ASIAN FOLKLORE STUDIES - MONOGRAPH NO. 6

Matthias Eder

Chinese Religion

Tokyo 1973

CONTENTS

Outline

Introduction

- The question of Chinese religion or Chinese religions
- The use of the singular justified by the syncretism of religious elements of various origins and by the peaceful coexistence or intermingling of various beliefs, rites, and religious customs

Early Chinese Religion

- Heaven or the God of Heaven the chief divinity
- The five duties prescribed by Heaven
- Other sky divinities and earthly divinities—mountain, river, and sea gods
- The cult of the souls of ancestors
- The numerous gods and spirits of popular religion
- Ritual and its essential connection with agriculture—the annual cycle of feasts and sacrifices

Confucius and Confucianism

- Confucius a statesman and moral philosopher
- His importance in the religious sphere, owing to his restoration of the old religion and old customs
- His emphasis on the will of Heaven and on the cult of ancestors
- His admission of divination to know the will of Heaven
- The teachings of Mencius (Meng K'o) the most influential of the successors of Confucius
- Confucianism made the religion of the state under the Han Dynasty
- The rise of Neo-Confucianism and its main tenets

Lao-tse, approximately a contemporary of Confucius, the founder of Taoism (Tao, "the Way")

- Taoism a new philosophical system
- Its doctrine of Yang and Yin
- Its ethics based on its metaphysics
- Philosophical and popular Taoism
- The prominent role of magic and alchemy in popular Taoism
- The *genii* and their importance in popular Taoism
- The conflict between Taoism and Confucianism
- Sketch of the history of Taoism to the present time

Chinese Buddhism

- Introduction of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism into China
- Chinese modifications and adaptations
- Relations with Confucianism and Taoism
- Sketch of the history of Chinese Buddhism to the present time—official support of and official measures against Buddhism

Syncretism in Chinese religious beliefs, institutions, rites, and customs

- This syncretism already many centuries old
- The numerous gods, Buddhist and Taoist saints, *genii*, and spirits
- Chinese beliefs in the life after death
- Chinese conceptions of heaven and hell
- Chinese temples and shrines, their rites and symbolism—the great religious art of China
- Chinese monasticism and its organization, activities, and ideals
- The annual cycle of religious feasts and their celebration—the importance of the New Year Feast
- The fusion of religion and magic in all aspects of Chinese religion—especially popular religion
- The importance of family religion in Chinese history—the ancestor cult
- Special rites and customs connected with birth, marriage, and death

The impact of Islam on Chinese religion

The impact of Christianity on Chinese thought and religion

- The question of the character and extent of the Nestorian mission in China
- The impact of Christianity in the 16th and 17th centuries
- The impact of Christianity in the 19th and 20th centuries
- The impact of Western rationalism on Chinese throught and religion in the 19th and 20th centuries

Chinese Communism and its policy towards traditional Chinese religion and towards Christianity in China

The present state of Chinese religion

- Difficulty of assessing the situation in mainland China
- The state of Chinese religion in Taiwan and in the large communities of Chinese outside of China—Southeastern Asia, Indonesia, Africa, the Americas, etc.

Bibliography

Preface

The Chinese possess a high culture with a history which is fairly well known over a span of three thousand years. Owing to the geographic position of the Chinese living space, this culture was able to grow in relative independence, and at the same time the population of the Middle Kingdom was large enough to produce an outlook on world and life of a specific and unique nature. In the making of this culture, religion was always in the center of Chinese life and development.

Throughout the history of Chinese religion we find three basic elements of different origin combined. The first is the autochthonous worship of the forces of nature, coupled with a strongly developed shamanism. The second is the widening and deepening of this native heritage by the speculations of Chinese thinkers, which exhibit marked variations. To these two native elements was added a third, the only one of alien origin, Buddhism with its various schools. The actual religion of the Chinese as practiced through many centuries is a kaleidoscopic mixture of these constitutive elements; it is not a mosaic in which stones are mechanically fixed in place, but rather a form of living organism with many offshoots and branches. Chinese religion as a system is something unique among the religions of the world and hence bears witness to the individuality of the Chinese people. This individuality has put its stamp on all changes in Chinese thought and practice.

For the Chinese there is no sector of human life which in one way or other does not come within the realm of religion. Gods, spirits, ghosts, and demons surround man in every situation. At every moment of his life, stars decide his fate; Heaven and Earth possess him; man has to know how to apply the rules or to protect himself against the supernatural powers or to gain their favors. The art of living is the art of coming to an understanding with the divine forces and neutralizing the hostility of superior forces by magic devices and practices.

Human existence comprises for the Chinese not only the time between birth and death but the time after death as well. For his fate after death man is responsible in the same way as he is for his fate during his lifetime. His existence is, furthermore, not that of a single and isolated person, but is united with that of his kinship group. This identification of man with his kinship group fortifies the security of his own person, but entails obligations and rights which are valid in this life and after death. The world of the five senses is for the Chinese but a small segment of reality within a boundless universe in which man

has to maintain his position. In this universe the Chinese sees unalterable principles of order. The universe is not a meaningless chaos; there is order throughout and man has to comply with it. Even those forces in the universe which are hostile to him man must not accept as blind fate; they too come under the control of higher, purposeful forces. With their help harmful interference from the invisible world of spirits and ghosts can be avoided and warded off. Throughout their whole recorded history the Chinese reveal themselves as a spiritual people. Firmly planted in the soil of earthly reality, they have believed at the same time in a vast supernatural world, peopled with innumerable higher beings. The Chinese were always seeking and finding a meaning and order in their existence. Chinese humanism sees a world in which nature and the supernatural make up one harmonious whole.

The supernatural provides the Chinese with guidelines for their conduct of life. Religion and ethics coincide. Ethical principles are but man's conscious accommodations, as an individual and as a member of society, to a preexisting world order. To the right relationship of man to this order the thinkers of many centuries have devoted much hard and painful thought, and its fruits belong to the highest achievements of mankind in his search for answers to the supreme and ultimate questions posed to him. The starting point for their thinking was always conditioned by their peculiar historic position and their general cultural milieu. Nevertheless, the best of them arrived at complete intellectual freedom, and their lines of thought, far removed from the coercion of traditions and schools, resulted in a highly variegated and rich philosophy.

Because of the intimate connection between religion and conduct of life, the state at one period tried to raise one specific system of thought to the rank of orthodoxy, but even then the tension between conflicting schools did not grow weaker but rather took on increasingly militant forms. The imposition of an orthodoxy by decrees from above could not silence the investigation of the religious questions which were always identical with the problems of human existence.

Though all strata of the population drew from the sources of a common historical heritage, there developed various levels in the philosophical penetration of the world of faith and religious practices, with accompanying socially and economically conditioned differences. It is impossible to register all the religious ideas and customs that existed during the three thousand years of the known history of Chinese religion.

In the following pages it will be our task to analyze the complex phenomenon of Chinese religion. We shall have to begin with its distant past, going as far back as possible. Then we shall describe and record new developments and, finally, examine the structure of the great

synthesis of the various elements which coalesced in the course of time to constitute the religion proper which we call Chinese and which is common to the entire nation. We shall abstain from unnecessary comparisons of Chinese religion with other religions of the world and likewise we shall not attempt to evaluate Chinese religion from the Christian point of view. Chinese religion is an achievement attained exclusively by the natural efforts of the human mind, whereas Christianity is based on divine revelation. Religions with such essentially different foundations are incommensurable.

More than any other factor, religion has contributed to the formation of the national individuality of the Chinese. In modern times, when they confronted peoples of different religious ideologies, they became conscious of their own individuality and were faced with the dilemma of either retaining their old ways or discarding the time-honored foundations of their spiritual culture and replacing them with new. This process of fermentation has gone on for an entire century. The present political regime of China is attempting a radically new orientation in a Marxist experiment in which a supernatural world in the old sense is unkown. No one knows yet how far the many millions of Chinese are, in matters of religion, following the dictates of their political leaders, and to what extent their religious heritage is vanishing in favor of the Communist creed. The Western literature on Chinese religion is vast and of a high standard. Nearly all great Sinologues were and are aware of the importance of religion in the formation of Chinese cultural life, and they have delved deeply in their research in Chinese religious thought and life. In voluminous monographs and numerous articles in scientific journals they have presented the results of their painstaking studies. For the purpose of this monograph we have endeavored to examine the great books of scholarly literature available and to present a well-balanced exposition of what is known about the religion of the Chinese. To Sinologues this presentation may not have anything new to say. Our purpose has been to present an accurate up-to-date survey of the subject that can be helpful to specialists in religion who are not at the same time Sinologues themselves. Though research on Chinese religion, folk religion included, has already gone far beyond the ground breaking stage, still much more, especially in fieldwork on folk religion, could and should be done.

Chapter One

Religion in Preclassical Antiquity

Our first task is to outline the religion of the early period to about the middle of the first millenium B.C., when Confucian and Taoist thinkers took up questions of religion dealing with the supernatural world and man's relationship to it, thus making religious problems subjects for philosophic speculation.

At the dawn of history we find the China of the Shang Dynasty (1523–1027 B.C., after 1400 B.C. known as the Yin Dynasty).[1] The Ch'ou Dynasty (1027–256 B.C.) followed. About 600 B.C. Lao-tse appeared, and Confucius lived from about 571 to 449 B.C., his chief follower Mencius, lived from 372 to 289. Mo-tse lived some time between 449 and 372. Though basically a Confucianist, he went his own way in important matters, and was known as the champion of altruism. In the middle Ch'ou Period (771–464) and the years immediately following, these personalities were the most outstanding among the "hundred philosophers." Their philosophy has contributed greatly to the shaping of Chinese cultural history. Mo-tse's influence, though great in his time and for some time later, even leading to a new school of thought, eventually vanished. Confucianism and Taoism remained forever the two antipodes of Chinese philosophic wisdom. As a third competitor for the Chinese religious mind, Buddhism arrived at the beginning of our era after having passed from India and Central Asia to the Middle Kingdom. The first period of the spread of this alien religion falls in the years between A.D. 65 and 170.

By the Preclassical Period we mean the centuries between the dawn of history and about the middle of the sixth century B.C., that is roughly the first half of the Ch'ou Dynasty (1027–771).[2] The sources on the earliest period reveal the religion of the aristocrats of the early feudal Ch'ou state.[3] We have scanty information on the religion of the masses

---

1. Chronological data have been taken from Li Shao-chang, China's Cultural Development, third rev. ed. (Lansing, Michigan, 1964).

2. *Ibid.*

3. The *Shu-king* is the most important and almost the only source for the earliest religion in China. See Alfred Forke, *Geschichte der alten chinesischen Philosophie* (Hamburg, 1927), pp. 6. ff., hereafter cited as *Geschichte.* The title signifies a collection of writings or documents. The Book is counted among

of this period. The writings register only the relationship of the nobles to the gods in whom they believed. The rulers alone were entitled to the right of worshiping gods by virtue of their ancestors; only they in their personal affairs could have recourse to the gods. The common people shared in this worship only indirectly and insofar as the rulers performed their acts of worship also in the interest of the community. The king offered sacrifices to the gods on behalf of the empire, the princes on behalf of their fiefs, the village superintendents on behalf of their village, the family heads on behalf of their families. The dignitaries of various ranks officiated as members of the aristocratic hierarchy.

I. Objects of Worship: Gods, Spirits, and Ancestors.

The objects of worship were gods and goddesses whose benevolence had to be ascertained or whose hostility had to be warded off. Heroes were also worshiped. These heroes were more or less historic personalities, their history being profusely embellished with legends and fables. The Chinese never speculated so extensively about the nature of their gods as for instance the Hindus did about theirs. The Chinese words for gods are rather vague in their significance. One is *kuei-shen*. The *kuei* means "returning"; the souls of the dead return. This admits of two different interpretations, a return to the point of origin in the great universe, or a return to the world of men to accept the sacrifices offered to the souls of the dead; and also a return as ghosts to molest their negligent relatives. By *shen* are meant higher beings who had never lived a human life. The other term is *k'i-shen*, which signifies earthly and heavenly spirits. This latter denomination is the most commonly used when speaking about the invisible beings which surrounded men and have to be respected by him. The Japanese language has adopted these terms also for the gods to be worshiped in the Shinto religion.

The gods and spirits were conceived of as superior human beings, much more powerful than man but not omnipotent, with a superior

---

the Confucian classics. Among other things, it contains speeches extolling the virtues of the great model rulers and exposing the vices of the evil ones. Its historical value is widely questionable. "It does not seem that Confucius himself was responsible for the fabrication. He may have merely copied or compiled what he found of the old emperor lore before his own time", according to F. Hirth, The Ancient History of China to the end of the Ch'ou Dynasty (New York, 1908), p.252 (hereafter cited as *History*). The standard translation of the Chinese classics is still considered to be that of J.Legge, *The Chinese Classics: with a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and Copious Indexes*, 7 vols. (Hongkong, 1861–72) (hereafter cited as *Chinese Classics*. On the *Shu-king* see also H.Maspéro, *La Chine antique* (Paris, 1927), p.XII (hereafter cited as *La Chine*). In religious matters the *Shu-king* reflects the opinions and concepts of the first half of the first millenium B.C.

intelligence and knowledge, but not omniscient. Higher moral qualities were not attributed to them; the gods could easily be offended and were vengeful. They could even be physically hurt by man. Yi wounded with his arrow the god of the Yellow River and the wind god. Gods and spirits might be killed by man, but they then continued their existence as dead gods. When the Ch'ou Dynasty had succeeded the Yin Dnasty, the earth god of the Yin Dynasty was killed, but the Ch'ou Dynasty had to worship him as the dead earth god of the previous dynasty.

The first concern of the worshipers was to gain the favor of the gods, not an insight into their nature. The gods possessed all spiritual potency (*ling*), the efficacy of which men wanted to utilize for their own purposes. The physical world was filled with spirits who were deified and transformed into powerful personalities with whom man desired to have useful intercourse. The gods should be, if possible, man's friends; otherwise they must be disarmed.

The early texts provide the names of many gods who can be grouped under the following categories.[4]

Forces of nature: Hi-ho, the mother of the sun; Heng-no, the goddess of the moon; Feng-po, also called Fei-lien, the count of the wind, who looks like a bird with the head of a deer and produces the wind; Yu-shih, the lord of the thunder, also respectfully called Lei-kung, or Prince Thunder, his onomatopoeic personal name being Feng-lung (wind-dragon). He was represented as a dragon with a human head, and he produced thunder by beating his belly. Others put a hand-drum into his left hand which he beats with a drumstick; the lord of the night; Count River, Ho-po, with the personal name *P'ing-yi*, the lord of the waters; the gods of the four oceans, with bodies like birds and human heads; the gods of the four mountain peaks, the other mountain gods, and the gods of the rivers and of woods; the gods of each of the five elements.[5]

2. The gods of human activities: There were and still are gods for all the occupations and concerns of man throughout his life. There are a great and small director of fate, the Ta-szu-ming and the Hsiao-szu-ming. Another god presides over marriages; his name, Kiao-mei, signifies his role as a go-between in establishing marital ties. There are five family gods in the house: a) the god of the doors of the interior

4. In the description of the ancient Chinese religion we follow mainly Maspéro, *La Chine*. On mythology much additional information is found in E.T.C.Werner, *A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology* (Shanghai, 1932) hereafter cited as *Dictionary*).

5. See C.B.Day, *Chinese Peasant Cults* (Shanghai, 1940), p.56 (hereafter cited as *Cults*).

of the house, b) the hearth-god, Prince Hearth, Tsao-kung, c) the god of the impluvium (*chung-liu*), d) the god of the house entrance (*men*), e) the god of the well (*tsing*)- according to others the god of access (*hing*) to the house.

Other gods preside over the work of man. For agriculture there is Lord Millet, Hou-tse, the god of grain and probably identical with an anthropomorphic transformation of millet. The first agricultural worker was Shen-nung, a cultural hero in several respects. He was the inventor of the plough and taught the people animal husbandry. He discovered the medicinal powers of plants and introduced the custom of having regular market days. There are also gods for the activities of women such as the heavenly weaver, Chih-nü. She has her origin in an astral myth. The stars *Aquila* and *Vega* are in Chinese mythology known as the herdsman and the weaver-girl.[6] For the kitchen there is the first cook, Hsien-ch'uei.

3. Gods of corporations: Professional corporations or guilds were already known in antiquity. There was the god of the blind musicians, K'uei, a dragon with one leg whose voice resounded like thunder. He was flayed by the Yellow Emperor, Huang-ti, who used his skin to make the first drum, which was then beaten with a bone of the thunder animal.[7] K'uei is the inventor of music and dancing. The foundries worshiped the god of the melting-furnace. The horse breeders had their Ma-tsu, the ancestor of the horses.[8] This god was also called Ma-wang, King Horse, and Yuan Ma, or horse ancestor. In later pictorial representations he is shown as a king accompanied by his officials and called Szu-ma Ta-shen, great horse-taming god; or represented in company with a dragon, a phoenix, and a crane. Offerings to Ma-tsu were made when the king was about to start on a military or hunting expedition.

We see much fantasy at work in the representation of the above mentioned gods. Even more fantasy operated in the creation of demons (*kuei*). In demonology the fertility of the Chinese imagination is well displayed. In a later chapter we shall say more on the world of the Chinese demons. From the earliest times the Chinese inherited an extremely large host of them. To mention here only a few: there are the Eight Brothers of the will-o'-the wisp (*yu-kuang*), then the Echoes (*wang-liang*), which were represented as children with long hair, imitating human voices in order to lead travelers astray. Rocks were in-

6. Werner, *Dictionary*, p.73.

7. See W.Eberhard, *Lokalkulturen im alten China*, part 2, *Die Lokalkulturen des Südens und Ostens* (Peking, 1942), p.34.

8. See Werner, *Dictionary*, p.301.

habited by ghosts, the *wang-ming*, that went abroad to devour people. Mountains were infested by ghosts without heads, and swamps, trees, and stones had their strange and fearful demons. The goddess of drought, Lady Pa, is the daughter of the Yellow Emperor; she and the demons of epidemics obey Hsi-wang-mu, the Queen of the West. Dangerous demons are also the souls of the dead who receive no offerings from their living relatives: they roam around hungry and harm people. As we shall see in another context, the Taoist philosophy and religion has assigned to the demons their position and function in the world system. The synchretistic religion of the common people has developed an immense demonological folklore and both Buddhist and Taoist magic have devised ways and means to keep the demons under control. Demons in the sense of originators and promoters of ethical evil are unknown to the Chinese. Their demons are not antagonists of the good gods.

II. Hierarchy among the Gods: the Pantheon.

At the summit of the entire pantheon stand the three great objects of official worship: Shang-ti, or God of Heaven; Lord Earth (Hou-t'u), who rules the land of the empire; and the royal ancestors. The God of Heaven and the God of Earth do not form a couple. The idea of a divine pair, man and wife, is alien to the ancient mythology, as both gods are masculine. The God of Heaven excels all other gods by far as lord over all gods and spirits and as master of mankind. Already in the ancient myths and later in philosophic speculations he occupies the supreme rank high above all other gods. The God of Heaven is the central concept of Chinese religion; all other elements are subordinate to him in such a way that the entire world of higher beings is combined into a firmly structured hierarchic system, a parallel to the system of feudal states on earth.

As each of the other gods and spirits was considered to be a personality with freedom of will and action, so also Shang-ti has his personality. It is only in later philosophic speculations that this concept of personal gods was sometimes lost sight of or was questioned. Such speculations hardly made any impression on the religion of the people. The development went rather in the opposite direction, insofar as the concept of Heaven was stripped of its fantastic mythological embellishments and became more that of a heavenly father, the good father in ultimate perfection.

The oldest expression for the God of Heaven is Shang-ti, the original meaning of which is somewhat obscure.[9] *Shang* means "above,"

9. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.161 ff.

"on top." The written symbol for *t'ien* "heaven" comes close to a human form, perhaps implying an anthropomorphic concept of Heaven. In the Thai languages, akin to the Chinese, the corresponding word is *t'en*, signifying the heavenly gods, whereas the physical heaven or sky is called *fa*. The *ti* in Shang-ti, later used as title for the emperor, seems to have been a denomination for the heavenly gods. *Ti* as the official title given to an emperor after death, and then as a title for emperor in general is explained as derivative from the first meaning of *ti*, a heavenly god. At any rate it is certain that the denomination *ti* was used exclusively as a special distinction reserved only for a higher being without equals.

The myths show Shang-ti as a giant in human form who ordinarily resides in Heaven. Sometimes he comes down to earth for a walk, leaving behind here his gigantic footprints. On earth he has some temporary residences. Certain cliffs are the terraces where he entertains invited guests at banquets, serving his guests fresh water from the sources of the great rivers. His residential palace is located in the constellation of the great bear (*Ursus major*) on the highest of the heavenly stairs. The entrance to it is guarded by the heavenly wolf, T'ien-lang, the star Sirius. There he lives with his family. His wife stays completely in the back-ground, playing no special role. His daughters, however, are important figures, for they are goddesses who have descended to earth. The most outstanding among them is Hsi-wang-mu, the Queen of the West. She has tiger teeth and a panther tail, and resides in places where the sun sets. She presides over epidemics. Another daughter of Shang-ti is the sorceress Yang, the Wu Yang. A younger daughter was Yao-k'i, who died on Mount Wu and became a supernatural plant. Two other daughters are the goddesses of the Hsiang River in Honan.

Shang-ti's subjects at his celestial court are the souls of the dead who keep their previous ranks as members of powerful clans and families. Furthermore, the souls of the kings, who were themselves deified and made *ti*, heavenly kings, were also members of the heavenly court, and with them were their own aristocratic subjects. Life there resembled the earthly courts of potentates with festivities and music. Kien-tse of Chao was permitted even in his lifetime to stay a while in heaven where he enjoyed himself.

Though living his glamorous life, Shang-ti is in no way far removed from earthly affairs: he is no *deus otiosus* who has resigned himself to be the Lord of Heaven and the king of the dead, enjoying his life of beatitude within his palace. From his heavenly hights Shang-ti rules with consummate sovereignty over all earthly and human affairs. He

sees everything in the four directions. He creates states, installs kings, invests royal families with kingdoms. He gives capable ministers to princes. He supervises from above the entire human world as its ruler. When a very solemn covenant is to be concluded, the parties to it swear by the name of Shang-ti, raising their heads up to heaven, Shang-ti's residence, after having offered a sacrifice to the supreme guarantor of their oaths. Shang-ti punishes culprits regardless of high position. In the year 655 B.C. he wished to chastise the Duke of Kuo who had gone astray. He caused his minister of chastisement to appear to the duke in a dream. The duke happened to be in his ancestor shrine, and when he was confronted by the minister from Heaven he was terribly frightened and wanted to run away. The god seized him and kept him back, saying: "Do not run away, the Lord has ordered me to tell you: 'I shall see to it that the Tsin will take possession of your door' ".

The souls of the unjustly executed dead invoke Shang-ti. In the year 581, after having extirpated the family of the Chao, the king of Tsin saw a huge ghost with disheveled hair hanging down to the earth. The ghost, beating his chest and jumping up, yelled to the king: "You have killed my grandsons! My petition to the Heavenly Lord has been granted!" Another example, hundred years later, concerned Prince Huei, who had committed an abominable crime: with court intrigues he had driven his brother Chen-cheng to suicide, and a year later he removed his brother's tomb to another place. In full daylight the raging soul of the dead man appeared to his former charioteer and said: "Yi-won [the personal name of the ruling prince] is acting against the rites! My petition to the Lord of Heaven has been granted, he will hand over the rule of Tsin to the Ts'in, who will make offerings to me". Invocations were made to the soul of Chen-cheng to induce him to write a new petition to the Heavenly Lord. Heaven permitted the punishment of Prince Huei, who was defeated and captured five years later by the count of Ts'in in the battle of Han in 645. On the other hand, the God of Heaven rewarded virtuous behavior. He sent down a god to announce to Count Mu of Ts'in in his ancestor shrine that he would grant him nineteen additional years of life. One did his best to keep the Lord of Heaven favorably disposed. In the sixth century, when a prince of Ts'i was sick, he wished to sacrifice his official prayer man in order that the latter could petition Shang-ti directly in his behalf. In antiquity, in an extreme emergency, a professional prayer man, belonging to the category of shamans, might be killed in order to let him defend the urgent case of his master before the gods and spirits in the other world.

Before inflicting his punishment upon a ruler, Shang-ti first warned the latter by chastising him with natural calamities such as fire in his

buildings or by having a comet appear in the sky. If the ruler still did no mend his evil ways of life and remained obdurate, Shang-ti struck him with personal punishment. When the virtue of a dynasty was found wanting, Shang-ti withdrew his mandate (*t'ien-ming*) from it and transferred it to a worthy prince.

In his world government Shang-ti is assisted by many helpers who hold the title and dignity of *ti*, "heavenly ruler", like Shang-ti himself. These helpers are the souls of former rulers, who again are assisted by the souls of their former ministers when cases come up which concern the domains for which they were responsible in their lifetime. In addition Shang-ti is further assisted by the five heavenly lords (Wu-ti), each one for the five heavenly quarters. These are the Blue Lord (Tsing-ti) for the East, the White Lord (Po-ti) for the West, the Red Lord (Ch'ih-ti) for the South (also called Yen-ti, Lord Fire Color), the Dark Lord (Hei-ti) for the North, and the Yellow Lord (Huang-ti) for the center. The religious role played by these celestial dignitaries is old. Some of them we find in the earliest mythological texts. Originally each represented one of the heavenly quarters on earth and accordingly, the White Lord of the West received the sacrifices of the count of Ts'in whose domain is situated to the West of the capital. However, the traditional correspondence of the four cardinal points with the four seasons led to the belief that the five heavenly lords also presided over the four seasons, and to their worship some ceremonies were added that originally had no connection with them. Such ceremonies were "the welcoming of the seasons" performed in the suburbs of the capital.

Finally, near the end of the Ch'ou period, when, under the influence of the astrological theories that had developed, the cult of the five heavenly lords had become current, these celestial rulers became also the gods who preside over the five elements. However, as the five elements already had their own regents (*cheng*), this accumulation of offices resulted in a rather artificial system. All this was made even more complicated when euhemerizing historians made these celestial emperors earthly rulers and assigned to each of them a place in early history, either directly as in the case of Huang-ti, the Yellow Emperor, or by the assimilation with one of the already euhemerized heroes, as in the case of Yen-ti, Lord Fire Color, who was assimilated with Shen-nung, the patron saint of agriculture.[10] Huang-ti, the third of the five heavenly lords, or legendary emperors, was said to have reigned from 2704–2595 B.C.[11] and to have regulated the sacrificial and other religious

10. See Day, *Cults*, pp.61, 105, 111, 192, 193.
11. See Hirth, *History*, pp.12 ff.

ceremonies. The Taoists later made him their religious head.[12]

Besides the five heavenly lords other but less known gods were believed to have assisted Shang-ti in the government of the world. Ju-shou was Minister of Chastisement, Kou-mang Minister of Rewards. Probably the gods of thunder, of rain, of wind, and other nature gods, and finally the celestial envoys (*t'ien-shih*), who had to transmit Shang-ti's messages, also belonged to the celestial officialdom. In Heaven also resided the souls of the dead (*hun*).[13] It is evident that these concrete ideas about the Heavenly Lord with his elaborate royal court developed only in the course of time, and paralleled the development of earthly government with kings and ranks of nobility. Chinese historians and Western writers who follow them, call the political situation in the seventh century B.C. the period of the "five hegemonies" (*wu-pa*): Huan of Ts'i (685–641), Mu of Ts'in (659–621), Hsiang of Sung (650–637), Wen of Tsin (636–626), and Chuang of Ch'ou (613–591). This arrangement however is merely an application of the theory of the Five Elements which were represented by the five heavenly quarters; it has no historical significance in fact, the five hegemonies having been only later projected into the past.[14] The historical truth is simply that the China of the early Ch'ou period was in the process of consolidation of central power and that the formation of territorial principalities was the theme of history. The political history consisted of events which were attempts at the preservation and further increase of the power of the house of Ch'ou on the one hand, and the preservation of the equilibrium of power among the feudal states on the other. The process of establishing a single consolidated state of China took about a thousand years.

This political process undoubtedly had an impact on the development of Chinese religion. Still it would be too much to say that the concept of Heaven with his power embracing the whole universe was nothing but an ideological projection of the striving of earthly rulers for an all embracing unified state. We can trace back the concept of Heaven to the time of the Shang Dynasty (1766–1122 B.C.) and it was in all probability taken over by the Shang from the preceding period when the semihistorical Hsia were in power.[15] The Shang and the Hsia can hardly have been yet involved in the process of the development of a great power with ambitions of universal rule that could produce a high god concept equal to it. It is much more probable that the idea

12. See Marcel Granet, *La Pensée chinoise* (Paris, 1934), p.302.
13. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.176 ff.
14. *Ibid.*, p.281, n.1.
15. See Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.28 ff.

of the God of Heaven came into existence independently of any political circumstances in an unknown past. A definite political system of ethics was only later derived from it.

Heaven thinks, feels, and acts as a being endowed with reasoning and planning power, and is a personal god. Even if this spirituality is thought to be immanent in the physical heaven, the personal character of Heaven could still have existed in a Heaven that was personified and deified. The only question that remains open is whether this identification of the God of Heaven with the physical heaven or sky was the original idea or was perhaps a later development. "Heaven hears and sees everything and the saint takes him as his model... He [Heaven] looks down on people beneath and examines its justice. He sends it accordingly long or short life. It is not Heaven who lets men die soon, but men themselves cut their lives in the middle."[16] This same idea we find expressed in a proverb still in use in modern times: At his birth man is given a lifetime of one hundred years. If he is a saint, he gets one hundred and twenty years; if he sins, his lifetime will be shortened in accordance with the seriousness of his sin.[17] The immutable principle of Heaven's activity is the rewarding of the good and the punishing of the evil. An innate strong moral sense of the Chinese people, and not a political situation is the foundation out of which the Chinese concept of Heaven has grown.

Most of the above information on the concept of Heaven in the religion of ancient China has been gathered from the classic *Shu-king*. This source, which describes so fully the belief in Heaven as the supreme deity, tells us little about the gods of nature. However we should not conclude that the people did not worship a great number of such gods. To the spirits of the heaven and of the earth animal sacrifices were offered, but the spirits accepted sacrifices only from people with a sincere heart.[18] All gods and spirits are subjects of the God of Heaven and act only by his order or with his permission. This old conviction found expression in the firm belief that demons also, whose number in the course of time had grown into an immense army, are all controlled by Heaven. Molestations by demons are a warning sent by Heaven or a punishment. The demons can never be antagonists of Heaven. Gods, spirits, and demons are all assigned their places in the world order which is governed by Heaven only. Beings like devils—as in the Christian or in many other religions—are unknown in Chinese religion.

16. *Ibid.*, p.29.

17. See C.H.Plopper, *Chinese Religion Seen through the Proverb* (Nanking, 1935), p.41 (hereafter cited as *Proverb*).

18. See Forke, *Geschichte*, p.30, where reference is made to texts in the *Shu-king* in Legge, *Chinese Classics*, vol.3, pp.262 and 234.

Gods, spirits, and demons people heaven and earth, either belonging to heaven or to the earth. As we shall see, earth itself is a deity.

Heaven is not a creator god. He is only the absolute sovereign of the world, which deities and heroes subordinate to Heaven have gradually erected out of chaos and made habitable. The God of Heaven of the Shang period is already strict in demanding from man a moral conduct of life. This demand concerns first of all the rulers, who must give a shining example to their subjects. This ethic, based on the belief in Heaven, is primarily social. Misbehavior for which rulers are occasionally reprimanded, includes impoliteness, injustice, wastefulness, avarice, debauchery with women, excessive indulgence in hunting and traveling, and favoritism. Virtue consists in striving after good by avoiding the above named vices.

The old religion of Heaven is not a sublimation or a mirror of the administration of the state; it was not created by the ruling class as a metaphysical foundation for its political aspirations, but is the expression of a general human conviction that there is a world order with a central power holding it together, and that there are, in subordination to this power, regulative principles for the conduct of life which make the existence of man in society possible.[19]

The nature of the God of Heaven becomes clearer by comparing him with the gods of the earth. These, too, are organized hierarchically and are important for the fate of man. The Lord of Earth, Hou-t'u, is the great god of the soil of the empire.[20] In addition to him there are the regional and local earth gods. These lesser earth gods dominate a limited domain whereas the great Earth God dominates in principle the whole earth, since everything under the heaven (*t'ien-hsia*) within the four oceans belongs, in theory, to the emperor. The hierarchy among the earth gods runs parallel with that of the human rulers on earth. On the lowest level are the village gods whose sphere of power comprises twenty-five families. Legend has it that the great Earth God is the son of the monster Kung-kung, that he helped to organize the nine provinces, and that after the death of his father he was worshiped as god of the earth. In contrast to the God of Heaven he never obtained full personality. Although he was never identified with a mythical hero, he had a strong hold on popular religion and was always close to the minor local gods.[21]

Every god of the soil was originally represented by a tree planted

19. In the evaluation of the belief in Heaven many opinions were expressed. See the summary of views in Forke, *Geschichte*, p.31.

20. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.167 ff.

21. *Ibid.*, p.168.

in a sacred grove on a hill. The tree differed with the region. In the center it was a pine tree, in the North an acacia, in the East a thuya, in the West a chestnut tree, in the South a catalpa. Because of such relationships special trees were attributed to the early dynasties: to the Hsia a pine tree; to the Yin, whose capital was in the East, a thuya which then remained the tree of the Sung; to the Ch'ou a chestnut tree. The choice of the tree was, however, not taken too literally; it could also be a tree other than the regular one, a white elm or an oak, but always a large and old tree. The god himself was identified with a natural unhewn stone, which was used as a table for the offerings.

The god of the soil was the ruler and guardian of the territory. The inhabitants of this territory could undertake nothing of significance without first notifying the god of the soil. If someone was to be invested with a fief outside his home territory, he took a clump of earth from the hill of his earth god to use it as foundation for the hill of the vassal god of the new fief. The earth god was responsible for the flourishing of his territory. The prince made offerings to him for a good harvest for the people. For himself the prince prayed for long life. Important enterprises in the realm, like hunting expeditions and wars, had to be announced to the god and started from his hill.

The god was also asked to adjudicate difficult cases. The two litigating parties first offered a ram to him, read their declarations aloud and swore an oath. This was an awe-inspiring ordeal and it was reported in some cases that a perjurer dropped dead right on the spot even before he had finished reading his declaration. The god of the realm also was frequently chosen as guarantor of oaths. For swearing a very solemn oath, the most powerful of all earth gods, the god of the royal domain, was asked to be the guarantor, along with Shang-ti, the God of Heaven. In the year 645, when Count Mu of Ts'in had taken Prince Huei of Tsin prisoner in the battle of Han, he swore by the "August Heaven and the Lord of the Earth" to spare the life of the prisoner. This oath was sworn in contradiction to the then prevailing custom of sacrificing the prisoners to the earth god upon returning from a victorious military expedition.

The Earth God did not display all the high ethical qualities of the God of Heaven. At times he could be extremely cruel, as he liked blood. Sacrifices to him were started by besmearing the stone table of his altar with the blood of the sacrificial animal. The offerings consisted mostly of oxen, but the god was also pleased with human sacrifices. According to tradition he demanded a human sacrifice at the beginning of the rule of T'ang the Victorious, when a drought had lasted for five years. When King T'ang was ready to sacrifice himself, rain fell.

A poet from the beginning of the third century describes under the name of count earth a monster with nine windings like a dragon and with sharp horns, a body the size of an ox, a head like that of a tiger, and with three eyes. This monster devoured men. In the year 641 the duke of Sung ordered the Viscount of Tseng to be offered to the earth god because he had come late to an assembly over which the duke was presiding. This harsh punishment however seems to have been exceptional and met with criticism. As a rule, human sacrifices were made when a victorious army returned from a campaign. When a war was about to be started, a military parade was held before the earth god, a bloody sacrifice made and probably blood smeared on the drums. Carried along in a special cart by an official prayer man, the earth god accompanied the troops on the expedition and those who were neglectful of their duties were sacrificed to him. After the troops had solemnly marched back to the capital, the marshal of the horses (*sze-ma*), that is the war minister, performed the sacrifice to the earth god which consisted in slaughtering the prisoners of war. Later when milder customs had begun to prevail, these human sacrifices were discontinued. Still in the year 532, when the warriors of Lu returned from a battle, they sacrificed a prisoner to the earth god of Puo. In later times the prisoners considered it a special favor when they were set free instead of being beheaded and the drums being besmeared with their blood.

Every prince had in his capital two earth gods, one for his principality and one for his family domain. When a dynasty was dethroned, its earth god had to be done away with and the earth god of the new dynasty was installed. The old earth god was "killed" by building a roof over his hill. In this way the altar of the old earth god became something like an ancestor shrine. The new dynasty continued to worship the old earth god, employing however the rites for sacrifices to the dead. Thus the Ch'ou had within the precincts of their court the dead earth god of the Yin, whom they called the earth god of Puo after the name of the old capital of the Yin. The dukes of Sung had a dead earth god of the Hsia. Such dead earth gods became warning symbols as their worship reminded the kings and the princes of the fate which woud befall them if they should quit the path of virtue. Though the earth god was also in charge of agricultural pursuits, his primary function seems to have been more of a political nature. It is certain that in the early Ch'ou period the earth god was not yet joined with the God of Heaven, as he was later under the influence of the doctrine of *Yin-Yang*.

Other gods also were worshiped in annual ceremonies, the gods of mountains, rivers, oceans. It is not clear how far these earthly gods

were subject to the earth god. In the official cult however they were of no great significance, only one of them attaining an important position, Ho-po, Count River, the god of the Yellow River. He was considered the lord of the waters on earth, and even the oceans were subject to him. He was represented as a huge fish, sometimes with a human face and riding on a dragon. More legends circulated about him during the Ch'ou period. The poet Yuan of K'iu described Count River as riding a water wagon under a canopy of sea roses, with two horned dragons pulling the shaft, a dragon without horns accompanying the god on his right side, and a whole army of fishes following behind. The personal name of the god was P'ing-yi. He resided in the whirlpool of Chung-ki at the foot of Mount Yang-ngou where the Yellow River runs against the massif of Mount Hua (Hua-shan) and, thrown back to the East, makes a sudden turn. There he has his water palace, "the hall of the river scales and the dragon hall...the pillared hall of the purple shell and the pearl palace." The god was the hero of a whole cycle of adventures: among them his fight with his neighbor, the god of the Lo River, and his defeat at the hands of the archer Yi who shot out one of his eyes. Such legends are intermingled with legends about the ancestors of the Yin Dynasty (1400–1027) one of whom, Ming of Chang, drowned himself in the waters of the Yellow River and then became ruler of the waters under the name of Hsian-ming. His son Huai married the daughter of Count River. When he was staying with Lord Yi, the latter abducted his wife and killed her husband. Later the son of Huai avenged his father's death by killing the murderer. Further legends were added to the story. It was on Mt. Yang-ngou that Yü lived for a while in seclusion before he began to drain the waters. It was also here where Fu-hsi saw the horse dragon rising from the water, bringing him the divinatory trigrams.

The river god was worshiped in two places, one in Lin-tsin near the residence of Tsong-ki opposite the confluence of the Lo River and the Yellow River in Shensi Province; the other, in Yeh in the country of Wei near the present sub-prefecture of Ling-chang in Honan Province. This place is now far removed from the river, but it is still close to next to the last capital of the Yin, which explains the fusion of the legends. In both sanctuaries a board of sorceresses (*wu*) officiated. There were twelve in Yeh, presided over by a seventy years old grand sorceress (*ta-wu*). The others were called her pupils (*ti-tse*). During the official annual ceremonies in both places a girl was sacrificed to the river god as his bride. In Yen this sacrifice was performed with much pomp on the river bank in the presence of the grand sorceress and her pupils, all arranged behind her in embroideerd

clothes. When the day of the festival was approaching, the grand sorceress chose the most beautiful girl from the families and said: "This one must be the bride of Lord River." Then the bethrothal ceremony took place, the girl was bathed and dressed in silk and satin garments, and sent into seclusion for fasting in a "fasting palace", a tent erected for this purpose on the river bank. An ox was kept ready as victim along with wine and food. The girl's face was rouged and her body was bedecked with jewls. Then she was seated on a nuptial couch on which she was thrown into the river, or the coach was placed on a raft which was set adrift in the river. It either sank somewhere or crashed against a rock. Early in the fourth century governor Hsi-men Pao of Yeh suppressed this human sacrifice.

In the sanctuary of Lin-tsin there was also a custom of "giving a girl to the river god as wife". In the year 417, to secure for himself the protection of the river god, Count Ling of Tsin decided to adopt a girl every year before the river god festival. The girl was given the title Princess Kiun-cho, offered to the river god, and thrown into the river at the end of the ceremony.

Count River was one of the most feared deities. When crossing the river travelers offered him a jade ring. The god took his revenge for offenses by sending diseases. Early in the fifth century B.C. the divination pointed at the river god as the originator of the sickness of the King Chao of Ch'ou and recommended a sacrifice, whereupon the king answered: "I have done nothing wrong to Count River." The river also served as guarantor of oaths, which were taken either by throwing the written statement into the river or simply by invoking the name of the god.

However, in spite of the importance of the river god and his significance for the population along the banks of the river, his worship remained local. Because the god of the Yellow River was no god of the Ch'ou, the king of Ch'ou refused to make sacrifices to him. The extension of the Chinese empire to the South was fateful for the river god and he gradually disappeared from the religious customs and practices together with much of the ancient world of the Chinese.[22] The Yellow River has been worshiped and deified as an impressive force of nature with which man had at times to struggle. With the increasing unification of the power of the state and the growth of worship on the basis of new philosophic and religious speculation, and probably also as a consequence of an increasingly efficient control of floods by agencies of the state, the worship of the river god faded away.

22. Our description of the worship of the Yellow River closely follows that in Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.172–175 (the best account).

III. The Worship of Ancestors

Each aristocratic family had as its special protectors the souls of its ancestors. From the early sources we learn nothing about the ancestor worship of the common people. We may assume only that they also believed in a life after death and that they somehow worshiped the departed souls of their loved ones. Ancestor worship occupies in the religious life of the entire Chinese people such an exalted position that it must be considered as one of the basic structural elements of Chinese spirituality and not merely something taken over by imitation from the higher social strata. The belief in the immortality of the soul and ancestor worship are closely related.

1. The Chinese Concept of Soul

From the earliest period the Chinese believed that man has several souls which are together in the living man and separate at the moment of death to go their own ways. There are four words for soul. The *p'o* is something like a biological soul, the physical principle of life which is effective from the moment of concept. Another soul is the *hun*, which is in man from his birth. Both souls grow strong by the absorption of subtle substances, not only through physical nourishment but also through the tasks which man fulfills in his life, through the blood of the family to which he belongs, and through the social standing which he enjoys. Thus the souls of princes and ministers and of their offspring are stronger than those of ordinary people. During a dream the soul can leave the body for a short time.

Other expressions for soul are *kuei* and *shen*. By *shen* is meant the soul in its spiritual manifestation. One speaks of *kuei* when the soul manifests itself at the grave. The word *hun* seems to be very old, since it has an affinity with *k'uan* in the Thai languages. The *p'o* soul stays after death with the corpse, whereas the *hun* soul soon separates from it to ascend to heaven into the realm of *Shang-ti*. Every soul can keep there the rank it had while on earth. The kings sit on the right and left side of *Shang-ti*, they are his guests and heavenly lords (*ti*) themselves. Their former ministers continue to serve them. Life at the heavenly court is similar to that at earthly courts, with plenty of feasting and merry making. Kien-tse of Chao, who in 501, was in a cataleptic state for five days, upon awakening had the following story to tell: "I went to the residence of the Lord of Above which I found most pleasing. I walked around with a hundred genii in the central part of heaven. The music I heared played nine melodies and there were ten thousand amusements with dancing."

The road to heaven is complicated and beset with many dangers.

At the four cardinal points the soul must keep clear of monsters who want to devour it, and under the earth is Count Earth, T'u-po, who wants to devour it also. In the sky is the heavenly wolf who is intent on killing the soul. It must know the password for entering the heavenly palace; otherwise, the doorkeepers of the nine heavenly stairs will not open the doors. A guide, too, is needed. This was perhaps the prayer man who had to recite the ritual prayers before and after the funeral. The old sorcerers and sorceresses (*wu*) were still active and could ascend to heaven to show the soul the way there. While the sorcerer recited his prayer, he accompanied the soul of the dead and guided it. A funeral prayer included these words: "The brave prayer woman gives you a signal, looking back [on you], she walks ahead of you." No doubt, shamanism has left its traces here.

The *p'o* soul stays temporarily with the corpse in the tomb and feeds on the offerings. If these are discontinued, the soul is tortured by pangs of hunger and becomes dangerous. It then returns to the living as a "returner" (*kuei*). These hungry returners were sometimes satisfied with appearing to somebody in a dream and demanding offerings. In 656 B.C. the Princess Kiang of Ts'i appeared in this way and desired offerings from her former husband, Hsien of Tsin. Hungry souls, when disregarded, sometimes caused diseases to take revenge on the living. In some districts the neglected souls received regular offerings in each of the four seasons as atonement for neglect. The more powerful such souls were in their lifetime, the more fearful they became after death. Po-yu, who had been assassinated in 535 B.C., appeared for several years, terrifying the whole population. Twice he appeared to announce the death of his assassins, and was appeased only when his son, reinstated in his office, was able to make offerings to him. The count of Tu, who had been murdered by the king of Hsüan, appeared to the murderer at an assembly of lords and shot him to death with an arrow.

The *p'o*, or bodily soul lives only as long as its body has not yet decayed. According to an old idea this period is three years, that is, the period of mourning; but the bodies of outstanding persons, such as kings and princes, sometimes last longer. The soul of the king of Hsiang of the house of the Hsia demanded offerings from Prince Ch'eng of Wei as late as the seventh century B.C., that is one thousand years after his death.

The idea of a kingdom of the bodily souls (*p'o*) under the earth, the counterpart of the heavenly kingdom of the spiritual souls (*hun*) arose very early. The souls in the underworld kingdom likewise have their own kings, the *ku-wang*. The kingdom of the dead was called the "Yellow Springs" (*huang-ts'üan*) or the "Nine Springs" (*kiu-ts'üan*).

These springs or fountainheads were places where the souls met and lived together. Count Chuang, therefore, when he was exiled with his mother, swore not to see her before meeting her at the Yellow Spring. Life in this underworld was similar to that on earth; the previous hierarchical ranks of the souls were preserved, princes remained princes, they had their wives with them and their ministers and servants. They could even fall sick. When T'ien Chieh, a grand officer of Ts'i, had died, his wife was told by her lady-in-waiting: "If his Lordship falls sick, he has nobody down there to nurse him," whereupon it was decided to send somebody as servant for the dead. Here again we find shamanistic thinking.

To make sure that they could continue in their old living habits, the dead rulers and other grandees took not only their weapons and personal effects with them but also their wives, servants and horses, who were all killed at the funeral. A funeral of a prince or other high ranking aristocrat could be followed by a hekatomb of men and women who were buried alive. The word *hsün*, meaning a human sacrifice by burying the person alive at the funeral of a lord, is but a special application of *hsün*, "to follow", that is to follow the dead. In 678, when Count Wu of Ts'in was buried, sixty-six other persons had to follow him. In 621 at the funeral of Wu's offspring, Count Mu of Ts'in, a hundred and seventy persons were buried alive, among them three courtesans whom Mu himself had picked out as his favorite maid servants at table. In 586, at the funeral of Duke Wen of the Sung, there was also an amazingly large sacrifice of human beings. Even a petty prince, like Ch'uan of Ch'ou, was, in 507, followed by five persons. Ch'ou of Wei, a faithful vassal of Prince Tsin, during his exile ordered his son to see to it that his favorite concubine should be buried together with him. Kan-hsi, a grand officer of Ts'i, gave orders that two slaves be laid in the coffin with him, one on each side. Women also wished to enjoy company in the underworld. As late as the end of the fourth century B.C. Princess Hsüan of Tsin wanted to be followed by her lover into Hades. In the families of lower social and economic levels straw figures were buried as substitutes for living persons.

We perceive that the ideas about the world of the dead are not entirely consistent. The bodily souls (*p'o*) stay with the corpse in the tomb and soon fade away with the corpse. At the same time there is a hierarchically organized kingdom of the dead where the souls wish to settle down in a comfortable life. The spirit souls (*hun*) meanwhile ascend to Shang-ti where they also continue the life to which they are accustomed. In other words, the personality is duplicated. Nobody cares for the well-being of those in heaven by providing them

with the same amenities of life which are allowed to the souls in the underworld, wives, servants, and horses. Perhaps in heaven they do not lack these things. Another inconsistency is the splitting of the soul in the *p'o* in the underworld and the dangerous *kuei* or hungry soul in the tomb. We see that the Chinese dealt with the enigma of death in a confused way, baffled by this great dissonance in human existence.

We must not expect too much logic at a time when philosophical thinking was still in its infancy in China. For the Chinese it is less important to know where the souls are than to know that they obtain the rank of ancestors and become as such the protectors of the living. Care was taken that the body soul (*p'o*) should last as long as possible by doing everything to slow down the decomposition of the corpse. For this purpose small pieces of jade were inserted into the orifices of the body. Food and clothing were placed in the tomb beside the body and a mirror which should give light.

At the same time the family had to be protected against harm emanating from the corpse, but it was impossible to avoid contraction of ritual impurity for a certain period, which was longer or shorter according to kinship degree and during which the family was subjected to several prohibitions and restrictions in social life. The mourning period (*sang*) for dead parents lasted in principle three years; in practice and by custom is was reduced to twenty-eight months for father and mother, and to a shorter period for other relatives. When a death occured in the house, the pollution of the fire place was avoided by heating the water for washing the corpse on an oven especially built for this purpose in the courtyard.

2. Death and Burial

As soon as a man of rank was dead, the whole family, men and women, began to weep, each exhibiting different degrees of emotion, the children moaning, brothers and nephews weeping, the women weeping and jumping up. This first outcry signaled the demise to the neighbors so that they could prepare themselves for what followed. At the same time, a last effort was made to call the departed soul back. A man, holding on his arm the official garment which the dead used for the ancestor sacrifices, climbed up to the roof of the house and, looking to the North, the region of the dead (*kuei-fang*), called three times: "N.N., come back!" When it had become clear that the soul of the dead was gone for good, the mortuary rites were started. The corpse was taken care of, its eyes closed, the jaws spread asunder to keep the mouth open, the legs fastened to a trestle to keep them straight. Then the body, including the hair, was washed. Fingernails and toe-nails were clipped. The corpse was dressed in special funeral

garments (*ming-yi*), over which the ceremonial robes were put. Jade was placed in the mouth. During all these activities, which occupied the entire first day, and thereafter all the time until the burial, many tears were shed. Relatives came for their visits of condolence day and night. The body was laid in state in the great hall, on the roof of which a banner was hoisted bearing the name of the dead (*ming-tsing*).

Until the body was laid in the coffin, all other rites were only a show at which the wealth of the family and its social standing were displayed. This was done first of all by exhibiting the clothes of the dead, on one day the "small exhibition" (*hsiao-lien*), consisting of nineteen pieces, on the next day the "great exhibition" (*ta-lien*), at which a much greater number of clothes was hung up than the day before, for princes up to one hundred garments. During these two days relatives and strangers kept coming to express their condolences. Clad in white, the sons received the guests, the daughters-in-law the guests' wives. For kings and princes the visits of condolences continued for seven days.

When the great exhibition had been closed, the body was laid in the coffin, the inside of which had been covered with black silk. In the four corners little bags were placed containing the clippings of the fingernails and toenails and the combings of fallen hair, all of which had been carefully collected during the lifetime of the dead so that he could enter the other world complete. Then the coffin was laid in a pit, with only the cover sticking out, and with a curtain covering it from view. In the pit was also laid an offering of roasted grain, dried fish, and meat. The coffin remained in the pit until the burial. The temporary deposition of the coffin in the pit is very probably a relic of an earlier burial custom, a temporary burial which formerly had lasted through the whole mourning period, until the body should be completely decayed and only the skeleton left. With the placing of the coffin in the pit the dead was definitely separated from the living, and the family then doubled its lamentations. They could no longer stand upright and from the next day on they supported themselves with the mourning staff.

Ordinarily burial followed immediately, but in families of higher rank it was postponed for some time. All relatives and many friends of the dead and the family walked in the funeral procession. The coffin was wrapped in white cloth and covered with a white veil. It rested on a four-wheeled cart under a canopy decorated with silk. The knots only were of red silk, and the silk was fastened to the canopy in the front and rear. The banner with the name of the dead and his wagon, if he was entitled to have one, followed. Next

in the cortege came the carriers of the sacrificial offerings. Ahead of the procession marched a sorcerer (*fang-hsiang*) brandishing a sword to the four points of the compass to eliminate evil influences from the road to the burial ground. The procession walked slowly to the burial place where a multitude of people were already waiting. While the coffin was lowered into the grave, with the head to the North, no cries of grief were allowed. At this moment the official in charge of the graves was looking around to find those who were to be sacrificed, men and women. They were forced to descend into a prepared vault which then was walled up, so that they were actually buried alive.

When all was over at the graveside, the mourners returned to the home of the deceased. There the son of the deceased went to the ancestor shrine and placed a provisory ancestor tablet of his father near the tablet of the grandfather of the deceased and offered the first sacrifice to his deceased father as ancestor. Then for the first time a representative of the deceased appeared impersonating the deceased as his "corpse" (*shih*), and participated in a meal. The representative, considered to be the dead man in person, entered, seated himself, took a few mouthfuls of the offerings, drank a little wine, and then left. Before he did so, the lamentations stopped, the visitors left and took off the mourning clothes. The mourning rites were over. Only the tombhill remained to be piled up, a lengthy and often expensive task, which sometimes was done much later.

3. The Making of an Ancestor

With the conclusion of the funeral rites the deceased had not yet become a full-fledged ancestor. The mourning period was for him the time of transition. His provisory tablet was not left in the ancestor shrine after the first offerings had been made before it, but was carried to his former living room where it received offerings at festivals, while the ancestors already properly installed received theirs in the ancestor shrine. It is only after having received offerings at the end of the mourning period that the deceased finally became an ancestor. The tablet of his grandfather was removed into the next chapel, and that of his great-grandfather was removed farther back. The new tablet was made of chestnut wood. From this time on the new ancestor was endowed with special power for the protection of his family and, if he was a prince, for the protection of his territory. Regular sacrifices followed. The power of the new ancestor decreased from generation to generation. The worship of a personal ancestor lasted for five generations for kings, three for princes, but only for one generation in the case of ordinary noblemen. At the end of these periods the old tablets were all deposited in one chapel and received no further in-

dividual offerings. The souls ranked now only as collectively worshiped ancestors, *kuei*, and so they were placed on the same footing as those poor souls who were left in their graves without offerings. Only a few early ancestors with extraordinary virtues, such as the founders of clans and of families who were the first holders of fiefs, received offerings indefinitely and were never degraded to demons (*kuei*). To counteract the decadence of ancestors, special temples were erected for them in princely families in which sacrifices never ceased. The existence of such high-ranking ancestors was terminated only by the extinction of their descendants.[23]

4. Ancestor Shrines and Rituals

As compared with the great number of regional variations in the cult of other gods, the cult for the souls of the dead was uniform almost everywhere down to details. The ancestor temple stood within the precincts of the residence on the East side of the courtyard so that the family head, when he sat down facing South, had the ancestor temple on his left. The temple was in a walled area, fenced in with a small enclosure, the gate of which opened on the South side. Behind the gate was a large courtyard; in its center stood a stele to which the animal was tied in at the time of offering. To the left and to the right of it were two lateral buildings which seem to have served several purposes. For instance, in one of them the representative of the deceased (*shih*) put on his ceremonial dress before impersonating the deceased. In the rear, facing South, on an elevated platform was the great temple (*t'ai-miao*) itself, to which two stairs led, one on the East for the family head, one on the West for the guests. The ancestor hall was a building with pillars and a light brick wall or perhaps one of stamped mud, constructed and decorated according to fixed rules. For the Son of Heaven the pillars were quadrangular, polished and pumiced. They were not pumiced for a prince, and for a grand officer they were simply quadrangular without further dressing. The pillars and posts which carried the roof were neither hewn nor painted.

The ancestor hall was partitioned into separate small chapels, as many as there were ancestors to be worshiped. An old tradition fixed the number of the chapels to which a patrician was entitled: seven for a king, five for princes, three for grand officers (*tai-fu*), and one for a simple patrician. The chapels were symmetrically arranged, with a chapel in the center and the others to the left and the right of it. This division led to a special classification of the ancestors to be worshiped. Beginning with the first ancestor, those of the same rank

23. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.186.

had their chapel always on the left side and were called *chao*. The ancestors of a lower rank had their chapels on the right side and were called *mu*. The central chapel was always reserved for the oldest ancestor who still received offerings. For the other dignitaries the disposition of the ancestor temple varied according to the rank of the family and the number of the chapels, and also according to the country. As in many other things the rites of the Sung differed in this respect from those of the Ch'ou.

In the royal ancestor temple of the Ch'ou the central chapel was dedicated to Hou-tse, the first ancestor of the clan; on each side were the chapels of the three *chao* and of the three *mu*, that is, of the ancestors whose rank was lower than that of Hou-tse. Four chapels, two on the left and two on the right were called *miao* and belonged to those ancestors who were entitled to monthly offerings: the father, the grandfather, the great-grandfather, and the great-great-grandfather, each with his legitimate wife. The two others, which were closest to the clan ancestor Hou-tse, were called *t'iao* and were reserved for the most remote ancestors who were no longer entitled to monthly but only to seasonal offerings. The term *t'iao* actually signifies a tablet that has been removed from its chapel and put away for good, when an ancestor is no longer entitled to a regular cult.

Besides the tablets with their chapels, there was also an altar (*t'an*) and an open space destined for the worship of the two ancestors in the fifth and sixth generation before their tablets were definitely put away and added to the *t'iao*, together with those of their predecessors. The ancestor temples of the princes who were blood relatives of the royal family were arranged in the same way, but had only five chapels, two for the immediate ancestors, the *miao*, two for the more remote, the *t'iao*, and one for the first ancestor, the *t'ai-miao*. In Wei the central chapel was dedicated to Hou-tse, the two neighboring to King Wen and his son, Kang-chou, the first prince of Wei. The father and the grandfather of the ruling prince occupied the two last chapels. In Lu the ancestor line did not go back to Hou-tse. The central chapel was dedicated to the duke of Chou, the father of the founder of the principality; the left chapel, to his son Po-li, the first prince of Lu; the right chapel to Prince Wu (825–815 B.C.). The two last chapels were reserved for the father and the grandfather of the ruling prince.

In each generation a series of tablets was demoted by one degree to make place for the tablet of the new arrival: the series of the *mu*, if the new arrival was to be put in their line, that of the *chao*, if he was to be among them. After the transition to the ancestors without a chapel, the tablet to be removed from its chapel was enclosed in a

little box and deposited in the chapel of the first ancestor (*t'ai-miao*) where it was placed, together with its predecessors, along the Northern wall. For certain sacrificial ceremonies it was taken out from its container to be placed first on the altar, and a generation later in the open space. It did not matter whether it was a *mu* or a *chao*: they all went, one by one, to the altar first and then to the open space to receive their offerings. Finally when six generation had passed, the tablet was deposited in its permanent place in the chapel of the first ancestor and was merged with the other tablets which received offerings only collectively.

The interior of the chapel was the same for all classes of ancestors. The tablet was kept in a container of stone and taken out for ceremonies. Generally every ancestor had two tablets. One remained always in the residence. The other was a kind of traveling tablet which could be taken along on a military expedition. By the end of the Ch'ou period, however, the ritualists declared that it was proper to have only one tablet because "as in heaven there is only one sun, there must not be two kings on earth", and also because at the sacrifice there must not be two tablets. They attributed this innovation of having only one tablet to Prince Huan of Ts'i in the seventh century B.C.

In an ancestral chapel were also preserved the clothes of the deceased which had been on exhibit at the funeral ceremonies. At the time of an offering the ceremonial robe of the deceased was taken out and worn by the representative who impersonated the deceased. The tortoise shell, too, that was to be used for the divination which was performed in behalf of the respective ancestor was also kept in his chapel, together with the sacrificial furniture, vessels, and implements. The temples of the patricians were simpler. The lesser dignitaries had only two chapels or even one. The simple people, having neither chapel nor temple, used only an altar which had been built in a hall in their private quarters.

These institutions and rites were part of the rigid structure of feudal society. We can understand why Confucius and other champions of the old ritualism explained the social and political confusion of their time by the crumbling of the sacrificial rites and proposed reforms through a return to the customs of antiquity.

Chinese ancestor worship existed at least as early as the Shang dynasty (1523–1027).[24] Three years of mourning were already practiced at that time. Emperor Wu-ting (1324–1265) mourned three years for his father, demonstrating filial piety for his ancestors and a desire

24. See Forke, *Geschichte*, p.30, with references to relevant texts in the *Shu-king*.

to emulate them. Historians note that I Yin, a famous minister of the founder of the Shang dynasty, imitated Yao and Shun, who were held up as models of good rulers, and Emperor P'an Keng (1401–1373) was praised for walking in the foodsteps of his ancestors. From such remarks we can infer the great ethical significance of ancestor worship and its force for the conservation of society.

With no god was the relationship so personal as with the ancestor spirits. When offerings were made to them, these spirits descended into the living persons who had been chosen as their representatives, in the same way as in shamanism gods were connected with the persons chosen by them. The representative of an ancestor was much more than his dramatic impersonator; he was the carrier of the soul of the ancestor who had temporarily possessed him. He was therefore called *shen-pao*, "the one possessed by the soul of the ancestor", just as the sorceresses were called *ling-pao*, "persons possessed by a spirit". The representative stood upright and immovable; when the ancestor spirit descended into him he sat down. In behalf of the ancestor soul he partook of the offered dishes and drinks. Toward the end of the ceremony he spoke words of gratitude for the offerings and promised to bestow happiness. It was believed that the ancestor spirit spoke in person through the mouth of the representative, who was always a descendant of the ancestor but never his son. He was a grandson or, when grandsons were lacking, a nephew. Assent of the ancestor to the choice of the representative was obtained by divination.

The necessity of choosing a descendant for the office of representative of his ancestor forced Prince P'ing of Tsin to ask the count of Tung to be his "corpse", when in 535 he made an offering to Kuen, the father of Yü the Great who was a remote ancestor of the clan Sze to which the Count of Tung delonged. The use of a "corpse" was restricted to the cult of the dead. With one apparent exception it never happened that a god was represented by a living person. However, at the sacrifices to the "warning god of the earth", a "corpse" participated because this was the earth god of a deposed dynasty, which meant that he was a "dead" earth god who received offerings through a funeral prayer man, following the ritual for funerals. This "corpse" however was not a descendant but an unrelated executive officer.

5. The Regular Cycle of Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship actually took place every day and every moment and permeated every phase of the life of the descendants. Before each meal the father of the family performed a libation and offered a few mouthfuls to the ancestors. When he received a plate of food

from the king or from a prince as a present, the ancestors were first offered their share. The family head never touched the new products of the season or game or fish before he had made the seasonal sacrifice to the ancestors. In the fourth month were offered grains of cereals, still in the milk, together with pork; in the seventh month an offering of millet was due; in the ninth month one of rice; and in the twelfth month, one of fish. Besides these routine offerings, great sacrificial ceremonies had to be performed in the ancestor temple by those who had one; those who did not took part in the great ceremonies of their superiors. In each of the four seasons a sacrifice was offered to all ancestors, to the *mu* and to the *chao* as well, that is both to the ancestors of equal rank with the first ancestor and to those of unequal rank; and also to the ancestors who had a special claim on offerings. The princes made only three seasonal offerings. They omitted the sacrifice of the season which corresponded to the cardinal point in which their fief was situated in respect to the capital, because in this season they had to visit the court. The ordinary private patricians, however, had to make four seasonal offerings to their ancestors.

Furthermore, the king and the princes, but not private noblemen, were obligated to perform a great collective sacrifice for all their ancestors from the beginning of their family line. This sacrifice, however, was not due every year. Its date always depended on the rhythm of the calendar within a period of five years when intercalations of months had to be made to bring months in harmony with the movements of the sun. Although this festival did not concern persons who were of a lower rank than princes with a fief, its celebration was sometimes permitted to grand officers as a reward for services rendered. They were not permitted, however, to extend their offerings to their first ancestor, who had no chapel in their ancestor temple, but could go as far back as their great-great-grandfather. Only the king and the descendants of the early dynasties and the prince of Lu had a second great sacrifice every five years for all ancestors beginning with the first, the so-called *ti*-sacrifice. This sacrifice, the greatest and most important performed in the ancestor temple, also depended on the intercalations in the calendar and was combined with the *hsia*-sacrifice which took place in the third year, the *ti* being performed in the fifth year. Otherwise neither the *hsia*- nor the *ti*-sacrifice were connected with the intercalations as such.

In Lu the cycle of the *hsia*- and the *ti*-sacrifices of every reign depended on the demise of the predecessor. When the mourning period was over and the sacrifices which marked its end were made, the *hsia*-sacrifice was offered first, and then the *ti*-sacrifice in the

spring of the following year. From then on the two sacrifices were made yearly until a new death caused a new modification in the cycle.

The *hsia* was the sacrifice by which the ancestor was united with the whole ancestral line of his predecessors. The *ti* was the sacrifice by which the deceased king was installed in the rank of a *ti*, that is of a heavenly lord. The heavenly lords, as we have already seen, sit on the left and right sides of the highest lord, Shang-ti. Such was the meaning of the first *hsia-* and the first *ti*-sacrifice of each line; they were sacrifices at the end of the mourning period. The other *hsia-* and *ti*-sacrifices were only renewals of the rites.

The great ancestor sacrifices were of two types: the first were given collectively to all ancestors whose tablets and chapels were united with those of the first ancestor; the second were offered separately to each ancestor in his own chapel, except that the tablets of the earliest ancestors who were without a chapel were assembled in the chapel of the first ancestor. Among the trimestrial sacrifices for the seven ancestors who still had a chapel, those in summer, autumn and winter were collective; those in spring, individual sacrifices. Of the sacrifices offered only every five years to all ancestors, the *hsia* were collective, the *ti* individual.

The *hsia*-sacrifice. At the beginning of the *hsia*-sacrifice an official prayer man solemnly accompanied the four tablets of the *chao* and the *mu* ancestors one by one from their chapels to that of the first ancestor where they all were assembled for the banquet. The tablets with a chapel were also taken from their containers and, by the guardian of the tablets that were already put away (*shu-t-'iao*), they were ceremoniously accompanied to the place of the ancestral banquet, where genealogy decided the precedence. The First Ancestor occupied the high end facing East. On his left his son faced South, on his right his grandson faced North, and all his descendants were arranged likewise in two rows, the *chao* on the left side and the *mu* on the right side, son and grandson following respectively, each generation getting farther away from the First Ancestor. There were seven "corpses" and never more: that of the First Ancestor, those of the kings Wen and Wu, and those of the four *chao* and *mu*. The demons (*kuei*), that is, the ancestors who were already without any sacrifices, had no "corpses". Each "corpse" stood on the left side of his respective tablet. At the end of the ceremony the tablets were returned to their chapels with the same ritual with which they had been brought out.

The *ti*-sacrifice. At the *ti*-sacrifice each tablet was left in its own chapel, their "corpses" standing there, and each tablet was given a personal banquet. The ancestors without a chapel participated in

the banquet of the First Ancestor in whose chapel they had been put away. The guardian of these tablets (*shou-t'iao*) took them out of their containers and arranged them genealogically, the *mu*, descendants to King Wen, in a row on his left side, all *chao*, descendants of King Wu, in a row on his right side. All *mu* and *chao* from the time before the two kings, that is those who held no heavenly mandate and were only vassal princes, were arranged in two rows on the left and on the right side of the First Ancestor Hou-tse, exactly in the same way as at the *hsia*-sacrifice. For the trimestrial collective and individual sacrifices the ritual was the same; only the *kuei* (demons), spirits without chapel and offering, were excluded.

Except for these differences in the number of ancestors to whom offerings were given, everything else, such as the arrangements of the offerings, etc., was the the same. Everybody and everything connected with the offerings had to be ritually pure, the officiating descendant, the prayer man, the sacrificial animals—as in all other sacrifices. The "corpses", as the representatives of the spirits, had to be acceptable to them, as ascertained by divination. They also had to undergo purification as did the officiant. The day of the sacrifice had to be auspicious and was chosen by the milfoil (*Achillea millefolium*) oracle. During the purification period of ten days the last preparations were made: the walls and the roofs of the ancestor temple were repaired, the chapels and the platform were swept, the tablets were taken out of their stone containers and arranged in the proper places. Finally on the eve of the festival a large exhibition of offerings and sacrificial vessels was held.

On the day of the festival the king put on his dragon robe and the black beret. The queen wore her pheasant robe and put on a ceremonial wig. King and queen proceeded separately to the ancestor temple, followed by the ministers, grand officers, and their wives. The procession was accompanied by march music. The queen was seated on the exterior platform of the temple at the Eastern stair. The "corpses" had gone into the Western lateral building, each to put on the ceremonial robe of his spirit, and after the king and the queen arrived they entered in state. The official prayer man preceded and accompanied them, and during the entire ceremony he had to act as interpreter because the dead and the living could not converse directly. First they washed their hands and then ascended on the Western stair to the temple while the king, who had waited for them on his seat, moved to welcome them and to invite them to be seated, the prayer man acting as the kings's mediator. Without saying a word, the "corpses" saluted and sat down, each one on the left side of his tablet. Now it was time to start the ceremonies by which the *manes* were

made to appear for the sacrifice and to take their share of the offerings. First came a libation. The king went to the Western platform and filled his goblet with wine from a vessel in the form of an ox which was placed there. He made an offering to the "corpses" who poured a few drops to the ground in order to invite the *p'o* souls who dwell underground and then drank the rest themselves. This was the first of the nine successive offerings which comprise the whole sacrifice. Immediately after this the queen made an offering to the "corpses," after having filled her goblet with wine from a vessel decorated with a thunder pattern, which had been placed at the eastern stair of the platform. The "corpses" drank as before. This was the second offering. When the queen had regained her seat, the "corpses" left the temple and sat down to the west of the entrance gate, facing south, their tablets being placed beside them on mats. There the "corpses" remained during the morning ceremonies, the sacrifice of the animals, and the preparation of the banquet.

The king descended to the court and proceeded, his left arm bare, to the principal sacrificial animal, a young bull, destined for Hou-tse, the First Ancestor. He led the bull by a rope, and was followed by ministers and grand officers who carried the silks, and subaltern officers who carried armloads of straw to spread out under the sacrificial animal, all praising the beauty and other qualities of the animal. The victim was tied to the stonepillar in the center of the court. The king took the knife, the handle of which was decorated with little bells, cut off some hair near the ears of the bull, and took a few drops of blood. Then he gave the knife and the blood to the prayer man, who went inside the temple to offer both hair and blood to the tablet of the First Ancestor so that the latter could see that the victim was perfect inside and out. Then the king killed the animal by shooting several arrows at it.

The same procedure was followed for the offering of animals to the other ancestors, but without the participation of the king and without first offering hair and blood to the ancestral tablets. After the slaughter the king opened the animal with the knife mentioned above, took out the liver, and then passed the knife to the ministers and grand officers, who cut the animal into pieces. Some fat was taken and spread over mugwort (*Artemisia*) stalks, which were burnt by the "corpses" so that the smoke rose up to heaven and invited the *hun* (spiritual) souls. The king washed the liver of the main animal with wine, ordered it cooked, and offered it to the corpse of Hou-tse, the first ancestor. The head of the bull was carried into the temple and deposited at the foot of the Northern wall in order to invite the soul which resided in the tablet. Then the prayer man commenced the last

ceremony at the great gate of the temple to provide for the souls far away. Nobody could know the whereabouts of the spirits, and all did their best to attract them by depositing offerings in many places—in the chapel, in the court, at the gates, calling out: "Are you here? Are you there?" While the *manes* were being invited, the cooks prepared the sacrificial meat. The king and the queen with their assistants distributed offerings to the tablets. In principle the officiant should, out of respect for the ancestors, do everything personally, and he does as much as he can. He takes part also in the preparation of the offerings. He puts the meat in the wooden bowls, and the raw meat, with or without bones, on small tables. In vessels coated with reedgrass or coarse cloth he puts the cooked meat and the meat roasted on the spit over hot stones. The variety of viands permits the spirits a choice. The prayer man offers the dishes before the tablets while the king, prostrating himself twice, salutes his ancestors. Thus the morning ceremony is completed with the preparation of the banquet.

When the offerings have been arranged in due order, the second part of the ceremonies follows and the sacrifice proper begins. The corpses are posted in the temple in accordance with the precedence of the chapels on the right and on the left side of the corpse of the First Ancestor. They take the lungs of the sacrificed animals, and millet and wine, and each offers a little to the spirit of the dead he represents, whereupon the spirits descend for a moment into their representatives. Then the corpses sit down and eat in behalf of the spirit. When a corpse has eaten something from the three dishes, he declares himself filled. The prayer man, sitting beside the king, urges him in the name of the king to eat more, saying: "The august corpse is not yet filled, I invite him to continue eating." A new dish is offered to him, of which he also partakes, but again declares that he is filled. The king on his knees salutes him, again inviting him to eat more. The corpse then partakes for the third time of a new dish.

Next comes the offering of drinks. The king and the queen offer to the corpse alternately water, sweet wine, and clear red wine. The corpse stands up each time and pours a few drops on the ground as a libation in order to invite the spirits to take possession of him. When the king and the queen offer the drinking bowl to the "corpse", the latter thanks them and invites the officiants to drink from the bowl. When the "corpse" has drunk five times, the king causes the bowl to be passed around among the ministers; after the seventh drink, among the grand officers; after the ninth drink, among the petty officials. At this moment, when host and assistants offer bowls to each other and are drinking one after the other, six "corpses" of the remote ancestors mix with the multitude, offering and accepting drinks.

Only the seventh "corpse", that of the soul of the First Ancestor, remains unmovable, too lofty for the common amusement. The meal being concluded, the chief "corpse" expresses his satisfaction and promises the king good luck. The prayer man transmits the promise by saying: "The able prayer man receives the declarations [of the spirits]; he will now pass them on to the pious descendants: the pious sacrifice has an agreable flavor; the *manes* are content with the drinks and dishes; they grant you hundredfold luck. These are their wishes, these shall be the embodiment (of their wishes); you have been diligent, you have been correct, you have been devoted, we grant you forever the highest favors, ten-thousand, ten-thousand!" The bells and tambours sound, the king returns to his seat and the prayer man announces: "The spirits are completely intoxicated!" The "corpses" rise to their feet and retire solemnly to the sound of music.

The sacrifice ends with a banquet for all, at which the remainders of the sacrifice are consumed. The "corpses", who are at this moment no longer possessed by the spirits, eat what was left over from the offerings to the ancestors, the king eats what was left over by the "corpses", the three ministers, what the king left, and the eight petty officials, what the grand officers left. When all the eight petty officials have finished eating, they carry what remains down the stairs to the court, where the assistants consume the rest, again strictly following order of rank among themselves. At the bottom of the hierarchy come the butchers, the dancing masters, and the gatekeepers. The gatekeepers come at the very end because they are culprits who are serving out court sentences. Princes of the royal clan who could not be present at the sacrifice, receive their share of meat through couriers who are dispatched at once. They eat this meat only after having themselves performed a sacrificial ceremony for their own ancestors.

With the banquet ends the second part of the ceremonies of the ancestral sacrifice, but not all is yet over. A third part follows immediately, which is as important as the two preceding parts, and consists of great dances with music and chants performed in the court of the ancestral temple.[25] First comes the dance called "the great (female) warrior" (*ta-wu*), and then the peace dance (*ta-hsia*). The first dance enacts the expedition of King Wu against Chou of the Yin, his victory, and the pacification of the kingdom.[26] The dance progresses in six consecutive scenes with a special music and chant for each of them,

25. For details on the *ta-wu* dance and for references to its odes and music, see Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.259, n.1.

26. The historical events of the foundation of the Ch'ou dynasty, to which songs and dances refer, are briefly described in Hirth, *History*, pp.93 ff.

a verse and a detailed text in prose which explains the events enacted and the progress of the ballet.

The ballet was a pantomime performed by sixty-four dancers arranged in eight rows of eight persons each, the sons of the great families who had been admitted into the Pi-yung College. They arrived wearing tunics with a dragon-pattern, their berets decorated with jade, in their right hand a battle-ax of jade, and in their left a large shield. The king, dressed in the same manner, took his seat on the West side of the court and directed the dancing. He played the role of King Wu; the dancers represented the army.[27] The beginning of the dance is marked by the rolling drums, signaling the exodus of the king on his expedition. The dancers first advance three steps to mark the beginning of the hostilities, then they stand motionless, holding the shields on their arms to indicate that the king is thinking and expecting the feudal lords. The scene ends with a dance symbolizing the exodus of the army.

Now they sing: "Onward, the troops beat the drums and shouted. The troops drew the swords. Those in front sang, those in the rear danced." At the same time the blind musicians, conducted by their master, sing the ode: "August Heaven has decided on the mandate; the two rulers have received it; made king, Wu does not dare to rest; day and night is he making the mandate secure [on himself] in silence. Oh, he continues to make it shine bright; he puts his heart into it, so that it is secure!".[28]

The next scene represents the defeat of Chou, the tyrant of the Yin dynasty and his execution together with his two concubines. The drums are beaten a second time to indicate the beginning of the battle. The king or his representative holds the yellow battle-ax in his left hand, with his right hand he waves the small white signal flag, and walks up and down. The dancers symbolize the battle by jumping up and violently stamping their feet on the ground and gesticulating with their arms. Two men with little bells, posted at the end of each formation, lead their formation into battle; they advance a few steps four times and stand still to bring their formation into proper order again. The following command is issued: "As to the affairs of today, do not advance more than six or seven steps, then stand still and rearrange your formation! Courage, men! Do not strike more than four times, five times, six times, seven times, then pause and rearrange your formation. Courage, men!" During this time the blind musicians chant the ode of Wu: "Oh ye illustrious King Wu—your

27. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.260, n.3.
28. *Ibid.*, p.261, n.4.

fame is unexcelled! Truly perfect was King Wen—who opened the road for his descendant [Wu]. Succeeding him, Wu, you receive [the heritage], you conquer Yin, you suppress his cruelties, you complete your work".

The third scene represents "the march to the South," that is the return to Chou. The dancers, divided into corps, advance by simply marching without jumping to show that the work of Wu has been completed. Meanwhile the ode *Chou* is chanted: "Oh mighty was the army of the king, whom he nourished, obeying [Heaven] at night-time; when the light shone he took his great armor. We, who have received through the [heavenly] favor the work completed by the war-like king, to make good use of our heritage, indeed we shall follow your example!"[29]

The fourth scene represents "the king who defines the Southern frontier," for which however there is no background in the legends. The song this time is the ode *Huan*: "In peace are the ten-thousand countries, good years follow one after the other, the mandate of Heaven is not exhausted. Warlike is King Wu, confident are his noblemen, he makes use of them in the four directions, and makes the institution of his family secure. Oh glorious before Heaven who has made him ruler instead of Shang [Yin dynasty]."

The fifth scene represents "the division of the government between the duke of Chou and the duke of Shao." The dancers advance in separate lines while the ode *Lai* is chanted: "King Wu works with zeal, we have also received [the heavenly mandate]; we unfold it and think constantly of it, from now on we try to consolidate it firmly, this mandate of Ch'ou; oh, let us constantly think of it!"

The sixth and last scene symbolizes the return of peace: the dancers go back to their starting point at the beginning of the first scene and stay there. Then each put his right knee on the ground while the ode *Pan* is sung: "Oh ruler of Ch'ou! He has ascended the high mountains, the sheer mountains, the sharply inclined and steep peaks, oh he has indeed subdued the river, all under Heaven he unites under his rule; this is the mandate of Ch'ou!"

The war dance (*ta-wu*) is followed by the peaceful dance *ta-hsia*, which is said to have been instituted by Yü the Great. It represents good government and overall peace and is expected to effect what it represents, order and calm in the country. The details of the scene of this dance are not known. Each dancer wore a robe of white silk, girdled in the middle; over it was an open white tunic, and as head-gear, a fur cap. It is probable that after the *ta-hsia*, the peace-dance,

29. Based on *ibid.*, pp.187 ff.

other less important dances followed in honor of the various princes of the royal house. In Lu, but not elsewhere, they had the dance *jen* of the Southern barbarians, and the dance *mei* of the Eastern barbarians, which commemorated the subjugation of neighboring barbarian tribes.

The ceremonies performed in the ancestor temple were the most important performed in honor of the ancestor spirits but were not the only ones. For some ancestors who were already without a tablet in the ancestor temple, pious descendants built a special temple. There was at the court of Ch'ou, and, in imitation of it, also in Lu, the Closed Palace, Pi-kung, built for Kiang Yuan, the First Mother, that is the mother of the First Ancestor, Lord Hou-tse. Since she had no husband at whose side she could receive offerings, a special temple was built for her. She has no husband because she became pregnant by walking in the footsteps of the Heavenly Lord. Her temple remained closed because the residence of a lady must always be closed. On festival days sacrifices were offered there and dances performed in honor of the First Mother. The dance in her honor was the *ta-hou*, the origin of which is attributed to T'ang the Victorious, the founder of the Yin dynasty. Her case made possible worship of personalities who did not find place in the ancestor temple.

In 718 B.C. a special temple was erected in Lu for the mother of Prince Huan, a concubine of Prince Huei. Only the first wife had a tablet in the ancestor temple beside that of her husband. In her own temple the mother of Prince Huan was honored with sacrifices and dances. Ceremonies of this kind were of secondary significance. The official worship of ancestors was solely that in the common ancestor temple.

The simple private patricians did not have of course such complicated ceremonies as those in the higher ranks. The number of ancestors to whom they had to give offerings, was much smaller; they offered sacrifices of lesser value and had no dances. The ritual, however, was essentially the same, the function of the wife being important throughout all ceremonies; the officiant was bound to perform the rites personally without being allowed to have himself represented by servants. If the officiant was a small child, he was still not entirely excused from his duties, but was carried in the arms of his wet-nurse to the celebration and thus considered the officiant. People who had no ancestor temple built a temporary altar in the main hall of their house and placed the ancestor tablet there. A grandson of the deceased acted as the representative or "corpse" of the ancestor and the ceremonies went on much like those for kings, but the number of the wine offerings was considerably reduced. The celebration was

concluded with some kind of a community banquet for all family members. The "corpse" declared himself contented and filled and retired. Ancestor worship was the cult of all patricians; every noble family, large and small, had ancestors as guardian-gods. The royal ritual differed from theirs only by its greater magnificence.

6. Ancestor Worship on Special Occasions

Neither the seasonal festivals nor regular ancestor worship constituted the whole religious life of the kings and the nobles. All acts important for life were surrounded by numerous religious ceremonies. Weddings were incomplete without a sacrifice for the ancestors. When a son was born, he had to be presented in his third month to the ancestors. He was then given a name, and a pig-sheep-bull sacrifice was made to the ancestors. The investiture with the cap of manhood was likewise performed in the ancestor temple.

A war could not be undertaken without many acts of ancestor worship. It was in the ancestor temple that the prince declared war and entrusted his general-in-chief with the high command. After this commission the oracle was consulted to find a day that would be propitious for the ceremonies of the drum and the standard and the consecration of the general. On the indicated day the general went to the ancestor temple where he received the halberd and the battle-ax from the hand of the ruler, who had repeated his order to the general to command the army. Then the ruler clipped his finger-nails, put on mourning clothes, and immolated himself symbolically in exchange for the victory. Next he went to the tumulus of the earth god where he offered an animal as sacrifice. The stone altar of the god was wetted with the victim's blood. The commander-in-chief was offered a piece of meat. A great military parade was held at the sanctuary of the earth god. It was probably here that in former times the drum was transferred to the general, sprinkled with the blood of the victim—often a human being.

At the moment of the army's departure the minister of religious affairs went into the ancestor temple to take out the most recent tablet, namely that of the father of the ruling prince. The prayer man brought the tablet of the earth god. Both tablets were placed on a wagon to accompany the army on its expedition. Offerings were made also to the ancestors of the horses before the army went into the field. The earth god and the ancestor spirit thus took active part in the campaign. In the presence of the earth god punishments were inflicted, and in the presence of the ancestor spirit rewards distributed. This distinction, however, was not always strictly observed, for before

the ancestor spirit also offenders were chastised. Yin of Chih, a grand officer of the Tsin, was kept prisoner by the Ch'ou for ten years, and when he was freed in 587, he declared that he was going home to be executed by his father in the ancestor temple. During a campaign no camp was ever pitched without first offering a sacrifice to the local earth god. Whenever the king penetrated into the territory of a principality he notified the Heavenly Lord by a sacrifice called *lei*, that is, by burning a stake. Upon returning from the expedition the war minister led the triumphant entry of the victorious army into the capital. In his right hand he held the flute with which he conducted the triumphal songs, in his left hand the battle-ax, and he marched ahead of the musicians. Then he performed a sacrifice to the earth god, often consisting in the slaughtering of one or more prisoners of war whose blood was smeared on the tablet of the earth god. Other offerings were given to the ancestors in their temple.

Outside the south gate of the ancestor temple a great military review was held. All those who had killed enemy soldiers brought their heads, or they led prisoners they had taken. The prisoners were lined up. The prince then drank from a bowl and offered a drink to his troops. When the scribes had counted the heads that were hung up, the prince distributed rewards. The heads were brought inside the temple to the ancestors in whose honor they were burned. The story goes that King Wu offered the head of the tyrant Chou of the Yin to his father. The king stood before the tablet, the music master brought the corpse of Chou, the king of Shang. King Wu hung Chou's head on the white standard, the heads of Chou's wives on the red standard. After this exhibition of the heads King Wu burned them inside his ancestor temple. Afterwards another offering was made, consisting of oxen, rams, and pigs, to the ancestors and to the earth god. When the army had suffered defeat, it was enough to announce it to the ancestors and to the earth god by bringing their tablets back to their places and performing a sacrifice at which the war minister wore mourning clothes.

Ancestor worship is a universal phenomenon. Almost everywhere ancestors are friendly guardian-spirits. If neglected and left without offerings they can do harm. There are several psychological motives for ancestor worship. Death is an event which mankind never has understood but always has tried to understand. There is no people on earth which looks on death with indifference. All people believe in one way or another in the continuation of individual life after death. The enormous success of Buddhism in China is to a great extent, if not entirely, to be attributed to two facts: its doctrine had substantially more to say on life after death than the indigenous religions could

say, and it claimed to know ways and means to improve the fate of the dead. We shall elaborate on Buddhist eschatology in the chapter on Buddhism.

Our detailed description of ancestor worship of the ancient Chinese concerns the religion of the aristocrats of the strongly feudal society of the Ch'ou period. It can, however, be taken for granted that the ancestor worship of the common people differed from that of the aristocrats chiefly by being simpler in its rites. The care for the dead and the belief in ancestors as guardians of the family were always of primary importance for all classes. In the ancestor worship of the common people we can certainly see more than merely the reflection of the practices of the upper classes. On the contrary, on the basis of what the early sources of pre-Confucian China tell us about ancestor worship at the various levels of the social hierarchy of ancient society, we can assume a sophisticated and specialized form of ancestor worship on the part of the common people. The underlying beliefs were the same on the highest and the lowest level and on all levels in between. Ancestor worship is not only care for the dead; it is care for the living as well. The ancestor soul is the family's most favorably disposed guardian-god, the worship of whom at the same time enhances the social standing of the family. In view of the extraordinary complexity of the ritual of Chinese ancestor worship we understand how for Confucius the exact observation of the rites was identical with safeguarding social order.

IV. Priesthood, Places and Ceremonies of Worship.[30]

Not everyone could get in direct and immediate contact with gods and spirits. These supernatural beings existed outside all human experience. How to deal with human fellow beings can be taught by education, prudence, and experience. To communicate with the world of spirits requires a special knowledge which only specialists in this field can have. Some gods and spirits were cruel and took revenge for the slightest affront to their prestige. Every patrician had to be on good terms with his ancestors and the gods of his territory and to offer them sacrifices at fixed intervals and on extraordinary occasions. He could only serve his own gods and could not pray to those of

30. See B.Schindler, Das Priestertum im alten China (Leipzig, 1919). He considers as priests of the official cult the king and his administrative staff, both princes and officials. The king as mediator is accepted by the gods on the ground of his virtues. Maspéro relies on Schindler's findings; see Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.188, n.1.

others. This would have been an usurpation with fateful consequences. Only the Son of Heaven could make offerings to all gods. In urgent situations one had recourse to persons who had the power to call gods and spirits of the dead, for instance, when a god or spirit had caused sickness or another evil. Also gods and spirits with whom one had official relationships could be called down only by fixed rites and formulas; otherwise the supernatural beings would be irritated. The official cult had therefore a numerous clergy experienced in ritual gestures, functions, and prayer formulas. The kings, princes, grand officers and even simple patricians had all to employ specialized priests.

1. The priesthood

The official clergy was divided in two categories. There were first of all the priests of the official cult. They were not in the strict sense the servants of the gods since they were neither called by them nor initiated into their service.[31] Their role was confined to their knowledge of the prayers, the texts of which were transmitted from father to son or from master to disciple, and had to be recited without fault. They did not cause the descent of the gods, for this was accomplished by the virtue of the sacrificing ruler, but the priests were specialists in the correct method of dealing with the gods and served as mediators. The rituals required the presence of one or more prayer men beside the officiating ruler, as we noted in our description of ancestor worship. No one could be an officiant and prayer man at the same time. To this category of priests belonged the augurs, diviners, and others.

The sorcerers or shamans (*wu*) were possessed by the spirits (*ling-piao*) who descended into them. During their trances they had personal connection with gods and spirits, while the officiant at the sacrifice did not. In historic times the two categories of priests differed not only in their religious functions but also in their social position. The shamans did not enjoy the same high esteem as accorded the official clergy. They belonged to the common people and, because of their devious practices, were feared.

The official priests were highly specialized in their functions, there being special priests for all important sacrifices. There were prayer men for the seasonal sacrifices to Shang-ti in the suburbs of the capital (*kiao*), prayer men for the sacrifices made before a hunting or a war expedition was started, other prayer men at the sacrifices made when a treaty was concluded, or assemblies of princes were held. Still others

31. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p. 187 ff.

knew the formulas for oaths and for contracts. For funerals, also, competent prayer men had to be called in. Others were in charge of the prayers and ceremonies in honor of the earth god. At the royal court a whole legion of ritualists existed, presided over by the grand prayer man (*ta-chu*).

The augurs were of equal rank. They had to receive and interpret the answers given when the ancestors were asked for a prophecy concerning the chances of the harvest or the outcome of a war or a voyage. In complex situations, for instance when the king and his ministers did not arrive at an agreement over a problem, or when the king hesistated about his decision, an oracle was consulted, with the help of specialists. The Ch'ou practiced mainly two procedures in obtaining oracles: one with a tortoise shell and one with milfoil stalks. The tortoise shell was punctured first in several places to facilitate cracking when the shell was held over fire. The answer of the spirit consulted was read from form, position, and direction of the cracks. Of lesser importance was the oracle with milfoil stalks. Fifty of them were used. Divided into two packs, the chance number of the stalks, applied to hexagrams consisting of whole lines and broken lines, gave the answer. The interpretation of the hexagrams required a specialist who had a handbook which he could consult. The hexagrams were believed to be of supernatural origin, having been devised by the first diviner, the emperor Fu-hsi, and first found on the back of a horse-dragon who arose from the Yellow River. If the two oracles, that with the tortoise shell and that with the milfoil stalks, were contradictory, the tortoise shell oracle was decisive.

The interpreter of dreams had not only to interpret dreams but also to make sacrifices to bad dreams every year at the end of the winter. There were other interpreters of extraordinary phenomena in the sun or the moon, of halos, of vapors, etc. Winds and clouds conveyed messages. All this predated astrology.

To the class of religious officials belonged also the blind musicians, the players of flutes, the beaters of gongs and stone chimes and drums. They were all directed by the director of music (*sze-yo*), who was blind himself. They played tunes by which the gods were called down: special melodies for celestial and for terrestrial gods, and others for the souls of the dead. Every college of musicians worshiped its own god and, in addition, the first musician, K'uei, a one-legged monster. We have here an example of worship of patron-gods of guilds. According to legend K'uei was the first who thought men how to call down gods and spirits by beating chimes made of stones in lozenge form. During the Ch'ou period he was made music master of the legendary emperor Shun.

There were masters of sacrifices (*sze-shih*) who were engaged in the material preparation of the festivals, and scribes who had to record the events of the court life of the king, and of the other great families, and to communicate them to the ancestors, Finally, there were servants and employees of all kinds for strictly defined functions connected with those of the priests or their assistants whom they served. This whole host of religious officials, high and low, lived for religion, each of them jealously keeping to himself his special knowledge. Religious positions were hereditary. Even the numerous prayer men who participated in ritual acts of worship of ordinary families were professionals. The knowledge of the formulas and the complicated rites of the patricians were not easy to acquire. In the course of time however the majority of the educated had become adept in divination. A whole philosophy developed around this art, which came to be considered part of the standard education of the gentleman. At the court of the Ch'ou the ministry of religious affairs was an important one, presided over by the count of religious affairs.

The daily life of the priests did not differ from that of other officials. However when an important ceremony was imminent, the religious officials had to undergo purification as well as the officiant. No one could be priest and officiant at the same time, and nobody could perform priestly functions in his own behalf. In ordinary families also the cooperation of prayer men was required at the side of the pious son and grandson when funeral rites were to be performed. The priests never developed a class consciousness, never united to guard their common professional interests, and never developed anything like a theological system. They were simply an element in the administrative machinery.

As already stated above, the category of sorcerers was distinct from that of the priests, and something more must be said about them. There were patricians among them but the majority were plebeians, and all owed their profession to divine calling. Sorcerers were still active in the palace of Emperor Wu (141 A.D.–87 B.C.) of the Han Dynasty. Much of the ancient shamanism was taken over and continued by the Taoists. Like the shamans, with their intimate contact among the gods and spirits, Emperor Wu traveled around among the inhabitants of heaven. The appointed priesthood and the shamans were still combined in the early and middle Ch'ou Period. There must have existed a specialized priesthood in historic times beside the sorcerers (*wu*) with divine calling. The earliest text dealing with the sorcerers seems to be a speech delivered at T'ai-kia in the eighteenth century B.C. by the minister I-yin of the Shang Dynasty. After a section on the behavior of the ruler we find the passage: "The late

sovereign instituted punishments for the officers and warned men in authority, saying, 'If you dare to have constant dancings in your mansions and drunken singing in your house, I call it wu fashion.' "[32] This text reveals a derogatory attitude toward sorcerers.

During the Ch'ou Period they were still active along with the officially appointed priests. The description of the functions of the official priests fills one of the six sections into which the *Ch'ou-li* (*Rites and Ceremonies of the Ch'ou*) is divided.[33] From it we can learn that in the early Ch'ou Period the minister of religious affairs was called the great superintendent of ancestors (*ta-tsung-po*), who had under him minor superintendents (*hsiao-tsung-po*). These officials were in charge of the construction and maintenance of the temples and altars of the state and of the mausolea and tombs of the reigning house; also of the sacrificial ceremonies with music and dances, of the sacrificial animals and vessels, of the funeral ceremonies for the royal family, and of divination and augury. The officials of this ministry served the gods (*shen*) of heaven and earth and the ancestor spirits. This official priesthood was the prototype of the ministry of rites and ceremonies which in later dynasties controlled religious affairs.

This official or public institution was a kind of official superstructure erected upon many older customs practiced among the people. The state religion also called shamans into its service, though only on a lower level. We read in the *Ch'ou-li*:[34] *Wu* [shamans] of both sexes, in indefinite numbers [existed]; their masters are four ordinary officers of the middle rank; with two keepers, four writers, four adjutants, and forty serfs .... The male *wu* are bound to turn their faces to the sacrifices and the invited spirits, and to supply the exclamations wherewith to call [the latter] from all sides while waving long grass. In winter [when spectres predominate], they eject [evil] from the halls, and perform the same task all around, without calculation [of directions and distances]. In spring they call [gods, or felicity], and avert [demons, or evil], thus warding off diseases. And when the Sovereign pays a visit of condolence, they walk before him with the Invokers or Conjurers .... And the female *wu* are directed to perform exorcism at fixed times annually, using ablutions with aromatics. In times of drought they perform dances or gestures during the sacri-

32. Text and translation in J.J.M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, 6 vols. (Leiden, 1899–1910; reprinted Peking, 1939), vol.6, p.1187) (hereafter cited as *Religious System*). The work is quoted according to the Peking reprint. The text is found in the *Shu-king*, section *I shun*, "The Instructions of I."

33. On the *Ch'ou-li*, see Hirth, *History*, pp.107 ff.

34. de Groot, *Religious System*, vol.6, p.1189.

fices for rain. When the Sovereign's consort pays a visit of condolence, they walk before her with the [female] Invokers and Conjurers. And at every great calamity in the kingdom they entreat [the gods or spirits], chanting and wailing.

Even more precise information on shamanism is found in the *Kuo-yü*:[35] King Chao (515–488 B.C.) asked [his minister] Kuan Shi-fu, saying: "The writings of the Ch'ou dynasty state that Chung-li was actually sent as an envoy to the inaccessible parts of heaven and earth, how was such a thing possible? Should no such thing have occurred, then tell me whether there be any possibility for people to ascend to heaven?"[36] The answer was that "this is not the meaning of that statement. Anciently the functions with respect to the people and with regard to the gods were not exercised by the same persons. Those among the people whose vital spirits (*tsing*) were in a bright and flourishing condition, and not distracted in different directions; who moreover had the capacity of concentrating all their feelings of reverence, and possessed inward rectitude—their knowledge was able to rise to higher spheres and descend into the lower, and distinguish there the things which it would be proper to do; their perfect intelligence then could clearly observe things in the distant future and explain them; by their sharpsightedness they could see them shine in their brightest light, and by the accuteness of their ears they could hear and scrutinize them. Being in this condition, intelligent *shen* (gods) descend into them. If a *shen* thus settled in a male person, this was called a *hih*, and if it settled in one of the other sex this was called a *wu*. As functionaries they regulated the places for the seats of the gods [at sacrifices], the order of their tablets, as also their sacrificial victims and implements, and the ceremonial attires to be worn in connection with the seasons."

This is probably the earliest existing reference to the phenomenon of shamanism. Gods and spirits descend into a man through strong imaginative power and mental concentration. These qualities produced the hallucinations which enabled them to penetrate into the future and to learn about the desires of the gods in the supernatural world. We must also keep in mind that the above quoted source, the *Kuo-yü*,[37] was written at a time when Taoist ideas were already known, and that later literati with Taoist leanings may have made additions to and editorial

35. An historic work written by Tso Ch'iu-ming, who also wrote the *Ch'un-ch'iu*, which covers the *Ch'un-ch'iu* period (722–481). See Hirth, *History*, pp.155 f.

36. See de Groot, *Religious System*, Vol.6, pp.1190 f.

37. *Ibid.*, pp.1190 f.

changes in it. From the *Kuo-yü* text quoted above it is quite evident that in their faith the Taoists and the shamans could easily meet each other half way.

On shamanism we may add that the gods frequently manifested their will through the mouths of young boys. This fact can easily be explained by the Taoist idea that the purity of children is still intact and not yet spoiled by passions and earthly distractions, and thus is still open for a union with the supernatural. In the historical books of the various periods references are found to *t'ung-yao*, or "ditties of boys", to which people listened in the streets as to divine revelations.[38] They were even reported to the magistrates, studied and interpreted as oracles, and afterwards officially recorded in the dynastic annals.[39] These boys were believed to have been used by the gods as ready instruments for the conveyance of their will. Wang Ch'ung (who died in A.D. 100) gives the plausible explanation that boys can be possessed by gods (*shen*) and thus become capable of divination and expulsion of evil spirits, the *shen* being the masters of the demons.

Boys as mediums for the transmission of the will of the gods were also called *shen-t'ung*, "divine boys," or "godly youths," which means that they belonged to the gods. Another name for them was *ki-t'ung*, "youthful diviners." De Groot, who observed such boys himself, describes them as follows:[40]

> They are, in fact, in the main young persons, and I have never seen one of advanced age. My Chinese informants probably spoke the truth when they asserted that the eight characters which constitute their horoscope or fate are light,[41] so that their constitution is so frail that they are bound to die young. We may then admit that they must be a nervous, impressionable, hysterical kind of people, physically and mentally weak, and therefore easily stirred to ecstasy by their self-conviction that gods descend into them .... It happens indeed, especially at religious festivals, celebrated in temples with great numbers of people, that a young man suddenly begins to hop, dance, and waddle with wild and drowsy looks, and make nervous gestures of arms and hands .... All onlookers at once realize that one of the gods whose image stands in the temple, or some other spirit, has "seized the youth" (*liang-t'ung*), and the community thus will henceforth rejoice in the possession of one more medium for the intercourse with the divine word.

Some shamans served only one god, as did the priestesses of the god of the Yellow River in Yeh and in Lin-tsin. The majority however seems to have had ties with several gods and especially with the souls of the dead. The shamans were classified not so much on the basis

38. *Ibid.*, p.1195.
39. *Ibid.*
40. de Groot, *ibid.*, p.985.
41. *Ibid.*

of the gods whom they served as according to their special abilities. There were simple mediums (*chu-tse*), then medicine men and women, rain makers, exorcists (*fang-hsiang*) for dispelling evil influences, and others. It is probable that the ten immortal sorcerers were the founders of the different branches of professional sorcery. Each category worshiped one of them. It was believed that the ten immortal sorcerers lived on the mountain of sorcerers (*wu-shan*) beyond the four seas. At the same time it seems that the family spirits of the sorcerers were not the same in all countries. In Tsin these spirits were the ancestors of the sorceresses (*wu-tsu-jen*); in Ts'in, the guardian spirits of the sorceresses (*wu-hsien*), who helped their protégés to locate their particular deity and to establish contact with gods and spirits.

This connection with the gods was established by a full-fledged possession. The spirits descended into their mediums so that only the body was that of the sorcerer or sorceress. The heart was that of the spirit, and the spirit spoke through the mouth of his medium.[42] Sometimes the spirit even acted through his medium. A hungry spirit, enraged over the lack of care exhibited by the prayer man of Kuan for the souls left without offerings suddenly seized a medium who clubbed the prayer man almost to death on the altar. Sometimes the ties between a spirit and its medium took on the form of a love affair. The beauty of the sorceress could attract some spirits or gods.

The calling down of spirits was a complicated matter. First the sorceress washed her face with water in which orchids had been cooked, and her body with water in which iris blossoms had been cooked. Then she put on gorgeous clothes. When the offerings were prepared she sent her soul away to search for the deity, and after having found him she escorted him to the place of the offering, mimicking the travel in a dance accompanied with music and songs. The following is an example of such a song:

> On this lucky day and in this lucky hour, I respectfully wish to enjoy the August Superior, I carry a long sword with a hilt of jade, the jewels, hanging on me, sing *ling-lang* when I walk. Of precious stones is the mat, of jade, the decorations. Now I take perfume *k'iung*, [a ragout seasoned with orchids and offered on a mat of orchids,] I offer a cup of wine from the tap of the cask, a peppered drink. Raise up the mallets, beat the drum! Stop beating it in a cadence and now play calmly a melody! Prepare the lutes and the flutes so that they may wonderfully sing! The sorceress dances in her beautiful attire; the hall is filled with many guests, how wonderful! the five tones of a charming kind are in harmony; the Lord is happy, the music pleases him.

Ceremonies of this kind are of an irregular character and were therefore not to the liking of the literati who were used to the strict

42. Cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.197.

order of the official cult. The sorceresses however needed the tremendous noise with drums and flutes to work themselves into a trance. Their assistants beat the drums and played the flutes with increasing intensity until one of them began to dance, holding in her hand a flower bud, an orchid or a chrysanthemum according to the season. When the dancer fell down in exhaustion, another one experienced a seizure and was given the flower bud. The song went on: "While the rites are performed, someone is beating the drum with violent strokes; pass on the flower bud when it is your turn to dance! Let the pretty girls sing in measure; in spring holding the orchid in their hands, always and without interruption from the earliest times [it was done like this]." The dance got faster and more violent. The singing went on: "Touch the lutes, beat the drums, [let] the bells [resound] to the sound of the pipes, on their support decorated with jade, let the flutes sing, let the oboes beautifully play! This sorceress is wise and she resembles the kingfisher in her whirling flight as she rises up—her dancing fits the rhythm of the verses, her steps correspond to the sounds."

The spirit who is invited in this way accepts the offerings, attends the dancing, speaks from time to time through the mouth of the dancer, and retires at the end of the dancing and the whole ceremony. When the spirit or god has left, the exhausted sorceresses salute their own souls (*li-hun*) in order to call back those souls which had "forgotten to come back", and to make them return by breaking up their ecstasy. The sorceresses owed their spiritual power to their self-imposed physical conditions.[43] They were emaciated and wizened women.

The literati and patricians, as already noted, disliked the violent display of emotions by the sorceresses and regarded their allusions to marriage relations improper. The sorceresses were for them only "stupid women" and their dances were considered a waste of time and inefficacious. "Although the dancing women whirl around and the flutes are singing high and clear, the Lord (Shang-ti) is not always favorably disposed and is sending all kinds of misfortunes."[44] Yet shamanism could not easily be abolished. Again and again sorceresses were called in to see and to recognize gods and spirits. In ceremonies for far-away gods (*sze-wang*) they were ordered to tell the names of these gods and to make them give signals by causing reed-grass to move. They were especially summoned to remove evil influences, personal and impersonal.

The *Ch'ou-li*, or the Rites of the Ch'ou, speak of a mysterious

43. M.Granet, *La Civilisation chinoise*, p.227.
44. Cf. Maspéro, *ibid.*, p.199.

ceremony for gods whose names were known only to the sorceresses (*wu*), who could call them. The commentators could only guess about the names. From the Han dynasty (202 B.C.—220 A.D.) there was continued discussion in respect to the "four far-away gods" (*sze wang*).[45] Chen Chung was of the opinion that they were the sun, the moon, the stars and the ocean. The princes of Lu made sacrifices only to "three far-away gods" whose names are equally unknown. The far-away gods to whom the kings of Ch'ou made sacrifices were the gods of the four rivers, the Blue River and its three tributaries, Han, Ts'iu, and Chang.[46] One of the far-away gods to whom the Tsin made offerings was Mount Liang in Hsia-yang in Shansi. The gods of mountains and rivers were believed to give rain.

Three times a year exorcists had to expel evil emanations in the countryside or in houses. Sorcerers were called in especially for funeral ceremonies. A prince who paid a visit of condolence to the family of a grand officer whose corpse was lying in state, had an exorcist walk in front of him. The exorcist, armed with a peach branch and assisted by a prayer man who carried a broom with him, expelled evil emanations from the corpse. An armed exorcist marched in front of the coffin in funeral processions, brandishing a halberd at the four corners of the tomb before the coffin was lowered into it.

Kings and princes followed the example of the ordinary people, who called a sorcerer or diviner in cases of sickness, and who followed his instructions as to the offerings to be made to the gods. A prince never traveled outside his territory without being accompanied by an exorcist, who was responsible for the safety of his master. In a long drought sorcerers and sorceresses were ordered to dance in the blistering sunshine until they were parched. They sometimes even died.

The philosopher Chuang-tse (fourth century B.D.)[47] reports the following story.[48] A sorcerer of the country of Cheng cured diseases, knew what was propitious and what unpropitious, and could foretell the lifetime of a person to the day. The people of Cheng were afraid of him and ran away when they caught sight of him. There were sorcerers everywhere, especially in the outskirts of cities. A sorceress of Kyu-wu used the soul of a murdered hereditary prince to establish contact with one of her friends in the world beyond. There was another sorcerer who refused to tell his name and who simply called himself "master of the fields." Shamanic cults and practices were an

45. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.200 f.
46. See Maspéro, *ibid.*, p.226, n.1.
47. See Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.303 ff.
48. de Groot, *ibid.* 6, p.1196.

integral part of the religion of the common people. One of these cults, that of the "sorceress of the bell," Chung-wu, had at the end of the eighteenth century B.C. gained access to the Tsin family in Cheng. A prince of Lu, when a prisoner in Cheng, associated himself with it and every year in the eleventh month he made offerings to Chung-wu, after a preliminary fast.

At the beginning of the third month a grand ceremony of exorcism, called *no*, was performed in the capital. Its purpose was to remove all impurity of the winter before the work in the fields began, impurity both in nature and in social life. It was inaugurated by a sorcerer who could see the spirits. His head was covered with a cap of bearskin which was decorated with four golden eyes, and he wore a halberd, in his left a shield. Marching ahead of his assistants he drove the pestilences away by hurling balls of clay at them and shooting arrows with a bow of peach wood. He also threw little red balls about when he pursued the spirits through the quarters of the palace buildings and then out of the city. Pieces of animal sacrifices were laid at the doors for the spirits. In the ladies' quarters sorceresses performed the same rites, whereupon the queen and the princesses went out to bathe in and drink water from a river which turned to the east, carrying away all impurity of the winter. After the official ceremonies at the royal court were finished, the inhabitants of the cities and towns performed the same rites.

The sources furnish ample testimony that even in the second and first centuries B.C. the shamans were *de facto* the most important priests, even for the son of Heaven. This priesthood had not yet been dethroned by the Confucian state religion which was being developed during the Han dynasty and was destined to become the only official and orthodox cult. Most of the spirits the shamans had to deal with were the spirits of the dead, and thus they owed their dominating prestige to ancestor worship.[49] After the Han period shamanism continued to exist, sometimes in the service of the state, and sometimes persecuted by it. Many shamanic rites disappeared from the official cult forever, but several magic practices were in constant demand.

What in the last analysis was the motive behind the persecution of shamanism? Many of its rites were found improper by the ritualists, and later, when an orthodoxy had been established, superstitious; but this was not all. The world of the Chinese was religious, yet not in the sense that the Chinese entertained an intimate relationship with their gods and were pious. Their religiosity was an intense feeling of dependency on the mysterious and therefore awe-inspiring world of

49. *Ibid.*, p.1195.

gods, spirits, and demons. To influence the supernatural world for the benefit of society meant power. The power aspirations of the rulers, however, grew increasingly totalitarian and all power was claimed by the kings and later by the emperors of the unified state. It was first shared in hierarchical gradation with the feudal lords, and later with the appointed officialdom. Kingship and emperorship were sacred. When the rulers claimed all power, they had the choice, either of becoming shamans themselves, or of suppressing shamanism. Against the first choice there were ritualistic objections, so only the second remained. The sacred nature of kingship will be treated in the next chapter.

2. The Annual Cycle of Religious Festivals

The entire religious life of ancient China was intimately connected with agriculture.[50] Both in agriculture and religion the year was divided into two parts of unequal duration. The one consisted of the great travail of nature, which religious acts were to assist and promote; the other was the period of rest in winter, when men gave thanks for the harvested crop and prayed for the next crop. The religious festivals were indissolubly connected with the seasons to which they belonged. Their celebration at another time would have resulted in disorder in the whole universe, with unspeakable consequences. "If in the second month of spring the regulations for summer were applied, the rains would fall at the wrong time, plants and grasses would wither too early, and the principalities would be in the grip of constant fear. If the regulations for the autumn were applied, there would rage great epidemics among the population, there would come at once a furious wind and torrential rains, and weeds and mugwort would grow luxuriantly. If the regulations for winter were applied, floods would devastate the fields, snow and ice would become too plentiful, the first seed-buds would not grow."[51]

The binding force that connected the festivals with the rural seasons was such that when the kings of the Ch'ou, for unknown reasons, advanced the beginning of spring and made it coincide with the winter solstice, the festivals did not follow this change. The ancient Chinese, like their modern successors, followed in principle a semilunar calendar. They divided the year into moon periods and restored the harmony between the twelve months cycle, which was too short, and the solar year by intercalating from time to time an additional lunar period,

50. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.221 ff.

51. *Li-ki*, k.4 (*yüeh-ling*), Couvreur 1:338–339; quoted in Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.221 ff.

but their insufficient astronomical and mathemathical knowledge during the Ch'ou period did not yet permit them to define a period correctly for the intercalation of a lunar month. They erroneously believed that it was enough to intercalate two additional lunar periods in every five years. Between the seventh and the fifth centuries B.C. the beginning of the royal year fluctuated between the month of November and the month of February. The beginning, while still traditionally called spring, though coming sometimes too early and sometimes too late, depended on the intercalation of two lunar periods within five years. Furthermore, the calendars used in different regions varied. The royal territory, the principalities of Lu, Cheng, and Wei followed the royal calendar, whereas in Sung another one was used which was described as that of the Yin dynasty (1400–1027 B.C.). As late as the end of the feudal age (221 B.C.), when efforts were made to unify various calendars, the calendar of Sung put the beginning of the year a month later than that of the Ch'ou. Also in Tsin a different calendar was used, the origin of which was said to go back to the Hsia dynasty. (The capital of Tsin was said to have been the site of the first capital of the Hsia.) This Tsin calendar put the spring two months later that in Ch'ou.

The farmers largely ignored the official calendar. In the *Shih-king*[52] there is a section which enumerates the various tasks to be done in different months,[53] and arranges the monthly occupations of the farmers in a twofold way: according to the royal calendar and according to the rural calendar. For the religious ceremonies the rural calendar was decisive, conforming to the actual seasons whatever the official calendar date might be.[54] The religious and the rural year actually began with or a little before our February. The Chinese placed their equinoxes and solstices in the middle of the respective seasons, and not, as we do, at their beginning.

The practices of the cult were not intended to help the individual, but to bring about the orderly movement of the world. The population at large did not participate, for it was the exclusive occupation of those who were responsible for the favorable progress of the world and its affairs: the rulers, the feudal lords, the officials—everywhere the competent authority. Each, according to his office, performed the

52. The "Book of Odes", containing over 300 odes, 9th to 6th centuries B.C., probably arranged and edited by Confucius himself. See Hirth, *History*, p.252.

53. See Maspéro, *ibid.*, p.223.

54. On the identity of the rural and religious calendar, see M.Granet, *Fêtes et chansons and anciennes de la Chine* (Paris, 1919), p.179, n.3 (hereafter cited as *Fêtes*); quoted in Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.223, n.3.

necessary ceremonies and private citizens had nothing to contribute to them. In the first place, the seasonal cult was the obligation of the king as the most sacred and unique person in the world. His role in religious life was of a special kind. His every action, even the most trivial—eating, dressing, the choice of his sleeping place and of the wife who shared his bed—was charged with sacred power that contributed to the functioning of the universe. As possessor of this metaphysical power the king had to be the first to perform all actions of life. He ate first from the fruits of the season, was the first to put on warm clothing in the cooler season, was first in hunting, and was first in performing the respective work of the season. He also had to be first in performing the seasonal religious ceremonies and had the power to issue prohibitions and to abrogate them.

The royal cult and all the cults of the princes and officials were performed in a double rhythm, the times of which overlapped without fusing. This was the rhythm of agricultural life with its unequally long seasons, one spent in agricultural work, the other in seclusion in the home. This rhythm determined the cycle of the festivals with their worship of the gods—a rural cult—with sacrifices to the God of Heaven, to the earth god, and other gods. The other rhythm was the cycle of the festivals of ancestor worship and certain others which were by their nature connected with an astronomic date, that is, festivals at the beginning of the seasons, the festivals of the solstices and equinoxes, and others. The occasional ceremonies in connection with wars, epidemics, and solar eclipses were celebrated between the regular festivals without interrupting the latter. The death of the ruler, however, caused interruptions by the suppression of certain festivals during the mourning period.

3. The Agricultural Cycle

Religious life throughout the year was divided into two periods: one of about eight months, spring, summer, and early autumn; the other of four months, late in autumn and winter. Each period was a closed unit in itself and contained its sequence of festivals at which the king worshiped almost all gods, so that they had their festivals in each season.

The religious life began in spring with a series of grand ceremonies which lifted the prohibition of festivals during wintertime and inaugurated the work in the fields. The king began his religious activity with a sacrifice to the Lord on High. It took place in the southern suburbs of the capital on a round mound which had been made there for the Lord of Heaven. The name of this sacrifice was *nan-kiao*, or simply *kiao*. This was the first act of worship of the year and only

the king had the power to perform this very important and dangerous act. Before doing so the king had to fulfil certain conditions. Some days earlier he made a sacrifice to the "four far-away gods" (*sze-wang*) with the help of sorceresses who with long reed-stalks, which they waved in the four directions, invited the gods to descend while a dance was in progress.[55]

The mediatior between the king and the Lord of Heaven was always the First Ancestor, which, for the Ch'ou, was Hou-tse, or Lord Millet. He had first to be notified so that he could establish contact with the Lord of Heaven. The same was done in Lu where the royal rites were observed. On the eve of the festival for the Heavenly Lord the king went to the *Pi-yung*, the great school in the northeastern suburb of the capital, to make an offering to the First Ancestor. Every detail of the sacrifice to the Lord of Heaven was minutely regulated.[56] The date had to be a *hsin*-day, that is the eighth day of that decimal cycle of the month that preceded the spring equinox. For the Ch'ou it was in principle the third month of the civil year, but there were frequent exceptions. Since a month has three periods of ten days and there were therefore three *hsin*-days, the ancestors were asked to indicate the propitious day by means of the tortoise shell divination.

Then a sacrificial animal had to be ready, a red bull which was ritually flawless. To choose the right animal the king himself went to the pasture three months before the festival, that is, in autumn. At the same time the animal was chosen for the sacrifice to the ancestors, which was associated with the sacrifice to Heaven. Bulls with bent horns were not eligible. When the choice was made the animal was brought to a specially built stable. The bull for the ancestral sacrifice could stay in the pasture till the day of the sacrifice but had to be kept from all defilement.

The king and all participants in the ceremonies of the sacrifice to Heaven had to submit themselves to a rigid preparation, as always before a great sacrifice. At the dawn of the festival day when the *ki-jen*, or "cooks," officials who gave the signal to rise, had heralded the daybreak, the king, in ordinary clothing and with a fur cap on his head, first listened to the announcement of the sacrifice. From this moment on all people who were mourning dead had to stop lamenting, no funeral ceremonies could be performed, and no one was allowed to leave the gates of the capital in mourning dress.

In full morning the king proceeded to the mound for the sacrifice

55. *Chou-li*, 2:103; quoted in Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.226.

56. The description of the sacrifice is taken from Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.226, n.3, who indicates the original sources used.

to Heaven in the southern outskirts. He wore a dress decorated with a sun-and-moon pattern and, on his head, a cap with twelve pendants. He rode on a cart without decorations. However, a standard was fixed on it with twelve pennants on which the dragons, the sun, and the moon were pictured, in order that his cart should imitate the sky which suspends the constellations above us. The road to the sacrificial mound had been swept and sprinkled with water. Along the roadside stood people with torches for illumination when the royal car was passing by with the whole suite.

After arriving at the sacred mound the king went to his place in the southeast and stood there looking westward. The musicians played to announce the arrival of the king and of the spirits who were in this moment descending. Then a funeral pyre was erected on the mound, without an altar. Officials in charge of fencing off the sacred precincts from the profane ground around them brought the sacrificial bull. A wooden block was fastened on the horns of the animal so that it could not harm anyone. The bull was led by a cord while gongs and stone lozenges sounded. The barrier officials danced while singing in praise of the bull, then they presented it to the king and invited him to kill it. This the king did with arrows. The bull's blood was offered to Heaven as the first immolation. Then the body of the animal, together with a roll of silk eighteen feet long, was placed on the funeral pyre. The king ascended the pyre and deposited there round pieces of blue jade. The grand prayer man, with the help of a concave mirror, kindled the fire, and, after a signal was given by the Count of religious affairs, recited a prayer for a plentiful harvest. By order of the grand prayer man the blind musicians sang the ode *cheng-min*, which reminded the participants of the sacrifice that it was Hou-tse, the First Ancestor, who had instituted it. The ancestor legend was elaborately retold. At the end of the ode the sacrifice was briefly described as follows: "We fill the wooden bowls with offerings, the bowls of wood and the bowls of clay; when the aroma has risen up, the Lord of Above begins to eat. What a fine aroma and how appropriate at the right time! Hou-tse founded the sacrifice, all have done their work without fault and omission, from then on till today."

When all offerings had been burned the top of the mound was swept clean. To the sound of the march *wang-hsia* the king ascended the mound, followed by the representative of Lord Hou-tse, who wore the same dress as the king. The march *sze-hsia* was played and a bull was offered to Hou-tse, the First Ancestor, in accordance with the rites of the ancestral sacrifice. The grand prayer man recited a prayer to Hou-tse while the chorus of blind musicians sang the ode *sze-wen*:

"Oh perfect Lord Hou-tse, you have become the associate of Heaven, you gave grain to us and to the entire people, a wonderful gift, unequaled; you gave us buckwheat and millet, the Lord has ordered us to be the nourishers of all without end and bounds, you have distributed the grain in the whole of China!" The ceremony ended with a great dance, which the king joined in.

The great *kiao* sacrifice signified the inauguration of the new season. However, before the people could resume their common chores, a number of other ceremonies had first to be performed by which work in the fields, silkworm breeding, weddings, and other activities, were made possible. The king officiated at the ceremony of labor in the "field of the Lord of Above" (*ti-tsi*), also called "the thousand acres" (*ts'ien-mu*), situated in the southern suburb. The day was determined every year by divination and followed soon after the great sacrifice to the first ancestor. The grand scribe announced the date nine days in advance, saying: "From today on in nine days the earth will be broken up. The king should respectfully purify himself and should direct the work without changing anything!"

The minister of works ordered an altar to be built in the sacred field and the grand officer for agriculture had to keep all necessary implements ready. Five days before the ceremony the director of music announced to the king that the wind had set in. The next day the king, accompanied by the ministers of the court, went to the Palace of Purification, where all underwent ritual preparations for three days.

On the day of the ceremony the king offered on the altar in the field three animals, a bull, a ram, and a pig. The sacrifice was intended for the ancestor of agriculture, Tien-tsu, who had first cultivated a field. Then the king made three furrows, the grand scribe acting as master of ceremonies, giving in a loud voice his instructions about the movements to be made. After the king each minister made nine furrows. The grand officers, the noblemen, and finally the farmers completed the work in an area of a thousand acres.

Assisted by the officer of the table, the superintendent prepared a big banquet on the spot. Under the direction of the officer of the table the king first performed the rite of feeding, at which meat from the three sacrificial animals was used. After the king the ministers, the grand officers, and the common people present did the same. When the banquet was over, a granary was built in the southeast corner of the field for the expected crop which should furnish the grain needed for acts of worship throughout the year.

From this day on the prohibition of work in the fields during wintertime was considered as lifted, and the farmers were ordered to begin their work. The royal ceremony of tilling the soil was repeated

everywhere on a smaller scale, by the princes in their territories where they had a ceremonial field of one hundred acres, by the vassals in their domain, and so down to the districts and villages. Everywhere a sacred field was tilled. But this was not all. Before work in the fields and life in the open air became possible, the cold had first to cease. On a day of the second month of spring the king offered to the Master of the Cold (Sze-han) a black animal and black millet. To expel the cold from the season the king shot thorn arrows with a bow of peach wood. Then he opened the storeroom in which, together with the ice, cold had been confined all the winter, and to the sound of drums the cold was led away.

After these ceremonies the cultivation of the fields could begin. Springtime was not only the beginning of vegetative but also of social life. The farmers, who had spent winter in seclusion in their homes, formed small groups and began living in huts among the fields. Marriages, which had been forbidden during winter, could now be arranged. For the inauguration of the wedding period the king chose the day of the return of the swallows in the second month. On the day of the winter equinox he offered a bull, a ram, and a pig to the god of wedding and fertility. After the sacrifice and prayers the queen and the concubines appeared, and to each pregnant woman among them the grand prayer man offered a bowl of wine in acknowledgment of the favor which the god of fertility had bestowed on the woman. He gave also a bow and an arrow in the hope that the child to be born might be a boy. With these ceremonies the prohibition against marriages was lifted. The official supervisor of marriages went out to the countryside, where he called men and women together to announce to them the end of the prohibition against marriages.

The gods of the earth were still to be given notice of the commencement of the new season. Since they were not vegetation gods the permission for cultivating the soil did not depend on them, but it was proper to notify them of the happenings within their domains. After the tilling of the sacred field the people were ordered to make offerings to the earth god, but only after the first rain had fallen because the god of the soil does not drink stale water.

The impurity of the winter had still to be eliminated before the actual beginning of agricultural work. In the moment of the change from the secluded winter life to the life in the new season, a bad influence could have entered into the activities in the fields, and purification was required. The religious acts of which it consisted were first performed by the king. The *no* ceremony, on which we elaborated when calling attention to the position of shamanism in ancient China, was a purification ceremony performed in the capital and other popula-

tion centers at the beginning of the third month.

Toward the end of the third month a festival was held in Lu on the banks of the river Yi. Two groups, one consisting of adult men, the other of young boys, performed in the water the dragon-dance. The dragon ascended from the water. Songs, a sacrifice, and a banquet followed. In Cheng, at the confluence of the rivers Chou and Wei, when the ice was thawing and the first rain had fallen, the youths celebrated the expulsion of evil influences, especially of infertility. The girls went to the rivers and called upon spiritual souls (*hun*) to unite with bodily souls (*p'o*). Holding orchids in their hands they expelled bad influences. The living man is composed of the two souls, *hun* and *p'o*, and their unification by the power of rites must produce children and expel infertility. In Ch'en, after the conclusion of the weaving activities in the homes, youths and girls, waving fans and egret feathers, danced on the Yuan hill to the sound of drums.[57]

Since in the new season everything had to be new, in the royal palaces as well as in the cottages of farmers, the fire was also renewed, it had "at the end of the winter to leave the houses." The old fire was extinguished and for three days now new fire was made. The new fire was then taken directly from the sun with the help of a concave mirror or produced by rubbing together two pieces of wood. The new fire was not made in the houses but in the open air over hearths which had been built for each group of farmers. The houses were left behind and the new season was to be spent in the big huts among the fields. All these ceremonies brought the country folk a series of festivities, during which the young people assembled with complete freedom. On places which tradition had made sacred, bands of them gathered in their best clothes, performed rites, danced, sang, and drank. Boys and girls flirted and couples formed to sing the love songs which were passed on from generation to generation. These alternating songs between boys and girls were love advances and responses which became more and more ardent, and culminated in unions. When parting, the boys gave their chosen girls fragrant flowers.

Such was the transition from winter to spring. The beginning of summer was again inaugurated with a religious ceremony, the *li-hsia*, the establishment of summer. With it life in the fields became intensive. The summer solstice brought a pause, with the sequence of festivals and offerings. In the second summer month the Son of Heaven ordered

57. Granet, *Fêtes*, pp.155–164. He was the first to collect all the texts concerning these festivals and to interpret them. He finds that the festivals in question became purification rites after their original meaning had been forgotten. On this complex, cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.236, n.1.

sacrifices to be made to the local mountains, rivers, and sources of rivers. The second month was in each season marked by a great religious ceremony. At the time of the summer solstice the king went to the *Pi-yung*, the Great School in the capital, to offer there to all earthly spirits. The school was built on a quadrangular hill in the middle of a lake, a symbol of the quadrangular earth surrounded by the four seas. Dancing followed. The dance was called *Hsien-ch'ih*, which was the name of the lake. According to local lore the sun bathed in the lake every morning before rising, so it is probable that the sun goddess played an important role in this festival. During the dance all the spirits of the earth were believed to be present and to accept the homage paid to them.

The main concern of the festivals in summer was, however, the need of rain, in North China a question of life and death. In the fourth century B.C. the king made an offering to the Lord of Heaven at the appearance of the Constellation of the Dragon (*lung*) in the second summer month. For it a temporary mound of earth was piled up near the Great Mound of Heaven in the southern suburb. Among all ceremonies of the royal cult, this was the one on which the personal conduct of the sovereign was most closely connected with the course of the universe. The king was not content with sacrifices of animals, but also accused himself of personal faults: that his government was bad, that his officials were negligent in their duties, that his palace was too beautiful, that he had too many wives, that his table was too good, that flatterers were given positions. Then two groups of children, eight boys and eight girls, dance the *huang* dance. While dancing, they waved white feathers and shouted: "I beg for rain!" If rain did not fall and the drought continued, sacrifices were made to a specific mountain and, in addition, to mountains and wood in general as the producers of rain. Or a winged dragon was made of clay, since the dragon also produces rain. If still no relief came, they resorted to the extraordinary measure of having a sorcerer or a sorceress dance in the sun even exposing them to the heat of the sun until they died. Sometimes they were burned alive. Instead of sorcerers, hunch-backs and cripples were at times tortured in the same way. Toward the end of the Ch'ou period, however, such procedures were no longer tolerated by the more enlightened elements of society. These extraordinary prayers for rain were not identical with the regular prayers in the fifth month, on which we will elaborate.

After the rainfall religious life came to a near standstill till the end of summer and the beginning of autumn. The summertime was entirely taken up with work in the fields, such as weeding, guarding the crop, harvesting, sowing the winter seed, storing up the grain in

granaries. The end of summer marked the beginning of the winter period. The official rites at the end of summer ran parallel to those at the beginning of spring. The sacrifice to the Lord of Heaven corresponded to the spring sacrifices in the southern suburb. The harvest festival and the closing of farming activities corresponded to the tilling of the sacred field in spring, so also in autumn, the earth god was notified of that change in the way of life within his domain. The fire which was no longer kept burning in homes from the third month on was solemnly restored in autumn. Also the cold returned. From the homesteads in which the people were going to live again, evil influences had first to be driven out, just as they were expelled from the fields in spring.

The beginning of a new religious activity from the eighth month on was marked by two festivals: one, a lustration (*no*) for driving the bad influences of summer away; the other the festival of return of the cold at which the king, during a night close to the equinox in the second month in autumn, offered a black ram and black millet to the Master of the Cold (Sze-han). In the third month of autumn the winter period began with the great offering by the king to the Lord of Heaven, which is a reverse of the offering in spring in the southern suburb. As the spring sacrifice was the prelude for the exodus from the villages, the winter sacrifice is the preparation for the return to the villages and for living again in homes. The winter sacrifice took place near the capital in the suburb inside the so-called Sacred Palace. This temple was the actual royal palace at the time when the king was too sacred to live amidst the urban mass of people, and still remained the scene of the king's religious activities when he no longer resided in it.

Thus the place of worship both in spring and in autumn symbolized the different ways of living in the two seasons, which were inaugurated by the two main festivals. In both festivals an ancestor had to introduce the giver of the sacrifices to the Heavenly Lord. This ancestor was the founder of the dynasty who had first received the divine mandate, that is, for the kings of Ch'ou, King Wen, for the Dukes of Sung, T'ang the Victorious, and for the princes of Lu again King Wen, as the princes of Lu claimed to have received the privilege of performing in Lu the royal rites. For the Cheng the competent ancestor was King Li, the father of the first count, of whom it was said that he imitated the rites of Lu. The details of the ceremonies at that time are no longer known. It is clear, however, that at the royal court the ode "I have brought" was sung in honor of King Wen. The text of the ode reads: "I have brought my offerings, a ram, a bull. May Heaven accept them. I have imitated, I have

followed. I have observed the rules of King Wen, daily pacifying the four regions; [also] the blessed King Wen comes at the right side of the offerings and is contented with them. I, day and night, fear the majesty of Heaven, so preserving it [the mandate of Heaven]."

With this ceremony the wintertime was inaugurated and then followed the installation of winter (*li-tung*). Before winter the king solemnly proceeded to the northern suburb, accompanied by his ministers and grand officers. Then he proclaimed in the Sacred Palace the following edict: "The effluences of heaven rise up, the effluences of the earth descend. Heaven and the earth are no longer connected with each other. The road of this connection is closed and blocked, the winter has come." The farmers were ordered to leave the field huts and to return to the villages. The ceremony of the renewal of the fire and its return to the villages was performed. In this way the religious and the profane preparations for the return to the villages were made.

Then in the first winter month three great festivals followed which marked the end of the work in the fields. First came the royal sacrifice to the great god of the earth, then a sacrifice to the ancestors, and finally the harvest festival. To the great god of the earth the king offered a pig-ram-bull sacrifice (*t'ai-lao*). The bull was black. The day was a *kia*-day, the first day of the decimal cycle. The king, clothed in a fine silk tunic, on his head a cap decorated with twelve pendants, ascended the earth mound. The minister of religious affairs (*ta-tsung-po*) rubbed the tablet of the earth god with blood to notify the god and to invite him to descend. The tablet of the god was an undressed stone. The king offered an animal, its flesh uncooked. Offered also were a roll of silk and a quadrangular piece of yellow jade, yellow being the color of the earth. Small pieces of raw flesh were placed on shells and distributed among the king and the assistants of the sacrifice, who ate them reverently. Other pieces were put aside to be brought to the lords of the royal clan and also to the lords of other clans to show them respect. During the whole ceremony armed troops were present, and in some areas the ceremony was concluded by a military parade.

Probably right after the sacrifice to the earth god a bull was offered to the associate of this god, the Prince Hou-tse, or Millet. From the harvest festival on, all work in the fields was prohibited. At the festival the offerings consisted of fruits from the fields and game. The princes participated in it, bringing presents to the Son of Heaven, such as cereals, game, eggs, precious objects, women. At the same time they held their own festivals in their territories. The institution of the harvest festival was attributed to Shen-nung, the divine laborer.

At the festival all those spirits were worshiped who had contributed to a plentiful harvest as guardians of agriculture in its various stages. The most prominent of them were the first reaper, the first constructor of dams, the first canal digger, the first builder of huts beside the fields. Attention was also given to the spirits of the cats as they destroyed rats, and to the spirits of the tigers as the destroyers of wild boars. The offerings were accompanied by prayer formulas which should guarantee the plenty of the next harvest, "that the lands may return to their places, that the waters may return to their canals, that no insect may be produced, that the bad plants may return to their swamps!" The festival must have resembled a great masquerade. The spirits of the cats and the tigers were represented by masked actors, men and children in costumes.

In Ch'ou the festival was combined with the festival of the dying year, because the royal calendar fixed the beginning of the new year in principle at the winter solstice in the first winter month of the rural calendar. The officiant at this farewell festival put on white mourning clothes, wore a fur cap on his head, and in his hand he carried a mourning staff of hazelwood. After the mourning ceremony he again wore clothes proper for the harvest festival, that is, like the other participants, a hat of yellow straw and the farmer's tunic. The offerings were distributed among the peope. The aged men occupied the first places. The festival became an orgy in its exuberance.

The harvest festival was perhaps the greatest festival of the year, the entire population taking part in it. It was celebrated not only by the king and the princes in the capital, but also by their subjects in the rural districts and villages, with the local patricians presiding. The district or village governor made offerings to the eight classes of spirits whom he had gone to find, just as the king had done. Like the king, he wore rustic clothing.

When the farmers were again back in their houses and the fire had made its re-entry, the king performed a great ceremony in honor of the heavenly spirits. He offered to them animals on a round mound, the symbol of the round heaven. Dances followed. This act of worship for the heavenly spirits corresponded to the festival of the winter solstice for the earthly spirits. When the people had retired into their houses, the doors were sealed with clay. The king had preceded his people in this respect by shutting himself up in his palace and ordering the doors to be plastered with clay. The grand officers in the capital and the princes in their fields did the same. This secluded life lasted for about one month. In the last month of the year the farmers were ordered to prepare the seed-grain and the farming tools for the coming year. The doors of the houses were opened again.

A great lustration to drive hostile emanations away was directed by a ghost-seeer. The ceremony began with an execration, chanted by children and directed against evil spirits and things. The execration threathened them with twelve spirits who would destroy them: "May the twelve spirits drive away the bad ones, and bringers of evil. May they break your backbones and your limbs! May they cut your flesh into pieces! May they tear out your lungs and your entrails! If you do not disappear at once, the twelve spirits will devour you." After spelling out these execrations, the sorcerer and his assistants drove out the pestilences with much shouting. Twelve men with animal masks, representing the twelve spirits, also participated. In their dance they made three rounds through the palace, brandishing burning torches, and then ended the ceremony by closing the doors, thus shutting out the pestilences. Knights, carrying torches, galloped to the River Lo which flowed past the capital and threw the pestilences into its water. This was the inauguration of the new season.

This alternation of the cycles of summer and winter, with their chain of festivals, was repeated every year. By bringing the changes in nature, the religious acts, and human life into harmony, favorable movement of the universe was secured. As already shown, a cycle of sacrifices to ancestors also ran through the year and human life.

4. Religious Ceremonies on Special Occasions.[58]

Appropriate religious ceremonies were performed when the city was besieged or when a siege was imminent. Offerings had then to be made to the four points of the compass. If the enemy came from the east, a rooster was offered on an altar at the east gate. If he attacked from the south, a dog was offered at the south gate. If he attacked from the west, a ram was offered at the west gate. If the attack came from the north, a pig was offered at the north gate. The sorcerers climbed the city wall and prognosticated on the wind and the effluences.

At a solar eclipse the sun had to be rescued. The king hurried to the mound of the earth god and wound a red cord three times around the tree of the god in order to bind him. Then he ordered his grand officers and a battalion of soldiers to get to their positions and to draw up their troops in battle array and to beat the drums. The king himself shot arrows in the direction of the sun with the bow that "helps the sun." At the same time an animal sacrifice was made

58. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.265 ff.

to the earth god, as was done when arms were taken up for a campaign. The princes allowed the drums to be beaten only in the courtyard of their palaces and did not risk offending their earth gods by binding them.

At a flood a similar ceremony was performed. The attacking enemy were the devastating waves, and against them arms were taken up as they had been against the monster which attacked the sun in the eclipses. Drums were beaten and an animal was offered to the earth god. In a long drought extraordinary measures were taken, and sorcerers cruelly exposed to the sun, as already described above. Wher the king fell sick, prayer men, sorcerers, and diviners tried to determine which god had been offended and had sent the sickness as revenge. Then offerings were made accordingly.

The religion of the aristocrats was ritualized to the extreme, yet in emergencies it did not differ from that of the common people, who tried, with the help of diviners and sorcerers, to bring pressure on the world of dangerous spirits and demons. A highly developed belief in spirits together with shamanism was the characteristic feature of the religion of the people at large. In this respect the aristocrats were also children of the people.

Religious Feeling

In the light of the immense number of official rites, with their rigid social gradations and limitations, one might infer that the true religious feelings were thereby stifled. It is true that in ancient China religious manifestations went hand in hand with the social order. But there is the central fact that man had to keep pace with the course of nature. Underlying this wisdom is the conviction that the happenings in nature are subject to order and that this order is maintained by spiritual agencies whom man can trust. The Chinese world outlook is positive and optimistic, and the attitude toward life is courageous.[59]

The long chain of sacrifices to the gods effected the continued and consistent connection of man with the universe in its cyclic changes. This conviction was shared by both the patricians and the common people. When in summer the village superintendent opened the gates of the village and the family heads the doors of their houses, when the bridge tolls which had been exacted in winter were abrogated, when men and animals left their houses to migrate to the field huts, when the strict bonds of family life slackened, then all knew that it was because this was the season for a general reopening. All felt

59. *Ibid.*, pp.270 ff.

that by accommodation to the regulations of the summertime everyone was contributing to the appropriate course of the world. When in winter all retired into their houses and lived behind tightly closed doors it was again the requirement of adaptation to nature. One had to submit to the rhythm of nature in order to avoid self-destruction.

Within this framework the privileged class believed that sacrifices also yielded them immediate and personal advantages. The ritual of the ancestor worship itself assured them of profit, since at the end of the sacrificial ceremony the representative of the ancestor promised blessings when he thanked them for the offerings. Egotism however, which expected a certain favor in return for sacrifices made, was censured. A report of 672 B.C. says that Duke Kuo made a sacrifice to the spirit of Chou of Tan, expecting for it an expansion of his territory. The writer criticizes this egotism which irritated the spirit and caused a calamity. In the year 658 the prince of Tsin conquered Kuo.

The only legitimate intention of a sacrifice was common interest. In the fourth century B.C. this idea was widely accepted and found expression in the *Tso-chuan*.[60] According to Mo-tse a man who serves the spirits well is like a good servant who lives up to his duties even when his master does not see it.[61] The Confucian school interpreted in the same way a word of the master: "The sacrifices must be offered to the ancestors [as respectfully] as if they were present, to the gods sacrifices must be given as if they were present," respectfully and with sincere submission. Confucius may have had a different idea, namely that sacrifices must be offered respectfully, regardless of whether the presence of the gods or ancestors was real or assumed, Confucius being skeptical an this score. Another, and clearer Confucian expression was: "[King Wen] was during the days of an ancestor sacrifice less cheerful than usual [because of the presence of his parents], but after the sacrifice he was sad [because of the departure of his parents]." Still another Confucian expression is: "The respectful son is in his sacrifice perfectly devoted, perfectly sincere, perfectly respectful"; the ritual acts were only the exteriorization of his innermost sentiments. Any innovations, restrictions, or additions in the fulfillment of ritual obligations were out of the question. Ritualism was a codification of the external actions as inspired by internal sentiments.

The Chinese stressed the correct intention of the sacrifice out of

60. The chief commentary on the *Ch'un-ch'iu*, the Annals of the State of Lu; see Hirth, *History*, p.253.

61. The philosopher Mo-tse, or Mê-ti, Mê-tse (about 480–400 B.C.) is treated at length in Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.368–395.

their belief that the receiving gods and spirits were actually present at the sacrifices. In certain quarters of the literati, under the influence of the diviners and the doctrine of *yin-yang*,[62] and also of Taoist thought, the belief in the existence of spirits was endangered. Such new ideas were already widely circulated by the middle of the Ch'ou period. Mo-tse, therefore, in the second half of the fifth century, found it necessary to devote a section of his philosophy to the demonstration of the existence of gods and spirits. His opponents explained the world by the theory of *yin* and *yang*, the reciprocal interaction of the two primordial substances or forces without any interference of a personal god or spirit. By their transformation, *yin* and *yang* produced everything. Compared with these cosmic, universal, and immutable forces and laws the gods of the official pantheon made poor figures with their petty functions and personal interventions.

The Heavenly Lord was able to preserve his existence and prestige by increasingly personalizing and spiritualizing himself. He became the first and most general materialization of the *yang*, just as Lord Earth and in general all earth gods became the materialization of the *yin*. The old texts do not give the impression that their writers were making a conscious effort to attribute personality to the gods. The personality of the gods was evident in the myths and was later traditionally accepted in spite of tendencies of philosophers to depersonalize divinities. While the Lord of Heaven was accorded an exceptional position, the personality of the other gods was only feebly developed. In the religious consciousness of the people and in philosophic treatises Heaven always enjoyed his commanding position and was attributed qualities which most evidently characterize him as a spiritual and personal entity. Numerous popular proverbs also depict Heaven as a spiritual and moral personality.[63] His greatness is such that man with his limited intelligence can never adequately comprehend him. There is only one Heaven. All existing things are manifest to him. He rules the world with consummate justice. He sends happiness to the good and misfortune to the bad. He rules the world with absolute wisdom and unfailing benevolence.

Some inquisitive minds nevertheless were troubled by doubt concerning the power of Heaven to intervene. When Prince King of Ts'i in his sickness wanted to sacrifice his prayer man to send him to Shang-ti, the Lord on High, his minister Yen-tse tried to dissuade

62. See our treatment of them in the section on the metaphysicians, where we shall deal in some detail with the doctrine of the *yin-yang*.

63. Plopper, *Proverb*, p.62, in C.H.Plopper, Chinese Religion seen through the Proverb (see n.114 in Chapter 2).

him from doing so by saying: "If the Lord on High is powerful, your prayer man cannot deceive him; if he is not powerful, your prayer man will be of no use [before Heaven]." As to the souls of the dead, there were persons who doubted whether the souls still possessed their previous consciousness, and the sentence "if the dead still have their knowledge" [of persons and things of the living world] occurs frequently in texts from the end of the Ch'ou period. This wavering in the old belief in gods and spirits led to a tendency not only to restrict the sacrifices and religious festivals, but also to question the efficacy of sacrifices.

There developed two opposing opinions, namely, that the spirits were present at the sacrifices for them, and that they were not present and were not conscious of any ceremonies performed in their honor. The proponents of these conflicting ideas, however, were in agreement that the giver of a sacrifice had to cultivate virtue and morality and to concentrate on the act of the sacrifice, and also that life must be adjusted by all means to the cyclic periods—which is done by offering the sacrifices.

In this way a peculiar theory of religious festivals developed. The festivals were considered to be the processes by which the heavenly norm and the human norm were brought into harmony. The heavenly norm—*t'ien-tao*—was the activity in *yin* and *yang* by means of the five elements. The human norm—*jen-tao*—consisted of the acts of the moral world which were performed at the right time and with the right intention. To the degree to which the happenings of the world and the life of man were determined by impersonal powers, personal gods with their interventions and causations correspondingly declined. Thus the Chinese arrived at rational explanations of the ceremonies, down to their smallest details.

An eclipse of the sun or moon traditionally made them take up arms at the mound of the earth god to rescue the sun or moon and to drive away the monster who wanted to devour either of the two celestial bodies. But, although the rites remained the same, the mythological explanation of the eclipses was replaced by a philosophical one: the light, the sun, is *yang*, the darkness is *yin*, the eclipse is the victory of the *yin* over the *yang*; or the earth is *yin*, and consequently also the earth god. One goes to the rescue of the sun, the *yang*, by binding the earth god, the *yin*. It is due to *yin* that in winter life declines and work in the fields comes to a standstill. The renewal of life in summer is due to *yang*, which is then dominant. *Yang* is activity. Until the summer solstice *yang* increases, and *yin* decreases. The equinoxes are the moment of parity between the *yang* and the *yin*.

The son of Heaven lived during each season in a palace which

was different from the Sacred Palace, in order to follow the movements of *yin* and *yang* throughout the seasons. The punishments he inflicted in summer were *yin*; the rewards which he distributed in winter were *yang*. The *yin* was considered inferior to the *yang* and had to be treated accordingly. The *yin* was ordered and attacked, while prayers were said to the *yang*. In a flood people simply tried to strengthen the *yin* by shifting the market place. The market place established by the wife of the ruler in the north of the city or town was *yin*. Thus the *yin* was made to triumph over the *yang*. The wife of the ruler presided over the shifting of the market place. In a drought the *yin* was forced to manifest itself by having sorceresses dance in the sunshine; they are *yin*, as are the spirits by whom they are possessed, while the sun is *yang*. In the early period the dancing rite of the sorcerers and sorceresses was sufficient for making rain. The meaning of this rite changed and became only a special instance of the operation of *yin* and *yang*.

The sacrifice for the dead contained, among other rites, a libation for the *p'o*, or bodily souls, living under the ground, while the smoke of the sacrifice rose towards the heavenly *hun*, or spiritual souls. Man was composed of *yin* and *yang*, like all other things, and at the worship of the dead justice had to be done to both elements. The explanation using *yin* and *yang* was extended to all categories of beings; from the middle Ch'ou period on the literati were increasingly fascinated by this rational and simple interpretation of the world. Various religious innovations, too, were justified by this interpretation. Astrology which, toward the end of the fourth century B.C., reached China from the Near East and the Mediterranean countries, was adopted without difficulty and assimilated to the existing religious ideas by identifying the virtues of the five planets with the five elements. A new astral mythology and a star worship of foreign origin came into existence. Old cults found themselves transformed; for instance, the Five Lords (Wu-ti), into the five elements and the five planets. The doctrines of the elements and of astrology permeated each other.

Despite all its ritualism in religious practice the Ch'ou period was one of spiritual ferment. Beside the well established official orthodoxy new and often conflicting opinions and new interpretations of the old faith began to grow. Down to the end of the Ch'ou period (256 B.C.) the new ideas were confined to a minority, but they were already destined to conquer, more or less, the religious consciousness of the entire people. Practically all philosophical schools discussed religious problems. Their main concern was man, and how man can live in harmony with himself and with all mankind. In view of the most intimate interrelations of ethics, sociology, and politics with religion,

religious problems could never be bypassed. The metaphysical basis of human existence within the universe led of necessity to speculations on the supernatural.

The common people continued to believe in personal gods having their own wills, sometimes quite arbitrary. The defeat which Teh-ch'en of Ch'eng, general of the Ch'ou, suffered in the year 632 on the Yellow River, the first defeat after a long chain of victories, was attributed to the general's disregard for the river god. The general had refused to offer him a cap of deer fur which the god had demanded from the general in a dream. Notwithstanding the objections of the literati that "the gods were not to be bought," many remained convinced that the abundance of offerings was pleasing to the gods and called down their favors on the pious, whereas negligence of the worshipers was punished with misfortune, if indeed hungry spirits did not strike back right an the spot.

At times superstitious terror could cause an uproar in the whole city. In 543 B.C., Po-yu, a former minister fallen in disgrace, was assassinated during a brawl in a open market-place. All of a sudden, somewhere people shouted: "Po-yu is here!" The panic reached its height when the dead man appeared to an inhabitant in a dream announcing that he, the inhabitant, would meet death at the hands of a murderer. That death took place in 535. The people regained their composure only when in the same year the son of the assassinated Po-yu was ordered to make regular sacrifices to his father to calm his irritated soul.

From the Ch'ou Period on, the characteristic religious attitude of the Chinese is clear and can be summarized thus: belief, on the one hand, in the existence and power of the spirits and the souls of the dead and, on the other, in the efficacy of ritual activities and gestures. Later came philosophical attempts at an explanation of the supernatural. The result was a mixture of (*sit venia verbi*) superstitious practices and theoretical rationalism. This attitude persisted through many centuries down to modern times. The common people shared this attitude in a variety of degrees and sought fulfillment of unsatisfied religious needs in later innovations. Heterogeneous elements were combined in a multicolored religious syncretism. On one side was much ritualistic petrification and rigid traditionalism; on the other, enormous tensions and fierce conflicts between contradictory doctrines.

Chapter Two

Religious Thoughts in Philosophical Systems

Rationalism, as opposed to mythological thinking, began in China at about the middle of the Ch'ou Period. The first great themes of philosophical thinking were the place of the world in a cosmological system and the problem of human existence. By this time, too, social life had already raised problems which led to the formation of theories of the state and of state-centered ethics. In both breadth and depth Chinese philosophy belongs to the greatest accomplishments of mankind. Together with religious creeds, philosophical tenets have moulded Chinese culture over many centuries. As described in Chapter I, new philosophical views entered into rivalries with religion. The old untrammeled belief in gods and spirits, with the many myths about them, was never actually displaced, although it tended to become more or less vague. At the same time philosophical systems found religious sanctions and became new forms of religion.

The Metaphysicians

The male and female dualism was unknown to the ancient Chinese in the explanation of the world. The god of the earth is in their earliest belief a male. The earth was not conceived as the female principle. But other cosmological speculations were already current in the Shang period (1523–1027 B.C.), and several conflicting world explanations were advanced. The oldest source concerning them seems to be the *hung-fan*, or "The Great Plan", which we find in the *Shu-king*. It is considered to be a divine revelation given to Yü the Great, the founder of the Hsia dynasty.[1] Yü saw a tortoise emerge from the river Lo with mysterious signs on its shell, and by these Yü was inspired to establish the nine categories of the "Great Plan." This plan enumerates in nine sections concepts which are considered of special importance for an understanding of nature and the state. An answer is given to the question: How should man, and especially the ruler, conduct himself in the world and in the state? It was taken for granted that a close connection exists between the happenings in nature and in the

1. Cf. A.Forke, Geschichte der alten chinesischen Philosophie (Hamburg, 1927), p.35 (hereafter cited as *Geschichte*).

state. Man and nature are mutually interacting. Between human life and nature there exists a far reaching harmony and sympathy.

In the course of time different interpretations were given of this harmony. Fundamental concepts of it are *yang* and *yin*. The *yin-yang* doctrine is the great cosmological theory which became a kind of religion. According to the *Li-ki*, or the Book of Rites,[2] the world came into existence in the following way: First there was the great unity. This split and became heaven and earth. Through revolution in a circle *yin* and *yang* came forth. Through a series of constant changes in these elements the four seasons were produced, and through a scission, spirits and demons. In spring and summer the *yang* fluid dominates; in autumn and winter, the *yin* fluid. The superior forces were divided into spirits and demons; the spirits animated all living beings, the demons lived in the dead. Life and death were reduced to the actions of these spiritual potencies, the *yin* and the *yang*. According to this cosmological explanation, first Heaven and Earth came forth from the primordial state, where upon the *yin* and the *yang* appeared.

According to a commentary to the Yi-king,[3] the world came into existence thus: First was the primordial principle. This principle produced the two potencies *yin* and *yang*, which together produced the eight trigrams.[4] In translations the primordial principle is also called "the great extreme" or "the great terminal point". It is the farthest point to which one can go back in the past and from it all things originate.[5] Giles calls it "the absolute". In their mystic speculations the Taoists have always shown an intense interest in it; in fact it was their main concern. Earlier interpreters considered it nonexistent or transcendental or an extremely subtle substance. The Sung philosophers[6] took it as an immaterial principle, as reason. In the absolute originate the two potencies *yin* and *yang*, and the strong and weak *yin*. They are graphically represented by broken and unbroken lines, the yang—, the yin– –. The four configurations then would look as

2. Ibid., p.170.

3. The *Yi-king* was a handbook for divination on which many commentaries were written. Hirth translates the title of this book as *Canon of Changes*; see *The Ancient History of China to the End of the Ch'ou Dynasty* (New York, 1908), p251 (hereafter cited as *History*. See also Forke, Geschichte, pp.9–15, 170–179.

4. *Yi-king*, Appendix 3, in Legge's *Yi-king*, p.373, quoted in Forke, *Geschichte*, p.171.

5. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.171.

6. The Sung Dynasty (960–1279) ultimately adopted the Neo-Confucian philosophy of Chu-hsi (1130–1200) and Liu Hsiang-shan (1139–93).

follows:

strong *yang* ⚊ weak *yang* ⚋

strong *yin* ⚋ weak *yin* ⚊

The strong *yang* is a doubled *yang*, the strong *yin* a doubled *yin*; we might say *yang* and *yin*. The weak *yang* is mixed with *yin*, and the weak *yin* is mixed with *yang*. Through a combination of the two configurations with the primordial potencies, the eight trigrams are constructed which symbolize various things in the cosmos, namely, heaven, vapors, fire, thunder, wind, water, mountains, earth.

Heaven and earth appear here as the second concentration of the first potencies *yin* and *yang*, the heaven being conceived as *yang* of the third power ($yang^3$), and the earth as *yin* of the third power (yin^3). According to the *Li-ki*, *yin* and *yang* came into existence after heaven and earth; but here it is the other way around: *yin* and *yang* come first, and from them spring heaven and earth.

The doctrine of the eight trigrams existed at the very early time in Chinese culture and was later developed by the Confucian school.[7] The contribution of the Confucianists has been recorded in the commentary to the *Yi-king*,[8] which is devoted to the explanation of the trigrams. In our presentation of the religion of the Chinese, a summarized description of the system of the eight trigrams, or the *Pa-kua*, cannot be omitted. The scope of this monograph, however, prevents us from recapitulating the discussions that took place in respect to various details.[9]

The eight trigrams are the first Chinese attempt at a philosophy of nature. Even before the Hsia dynasty the eight trigrams were used for divination. They have as their basis quasi-scientific observations. Eitel, who was the first to recognize that the eight trigrams are more than merely cabalistic signs for divination, though they were always used for this purpose, writes as follows: "There is underlying these diagrams a recognition of the truth that things are groups of relations. The diagrams themselves are, to my mind, clearly ideal constructions, expressing real facts and built up from the real elements of imperfect and fanciful experience for their basis. These diagrams are simply abstract types, substituting an ideal process for that actually observed in nature. They are formulae in which the multifarious phenomena are stripped of their variety and reduced to unity and harmony. Causation is here represented as imminent change, as the constant interaction of the bi-polar power of Nature, which is never at rest,

7. Cf. Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.20 ff.

8. *Yi-king*, Appendix 5, in Legge, Texts of Confucianism, vol.2, pp.422 ff.; quoted in Forke, *Geschichte*, p.172, n.1.

9. Cf. Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.20 ff.

balanced or free, the mutually sustaining opposition of two forces which are essentially one energy, and in the activity of which divergence and direction is inherent and essential."[10]

Further interpretations by authors who have tried to shed light on the doctrine of the eight diagrams will necessarily be fragmentary, but sufficient to give the reader an idea of this ideology which is so deeply imbedded in the Chinese world outlook. The work of the early diviners was taken up again by a school which continued their speculations and developed their doctrines further by formulating a metaphysical theory.[11] The ideas of this school are laid down in a small book which Hsi-tse began to write and which was concluded toward the end of the fifth century. It is now contained in the appendices to the *Yi-king*.

The ancient diviners always attributed a real existence to the hexagrams, similar to that of the perceptible things in the world. Between the hexagrams and the world there existed for them an absolute correspondence. The ancient diviners did not explain on what this correspondence was based. The authors of the Hsi-tse admitted that the reality of the hexagrams could not be exactly the same as that of ordinary things. They therefore treated the hexagrams separately and made them an ideal world of divination. The universe was conceived as consisting on two planes: the material plane on which are men and the ordinary objects of the perceptible world, numbering altogether 11,520 things. This total results from the possible combinations of the symbolic numbers of the figures and lines.[12] Beside or above the real plane, and corresponding to it, is the ideal plane of divination wherein the 64 hexagrams are found. Both worlds are equally true and correspond to each other exactly. Divination permits us to transcend one world and realize the other.

From the point of view of the science of religion it is interesting to see that in the arrangement of the trigrams and the hexagrams was introduced the idea of a family, in which Heaven is the father and the Earth the mother; other things, in accordance with their forms, are the sons and the daughters. The trigrams, and still more the hexagrams, are all derivatives of the symbols for Heaven and Earth, the

10. Cf. E.I.Eitel, "Chinese Philosophy before Confucius," *China Review* 7 (1978–79): 388 ff., and idem, "Fragmentary Studies in Ancient Chinese Philosophy," *China Review* 7 (1888–89): 26 ff.; quoted in Forke, *Geschichte*, p.22.

11. Cf. Maspéro, La *Chine antique* (Paris, 1927), pp.479 ff. (hereafter cited as *La Chine*).

12. *Yi-king*, in Legge, *Texts of Confucianism*, vol.2, pp.368 ff. and notes; quoted in Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.481, n.2.

other symbols being created by the reciprocal action of the first two.

Since there was a double world one could not say that everything was derived from the trigrams *t'ien* (Heaven) ☰ and *kun* ☷ (Earth). One could speak of derivation in respect to the ideal world but not in respect to the perceptible and real world. To close the gap the *yin-yang* doctrine was developed. A distinction was made between the hexagrams for Heaven and Earth, which correspond to heaven and earth in the material sense, and the trigrams of this name which are somehow the prototypes of heaven and earth. It was found appropriate to apply the notion of prototype to the perceptible world, which is represented by the two trigrams, and to designate the broadened notions *yin* and *yang*. The two new terms were thus introduced into philosophy. Both terms are borrowed from the colloquial language, *yin* meaning the shadowy side, *yang* the sunny side of a mountain or a valley. The two terms are first applied in their philosophical meaning in the *Hsi-tse*. The *yin*, corresponding to the *k'un* (Earth), the *yang*, corresponding to the *t'ien* (Heaven), were substances.[13]

Yin and *yang*, then, are commonly defined as substances. The *yin* gives birth, and the *yang* gives birth, This process is called *yi*, mutation, change. By this mutation, *yin* and *yang* produce all things of the perceptible world, says Hsi-tse, the originator of the *yin-yang* doctrine. *Yin* and *yang* come and go in a constant mutation, which is called *Tao*. This transformation is effected in successive phases. Material things also consist of *Tao*. There is, consequently, no essential difference between spirit and matter. Material things are the last degree of the transformation from the *Tao*. Hsi-tse never defined *Tao* in itself, but only in relation to *yin* and *yang*, of which it is the sum. Later the Taoists made the *Tao* a reality in itself.

The earthly and the ideal things are correlated. In both worlds things are produced in the same way. In the ideal world everything is line; in it the two primordial substances *yin* and *yang* correspond to the visible world. The two elementary lines are the whole or strong line and the broken or weak line; these are the two mutations (*yi*). To the first phase of the transformation, that is, the mutation from the formless to the visible (*hsiang*), correspond the first assemblages of two lines which have no definite form as yet—visible but still formless things, that is, ideas. To the second phase of transformation, that is, that of bodies with forms (*k'i*), correspond the assemblages of three lines, the eight trigrams, the first definite divinatory signs. To the third phase of the transformation, that is, that of beings

13. Cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.482, n.2.

and specifically differentiated things (*wan-wu*), correspond the definite figures, the 64 hexagrams.

The universe with its two planes can therefore be encompassed under the following categories of things:[14]

Sensible (perceptible) world	Ideal world
Invisible and without form: the two substances *yin* and *yang*, the sum of which is *Tao*	The two lines, strong and weak, the sum of which is the Great Summit (*T'ai-ki*)
Visible, without form: ideas (*hsiang*)	The four assemblages of two lines (*hsiang*)
Visible, with form: bodies (*k'i*)	The eight trigrams (*kuai*)
Specifically differentiated things: all species of beings and things (wan-wu) numbering 11,520	The definite figures, the hexagrams (*kuai*), numbering 64

Since there is an exact correspondence between the two worlds it is always possible to influence one by means of the other; and if it is difficult, as experience easily shows, to obtain a result through influencing each of the 11,520 things of the sensible world, the field of possibilities offered by the 64 hexagrams is much more limited. If one is able to effect the transformation of the hexagrams he can influence the ideal world, and thence his action will have a repercussion on the sensible world.

Thus the contributors to the book named after Hsi-tse developed further the theory of the diviners. For them, a man who possesses a perfect knowledge of the ideal world of the hexagrams is in a position to act upon this ideal world. He is the perfect sage, able, through his knowledge, to aid Heaven in its activity. The saint, looking upward, contemplates the heavenly figures; looking downward, he examines the terrestrial forms, and in this way he searches for the cause of that which is obscure, and of that which is clear. He reduces the things to their origin, follows them to the end, and, thus, he knows what can be said of life and death .... There is similitude between him, on the one hand, and Heaven and Earth on the other, and, consequently, there exists no opposition between him and Heaven and Earth. His knowledge embraces all things, and his action benefits the whole world, and he is above error.[15]

The authors of Hsi-tse succeeded in creating a complete metaphysical system in which all theories on divination techniques, and,

14. *Ibid.*, p.484.

15. *Hsi-tse*, appendix to *Yi-king*, in Legge's Texts of Confucianism, vol.2, pp.353–354; quoted in Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.484 ff.

at the same time, all ethical doctrines of their predecessors, find their place. Falling soon in oblivion was the part of their system which states that the saint must begin by influencing the physical world by means of the ideal world of the hexagrams, and thus by necessity, owing to the harmony of the universe, effecting good government. However, the *yin-yang* doctrine found wide and lasting acceptance. From the end of the fifth century B.C. all philosophers adhere to it and it has dominated Chinese thinking until modern times.

To the presentation of the metaphysical system given above some colloraries may well be added to elucidate further a few points. The general feeling of the ancient Chinese was one of complete dependence on the laws and structure of the universe. The metaphysicians had investigated the universe with the purpose of finding ways and means to dominate it instead of being dominated by it. The common man can dominate but a small sector of it; only the great men, the saints, can penetrate the universe to the point whence all movements start, and thus influence from there the happenings in the world. This concept of the saint is of special interest for the science of religion. Chinese thought knows several types of saints. Not only the metaphysicians but also the Confucianists, the Taoists, and other philosophers, not to speak of the Buddhists, tell us much about the saint as they conceived him. The saint is a superman, a man who has fully activated his human capacities. Man does not have to reduce himself to nothingness before the absolute; man can overcome his limitations and reach out to a full participation in, and even identification with, the ultimate principle of the universe.

The universe is a powerful organism of substances and potencies, a living machine, so to speak, with the *T'ai-ki*, or the ultimate principle, in its center. This center comprises the twofold cosmic breath or, in other words, the two souls *yin* and *yang* with the heaven and earth as their sphere of living. These two souls produce the four seasons and the phenomena of nature which are represented by linear figures. They produce and animate also the five elements, viz., wood, fire, earth, metal, water, which constitute the material world.[16]

The metaphysical *yin-yang* doctrine found its application in psychology, medicine, demonology, and magic. The speculations on the cosmos were extended to the world of the gods and spirits and to the physical and spiritual nature of man.

The *yin* and the *yang* are the emblems of the two contrasting and alternating groupings which characterize their localization in space and

16. Cf. J.J.M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, 6 vols. (Leiden, 1899–1910; reprinted Peking, 1939), vol.4, p.68.

time.[17] An organization of society, based on a double morphology and the principle of constant alternation between the two groupings finds its expression in this conception. The *yin* and *yang* can be taken as a pair of alternating forces or as two substances charged with power, or as two groupings of antagonistic realities.

The concept of *hsing* also needs further clarification. The word *hsing* signifies a road, it applies to the primary elements of the material world.[18] They are not real physical elements, just as the four elements of the Greeks, fire, water, air, earth, were not physical elements. The word *hsing*, "road", connotes movement and *hsing* could be translated as "behave" or "act"; *wu-hsing*, the five elements, by "five agents." But fire, water, etc., contain something material. The five elements are not simple matter but matter in the process of transformation. We could also call them the "five cardinal rubrics." They come under the *Tao*, the great principle of order and classification. The words *hsing* and *tao* evoke the image of a road to be followed, or a direction given to behavoir. The *Tao* makes one think of the way of behavior of the sage and the ruler, which is, in principle, the best and most regulated. The moral interpretation is included in the concept of "element" (*hsing*).

The *yin* and *yang* are not opposites, as being (*esse*) and non-being (*non-esse*), and not even two genders (*genera*).[19] They complement and complete each other in reality, in thinking, and in moral actions. Spiritual activity is not regulated by the principle of the harmony and contradiction but by the principle of the harmony of contrasts. Every phenomenon of nature or of the course of thinking originates, as the universe itself does, in the interdependency of the two complementary aspects *yin* and *yang*. The *Tao* is the principle of order of the mutations. Between the technical order of the emblems and the order in the reality of things no distinction can be made. Power is obtained by manipulating the world. Mutation and effective virtue are together one unit. The feeling of the interdependency of the emblematic realities is sufficient in itself. The world and the mind simultaneously obey one rule.

The emblems exhaust the real. As noted above, the order of the world comprises 11,520 specific beings, or things. The 384 lines of the hexagrams arouse the whole of the tangible realities of which they

17. Cf. M. Granet, *Fêtes et chansons de la Chine* (Paris, 1919), (hereafter cited as *Fêtes*).

18. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.36.

19. The following aphoristic summary of the main points in the metaphysical doctrine has been condensed from Granet, *Fêtes*, pp.335 ff.

are the emblematic realization. Each line connotes a sphere of these realities, 24 or 36, depending on whether the line is *yin* or *yang*. There are 192 *yang* lines and 192 *yin* lines.[20] The transition of one symbol into another, a substitution, is the active sign of a mutation (*yi*), which takes place in the actual changing of things.

We may again raise the question of the position of religion in this metaphysical system. The system undoubtedly has its religious implications, which are, however, entirely different from a monotheistic or even pantheistic religion. The world is a construction which is continuously changing, and the flow of these changes involves everything in the same way, gods, men, material and spiritual things, without exception. Man has the power to exert influence on the direction of this change but the gods do not. Man is given the chance to transcend his concrete condition of being and to penetrate into the universe. It is a religious system insofar as it enables man to live in harmony with the universe and inspires him to do so.

2. Confucianism

Confucianism is always considered the typical religion of the Chinese. This is correct, provided that some reservations are made. Confucius was not the founder of the religion named after him, and Confucianism is first of all a philosophical system, but with religious implications. The Confucianists are transmitters of the oldest Chinese civilization, which they saved from oblivion, strengthened, and developed further. It is also said, and rightly so, that Confucianism was made the state philosophy and state religion. When we outlined the metaphysical theory, we found that a neat separation of religion and philosophy in Chinese spiritual life is impossible. In a world in which ancestors are closely bound to the living family and even appear among the living and talk to them, the boundary line between this and the other world is fluid; the natural and the supernatural are not two separate worlds. Man is part of the one universe which comprises all visible and invisible things.

Confucius and the exponents of his doctrine must be studied in the context of the spiritual situation of their time. There was then neither a state religion nor a state philosophy. No officially decreed patterns of thinking fettered the freedom of thought. Schools could develop free of political control and could openly oppose those with whom they disagreed. At the center stood society in the state. China was a confederation of principalities with the king at the summit of the

20. *Ibid.*, p.327.

hierarchy, and the feudal states were at war among themselves with increasing frequency and intensity. Thinkers were particularly concerned with how to establish social and political stability. One theory was the philosophy that came to be called Confucianism. Since no great state existed as yet that could have made Confucianism its official and orthodox religion, this philosophy could gain acceptance only by the appeal of its intrinsic values.

At the outset, it should be noted that in religion Confucianism did not bring any innovations, but preserved the religion of antiquity in a more spiritualized form and passed it on to later generations. In Confucianism religion is an intregral component of a philosophy of social ethics. In an outline of Chinese religion special attention has to be devoted to three Confucian thinkers, namely, Confucius, Mencius, and Hsün-tse.

3. Confucius, His Life and Personality[21]

Confucius belonged to a patrician family whose genealogy goes back to the kings of the Yin dynasty (1400–1027 B.C.), and is known to historians for fourteen generations. The name Confucius is the Latinized form in which Jesuit missionaries made the philosopher known in the West. The Chinese equivalent of this form is K'ung-Fu-tse, Master K'ung. His father, K'ung Shu-liang, was an officer in the state of Lu, in the district Tsou, in the modern prefecture of Yen-chou-fu in Shantung province. There Confucius was born in 551 B.C. He was a contemporary of Buddha, whose year of birth was 557, and Pythagoras, who is said to have lived between 540 and 500. Socrates was born in 469. Confucius was appointed in 533 a petty supervisor of granaries by the powerful clan of Chi in the state of Lu, and in 532 he was made supervisor of public fields. When only twenty-two years old, he started his public teaching activity, explaining to his disciples the *Shih-king* ("Book of Odes"), the *Shu-king* ("Book of History"), and the rites and music. The great number of disciples and the many records in literature of colloquies and debates with the master show that his personality must have made a deep impression on his disciples. He stressed the formation of character more than intellectual training.

His disciples in the stricter sense, who thoroughly studied the classics with him, were seventy-two in number, his disciples in a broader sense, three thousand. In the year 518 Confucius traveled to Lo-yang where he desired to study the old institutions of the kingdom and the

21. After Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.99 ff.

court customs of the Ch'ou dynasty. The power of the central ruler of the federation was at that time only a shadow of its previous grandeur. Thirteen larger and smaller states were ruled by the descendents and adherents of the royal house, each of whom was almost autonomous and warred frequently with the others. Within the feudal states the relatives of princes were fighting each other, and the noble families, whose high offices were hereditary, had to be on constant guard against the encroachments of overbearing underlings. But in the capital Confucius found the old rites well preserved and he studied enthusiastically the great sacrifices to Heaven and Earth and the rites in the royal ancestor temples.

In 517 Confucius fled, together with the Duke of Lu, to Ch'i, because in Lu a civil war was about to break out. When he could return to Lu, for fifteen years he spent all his time and efforts in the study of history, the odes, and music, and did not hold any office. Confucius' relationship to his wife and his son seems to have been correct but somewhat cool. The sentiments he entertained for his disciples may have stifled his feelings for his family. When he was fifty-two years old, he was given a higher official position which he had sought for a long time; he was appointed magistrate of Chung-tu. Subsequently he became assistant to the superintendent of public works, and finally minister of justice. During his four years in office he tried to strengthen the power of the duke and to break the disproportionate influence of the aristocratic families. The whole country flourished once more. This aroused the concern of the neighboring state of Ch'u where it was feared that Lu might strive to establish its hegemony. Crafty machinations in Lu made Confucius decide to leave, hoping in vain to be called back.

For thirteen years Confucius traveled through various states in the hope of finding employment somewhere, but this never happened. In 484, he was called back to Lu when already sixty-seven years old, but he still did not obtain another official appointment. At this time he began to edit the old classic writings. These had hitherto existed only in state archives, for they were compiled by the official historiographers, by the music masters, and by the officials of the bureau for rites and ceremonies. These writings were the foundation of the entire older civilization of China which Confucius wanted to restore to new prestige by publishing the classic writings. The classics thus edited by Confucius were the *Shu-king* (Book of Documents, or of History), the *Shih-king* (Book of Odes), the *Yi-king* (Book of Mutations; some Sinologues transcribe as *I-king*), the *Li-ki* (Book of Rites), and the *Yo-king* (Book of Music). Two years before his death he edited the *Ch'un-ch'iu* ("Spring and Autumn", Annals of the State of Lu).

These five classics were probably the books with which Confucius occupied himself at various periods of his life. The *Yi-king* he studied long and thoroughly but was not sure that he understood it. His special pride was the *Ch'un-ch'iu*, the work for which Confucius was sure that posterity would judge him.

Confucius died in 479 after a short illness. Duke Ai of Lu ordered a temple to be built for Confucius and sacrifices to be made there to his spirit four times a year. In 555 A.D. an imperial edict ordained that in every prefectural capital a temple should be built in honor of the philosopher who had meanwhile been declared a national saint. These temples were usually connected with schools and examination halls, since Confucius was the patron saint of schools and learning. Under Emperor K'ang-hsi (1662–1723) of the Manchu or Ts'ing dynasty (1644–1911) there were about 11,000 living male descendants of the Sage. The head of the family, on whom the duty to sacrifice to the great ancestor is incumbent, has the rank of a duke. In 1927 he represented the seventy-third generation after Confucius.

During his lifetime Confucius enjoyed high esteem and had much influence, but his position was still far from being beyond dispute. Only the powerful decree of the Han Emperor Wu (140–87 B.C.) declared Confucianism as the state religion. Until that time Confucius' philosophy had to share the field with other systems. There exists a vast literature on Confucius, and the opinions with regard to him are not unanimous in every respect. A.Forke[22] summarizes his appreciation of Confucius along the following lines. As a philosopher Confucius cannot be put on the same level with Aristotle, Locke, or Kant. Even other Chinese thinkers, such as Mencius, Lao-tse, Lieh-tse, Chuang-tse, Chu-hsi, and Wang Yang-ming excelled him by far. He does not belong to the great thinkers because he offered no profound original thoughts of his own. Further, he lacked the qualifications of a metaphysician and did not carry on independent speculations. He was a great sage, the transmitter of the old culture of the country, with which was also connected to an eminent degree the old religion emphasizing the commanding position held by the god of Heaven. From his earthly career we know that he was not a solitary recluse but occupied a central place in the troubled political life of his time. He started writing when already over sixty years old, and when he had learned from bitter experience what his compatriotes needed.

b. Mencius, His Career and Accomplishments

The most outstanding disciples of Confucius were Mencius and

22. Cf. Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.115 ff.

Hsün-tse. Mencius is the Latinized form of the Chinese name Mêng-tse. This philosopher was born of a patrician family in Lu, probably in 372 B.C., and died in 289, at the age of eighty-four. He was thus a contemporary of the Greeks Aristotle, Zeno, and Epicurus, and enjoyed an equal importance for China and the entire Far Eastern culture. Confucianism lived through the ages mostly in the form Mencius had given it. Until modern times Chinese youth began their study of the classics with Mencius.

At the time of Mencius the Ch'ou dynasty had already lost all its reputation and only a shadow of its former power was left. The war between the feudal states had become chronic. The more powerful among them had usurped the title of kingdom. Ambitious politicians traveled from state to state and gave advice on their alliances and war plans. The teachings of Confucius were largely forgotten, and those of others were in fashion. Mencius, however, considered Confucianism the only true system, and he succeeded to a considerable extent in restoring its prestige. The Confucianists began to respect Mencius as the "Second Saint." It was Mencius who gave to Confucianism its scientific foundation. He was given special credit for having proved the innate goodness of human nature, which had been denied by other philosophers. His chief merit however is that he saved the teachings of Confucius from oblivion.

In A.D. 1083 the Sung Emperor Shen-tsung bestowed on Mencius the title "Duke of the State of Tsou," and ordered a temple to be built in Chou-hsien where Mencius had been buried. The tablet of Mencius was given a place in the temple of Confucius in Chü-fu. Emperor Shen-tsu raised Mencius to the rank of "Second Saint and Duke of the State of Tsou." The Ming Emperor Hung-wu (1368–1398) however was offended by the remark of Mencius that there are rulers who are bandits and enemies, and he degraded the philosopher. But when the minister of justice, Ch'ien T'ang, in a daring petition to the emperor defended Mencius, the emperor restored Mencius to his previous honors, praising him as a fighter against heresies and defender of the principles of Confucius.

Mencius' doctrines, edited by his disciples, are found in a book called after him, *Mêng-tse*. It was finally raised to the rank of a classic in the Southern Sung period (1127–1279), mainly owing to the influence of the great commentator Chu Hsi (1130–1200), who in his *Collected Commentaries* combined the discourses of Confucius and Mencius. Since the the book *Mêng-tse* has belonged to the Four (sacred) Books (*Sze-shu*), which are: the Discourses, or Confucian Analects (*Lun-yü*), the Great Learning (*Ta-hsüeh*), the Doctrine of the Mean (*Chung-yung*), and Mêng-tse. From the latter the favorite

topics of the state examinations were taken.

There is some justification for including here Hsün-tse,[23] another philosopher who in many things is close to the Confucianist camp, but he was too independent to be classified as a Confucianist in the traditional meaning of this term. Since he was in disagreement with the orthodox Confucianists on several points, and in particular in his concept of Heaven, we have decided not to treat him as a Confucianist in our survey.

3. The Religious Content of Confucianism

Confucianism in its basic tendencies is a system of moral philosophy with a political orientation; but it had also a great impact on the religious side of Chinese civilization. There can be no doubt on this point. None of the outstanding Confucian thinkers founded a religion. Their religious conviction was that the religion which the nation had inherited from their ancestors was the only right and true one, which had to be preserved, together with its ritualism, if state and society were not to fall into an abysmal chaos. Buddhism of course was not yet known to any of them, nor had any other religious system except that of ancient China appeared on their spiritual horizon. They had no need, therefore, to defend the old religion against any radical innovations. The alternatives against which they had to make a stand in defending the ancient religion were three: the old and popular belief in spirits along with sorcery and magic; the speculations of the metaphysicians who transformed the gods and ancestor spirits into depersonalized powers of the universe; and the quietism of the Taoists who showed little concern for the old sacrificial rites.

Confucius wanted to give a correct interpretation of the books for antiquity on rites and politics. "I only want to transmit, I do not invent,"[24] he said, keeping in mind his only goal, good government for the people. For bad government conditions in his time he blamed the neglect of the traditions in religious and secular matters. He was a champion of the universism in which religious and secular matters form one unit. His thoughts centered around the virtue of the ruler which makes the ruler worthy of holding the mandate of Heaven. "The virtue of the ruler resembles the wind, that of the small people is like the grass. The grass must bow when the wind blows over it."[25]

Perfect virtue was possessed only by the saints of antiquity, and

23. *Ibid.*, pp.216 ff.

24. Cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.461, n.2.

25. *Ibid.*, p.462, and n.2. The translation is from the Lun-yü, 3:2, p.19; see Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.465.

in his degenerate times Confucius could not longer find such saints. He demanded that the rulers at least should come close to the ideal of sainthood. The school of the diviners, to which Confucius was attached, called these second degree saints the "superior men" (*chün-tse*). The saints of antiquity, that is the saints of the first degree, were born saints. The qualities of a superior man could be acquired by studying the literature on those born saints, left behind by the saints of antiquity. To become a superior man one has to work on self-perfection, which means, first of all, the acquisition of the cardinal virtue of Confucianism, altruism (*jen*). In this virtue the perfection of the superior man is epitomized. On the basis of this virtue all relationships among men must be regulated. But this altruism is not without nuances. It is not a love that embraces all humanity indiscriminately: one naturally loves close relations more than distant ones, and good more than bad.

Adherence to the rites is the best way to abolish selffishness and acquire true altruism.[26] The rites are codified self-abnegation. In the Confucian system the rites are the practical rules for the application of altruism to the various types of human relationships. Since the rites are derived from the ancient saints they are categorically binding.

The duty to strive after virtues is incumbent on all noblemen, high and low, because every nobleman must be ready to be called by his lord to take over ministerial duties and exercise power in the government. Nothing is said about the plebeians, because they have only to obey. In his altruism the saint follows the example of Heaven.[27] Heaven always acts with justice. He is kind to those who worship him. He does not grant his favor arbitrarily. With his conviction concerning Heaven, Confucius looks at the events of history. Heaven has not forsaken the Hsia dynasty out of special consideration for the Shang; it was by its own corruption that the Hsia dynasty had forfeited Heaven's favors. Later the Shang dynasty by its conduct irritated Heaven and was dethroned by the Ch'ou. The downfall of a dynasty is the consequence of its own perversion, which Heaven punishes. At the same time Heaven sees to it that the people get a wise ruler. Kings and sages are under Heaven's order to guide the people. In 1766 B.C. T'ang received the heavenly order to destroy the Hsia dynasty. Heaven always acts to firm principles: he blesses the virtuous and hates evil men. This is "the way of Heaven" (*T'ien-tao*), the moral world order.

In a grandiose mythology Heaven is conceived as a giant; he has

26. According to the *Lun-yü*, 3:2, p.19. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.465.
27. See Forke, *Geschichte*, p.28.

a court life like a super-emperor, and he has a wife and children. Of these anthropomorphisms we find nothing in the writings of Confucius. The concept of Heaven has been spiritualized. Heaven never appears in a visible form like Yahweh in the Old Testament. The august Heaven has bestowed spirit and heart upon man on earth, and in the cultivation of their spiritual qualities men are capable of steadfastness. It is the duty of the ruler to help men to walk unperturbed the "way of Heaven".

When in Confucian literature reference is made to the saints of antiquity, the heroes of the Confucian legends are meant.[28] These legends, created by an historiography of Confucian inspiration, tell us of personalities and events at the beginning of Chinese history. We find them in the *Shu-king*, which Confucius highly revered and interpreted, and in the *Shih-ki* of Sze-ma Ts'ien (145–197 B.C.). Most popular are the emperor Yao and his successor Shun. With these two emperors the official historiography created a "mirror of princes" for the rulers of the coming generations. Chinese history also begins with a golden age insofar as at its beginning there are two model emperors, Yao (2357–2258 B.C.) and Shun (2258–2208, according to traditional chronology), who were never equalled later. The *Shu-king* praises also the Great Yü (2205–2198) of the Hsia dynasty. All these emperors were heroes of altruism.

The *Shu-king*, the Canon of History, includes, among other things, many speeches in which the virtues of the three model emperors are praised. They may contain some grains of truth, but it is more probable that the composer of the *Shu-king* wanted to show that later rulers were of much smaller caliber as compared with the ideal rulers of the golden age. Confucius himself was hardly responsible for this kind of hagiography, but it is probably through him that the emperor legends, which were current in his time, were taken as history by later generations.

Here is perhaps the appropriate place to say something about the so-called Chinese Classics.[29] They are intimately connected with Confucianism, though they are not to be considered as the work of Confucius. The Classics are commonly divided into the Five Canons (*wu-king*) and the Four Books (*sze-shu*). The Five Canons are the pre-Confucian writings which have been partly edited by Confucius, and in their entirety have been used by Confucius as a foundation and illustration of his own doctrine. To the Five Canons belong the Canon of the Mutations (*I-king*), the Canon of History (*Shu-king*),

28. See Hirth, *History*, pp.29 ff.
29. *Ibid.*, pp.251.

and the Canon of the Odes (*Shih-king*), which is a rich source of information on the oldest historically known culture of China and seems to have been given its final form by the editorial hand of Confucius. The fourth in the list of the Classics is the Canon of Rites (*Li-ki*), a collection of detailed ceremonial rules which the Chinese noblemen had to observe on various occasions. These rules were the the very soul of Chinese society and existed before Confucius. In the fifth book, *Ch'un-ch'iu* ("Spring and Autumn") we find he Annals of the State of Lu, which were first compiled by Confucius and later were amplified by commentators

With these Five Classics Confucius occupied himself for many years. In them the idea of the God of Heaven, as saint emperors of antiquity had conceived it, is made manifest more impressively and powerfully than ever in later times. This idea Confucius made his own. He conceived the saint as a ruler who, in imitation of the action of Heaven, exhausts himself by selflessly serving the people. He considered the Classics as the highest authority and derived from them the norms of all his thinking and planning as a reformer.

Confucius' own ideas and expressions are laid down in the so-called Four Books (*sze-shu*), which again were not written by him but were compiled by his disciples. The Four Books reflect best the frame of mind of Confucius. In the *Lun-yü*, or Discourses, also translated "Analects of Confucius", the conversations of the master with his disciples are put into writing. Their basic theme is filial piety, the foundation of the virtues of family life. Closely connected with it is the idea of the subordination of the young to their elders, and, as applied to the state, of vassals to their lord. Man must regulate his life by cultivating the five relationships: (1) between ruler and subject, (2) between father and son, (3) between husband and wife, (4) between elder any younger brother, (5) between friend and friend. A good government and peace and harmony in the country are guaranteed only to the extent to which the five relationships are fully realized. The concept of the gentleman (*chün-tse*) is a specific creation of Confucius' spirit.

Self-development as a means for reforming society is also the topic of another of the Four Books, the Great Learning (*Ta-hsüeh*). The Doctrine of the Mean (*Chung-yung*), also called the "Golden Mean," describes the gentleman or the superior man. Of him it is said that "he should stand upright in the center without leaning to one side." He does the right thing for its own sake regardless of praise or contempt. The fourth of the Four Books is *Mêng-tse*, a compendium of the teachings of Mencius. It resembles the *Lun-yü* insofar as it also reflects the conversation of the master with his disciples.

In all these books good government is the central concern. It should be attained by the moral attitude of ruler and subjects. The supreme sanction of all moral duties is the will of Heaven. Mencius, who lived several generations after Confucius, in considering Heaven as the ultimate principle of the world was faithful to his master. In *Mêng-tse* it is written, "Mencius said, 'if man develops his spiritual faculties to the fullest extent, he will understand his own nature; if he understands his own nature, he will understand Heaven. By preserving his spiritual faculties and cultivating his nature, he serves Heaven'."[30] The spiritual nature of man is akin to Heaven. "We have received our spirit from Heaven and we show our reverence to Heaven when we develop our spiritual faculties, because Heaven is spirit himself and values spirituality."[31]

Of Shang-ti Mencius speaks only in three quotations from the Classics. Sinologues are not in agreement whether the ancient Chinese thought of Heaven as a personality or as an impersonal spiritual power.[32] It seems to us however that a spiritual power must *eo ipso* be personal, that is, it has to be possessed by a person. If human nature is an image of the nature of Heaven, Heaven must *a fortiori* possess personality. Man makes his free decision between the good and the bad or the good and better. Such decision-making is the privilege of a personality. The prototype of the good man is Heaven, the most perfect personality. This personality reveals to man its will. "Heaven does not speak, but by his way of acting he reveals to man his will."[33] Further, Mencius says of Heaven that he rules the world, directs the deeds of man, gives leaders to the people, and to the leaders ruling power. Heaven gets his will done independently of the actions and will of man, but frequently uses men to achieve his purposes.

Yet in spite of this high concept of Heaven, Mencius concedes to man great influence in the shaping of his fate: "Luck and misfortune originate in man himself."[34] He bases his statement on an example from the *Shu-king*, according to which a man who obeys the commands of Heaven can gain much luck. Man's fate is the outcome both of the actions of Heaven and of man, the final result being the work of Heaven. Want and misery are not always misfortunes, as Heaven uses hard experiences of life to prepare a man for great tasks. "When Heaven wants to install a man in a difficult office, he first makes that

30. See Forke, *Geschichte*, p.197.

31. *Ibid.*, p.198.

32. Forke, *ibid.*, (*ibid.*, pp.31 ff.) gives a brief historical review of the divergent opinions; see also Hirth, *History*, pp.95 f.

33. Quoted and transl. in Forke, *Geschichte*, p.198. pp.95 f.

34. *Ibid.*

man's soul suffer much pain, his muscles and bones labor hard, his body starve and lose strength through hardships. He also confuses man's undertakings. By doing so Heaven awakens the man's energy, strengthens his character and supplies what is still missing in the man."[35]

Besides Heaven, Mencius mentions guardian-gods of countries, gods who in the feudal states enjoyed an importance next to Heaven, but Mencius concedes them only a minor position. The worship of Earth as the counterpart of Heaven was solely the duty of the central ruler; the feudal lords had to worship the guardian-spirit of their territory and the spirits of the crops. The people rank higher than the sovereign, next come the gods of the country, and the prince, third. If despite the offerings made, the people suffer from drought and floods, Mencius blames the gods of the county for not fulfilling their duty toward the people.

Confucius knew, besides Heaven, celestial and terrestrial gods and spirits and spirits of the dead. He stressed the duty of man to give offerings to gods and spirits. One has to give offerings to them "as if they were present." This attitude shows a certain reserve in regard to the actual presence of the higher beings at the sacrifices. Another sentence of Confucius makes us think that he was not too devout in worshiping the spirits: "One has to revere the spirits and demons, but one keeps away from them." Confucius was a staunch champion of ancestor worship, but set himself against all unnecessary pomp in funeral rites and in the ancestor sacrifices. He stood for a return to the initial simplicity of the cult as practiced at the time of the foundation of the Ch'ou dynasty. He never wavered in his belief that by divination with milfoil stalks or with a tortoise shell the will of the gods can be explored. The cabalistic book *I-king* he held in high regard, but even at an advanced age he admitted that he had a hard time to understand it. He was convinced also that Heaven rewards good men with luck and punishes evil men with misfortune. But at the same time he was well aware of the many exceptions to this rule, which he attributed to fate. Confucius gave much thought to the problem of world government by Heaven and the simultaneous existence of evil in the world without ever arriving at a satisfactory solution.

Mencius shows himself somewhat reserved with regard to the worship of the gods and condemns all excess in it. In ancestor worship he follows the traditional line. He considered it the greatest lack of filial piety to be indifferent about having a son. One of the most serious charges brought up in later times against Buddhist monasticism stems from this demand. If ancestors are to get their sacrifices, the

35. *Ibid.*, p.199.

family must not become extinct. The funeral is for Mencius the noblest manifestation of filial piety.

The Confucianists discussed repeatedly the question whether human nature is at birth good or bad. All possibilities in this respect were explored: Human nature is born bad and has to be made good by education. At birth human nature has both good and bad sides; the cultivation of the good and the suppression of the bad is a matter of culture. Man is born neither good nor bad, but external circumstances form him one way or the other. Mencius reclaims for man innate goodness. "By birth all men are gifted with compassion and sympathy for their fellowmen, with the sentiments of shame and aversion, of reverence and respect, of consent and dissent. Compassion and sympathy lead them to benevolence, shame and aversion to justice, reverence and respect to custom, consent and dissent to knowledge. Benevolence, justice, custom, and knowledge are not given us from outside, we possess them with our nature."[36]

In their moral attitudes men differ according to the external situations they are in, circumstances of time, and economic conditions. In years with good harvests most men are good and noble; in bad years, men are depraved.[37] This outlook seems to be somewhat deterministic and mechanical, but Mencius did not forget the role played by man's personal and free decision in the formation of his character. The innate goodness of man is lost unless consistently practiced. By a good night's rest not only the physical but also the moral energies are restored and refreshed. Yet these regular restorations are not sufficient to prevent the erosion of good character by the events of the day. Passions have to be brought under control. If man keeps order in his inner life he is rewarded with equanimity and peace of mind. If one has lost a good heart one can recover it by studying. "The purpose of studying is nothing else but the search for the lost heart."[38]

On the virtues to be practiced in human relationships, Mencius made many statements of perennial validity. He does not refer in each axiom to Heaven as the ultimate principle but, since human nature is for him an image of Heaven, moral norms are consequently based on the will of Heaven, the highest moral personality. Mencius demonstrated that in the cultivation of their virtues men must begin with the elimination of bad deeds. This makes one think of the *via purgativa* in the *Ascent to Mount Carmel* of St.John of the Cross.

36. *Ibid.*, p.202.
37. *Ibid.*, p.203.
38. *Ibid.*

According to Mencius, "Men must first know how not to act, before they can act."[39] By this statement Mencius did not make any concession to the Taoists with their concept of non-acting (*wu-wei*); he only wanted to say that the first step to good moral behavior is the omission of the opposite bad actions, bringing closer the peaceful coexistence of men in society. "It is a great deficiency on the part of men that they neglect their own fields while they are weeding the fields of others, and that they make heavy demands on others while they make only easy demands on themselves."[40]

Like Confucius, Mencius spoke at great length about the mutual relationships existing between the different groups of society. He refers to the saint Emperor Shun who according to tradition ordered Hsieh, his minister of education, to disseminate among the people the following principles: "Between father and son affection must prevail, between the prince and the subjects justice, between husband and wife division of spheres of activities, between the elder and the younger the correct precedence, between friend and friend faithfulness."[41] What Mencius has to tell us on many details of the virtuous life belongs to the best that has ever been written anywhere on this subject. The doctrine of Mencius can stand comparison with the Sapiential Books of the Old Testament. His saying that "he who strives for riches is not benevolent, and he who values benevolence will not obtain riches,"[42] makes us think of Christ's word that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven." How thoughtful Mencius was in his teaching, we can grasp also from what he says about custom: custom can be disregarded if by its rigid application more evil is done than by its neglect. It was a strict custom that men and women should never touch one another. But that man would be like a wolf who would not rescue his sister-in-law who were about to be drowned.[43]

Schools are for Mencius above all institutions for moral education in which the five relationships should be thaught. The saints and the sages of antiquity made their ennobling influence felt not only in their time but also for posterity. "The saints are the teachers for a hundred generations."[44] Selfish people who hear of them become selfless, the weak become strong, misers become open handed. Perfect generosity never fails to have its impact on others." The saints are

39. *Ibid.*
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*, p.204.
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*, p.205.

not examples beyond reach; everybody can become a Yao or a Shun if he emulates them in every respect.[45] Mencius places the saints within reach of every man. Not so Confucius, whose saints are beings of a higher order; an ordinary man can only become a saint of the second degree, a *chün-tse*, or gentleman.

Mencius gave much thought to the virtues of family life. He stressed heavily the dignified burial of parents. The philosopher Mo-ti and his school criticized the Cnfucianists for this because many people ruined themselves financially by lavish expenses of funerals. The three early dynasties decreed a mourning period of three years for everybody, from the emperor down to the common man. During this time the mourners had to wear sack-cloth and eat only rice gruel.

According to their degree of perfection Mencius classifies men as genuine, excellent, great, saints, and *genii*.[46] Great men whose ennobling influence is strongly felt by others are called saints, and saints whose activities we cannot comprehend are called *genii*. Mencius has something to say, too, on the gentleman (*chün-tse*), among other things, that he is simple and sincere like a child. "A great man is one who has not lost his childlike mentality."[47] This sentence too sounds Taoist. As we shall see in our treatment of Taoism, the Taoists consider the child as the perfect man because its nature is still pure and not yet spoiled by passions and the corruptions of civilization. Yet the Taoist ethical doctrine is different from that of the Confucianists.

Man differs from the animal by virtue of his education. Men who live in comfort but have learned nothing "are not much different from animals. Mencius says: 'The difference between man on one side and animals and birds on the other is only a a small one. The masses abandon this difference; only the gentleman preserves it' ".[48]

In his teaching on the state Mencius shows less esteem for the princes than Confucius. For Mencius the people come first, the ruler second, but Confucius gives first place to the ruler. Mencius was not deceived by the pomp of princes. At this time the king of the Ch'ou was only a powerless figure. The feudal states were ruled by vassals, the most powerful of whom had usurped the title of king, and almost all vassals had assumed a higher title than was due them. The positions in the official hierarchy had become hereditary. Mencius expected from ministers that they admonish the king again and again

45. *Ibid.*

46. The Chinese terms for each category are given in Forke, *Geschichte*, p.206, n.7.

47. *Ibid.*, p.207.

48. *Ibid.*

if he neglected his duties. If all admonitions are of no avail they can depose him. A criminal ruler can even be killed. It is a Chinese axiom that a rebel who kills his ruler is only executing the will of Heaven. The successful rebel puts the legitimate king to death, the executed king is then branded as a criminal, and the rebel ascends his throne. If his rebellion is unsuccessful, the rebel himself is the criminal and deserves capital punishment. This is the orthodox Confucian justification of regicide.

Morality is the fondation of government. The state is in good order only if the virtues of family life are practiced. The prince himself must lead his people by his good example. "If the prince is benevolent, all will be benevolent. If he is honest, all will be honest."[49] Mencius tried to explain to King Hui of Liang how a benevolent government can create peace and harmony in the state, saying: "If your majesty wants to give a benevolent government to your people, you have to be considerate in inflicting punishments and fines, and moderate in exacting taxes and excises, so that the people can plough their fields deeply and weed them. The strong will then in their leisure time practice filial piety, brotherly love, sincerity and faithfulness."[50]

A benevolent government attracts inhabitants of other states, and a ruler whose government is benevolent can without difficulty obtain for himself domination over all China and become the central ruler. With regard to the power of virtue, Mencius was an optimist if not an utopian, yet his lofty ideals had an ennobling effect on the Chinese people. He lived in a time of crass egoism on the part of the rulers and he hoped to eliminate their selfishness by preaching the virtue of benevolence. There were already sects in this period which advocated that every man, the princes and officials included, till their fields personally and live on the products of their own hands. Mencius was opposed to this mania for leveling, on the ground that the things of the world are not all of the same value and that not all men should be treated equally. He also stressed the division of labor that is necessary in community life. Besides the farmers who produce foods, men engaged in trades and industry are needed too, and finally intellectual workers who rule the country.

Mencius was a pacifist. He had great aversion against the chronic wars among the feudal lords and the resulting misery in the country. He gave thought also to the question how a prince should behave if his country is attacked. Two ways are open for the prince, namely, either to defend his country to the bitter end according to all the rules

49. *Ibid.*, p.210.
50. *Ibid.*

of warfare, or to buy the favor of the attacking states by paying ample tribute to them. But if war cannot be avoided, he can leave the country and settle down elsewhere along with all those who follow him. Only by order of Heaven may a state attack another state. If Heaven has actually issued the order, success follows.

Mencius was an idealistic moralist. His approach to the problems he wanted to tackle is rationalistic and he rarely brings religious considerations to his arguments. In the background of his doctrine nevertheless there is always present the binding sanction of the will of Heaven. The mandate of Heaven becomes manifest in situations when to be or not to be is the question.

4. Other Currents of Thought

There were other philosophers and schools, less significant than those already discussed, but each making some contribution to the fabric of Chinese thought.

Hsün-tse, His Life and Work

The exact lifetime of Hsün-tse is unknown, but he must have lived in the third century B.C., and it is probable that he was born in 310. He succesively held various official positions. His influence on the tradition and interpretation of the Confucian classics was even stronger than that of Mencius. In the Confucian schools of the Western Han Dynasty (202–9 B.C.) his writings dominated. Liu Hsiang, who by imperial order edited the classics and the writings of historiographers and philosophers, included, in 26 B.C., an edition of Hsün-tse.[51]

Hsün-tse was vigorously rejected by the followers of Mencius whose doctrines he contradicted on several scores, and only a moderate faction of Confucians has accepted him. The controversy over Hsün-tse extended over many centuries. Finally in the Ming period (1368–1644) an expurgated edition of Hsün-tse was published in which all points offensive to the Confucians were omitted. The main offenses were Hsün-tse's low opinion of the sages, his branding Mencius as a corruptor of the state, and his opinion of human nature as bad. The evaluation of Hsün-tse shows how lively were the discussions carried on even within the Confucian camp. In his thinking Hsün-tse was keener than Mencius and very independent. He frequently used Taoist terms but connected Confucian concepts with them.

51. On problems of literary criticism with regard to Hsün-tse, see Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.218 f.

Many ideas with religious content are found in his writings. He meditated much on Heaven, on *Tao*, and on fate.[52] For him, the action of Heaven is spontaneous, and not conscious and planned. "What is accomplished without consciousness, and obtained without striving after it, is called the activity of Heaven," a pronouncement which could have been made by a genuine Taoist. It seems that Heaven is for Hsün-tse not a personal ruler of the world but rather an unconscious natural force which works according to established rules. Lao-tse and Chuang-tse thought of Heaven as of a spiritual power, but Heaven, it seems, is for Hsün-tse a blind force of nature.[53] "The acting of Heaven is determined by definite rules which Heaven does not keep for the sake of Yao, and does not disregard for the sake of Ch'ieh. If a good government accommodates itself to these rules, happiness will be the result; if a bad government occurs misfortune will follow."[54] Luck and misfortune are made by man himself, they do not result because Heaven loves Yao and hates Ch'ieh. Hsün-tse says further: "Heaven is not cold because men are bad, it is because of the wintertime that it is cold. The earth is not infinitely wide because men are bad, it is wide because of its extension. Heaven has its fixed rules, and the earth has fixed determinations."[55]

Hsün-tse obviously thinks of Heaven as something material like the earth and not something spiritual like man, when he says: "Heaven does not speak, but men figure out its height; the earth does not speak, but men figure out its thickness. The four seasons do not speak, but men learn from them the time. Their fixed laws are the result of their highest perfection .... Heaven and earth are great, without their perfection they could not produce things."[56] Again: "Heaven and earth are the origin of all life." He considers the origin of life as a natural process and does not see why behind the mystery of birth there should be any divine being. He calls Heaven the origin of life, but because of this Heaven must not be a divine being. As for all Confucianists, Heaven is also for him the supreme principle of all things. Hsün-tse operates with the concept of *Tao*, but his *Tao* is not metaphysical as it is for the Taoists. By *Tao* he means customs and laws, something in the realm of human behavior. "Tao is customs, obligingness, truthfulness and faith."[57] Hsün-tse never interprets

52. Our summary follows Forke, *Geschichte*, pp.222 ff.

53. The interpretation of Hsün-tse's writings on Heaven is still a matter of controversy; cf. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.222, n.7.

54. *Ibid.*, p.223.

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*, p.224.

the *Tao* as the absolute and ultimate principle of all existing things. *Tao* is for him a mode of behavior along the lines of Confucian ethics which are based on the *Shu-king* (Documents).

When Hsün-tse says that the *Tao* is recognized by man through emptiness, concentration and peace of mind, his words again show a Taoist tint. The Taoists teach that movements of the will, thoughts and sentiments have first to be removed from the heart and that only out of a condition of complete apathy will the light of *Tao* shine. Contrary to the Taoists, Hsün-tse finds that knowledge and movements of will are not contrary to the emptiness of heart. For Hsün-tse the *Tao* is the highest moral principle. To recognize this principle one needs only to concentrate his mind on the *Tao*, to empty the mind of other thoughts, and to meditate exclusively on the *Tao*. It is recognition by reasoning and not by mystic intuition. Avidity and others desires need not be eradicated, but they must be brought into conformity with the *Tao*. Hsün-tse's moral philosophy is activist; he warns however against an exaggerated activity, without regard for justice and morals.

Heaven acts in accordance with eternal laws and does not interfere in the life of man. The fate of man is not simply the will of Heaven. Man creates his fate himself by his deeds. "One who knows what fate is does not complain about Heaven .... One who complains about fate does not possess resoluteness."[58] Another typical pronouncement of Hsün-tse is: "The gentleman assiduously cultivates his own strength and expects nothing from Heaven, and thus he makes progress day by day. The mean man neglects what depends on himself, and asks for help of Heaven, and by doing so he regresses day by day."[59] Still more pronounced are the following: "Instead of praising Heaven it is better to shape and use the life that has been given by Heaven. Instead of waiting for a more favorable time, it is better to act in accordance with the time and to use it." When it is said that life is given to man at birth, it means that man receives from nature body and mind. His future life and fate depend to a great extent on how he treats his body and mind. External circumstances, which we call time, also play an important role.

Hsün-tse repeatedly shows the impossibility of a direct interference of Heaven in the life of man. If men store up provisions and use them sparingly, Heaven cannot make them poor; if men feed themselves well and work at the right time, Heaven cannot make them sick. If men do not deviate from their duties, Heaven cannot send them

58. *Ibid.*, p.225.
59. *Ibid.*

misfortune. We find here nothing of the educational purpose of sufferings which Heaven sends. On the other side, if somebody dissipates his stored provisions Heaven cannot create wealth for him. Heaven has no way of helping if man himself induces his misfortune by shortsightedness and negligence. All that concerns man is the strength of his physical constitution, his own abilities, and his external living conditions; everything follows in the natural way. Man need not be afraid of strange natural phenomena such as meteors, eclipses of the sun and moon, storms, and showers, things which are usually taken as manifestations of divine anger or warnings for evildoers. All natural phenomena are produced by the cooperation of Heaven and Earth, of *Yin* and *Yang*, and have no further meaning. Happines and unhappiness of the country do not depend on good or bad omens, but only on how the ruler fulfills his duties.[60]

We have noticed that an impersonal concept of Heaven is manifest in Hsün-tse's philosophy. The controversy on the nature of Heaven ceased. The proponents of the personal concept of Heaven were the philosophers who closely followed Confucius and Mencius; their opponents were those who introduced elements alien to the Confucian system. Hsün-tse not only deviates from Confucius on the nature of Heaven but also on human nature. Human nature he finds basically bad. Men strive to be good because they realize that they are lacking something. If men were good by nature they would not need virtue and sages. Without a powerful government, without justice and customs, and without laws only quarrels and fights would prevail. These restrictions of freedom are necessary to make human existence possible. They show at the same time that human nature is bad and has to be tamed. "Human nature is bad, and what is good in man is acquired."[61] Men are always on the lookout for their personal benefit, and thus conflict and robbery follow. Men hate each other and indulge in their passions. This leads to dissoluteness and cruelty. Men therefore need to be educated by teachers, good example, and the guidance of laws and customs. It is only in this way that mild manners and self-control are cultivated and orderly cultural conditions are created.

In order to better human nature, wise kings have instituted laws and customs. "Customs and laws are the active and planned result of the activities of the sages and do not spring from human nature."[62] Gentlemen are different from the common people because they have received the good from outside. The nature of the wise rulers Yao

60. Condensed from Forke, *Geschichte*, p.226.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*, p.227.

and Shun was originally not different from that of notorious bandits, but they made it noble and are now admired for it. It is possible for all men to ennoble their natures. Everybody can become a Yü. "If men constantly practice the good, they can converse with the spirits and become like Heaven and Earth. The way to sainthood, open to all, is constant practice."[63]

Hsieh Wu-liang, in his *History of Chinese Philosophy*,[64] has pointed out the difference between the teachings of Mencius and Hsün-tse with regard to human nature as follows:

Mencius: Human nature is good by birth.
Hsün-tse: It is bad.
M.: His moral abilities are given to man by nature.
H.: Morals are created by the saints out of necessity.
M.: Moral evil comes from desires and education from outside.
H.: Moral good comes from outside through education by the sages.
M.: Knowledge is obtained by recollection and interior life and by the preservation of good abilities.
H.: Knowledge comes from outside through customs, justice and laws.
M.: Education is accomplished by the elimination of desires and the unfolding of good qualities.
H.: Education consists in the transformation of bad qualities and the acceptance of the customs and laws of the sages.
M.: Benevolence and justice come from the good qualities of the heart.
H.: Customs, laws, and justice forcibly transform the bad qualities from outside.

Following his premises that human nature is bad, Hsün-tse does not regard man's thinking very highly. He recommends a moment's thought rather than pondering over a matter a whole day. Important truths are found only by the great sages and then transmitted to mankind—this is the essence of culture. Studies must all begin with the Classics and be concluded with the rites. First one becomes a scholar and then a saint. The main purpose of studies is the formation of character. The student has to keep antiquity in high esteem because the fundamental and binding truths for all future generations come from the ancient sages and kings. The gentleman also must start by learning virtue first. By accumulating virtue man can arrive at an intercourse with the spirits; the spirits of nature will feel attracted

63. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.227.
64. *Ibid.*, p.228.

by the virtuous man and offer him their help. Hsün-tse describes the gentleman (*chün-tse*) thus: "The gentleman is noble without rank, rich without income, he does not have to speak to inspire confidence, he impresses people without being angry, he has fame when in a bad situation, and he is cheerful, also when he is alone."[65]

While Mencius stresses benevolence and justice, Hsün-tse puts the accent on custom. Confucius considers these three virtues—benevolence, justice, and custom—equally important. Custom is important for Hsün-tse because the living together of men is based on it; in order to avoid frictions the kings introduced regulations and distinctions which are the origin of customs. The ancient kings inaugurated customs in order to distinguish between noblemen and commoners, between the old and the young.

In his teaching of the state Hsün-tse maintains that Heaven has installed the ruler for the benefit of the people. In the center of the intellectual struggles of his time, Hsün-tse was fighting almost all the philosophers of the past and of his own time except Confucius. He criticized Lao-tse for always advocating retreat and never progress. In Chuang-tse, an outstanding Taoist, he found fault because he was familiar with heavenly things but not with things on earth. Yao and Shun, the legendary emperors, are highly praised as examples of virtue. Confucius is given unreserved approval. Of the Confucianists Hsün-tse said that they followed the example of the early kings, always standing for custom and justice, and that as officials they were duty conscious and worked for the prestige of their princes.

One group among the post-Confucian philosophers were the Nominalists. They proclaimed that order in thinking and in public and private life is effected by giving each thing its correct name. Together with the whole cultural heritage, correct names also came from the ancients. Hsün-tse wrote a chapter on the rectification of names (*cheng-ming-p'ien*), in which he pointed out that only after the ancient kings had invented and determined the names of the things did it become possible to understand truth and to distinguish between the various truths. All those who arbitrarily invented names and then deluded people with false names were punished, just as were those who forged measures and weights. Names should signify the truth. By names the identity and value of things is judged like noble and mean, equal and unequal. By the combination of several truths we get a sentence or judgment. Hsün-tse is logically consistent when he says: "The names are not in themselves appropriate, but are only conventions for calling things. They are fixed by customs, and names

65. *Ibid.*, 233.

which run counter to the conventions are called inappropriate".[66] Hsün-tse differs here from Yin-wen who maintained that all that is good has good names, and what is bad has bad names.

Together with the contemporaneous Legalist school Hsün-tse demanded severe laws. He did not believe in the virtue or the force of law as such, but found it justified when a government ruled with severe laws in order to teach the people how to do good, which they do not know by nature. "A straight piece of wood needs not to be pressed to be straight, it is straight by nature. A bent piece of wood must first be softened before it can be straightened, because it is not straight by nature. Because human nature is bad, it must submit to the regulations made by the saint kings, and to the transformations made by the rites and justice, in order to conform itself to the good."[67]

In matters of rites and justice (*li-yi*) Hsün-tse came under the influence of Mencius, but goes far beyond Mencius when he says:

> "What is the origin of rites? Men have from birth on their desires which they cannot satisfy and which they cannot cease from trying to satisfy. Since there is no measure for division [among individuals], men cannot abstain from disputes. Disputes produce disorder, and disorder produces limitation [in the satisfaction of desires]. The ancient kings hated disorder, and they, therefore, instituted the rites and justice, in order to fix the individual shares by satisfying the desires of man, by giving him what he seeks and by preventing desires from being limited by things and by preventing things from being subject to his desires, in order that the real things and the desires of man support each other mutually and directly. This is the origin of rites".[68] "Justice is the very origin of society, and without it there could be no society.... Not animals, but only men are able to organize themselves into a society by dividing their spheres of interest as individuals by means of justice. Justice also brings about the consent of men to this division. Men in accord form a unit, and as a unit have much power. They can have palaces and houses to live in. They are thus in a position to regulate the four seasons, govern all things and universally do much good for the world. Such benefits result from rites and from justice. Men are not already organized into a society at birth. If they organize themselves into a society without division of interests, there will be conflict. Conflict creates disorder and disorder leads to disunity. In disunity men are weak. When weak they do not dominate things. They then have no palaces to live in. This all shows that rites and justice cannot for a moment be left aside".[69]

Men owe their society to the saints who wanted to bring order, based

66. *Ibid.*; cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.573 ff.
67. Quoted in translation in Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.568.
68. *Ibid.*, p.569.
69. *Ibid.*, pp.569–570.

on rites and justice, to mankind.

To sum up, good government will be assured by the saint who—by correcting names so that all orders can be understood, and then by educating the people in the rites—will establish order in the world and will maintain it by severe punishments for those who deviate from the right path, either by discourses contrary to the correction of names or by acting against rites. Hsün-tse's saint possesses an entirely earthly sainthood or, as we might perhaps say today, a sainthood which consists in community service and concern for the order of this world and for the benefit of men living therein. However, Hsün-tse did not think, as Confucius and Mencius did, that the saint's government must necessarily emulate that of the saints of antiquity, Yao and Shun, for instance. It is much better to emulate saintly modern kings and not those of a far away past of whom we know only very little. On this score the Legalist school has again exercised its influence on Hsün-tse, and more strongly than on Mencius. Hsün-tse, however, modified the borrowed ideas considerably. The Legalists thought of the present world as different from the earlier one, thus a government recommended by the ancient saints would never fit into the present time. Hsün-tse finds that the times have always remained the same and that present men are of the same stuff as those of previous times. But the saints of antiquity are so far away that one knows almost nothing about them. The saints of the present time are nearer to us and more clearly visible.[70]

Furthermore, by already being a saint, the saint knows the right thing to do without having to rely on the example of others. By his own mental effort he can distinguish between the true and the false course of action, and by a mental effort also he can choose between good and evil. This effort is not purely intellectual, not only an act of reason, but is accompanied by meditation which leads to the saint very far, to the moment in which his mind, freed from all contingencies, apprehends the very nature of things and is able to name them without error. In this respect Hsün-tse follows Taoist ways of thinking. It is not yet an ecstatic condition but at least one of trance in which the mind is freed from all physical bonds. This condition Hsün-tse calls the Great Pure Clarity (*ta-ts'ing-ming*). In describing this clarity he uses expressions which remind us of the great Taoist Chuang-tse, who wrote: "One who finds himself in this condition, of ten thousand things he can classify each and every one. Sitting in his house he sees the whole world; though being placed himself in the present he discourses over the remote past; he penetrates all things and knows

70. *Ibid.*, p.570.

their essence; he studies order and disorder and knows their names: he rules Heaven and Earth and rules the ten thousand things."[71]

The procedure by which one arrives at this condition, according to Hsün-tse, again shows Taoist influence even down to technical terms. "How can one understand the principle *Tao* [of good government]? Through the heart. How does the heart understand it? The heart must be calmed by emptiness and concentration."[72] We find here the Taoist "emptiness." For meditation the mind must completely eliminate all those things which ordinarily obscure it.

> Man, by birth, possesses knowledge; possessing knowledge, he has intentions; the intentions are included in knowledge. But in spite of this inclusion the heart possesses what is called the "void." At birth the heart has knowledge, and with this knowledge it differentiates. Differentiation is to know different things at the same time. To know different things at the same time is to dissipate onecelf. Yet the heart has what is called concentration; not to harm one idea by another, that is, concentration. The heart dreams in sleep; when neglected, it acts alone by itself. If it is used, it reflects; it is thus not free from agitation, but retains its calm. The condition in which knowledge is not disturbed by the illusions of the dream is called its calm.[73]

This sainthood, which is the condition of good government, can, according to Hsün-tse and Mencius, be acquired by everyone. It is enough that man makes the same effort the saints did. By doing this man becomes a saint (*sheng*), or at least a superior man (*chün-tse*), a gentleman, or a great man (*ta-jen*). Formation of the saint was one of the problems that occupied Hsün-tse most. In the human mind two elements are combined, one called nature (*hsing*), the other, the artificial (*wei*). This distinction, of Taoist origin, became a commonplace in the psychology of the time and was also applied by Hsün-tse. "That by which man is man is called nature (*hsing*)." Nature is given to man by Heaven. It cannot be acquired by learning or any other human effort.[74] The artificial is the product of reflection. By accumulated reflection man can acquire habits and perfect himself.[75]

The natural movements of the soul, such as love and hate, contentment and anger, pain and lust, are the reactions of man to his contacts with the external world. They are the substratum for the artificial; "the heart chooses from among them, and this is called reflection." The accumulation of reflections gradually produces the artificial. All

71. *Ibid.*, p.572.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*, p.573.
74. Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.573.
75. *Ibid.*, p.574.

that is good in man is artificial. The effort of the saint must not consist in a return to natural simplicity, as the Taoists wish, or in recovering "one's heart, which is the heart of a babe," as Mencius suggests. The saint endeavors to move away as far as possible from bad nature by developing the artificial. The saint is a man who has accumulated good notions by continuous study. Sainthood is not innate, it can be acquired. "The first comer, if he accumulates the good till perfection is reached, is called a saint."[76] This accumulation can be effected by education. Education is all-powerful. The children of civilized people and those of barbarians alike cry at their birth; the difference between civilized men and barbarians has been produced by education.

In education not all that the Confucians use is necessary: the Documents (*Shu-king*), the Odes (*Shih-king*), the Chronicle (*Ch'un-ch'iu*) are useless, only the study of Rites (*Li-ki*) is essential. "Rites and Music give examples, but they do not speak." Best of all is to accept the guidance of a teacher. "Nothing leads to such rapid progress as close friendship with a teacher. [Under the guidance of a teacher] conformity to the Rites comes quickly."[77] Without friendly relations with a teacher and without accomodation to the Rites, and through the study only of the Documents and the Odes, one will remain a narrow-minded scholar for his whole life. Learning, when carried on as it should be, leads to a complete transformation of the student. "The studies to which a Superior Man (*chün-tse*) devotes himself enter through his ear, settle in his heart, expand in his four limbs, take shape in action and in calmness. He speaks correctly, behaves with dignity, and he can serve us in all respects."[78] Poorly guided learning is of no use. "When a man of small account studies, his studies enter through his ears and come out again through his mouth. The distance between ears and mouth is only four inches how should this be enough to improve a body that is seven feet long?"[79]

As the quotations above indicate, Hsün-tse was a man of powerful mind who succeeded in developing a coherent system of thought which gave new life to Confucianism. His concept of a basically bad human nature was an exaggeration, but it was not destined to end in pessimism. It is better not to think too highly of human nature than to fall from one state of despair into another. Culture has to be built up in each individual from nothing, and there are ways and means to make of every man a good man. Outside pressure by rites and laws coincides

76. *Ibid.*, p.575.
77. *Ibid.*
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid.*, p.576.

with the gradually growing personal efforts to which no limits can be set. Every man is in the position to outgrow himself and to become a saint. The concept of the saint occupies a large place in Hsün-tse's ethics. Thoroughly and with a critical mind he analyzed other systems from which he appropriated good elements that fitted into his own system. His influence on his contemporaries seems to have been considerable. It was still felt in the second century B.C. and strongly impressed the literati of the Han Period until the day when the rediscovered Mencius eclipsed him.

The Confucian thinkers, especially Hsün-tse, impress us by the courageous and thoroughgoing treatment of the problem "man": human nature, its elevation and ennoblement, the fundamental structure of society, the position of man in the universe—*nihil humani eis alienum*. Above man is Heaven, the sum total of all perfection, and the gods and spirits. Through his own effort man can grow higher and reach the realm of superhuman beings. Confucianism has contributed to Chinese culture one very essential element which we can call humanism. This ennoblement is to a great extent identical with altruism, or service to the community. The highest norm for all human activity is Heaven. He is a spiritual and personal being, at least for the majority of the Confucian thinkers. Heaven ranks so high above man that the philosophers could not reconcile him with man or any other creature on earth. Hsün-tse saw in the sovereign activity of Heaven something like a natural law.

The investigation of the nature of material things on earth did not come within the sphere of interest of the Chinese philosophers. Here lies the fundamental difference between the Chinese and the classical Mediterranean culture. The Confucians looked at nature from their humanistic and ethical standpoint and thus never penetrated into its depths and mysteries. When in modern times a confrontation with an alien culture became unavoidable, the Chinese with their humanistic culture could have deeply impressed the world. They were, however, unprepared to meet the challenges of the scientifically and technically superior civilization of their new partner with whom they had now to share the world. They suffered a shock which made their spiritual world crumble, but this does not mean that their old culture was devoid of lasting values. The Confucian philosophy, together with other systems like Taoism and Buddhism, has enormously spiritualized human life, and contains values which are precious elements in the culture of the world. The "wisdom of the East" was recognized as such by unbiased minds long ago, and should be studied again in our own day.

In an outline of the religion of the Chinese we have to confine

ourselves to the structural pillars of their spiritual world, to the religious ideas of the most representative and influential philosophers. In the case of Confucianism the most significant are undoubtedly Confucius, Mencius, and Hsün-tse. However, to make their profiles stand out more distinctly, it will be well here to treat briefly several other systems of Chinese thought.

b. The School of the Ritualists

When Confucius died his doctrine was kept alive by his immediate and subsequent disciples and transmitted to posterity in several schools, all of which specialized in rites and also continued the Confucian system of teaching.[80] This means that the students were initiated in the Documents (*Shu-king*), the Odes (*Shih-king*), the Annals (*Ch'un-ch'iu*), the Rites, and Music. Occasionally also the Book of Changes (*I-king*) was part of the program. The school of Tse-sze, toward the end of the third century A.D. gave the *I-king* its definite form, and the *Wen-yen*, or Appendices, was added to it. At the same time, the members of Tse-sze's school edited small works on the rites, of which some are still extant and are included in the Book of Rites (*Li-ki*).[81] The second part of the Doctrine of the Mean (*Chung-yung*) must have been one of the last works of the Ritualists on the eve of the persecution of the literati by the first emperor of Ts'in (221–207 B.C.).[82] Although Mencius and Hsün-tse were the most prominent Confucians in the fourth and third centuries, it is mostly owing to the Ritualists that the Confucian school had enough vitality to withstand the crisis of the third century and to emerge from it stronger than ever. This school taught predominantly practical subjects, which were more in demand than the profound theories of the speculative philosophers. The institutions of the ritualistic Confucians preserved the old belief in Heaven in the time of crisis and transmitted it to coming generations. How efficient their orthodox way of teaching was is evident from the fact that the old belief in Heaven passed down from the world of the literati to the people, among whom it is still a living force in modern times.

80. In this section we also follow Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.182 ff.

81. Cf. Hirth, *History*, p.252 ff. Hirth writes: "The *Li-ki* corresponds in spirit to the *Ch'ou-li*, which to us [for the history of ancient China] is of much greater importance as a record of historical value, though it is not included among the canonical books of prime importance. The *Li-ki* may be called the ceremonial code of the private man, whereas the *Ch'ou-li* is devoted to public life and the institutions of the government."

82. The king declared himself "First Emperor", *shih-huang-ti*.

c. Mo-tse, the Philosopher of Universal Love

During the fifth century B.C. the work of Confucius was continued by a very original thinker, Mo-tse.[83] He lived in Lu, probably in the second half of the century, and was the leader of a school there. Though he started out from a Confucian position on problems, he arrived at conclusions which differ in several respects so widely from those of Confucius that he cannot be aligned with the Confucians. He found followers, but his doctrine foundered in the spiritual turmoil of the third century and was never taken up again by other philosophers in later centuries.

Mo-tse cherished the things of antiquity less than Confucius did though he was a bookish type. He hated music and saw in it the source of all corruption at his time. His religious piety was a characteristic trait. He believed in the power of the Lord of Above and used this name much more frequently than the less personal name, "Heaven." He believed in the souls of the dead and was convinced that they favorably intervened in the affairs of this world. He disliked, however, the external ritual demonstrations and he condemned the long mourning period of three years and the complicated ceremonies of ancestor worship, especially the music. His religion was entirely personal and consisted first of all in conforming with the will of Heaven. With its strong personal character his religion contrasted sharply with the markedly social orientation of the ancient religion. On this score Mo-tse occupied a position which was definitely at variance with the Confucians for whom the rites had their own value and who performed them without giving much thought to the superior beings who were to be worshiped by them.

In the history of Chinese philosophy Mo-tse is known for his cultivation of dialectic and logic. Before him the books were hardly more than a sequence of unrelatated paragraphs, an accumulation of loosely connected ideas. Mo-tse was not content with affirmations, he wanted to prove and present his ideas in logical sequence. This was an innovation which greatly contributed to Mo-tse's success. Students came to him to learn the art of discussion. When Mo-tse died at the beginning of the fourth century, China began to be flooded by sophists of all philosophical shades for whom the art of discussion meant everything with ideas regarded as incidental and cheap. Yet it is Mo-tse's lasting merit that he was the first to teach the Chinese to put thoughts in logical order.[84]

83. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.468 ff.
84. *Ibid.*, pp.471 ff.

Mo-tse's ideological system is basically a logical development of that of Confucius, to which he closely adheres despite numerous deviations in detail. The main difference between him and his master is that he tries to justify his theory not by the authority of the ancient saints but by logical reasoning. While Confucius preserved the old superior man, and his virtues, Mo-tse discarded them completely. He concepts of the scribes and diviners with regard to the saint, the made altruism the fundamental virtue of the gentleman, but without borrowing this concept from the ancient saints. He defines the concept of altruism most elaborately by making it universal love and attributing to it that active influence which Confucius had attributed to the supernatural power of the saints. If this universal love is once put into practice, everything will go well. Mo-tse's universal love goes far beyond the altruism of Confucius. Confucius held that somehow all men must be loved, but also that this love must be graduated according to the rank and the class of the men loved, decreasing in intensity according to the distance from the loving individual and his family. No such distinctions between near and far exist in the universal love: all men are equally comprised in it. A love which distinguishes is no virtue; on the contrary, it is the source of all evil in the world. Only universal love without discrimination can save the world.[85] The universal love must be carried through to the end, which is self-sacrifice. "To kill a man in order to save the world, that is not acting for the good of the world. To sacrifice oneself for the good of the world, that is acting for the good of the world."[86]

From this principle of universal love Mo-tse judges princes and their governments. He attacks their extravagant expenditures, their feasts which exploit the people, and the long mourning periods they impose on their subjects. This is one of the points of Mo-tse's doctrine which shocked those who were imbued with Confucian ritualism.[87] Mo-tse advocated a return to the simplicity of the ancient saints who were content with coarse clothing and ordinary food. He wanted the ceremonies to be simplified by the suppression of music and all luxury. He condemned war as the worst injustice on earth. Making war is crime that deserves capital punishment: to kill ten men deserves ten deaths; to kill a hundred men is a hundred times more unjust and deserves death a hundred times. Yet in fact no prince punishes the

85. In this connection Maspéro quotes a long passage from Mo-tse on universal love as the salvation of the world; *La Chine*, pp.474–476.

86. *Ibid.*, p.476.

87. Maspéro (*La Chine*, p.476) refers to Wu Yu, "A Neglected Side of Mo Tzu's Doctrine as Seen through Hsün Tzu", in *Shinagaku*, 2.7 (1922: 1–18)

makers of war, and war is glorified and declared just.

Universal love, if practiced, is a blessing for the world. The saints ruled the world well because they practiced universal love. It is to this love that they owed their influence and their good government. At the beginning all men had their own ideas, which they wanted to see materialized, and egoism dominated all. Father and sons, elder and younger brothers, were fighting for personal advantages like wild animals. To remedy this condition, they sought out the wisest and the saintliest man in the world and made him the Son of Heaven, and they gave him other wise men as assistants. Thus order replaced anarchy.

But one does not need to be a ruler or minister in order to effect the happiness of the world by practicing univeral love. Universal love makes its influence felt independently of the office of its advocate. It need not depend, like the altruism of Confucius, on the efficiency of a ruler. How can universal love be attained? One must practice altruism (*jen*) and justice (*yi*). One must get rid of passions. For the practice of justice one must know the right method. Confucius wanted the rulers to learn justice by studying the books on ancient history and rites. Mot-tse holds that the books are nothing more than written remains. To find altruism Mo-tse looks up to Heaven. Man must emulate Heaven and do what pleases Heaven and omit what displeases Heaven.[88] "Heaven likes fairness and hates unfairness. If I encourage the people to act with fairness, I am doing the will of Heaven; Heaven, for his part, fulfills my desires."[89]

Heaven is for Mo-tse the Lord of Above, personal god, omnipotent and omniscient. "His eye is the sun which sees and illumines everything, before Heaven there is no dark ravine, no hiding place, no desert which his light does not penetrate."[90] To the submission to Heaven Mo-tse dedicates a whole chapter, points out that one has to interpret the will of Heaven correctly and adjust one's actions to it.[91]

Knowledge is not acquired from books; it consists in the worship of Heaven and the gods and in love for men. The worship of Heaven and the gods does not consist in the punctilious performance of the customary rites but in conformity with their will. This conformity alone leads to universal love. Heaven is the noblest and wisest being, and no one on earth can equal him in esteem, power, and insight. In Heaven originate benevolence and justice, the two foundations of

88. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.478.
89. *Ibid.*
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*, p.479.

the moral world. Benevolence and justice must also be the basic principles of the government of the state.[92]

Of all Confucians, Mo-tse made the most positive pronouncements on spirits and demons. He divides the word into three spheres, that of Heaven, that of spirits, and that of men. His concept of Heaven is identical with that of the old Classics, the Documents (*Shu-king*) and the Odes (*Shih-king*). Heaven is the Supreme Being, Shang-ti. In the government of the world Heaven is assisted to some extent by the spirits and the demons. In contrast to the skeptical Confucians, Mo-tse wished to prove the existence of spirits and demons. He refers to observations which men have made throughout the ages and quotes ghost stories from old chronicles. At all times, he writes, great multitudes of people have seen ghosts and heard their voices. The common masses may not always deserve credence, but one must trust the ancient sages who were all convinced of the existence of spirits. In denying their existence one would have to contradict the saintly kings and sages. Spirits, therefore, must exist.[93] One has to serve them even if one cannot seen them, just as a good servant goes about his duty without seeing his master. Yet Mo-tse was not completely convinced of the existence of spirits; he says that if there should really be no spirits, their worship would still be meaningful. The offerings made to spirits can also make men happy and promote friendship among them. Another motive for sticking to the customary worship of spirits is the undeniable fact that the belief in spirits keeps men on the right path of virtue insofar as fear of the higher powers restrains men from doing evil. Disregard for spirits is not only an affront to the sages, but also a lack of piety towards one's own ancestors.

Mot-tse considers spirits as gifted with reason and as knowing the present and predicting the future. In a reply to a question by Wu-ma-tse, Mo-tse said: "The intelligence of the spirits and demons, compared with that of the saints, stands in the same relationship as the perceptions of especially sensitive and acute-minded persons stand in relation to those of deaf and blind persons."[94] Like the sight of Heaven, the eyes of the spirits penetrate everything and nothing remains hidden from them. "Since the spirits see everything, no one can feel secure from them, neither in dusky mountain gorges nor in vast swamps, neither in forests nor in deep valleys. The eyes of the spirits notice everything, and since the spirits punish evil deeds, one cannot rely on wealth, rank, plenty, might, courage, strength, martial

92. See Forke, *Geschichte*, p.378.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*, p.379.

valor, strong armor and sharp weapons. The spirits, when punishing, overcome all obstacles."[95]

The belief in spirits current among the people entered even the discussions of the scholars. Mo-tse's disciples complained to their master that in distributing fortune and misfortune the spirits often were unjust: for instance, their master had fallen sick in spite of his holy life. Doubts become manifest here, or at least there is confusion, since in Confucian theory the spirits have no power over a scholar, and furthermore, they can act only in subordination to Heaven whose executives they are. Mo-tse gives the somewhat lame answer that the spirits intervene in human affairs only sometimes and exceptionally, and that they cannot determine the fate of men.

Mot-se was against belief in predestination by an uncontrollable fate to which the people of his time, the Confucianists included, adhered. He said that Heaven and the spirits only adjudicate the deeds of men, but these deeds alone are decisive for happiness and misfortune. If the people oppose the will of Heaven, they call down punishment in the form of natural disasters, such as thunderstorms, torrential rains, drought, and bad harvests.

The Son of Heaven must live up to his duties as the representative of Heaven and is responsible for ensuring that mutual love and justice prevail on earth. In the earliest time saint rulers like Fu-hsi, Huang-ti and Shen-nung eliminated the original primitive living conditions of their subjects and developed civilization. It was human activity and not fate that made this world inhabitable.

Mo-tse long enjoyed high esteem and was even considered the equal of Confucius. During the Han dynasty he disappears, however, from among the philosophers, as did all whose system deviated from the Confucian. Mo-tse, as the most dangerous rival of Confucius came under heavier attack than others.[96] The orthodox Confucians turned against Mo-tse mainly because Mencius sharply attacked him, declaring: "Yang Chu's [a Taoist] principle is the egoism by which the sovereign is eliminated; Mo-ti [Mo-tse] teaches universal love by which the father becomes dependent. If no sovereign and no father are recognized any longer, men live like wild animals."[97] Other Confucians also were against Mo-tse because of his doctrine of universal love. For them love for men was gradated in accordance with the five relationships. Consequently strangers were not loved at all: one,

95. *Ibid.*

96. On judgments pro and contra Mo-tse, cf. *ibid.*, pp.390 ff.

97. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.391, n.2, after Mencius in Legge, *Chinese Classics*, vol.2.

out of compassion, lent them help only in an extreme emergency. Mencius considered Mo-tse to be a radical leveler who tore down sacred class distinctions. Confucius had already warned against heresies. Forke observes: "Mo-tse is better as theologian than as metaphysician. As a sincerely religious man he wished also to demonstrate his faith but did not succeed any better than other philosophers. His discussions on spirits are especially unsatisfying. His significance lies in ethics, which he did not base on the moral law which is said to rest in the human heart, but rather on social and political considerations. His universal love for man is a great idea which secured him immortality and the fame of being one of the most outstanding moral philosophers, and all the more so when one considers the time in which he expressed this idea."[98] The doctrines of Mo-tse on a Heaven equally benevolent to all men, and on the benevolent Heaven as the supreme norm for all activities of men in regard to their fellow-men, belong to the highest achievements in the religious thinking of the Chinese.

To his disciples Mo-tse was a saint and a prophet. He is interesting to us first of all as a witness of the religious thinking of his time. One of his personal disciples, Sui Ch'ao-tse, worked hard to spread his master's teaching on temperance and wrote a book in six chapters of which a fragment is still extant.[99] This disciple also seems to have been a strong believer in spirits and to have relished ghost stories which in his credulity he accepted as true. Even the ordinary events in nature he reduced to activities of spirits. He declared that the intelligence of spirits and demons excels that of men. They provide the means of existence for men by producing the four seasons. They rear and educate men. By sending rain they produce a luxuriant growth of grain and other foods. All this the sages cannot accomplish, but the demons can.

Mo-tse's disciples developed further the teachings of their master.[100] According to one of them, "Heaven loves men less than the sage does, but he serves them better than the sage can do."[101] The master, however, held that men can excel Heaven in no way whatsoever, and universal love, since it is the creation of Heaven, cannot be regarded as an exception. Yet in general the disciples of Mo-tse were more interested in dialectic, logic, and epistemology than in religious problems. Discussions of such problems we shall find again among the Taoists. Mo-tse could be classified as a Confucian, but since the "orthodox"

98. *Ibid.*, p.349.
99. *Ibid.*, p.397, n.7.
100. *Ibid.*, pp.401 ff.
101. *Ibid.*, p.401 ff.

Confucians excommunicated him from their ranks, he should perhaps be called an heretical Confucian.

In this chapter we have dealt with the religious opinions of the principal Confucian thinkers, both orthodox and heretical. None of them was the creator of a religious system. Their sole concern was to cure the evils of their time, and many of them believed that this could be done by a return to a golden age. This attitude naturally included the acceptance and further propagation of the old religion. The world was seen as a hierarchically structured whole. At the summit, and as its charioteer so to speak, was the God of Heaven, who was at the same time the model and norm of human behavior. Ethics was highly developed and was closely connected with the personal and spiritual Supreme Being. Ethically correct behavior meant submission to him. Men's consciousness of their obligations toward Heaven was not kept alive by a special sacerdotal class, and the worship of the God of Heaven and of the other gods was not entrusted to professional priests. Rites of the cult were in the hands of the rulers, who performed them on behalf of the people. Thus it was only natural that in Confucianism the oldest elements of Chinese religion were preserved unaltered. The concept of Heaven, however, was purified from some anthropomorphic traits.

How far the Chinese progressed in the spiritualization of Heaven and other gods we can grasp by way of contrast if we examine the statements of Yen Ying, or Yen-tse, one of the older state philosophers who lived in the sixth century B.C.[102] Yen-tse, Master Yen, is a firm adherent of the old nature worship, or animism, and recognizes *Shang-ti* and the other nature gods. The gods of nature he conceives very concretely. Accordingly he calls the stones on a mountain the body of the mountain god, and the trees and bushes the hair of the god. In speaking of the god of the Yellow River he says that the water is his kingdom and that fishes and turtles are his subjects. However, he does not speak of a material body of the river god. It is not clear whether the people of that time had any concrete idea of the river god or whether a process of spiritualization was already at work.

d. The Legalists

In the first centuries of the existence of their school the Confucians were a powerful group, but only one among others, and in the lively discussions among them they met with a varied fate. We shall now see how Confucianism became the religion and the philosophy of the

102. *Ibid.*, p.88 ff.

state. All systems of thought had many things to say on the state, problems of society occupied a central place everywhere, and all schools offered their services to create the best possible society. How did it happen that Confucianism was chosen as the ideological basis of the state? The various brands of thought of the politically and ideologically disturbed late Ch'ou Period can be gathered under three main categories: the Confucians, the Taoists, and the Legalists. The Taoists have at times fascinated many minds, but their system was too unrealistic to be of use for the solution of the problems of existence in this world. The Legalists could claim a much better chance of acceptance, since their way of thinking could have served as the basis of a political state. It did in fact serve as such for some time and even the Confucian state system contains a few elements taken from the teachings of the Legalist school.[103]

The earlier and the later legal and state philosophers differ on two points.[104] The earlier ones are close to Confucius, and Chinese philosophy began with them. Their metaphysic is the ancient nature religion and their ethic is nearly identical with the Confucian ethic. The rulers of the pre-Confucian time governed by their theories. The later legal philosophers are, in their outlook on the world, Taoists. They reject the Confucian doctrine on the virtues and wish to replace them by law. Instead of a morality of love they taught a morality of might. The kings of the great states of the fourth and the third centuries B.C. and the Ch'in Dynasty (221–207 B.C.) ruled by Legalist principles.

A few observations on the most outstanding Legalist philosopher, Han Fei-tse (died 233 B.C.), will give us an idea of the Legalist line of thinking. In his world outlook Han Fei-tse was a good Taoist, in his political practice he was a Legalist. His ethic was Taoist. He demanded that man rely on Heaven and Earth and not on other men, and that the principle of the *Tao* be applied and not the doctrines of men. In his practical wisdom he bases government on *Tao*, eliminating, however, all Taoist quietism and assigning a dominant position to law. A wise sovereign governs by not-acting (*wu-wei*), a central axiom in the Taoist system, and he expects that things will fall into order by themselves. The sovereign himself does nothing, but lets his functionaries think and act: "A wise prince does nothing, but his officials tremble under him,"[105] and again, he lets clever men exhaust

103. Cf. C.O. Hucker, "Confucianism and the Chinese Censorial System", in *Confucianism and the Chinese Civilization*, ed. A.F. Wright (New York, 1964), pp.50–76 (hereafter cited as "Confucianism.").

104. See Forke, *Geschichte*, p.441.

105. *Ibid.*, p.473.

their wits, and he makes his decisions accordingly, without wearing himself out by knowledge. The sages must put their abilities into practice; the sovereign only makes use of them and employs them without exhausting his own talents. If the government is successful, the fame goes to the sovereign; if it miscarries, the officials are blamed. The sovereign need not worry about his reputation, for, without being himself wise, he will become a model for wise men; without knowing anything himself, he will be regarded as the possessor of the supreme wisdom. The officials have the toil, the prince enjoys complete success.[106]

If the *Tao* rules in the country, there is peace and order. But even a Han Fei-tse cannot get along with *Tao* alone; he needs the law and the power of the state. Han Fei-tse replaces the Confucian ethic by might and a legalistic morality. He thus contradicts Taoism, which abhors might and all laws. The following statements will suffice to characterize briefly the legalistic morality envisaged by Han Fei-tse.[107] The Legalists maintained:

1. Man is amorally self-seeking.
2. People exist for the sake of the state and its ruler.
3. People must therefore be coerced into obedience by rewards and harsh punishments.
4. Law is a supreme, state-determined, amoral inflexibility.
5. Officials must be obedient instruments of the ruler's will, accountable to him alone.
6. Expediency must be the basis for all state policy and all state service.
7. The state can prosper only if it is organized for prompt and efficient implementation of the ruler's will.

Conversely, in direct contrast to the Legalists the classical Confucians maintain that:

1. Man is morally perfectible.
2. The state and its ruler exist for the sake of the people.
3. The people must therefore be encouraged to goodness by education and virtuous example.
4. Law is a necessary but necessaribly fallible handmaiden of the natural order and must therefore be enforced with flexibility.
5. Officials must be morally superior men, loyal to the ruler, but accountable primarily and in the last resort to Heaven.
6. Morality, specifically the doctrines of good government as expounded in the Classics and manifested in the acts of worthy men of the past, must be the basis of all state policy and all state service.
7. The state can prosper only if its people posses the morale that comes from confidence in the ruler's virtue.

106. *Ibid.*
107. Following Hucker, "Confucianism," p.51.

The Confucian and the Legalist concepts of the state are diametrically opposed. The nucleus of Confucianism is the ethical idea of Heaven from which all ethical demands are derived. In Legalism this nucleus is missing, the state is but a horde of selfish men, not much better than animals. This horde with its raw instincts can be tamed only by rigid laws. Accordingly we find at the bottom of the conflict of the two concepts of the state a religious element.

Political philosophy made this radical turn in its concept of the state in the course of the fourth century B.C., a time of great upheavals in which all other systems of thought offered only despair. The new philosophers found that the new and corrupt mankind could not be governed with the same devices as the supposedly much better people of the golden age. The Legalists (*fa-chia*) hailed from various schools, from the Taoists, the Confucianists, and from among the disciples of Mo-tse. In the third century B.C. the doctrine of the law gained strength and books published on it were attributed to the great men of antiquity. Only Han Fei-tse's work is still extant. He too found the modern period radically different from bygone centuries: "when in our time people are boasting of the principles of Yao, Shun, Yü, T'ang, and Wu [exemplary ancient rulers], the modern saint can only laugh about them."[108] The need for changing the law stems from the general instability of things. Only the Tao is stable. The imitation of the methods of the ancient saints, regardless of changed circumstances, can only lead to disorder. The law can no longer be based on a stable authority outside this world: it can be justified only by its efficiency and by nothing else. The Legalists gave up the metaphysical basis of the law and sacrificed morality to the law. They knew how to make use of the Taoist idea of nonintervention (*Wu-wei*) in order to build up a basis for the concept of law: the law is impartial and sovereign.[109]

The first unification of the hitherto only loosely federated states into one powerful empire was accomplished, as we have said, by the First Emperor of Ch'in (Ch'in Shih-huang-ti), who had no Confucianist background whatever but who had as his principal adviser the state minister Li Sze, an accomplished Legalist. The empire would have fared well had not the emperor died at the early age of forty-nine, and had his son and successor been in capable of giving it stability.[110]

---

108. Quoted in Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.526.

109. Cf. Granet, *La Pensée chinoise*, p.467.

110. On the short-lived era of Ch'in Shih-huang-ti we find good information in Otto Franke, *Geschichte des chinesischen Reiches*, I, Berlin-Leipzig 1930; pp.223-267.

The Ch'in Dynasty soon came to its end, but the unification of the country lasted. Lasting also was the conviction of all those concerned that the gigantic empire of the Chinese, could not be ruled solely by virtue, or solely by might, it could be ruled only by virtue and might combined.

Now we need only to recall the foundation of the first state on a Confucianist basis in the Han Empire. Liu Pan, the founder of the Han dynasty (West Han, 202–9 B.C., East Han, A.D. 25–200), consolidated the empire as a pure pragmatist without any philosophical considerations. The feudal system of the Ch'ou had led to the end of the dynasty, and the unified and centralized new state with its appointed officialdom that superseded the feudal lords was wrecked again after a few decades. Which new system was now more promising? The Confucianists blamed the debacle on the aberration of the Ch'in emperor from the ways of the ancient sages. The empire must be divided again and each feudal lord given a share of it; the son of Heaven must be given back his position as teacher of mankind and as holder of the heavenly mandate. But an enormous and rather kaleidoscopic ideological heritage had accumulated and it took Confucianism a good while to gain the upperhand once more.

In 196 B.C. the system of an appointed officialdom was introduced, which was not to the liking of the Confucianists. For them the feudal system had always been part of the theocratic world order and a sacred institution of antiquity. In the imperial decree of 196 not a single word is said to the effect that the knowledge of antiquity and of the teachings of its saint sovereigns is required for holding office. The first Han emperor, known in history as Kao-tsung, made offerings at the tomb of Confucius but he still lacked clear insight into the significance of Confucianism. The emperor merely wanted to do a favor to those Confucianists who had sided with him in the preceding struggle for power. The emperor was still sitting on a political volcano; intrigues and murders were rampant, endangering daily the existence of the state. Under such circumstances the Confucianists began to admit that an orderly system of laws and punishments was a necessity. They became, furthermore, increasingly inclined to cosmological magic and to metaphysic, and were interested in spirits and extraordinary phenomena. The Confucianism of the early Han time is a syncretism which the later orthodoxy tried to disentangle, but only with moderate success. Even Taoist elements had crept in. The Confucians had the advantage that they possessed a vast and highly esteemed literature such as no other school had.

The state was Confucianized by Emperor Wu-ti who in 141 B.C.[111] had ascended the throne when he was only sixteen years old. He was to rule for fifty-four years. During his time the Han dynasty reached its apogee. It displayed its greatest might and in spiritual life the Chinese were given an ideological orientation which they followed during the next two thousand years. During the first six decades of the Han rule intellectual activities were resumed. A Taoist-inspired literary genre indulged in unbridled fantasies on a cosmic dream world. Whole schools of magicians who sought to find the Islands of the Genii and the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone which could be turned to gold. In addition, the school of the Legalists was still alive and influential. At the imperial court the magicians could easily sell their tricks.

When Wu-ti ascended the throne no decision was yet made on how candidates for an official career should be trained. In the first year of his reign, that is in 140 B.C., the emperor ordered his ministers to select suitable candidates for the public service. In this selection the Legalists were completely ignored, and they disappeared thereafter for good. The leader of the contemporary Confucianists was Tung Chung-shu, a man with Taoist cosmo-mystic leanings. He developed the old concept of the two cosmic forces *Yin* and *Yang* to a system close to Taoist mysticism. He saw *Yin-Yang* in all human reationships, including both political life and moral consciousness, and linked the state as an organization with the life of the cosmos. He especially construed a very intimate relationship between events in nature and the government of the central ruler, and he stressed the responsibility of the latter for the behavior of the forces of nature. Similar ideas on the effects of the actions of the ruler on nature had existed in the early period and Confucius also was familiar with them.

The young Emperor Wu-ti was well aware of the still shaky condition of his empire. From the very beginning he was convinced that the Confucians were best suited to provide a firm norm for the consolidation of the government. In their teachings he found the moral principles on which private and political order could stand, and at the same time he found in them a good justification for the divine mission of the ruler and for the position of the ruler in the world state. Wu-ti pushed aside the various schools of Huang-ti and Lao-tse, as well as that of the Legalists, and appointed several hundred Confucian officials. He then issued the famous three decrees which inaugurated a new formation of the entire political ethic and remained forever the basic

111. Cf. Franke, *Geschichte*, I, pp.295 ff., Die Konfuzianisierung des Staates.

documents in the Confucianist system. In these declarations the traces of the teachings of Tung Chung-shu are visible. The emperor elaborates on the mysterious connection between the forces of the universe and the activity of the sovereign. For the shortcomings in the empire he blames his own government. "The *Yin* and the *Yang* are not coordinated in perfect unison, and evil emanations check the course of the evolution."[112] The emperor must, he said, try hard to find the roots of the faults and accept good advice; whereupon the Confucianists presented many suggestions to the emperor.

Tung Chung-shu submitted three memorials which were sprinkled with Taoist elements amidst their Confucian substance. He clearly points out the connection between the course of the cosmos, earthly catastrophs, and moral deviations of the emperor. The book *Ch'un-ch'iu*, that is, the annals of the state of Lu, compiled by Confucius, is for him the fountain of all wisdom. Rites and music determine the worth of the government; the ancient state, as Yao, Shun, and Yü had built it up, remains forever the ideal. The shortcomings of the Han state are leftovers of the Ch'in state, which was a product of the Legalists; the governmental machinery is in need of a thorough overhaul; and the spirit of the people must be reformed. Then Tung Chung-shu demands the promotion of Confucian scholars to official positions and proposes a new system of higher learning (*t'ai-hsüeh*) in which the canonical books and the doctrine of Confucius are to be studied; "then the order of the whole community will be coherent and the people will know what is has to do."

This exchange of ideas between the emperor and Tung Chung-shu and other Confucianists lasted for a decade and ended with the formulation of guidelines for the future course of actions of the government. The doctrine of Confucius obtained a monopoly on religious and political thought and became the common property of the officials and the entire people. An imperial decree of 196 B.C. established, for the public service candidates, an examination system which was unique in the world and lasted until its abrogation in 1905. Confucian religion and philosophy were made the fundamental law of the state. Since in the Chinese conception the state is the expression of the divine world order, the fundamental law of the state had to be religious. Confucianism had always considered it a duty to transmit the ancient religion to every new generation. In its new position in the state Confucianism became itself a religion, in fact, it became the only possible and the only true religion. All other religious systems were heterodox and heretic. Heresy became a political crime. Confucius, the philosopher

112. Transl. in Franke, Geschichte, I, p.299.

and transmitter of the ancient religion, was made the founder of the only right religion and was even deified.

The religious worship of the person of Confucius goes back to the year A.D. 59, when an imperial decree ordered all schools of the capital and of the provinces to make offerings to Ch'ou-kung, or Duke Ch'ou,[113] and to Confucius. In Chü-fu, near Yen-chou-fu in Shantung, the home of the K'ung family, a grandiose worship hall was built in A.D. 153, for the saint "who had explored the mysteries of the universe and knew its divine actions." As superintendent of this temple a high ranking official was appointed. In the four seasons the eldest family member of the K'ung had to perform the sacrifices according to prescribed ritual.

Confucianism had a canon for imperial policy which made it especially suitable for the elimination of the feudal nobility, the main source of imperial worries. This stemmed from the position the system assigned to the emperor: the emperor is the Son of Heaven, the mediator between heaven and earth. This theoretical position was priceless as a foundation of imperial power. Furthermore, the Confucian doctrine of reverence (*hsiao*) for persons of distinction was the best tool to keep the people in submission. This reverence was the source of the rites (*li*) in the cultic system in which the position of the emperor as Son of Heaven found its expressive manifestation. Other rites, as a system of right conduct of life, assigned to each individual Chinese his position in the family and in social life. The rites were the laws promulgated by the saint rulers of the ancient period. But it was Confucianism that made the theocratic element in the theory of the ideal state fully effective.

In the Confucian religion the emperor was the high priest who had to perform the highest state sacrifices. The officials in the provinces officiated at the sacrifices to subordinate deities. The common people were left outside the official gatherings of worship. In respect to the question of the other world Confucianism had no answer; to find an answer the people had to look elsewhere. The people consequently tried to satisfy some of their most urgent religious needs outside Confucianism by keeping their ancient gods and spirits and by building up their multivaried pantheon of Buddhist and Taoist deities. But the state was kept together by its official religion for about two thousand years. Its Confucian structure was a blessing for China a long as China had to deal only with peoples of the Far East; it was more of a liability when China came into confrontation with the

113. For his great contribution to the consolidation of the Ch'ou empire the Confucianists venerated him as one of the Saints of the old time.

West and its different ideologies and higher technical civilization. This new situation could not be mastered by looking back into the ancient past and into the books of the sages.

5. Confucianism in Folk Religion

Such is the saga of the great phenomenon which we call Confucianism. We must now consider how it happened that the religious content of Confucianism became the common property of the Chinese people. The Chinese folk religion has been explored by a number of scholars. To the Chinese religion in its syncretistic totality we shall devote a separate chapter. In the present section we shall confine ourselves to the Chinese proverbs: from them we can conclude how efficiently the literati have guided the beliefs of the people. They were, as we said, no innovators, but the custodians of a heritage that is as old as Chinese civilization. Therefore, we find in the proverbs old ideas expressed with the precision and skill of men of letters.[114]

As to be expected, the common people were not concerned with subtle controversies on doctrinal details. In the wisdom of the people, Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist articles and practices of faith intermingle. One proverb says: "The golden pill, the Relic of Buddha, together with Benevolence and Righteousness, the three religions were from the same home."[115] The proverbs mirror elements of the old nature worship, of the belief in Heaven and in spirits and demons; they reflect confidence in magic and reverence for Buddha, they evaluate life in convents and temples, they express moral principles and expectation of life after death.

By way of example, let us examine the relevant proverbs to find out what the people think of Heaven, the central concept of Confucianism. First the all-transcending position of Heaven is evident. The human mind can never comprehend Heaven. The might of Heaven controls the whole universe and there can be only one Heaven. "Man has many schemes, Heaven has but one"—man thinks of many plans but if his plan does not coincide with the intention of Heaven the plan will fail. Heaven is in certain sense a creator. "All things originate in Heaven" (63,317). "Heaven produces, Heaven changes" (63,318). All life looks up to Heaven as to its originator and sustainer: "Man in his extremity turns to his source; therefore when

114. Cf. Clifford H. Plopper, *Chinese Religion Seen through the Proverb*, 2nd ed., Shanghai 1935.

115. Plopper, *Proverbs*, proverb 26. In the following quotations we shall indicate page number and number of the quoted proverb after the quotation.

exhausted he cannot but call upon Heaven" (63,320). Heaven is the producer of the various life circumstances of man. A creation in the metaphysical sense as *creatio ex nihilo* is alien to Chinese thinking.

Heaven is omniscient. "You may deceive man; you cannot deceive Heaven" (63,323). "There cannot be but punishment for evil, as Heaven's eyes are near and difficult to blindfold; sooner or later the time will come, so do not say, by luck I may escape" (63,326). "Telling secrets in a private room is heard by Heaven like thunder" (63,327). "Whispers sound like thunder in the hearing of Heaven, and one's thoughts are clear as lightning in the eyes of Heaven" (64,328). "When Heaven's calculations have been made manifest, there is never the least mistake" (64,330). "The smallest desire to do good is, though unseen by man, certainly known to Heaven" (64,335). "Nothing can escape the eye of Heaven" (64,337). "Man only sees the present, Heaven sees into the future" (64,338).

Heaven is almighty. Heaven is the great king, the almighty ruler of the universe. Unequivocal proverbs elaborate on this theme. "Planning matters pertains to man, completing matters pertains to Heaven" (65,341); or as we might say, man proposes, but God disposes.

Heaven is just. Heaven weighs and measures the thoughts and actions of man with utmost care. "There is nothing partial in the ways of Heaven" (65,349). "Imperial Heaven is without partiality, he gives help to the virtuous" (66,355). "If man's desires and wishes be laudable, Heaven will certainly further them" (66,356).

Heaven rewards the good. Heaven rules wisely, but he also wants the nations on earth to be just and good. When rulers are righteous, Heaven makes their government flourish and gives their people peace and prosperity. "Heaven complies with the wishes of good men; joy springs spontaneously in harmonious homes" (67,360). "Imperial Heaven does not desert one with an obedient heart; Imperial Heaven does not desert one with a suffering heart" (67,364).

Heaven punishes the evil and the wicked as they deserve. For bad conduct Heaven sends a life in misery. "He who obeys his parents will not need to fear Heaven; he who keeps his country's laws need fear no official" (67,363). "The more cunning and crafty you are the poorer you will be; cunningness and craftiness will never be sanctioned by Heaven" (67,365). "They who accord with Heaven are preserved, and they who rebel against Heaven perish" (68,369). "To do evil is to transgress the laws of Heaven" (68,370). "If man's heart is violent, Heaven's heart will be violent" (i.e., he punishes evil, 68,370).

Heaven is merciful. Heaven governs with justice but at the same time loves benevolence. "Heaven has the virtue of loving life"

(69,383). "Heaven sends down sweet dew" (sudden help in time of trouble, 69,386). "Venerable Heaven does not destroy the big fool gourd" (Heaven cares also for the half-witted, 68,376).

Heaven is benevolent. All the good and beautiful in nature is a gift of Heaven. "Man has no strength to requite the gifts of Heaven; Heaven yearns to feed man" (69,384). "Heaven nourishes the blind pheasants" (i.e., Heaven cares for the maimed, 69,385). "Every blade of grass has its share of the dews of Heaven" (69,387). "On the head of every grain of rice is a pearl of dew" (70,388). "We depend on Heaven for our food" (70,391). "The Heavenly Father does not starve the birds in a blind sparrow's nest" (70,391). "Though the birds of the forests have no garners, the wide world is all before them" (70,394). "Great blessings come from Heaven; small blessings come from men" (70,401).

Heaven is faithful. All life depends on the faithfulness of Heaven. "Be contented to cultivate your fields, and when they have yielded their increase, and you are fed and warmed, give thanks to Heaven" (71,405).

Man has an attitude of awe before Heaven. "In public one must stand in awe of men, in private, in awe of Heaven. In public matters men cannot be deceived, in matters of the heart Heaven cannot be deceived" (72,407). "The mean man does not know the ordinances of Heaven, and consequently does not stand in awe of them" (72,408).

For misfortune man must blame himself. "He who offends against Heaven has none to whom he can pray" (73,420). "Calamities may come down from Heaven; but let us seek to be blameless" (73,418).

Man must have confidence in Heaven. "Trust Heaven for the harvest" (73,421). "Man is worried but Heaven is not" (i.e., Heaven knows how everything will turn out, 73,422). "Thus, when Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man, it first exercises his mind with suffering, and his sinews and bones with toil. It exposes his body to hunger and subjects him to extreme poverty. It confounds his undertakings. By all these methods it stimulates his mind, and hardens his nature, and supplies his incompetencies" (a quotation from Mencius, 73,423). "Do your duty; accept your destiny; follow your time; and obey Heaven" (74,428). "The perfect man sees the blue sky over him, and fears; he hears the roll of thunder, but is not afraid" (i.e., one with a good conscience fears Heaven but not thunder, 74,429). "Man depends on Heaven as a ship on her pilot" (74,430). "When man reaches his limit, Heaven brings a change" (i.e., man's extremity is God's opportunity, 74,431). "Always strive to accord with the will of Heaven. So you shall be seeking for much happiness" (75,438). Man's correct attitude toward Heaven is precisely expressed

in the following words: "The mind thinking for Heaven; the mouth speaking for Heaven; the hands working for Heaven; the bodily affairs all for Heaven" (76,444). "The superior man's life is at the service of Heaven" (76,445).

The above selection of proverbs shows not only the unique and exalted position of Heaven in the personal religious life of the Chinese, but also the confidential relationship of the individual to Heaven in the vicissitudes of life. The ritual and solemn worship of Heaven was the duty and privilege of the emperor, but the belief in Heaven as supreme god belonged to the entire people. The proverbs also make it evident that the basic ethical tenets were derived from this belief. Some of the proverbs are virtually poetry and many are reminiscent of proverbs current among Christians. We could however quote many Chinese proverbs which testify to the reverence shown to gods other than Heaven, some proverbs referring to gods in general, others to specific gods. "What is done in dark rooms the gods know" (76,448). "What the spirits adhere to is a man's virtue" (77,450). "To those whose hearts are full of light, the spirits act as protectors" (78,451).

The gods (*shen*) are the messengers of Heaven and the friends of men. "Man looks to the spirits for strength, and the herbs wait for the spring to make them spring forth" (80,472). "If in the home one does not deceive his relatives, if on becoming an official one does not deceive his prince, if on looking upward one does not deceive Heaven, if upon looking down one does not cheat men, if in private one does not deceive the demons and spirits, then why should one search for happiness?" (i.e., happiness will be the natural result of an orderly life, 80,473).

Men should always consider themselves in the presence of the gods: "Worship the gods as if they were present; if you don't worship them, they are but pieces of mud" (81,478). "Sacrifice [to the ancestors] as though they were with you; sacrifice to the gods as if they were present" (81,479). The latter is a quotation from the Confucian *Analects*. The gods and the spirits of the common people are numerous. All that was said about them by the leading religious thinkers was accepted by the people, while the literati participated to a large extent in the popular religion.

Man is also surrounded by a swarm of malignant spirits (*kuei*). Demonology is the most cultivated field in Chinese religion, yet it could not detract from the prestige of the God of Heaven. The good spirits are always on the side of the virtuous men. The evil spirits and demons cannot harm them, and for the control of demons there are as many devices at hand as there are demons. A dichotomy of the

universe into a good and a bad principle, hostile to each other, is unknown to the Chinese. There is only one universe and this is both in its human and in its supernatural sphere ruled by the omnipotent, omniscient, just and benevolent Heaven. This metaphysical optimism is a unique heritage of the Confucian religion and philosophy.

6. Taoism

When speaking about Taoism we have to return again to antiquity. The Taoists are in most respects the antipodes of the Confucianists. The few points on which they agree concern almost exclusively their philosophy of nature. Both the Confucianists and Taoists wished to build up their own anthropological philosophy as a means for remedying the social and moral evils of their time. In the pursuit of that goal, however, their roads part. The Confucianists never leave the soil of this earth behind; they wish to found on it an order in which men can live in peace and abundance. The Taoists teach retreat from the battles of existence and put their stress on the cultivation of the inner life, which in their mind is the heart of every culture and the source of contentment and happiness. They are against every use of force and see in the frugality of primitive man their earthly paradise.

General Characteristics

By Taoism we understand the doctrine of the *Tao* as an attempt to explain the world and man's life in it and to find principles for the right conduct of life. Like Confucianism, Taoism is a universal system. The most outstanding representatives of Taoism are Lao-tse, its founder, Lieh-tse, and Chuang-tse. Taoism is of about the same age as Confucianism and was its great rival until the latter was made the state religion and philosophy and given all the privileges of an orthodoxy. Taoism has had among its champions men of enormous intellectual stature. It made a lasting impact on the spiritual life of the Chinese people and, even after it had been pushed into the background by the Confucianist literati, had throughout the centuries countless adherents. Statesmen and philosophers were especially attracted by its message. However, attempts made by some emperors to rule along Taoist lines led only to utopian and abstruse experiments.

A distinction must be made between the philosophic Taoism and the so-called popular Taoism in which some Taoist ideas were blended with magic, sorcery, and alchemy. There is a third type of Taoism

which has been organized into a church in imitation of Buddhist sects.

a. The Foundation of Taoism by Lao-tse

During the last years of Mo-tse's lifetime (480–400) there lived the unknown author of the book *Tao-teh-king* or *Lao-tse*. In it for the first time were expounded the principles of a school which at the turn of the fourth and third centuries B.C. was to have its greatest flowering. Together with the school of Confucius it survived the collapse of the ancient world and in the religious life of the Han time it continued to play a significant role. The Taoist school claimed to have always existed and to represent the doctrine of the ancient saints. To one of them, Huang-ti, was even sometimes attributed the authorship of the book *Lao-tse*. We know for certain only that toward the end of the fifth century a master of the mystic life succeeded in founding a coherent system, taking as its philosophic basis the metaphysical system of the school of the diviners which at that time was finding increasing acceptance. For their ascetic practices the Taoists probably borrowed professional elements from the sorcerers and sorceresses.

Neither the name, nor the origin and lifetime of the author of the *Tao-teh-king* are reliably known. An old tradition has it that its author was Lao Tan, who was for a long time in charge of the royal archives. He is said to have retired to P'ei in what is now the southern part of the province of Shantung and to have started a school there. His personality, as he himself portrayed it, seems to have been that of a melancholic mystic: Others are happy [he writes] when they can take part in a banquet or ride on horseback out for a spring excursion. I am the only one who is quiet, my desires do not show; I am like the child who did not smile; I am sad and downcast when I have no refuge. All others have everything in abundance, only I seem to have lost everything. My mind is like that of a fool. What a chaos! The others look intelligent, only I appear silly. I seem to have been seized by waves and can never calm down. The others have all their positions, ony I am narrow-minded like a savage. Only in one point I differ from the others, that is I respect [*Tao*] the nourishing mother. Apparently Lao-tse was a retiring person who gave himself up to lonely mediation.

In addition to the rather mysterious Lao-tse, Chuang-tse was instrumental in the foundation of the Taoist school and in giving it literary expression. The new school promoted the practices of contemplative life rather than intellectual inquiry. For the Taoists, as for all ancient schools, the attainment of sainthood was the great

objective; in the persuance of this the Taoists did not rely on knowledge and did not give much weight to philosophical discussions. In Chuang-tse we find written: "The Yellow Emperor [Huang-ti], when he went out for a stroll to the North of the Red Water and had climbed the K'un-lun mountain range, looked to the South and returned, losing his pearl. He sent out Knowledge to find it, but all in vain. He sent out Abstraction which found it. The Yellow Emperor said: "Strange! Must it be Abstraction that finds it! One must not rely on books, they are but the dregs of wine and the residue of the ancients."

Thinking must be given up; it only obscures the true understanding which comes through intuition. The true knowledge is not the knowledge of the perceptible things, which are the unstable product of the *Yin* and the *Yang*, as the school of the diviners has shown. True knowledge consists in insight into the supreme reality which exists beyond the preceptible things. It is the comprehension of the absolute, which the Taoist school calls *Tao*. This comprehension cannot be acquired by learning and science. "Those who want to obtain the *Tao* by studies are searching for something which studies cannot give. Those who want to obtain the *Tao* by [intellectual] efforts are searching for something which efforts cannot give." Only the mystic life leads to the possession of the *Tao*, when its adept has gone through the major stages which have been described by the mystic teachers of all times and all countries: renunciation of the outside world, then resignation for a considerable length of time, followed by a stage of ecstatic experiences. This stage is sometimes described by an expression from the common language which signifies the trance of the sorceresses, "a spirit (*kuei*) has entered into me," and sometimes by vision. The final stage is union, the "great mystery." Mystic life requires, besides meditation, all kinds of regular practical exercises—among them breathing techniques—which conserve youth. They are called the "alimentation of the vital principle."[116]

Thus membership in the Taoist school was not a simple act of intellectual acquiescence as in other schools, but a real conversion to a different mode of life, an illumination by which the neophyte underwent a great change. His previous normal psychic balance was broken down, giving way to an entirely new condition. This spontaneous illumination could of course not be obtained as a formality upon entrance in the school. The time for it might come soon or late,

116. Cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.486 ff. See also Maspéro's article, "*Le saint et la vie mystique chez Lao-tseu et* Tchouang-tseu," in *Bulletin de l'Association des Amis de l'Orient* (1922), no.3), pp.69–89.

depending on the person. Chuang-tse was already master of many students when his conversion happened. "Yen Huei [a favorite student of Confucius] exclaimed: 'Yen Huei who has not yet obtained it [the illumination], that is I; when I shall have obtained it, I shall be a Yen Huei who did not exist before.' "[117] This illumination is followed by a long period of purification which Chuang-tse calls "the fasting of the heart" (*hsin-chai*). "Concentrate your attention. Do not listen to what the ear hears, but listen to what the heart perceives. Do not listen to what the heart perceives, but listen to what the soul (*k'i*) perceives. What you hear does not go beyond the ear, your heart should concentrate on itself. Then the soul will be void (*hsü*) and will grasp the reality. The union with the principle (*Tao-tsi*) can only be obtained through the void; this void is the fasting of the heart."[118]

This effort toward detachment from worldly things cannot be made without agonies. The personality which has been awakened by conversion Lao-tse calls "the celestial," which has to overcome the normal personality, "the human." The struggle of the celestial personality with the human can be carried on in either by two different ways, depending on the individual. Some relinquish everything and become hermits, while others do not think that it is necessary to live in a desert and, instead, give themselves up to purification at home within their family.[119] This is the period when the neophyte cuts himself loose from the artificial world to arrive at the original simplicity (*p'uo*) in which the "human" man is controlled by the "celestial." When this has happened and the neophyte has arrived at emptiness, then ecstasy is the first reward of his long and trying endeavors; he attains the "clear penetration like the evening moon" and he sees "what is unique."[120] In this moment his respiration becomes feeble, he feels like a limb severed from the body, as if the body had lost its companion.[121] All distinct perceptions disappear or are intermingled with one another. That which was interior and exterior in me penetrated each other. I had with the eyes the same perceptions as with the ears, with the ears the same as with the nose, with the nose the same as with the mouth. All sensual perceptions were the same. My heart became concentrated on itself, my body was dissipated. My

117. See Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.317, n.2. In translation quoted in Maspéro, *ibid.*, p.493.

118. *Ibid.*, p.493.

119. *Ibid.*, p.494.

120. *Ibid.*

121. From Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.494.

bones and my flesh became liquid. I had no longer the sensations on which my body used to rely. My feet were tranquil, with the breath of the wind I went to the East and to the West, like a leaf from a tree, like a withered stalk, so that I could not distinguish between my being carried by the wind and my carrying the wind.[122]

This period of ecstasis leads imperceptibly to the perfect union, the "Great Mystery in which the mind is one with that which penetrates everything," in which the neophyte has penetrated the divine, and finally, in which he is in "union with the mysterious Heaven." In this way the *Tao* is truly obtained. The union with the *Tao* is then not only experienced in transient ecstasies but is definite and lasting. This does not mean however that it has been understood: the *Tao* is incomprehensible. "The *Tao* that can be given a name is not the true *Tao*." One can only try to make it understandable by comparisons: "Oh great quadrangle without corners, great vessel never completed, great voice which does not form words, great appearance without form."[123] Or in the words of Chuang-tse: "Oh my master! You destroy all things without being cruel, you are generous to the ten thousand generations without being good! You are older than the highest antiquity and you are not old! You cover the sky and support the earth, you model all forms without being skillful! You are what we call the Heavenly joy!"[124] One who knows the Heavenly joy the Taoists call a saint (*sheng-jen*), or to use another term which is of Taoist coinage, the "realized man," the embodiment of man, not only a potential man but a man whose potentialities have been realized to the fullest possible extent. Because of his union and identification with the *Tao* such a man is eternal and omnipotent.

Though not all of the Taoist masters arrived at a perfect union with the *Tao*, they at least made the first step toward it in their conversion, the rejuvenation of their hearts in their ecstatic experiences. The mystic experience dominated their philosophy, from it they derived the best in their metaphysic, their psychology, and even the principles of a philosophy of government. From their lofty mystic standpoint they looked down upon the world and the problems of human existence.

The Taoist philosophy has its roots in the teaching of the diviners. According to them the things of the world are real as the effect of the constant production caused by the succession and interaction of *Yin* and *Yang*. Growing from this outlook was the belief that there

122. *Ibid.*, p.495.
123. This is Chuang-tse's idea; sources given in *ibid.*, p.195.
124. *Ibid.*, p.495.

is unity at the basis of all outward phenomena of the word. What they then wanted was to find a direct road to this ultimate unity underlying the constant changes in the universe. This basis or source was for the diviners the *T'ai-ki*, the Grand Ridge, the ultimate reality from which all single phenomena emanate by its expansion and contraction. The Taoists called it *Tao*, a term existing even before them. Ecstasy and mystica union revealed to them this absolute reality which is immutable amidst the ever changing contingencies of the phenomenal world. In it the *Yin* and the *Yang* lose their concrete reality as the two phenomenal modalities which, through their action and reciprocal reaction, produce the diversities of perceptible things. All things proceed from the *Yin* in the direction of the *Yang*, or as Lao-tse put it, "the one produces the two, the two produce the three by being brought into harmony by a breath of the Empty." The one is the *Tao*, the two is the *Yin*, the three is the *Yang*. At some later time Chuang-tse describes this process as follows: "The Heaven and the Earth are the infiniteness of all that which has form; the *Yin* and the *Yang* are the infiniteness of all that which is without form. They both have the *Tao* in common."

Creation, which is not a completed act but infinite reproduction, is simply the transition of the *Tao* from the resemblance of activity (*yang*). It is only a resemblance, in reality the *Tao* is immovable. According to Lao-tse the *Tao* is the origin of all things, it is inscrutable and like the ancestor of everything. "There is something indefinite and perfect which precedes the birth of Heaven and Earth. Oh, you immutable [something], oh you [something] without form alone [among all things] is without change, which permeates all things without undergoing itself a change! It can be considered as the mother of the world."

The *Tao* is the great fountain that never ceases to give forth all things. All things depend on it. When the *Tao* has done its work it does not expect any glory for it. The *Tao* is the essence of all things. There is nothing in the universe where the *Tao* is not present, there is no thing without *Tao*.

In such terms Chuang-tse and other Taoists eulogized the *Tao*, in a language which is often cryptic for the uninitiated. We must also constantly keep in mind that the *Tao* is not just a concept for the speculative mind, the *ultima ratio* for all things, but an existential reality with which man can come in contact; and if he succeeds he identifies himself with his total existence. The saint, or the realized man, owes to the *Tao* all those supernatural powers which he possesses by virtue of the union with it. Participating in the nature of the *Tao*, the saint is present in everything, permeates everything, and is therefore capable of changing the perceptible phenomena by acting

upon their true nature, which is *Tao*. There is continuity between the *Tao* and things.

What the school of the diviners believed of the *Yin* and the *Yang*—namely, that all things in the world, with or without form, are in the last instance more or less advanced stages of transformation of the *Yin* and the *Yang*—the Taoists transferred to the *Tao*: all things consist essentially of undifferentiated *Tao*. The transformation brought about by the *Yin* and the *Yang* are illusory. The *Tao* is the only real substance, the *Yin* and the *Yang* are but the modes of its existence. The *Tao* is in everything its essence, and that which we can perceive of things is only accidental.

That the world is only an illusion is the content of a book that bears the name *Lieh-tse*. The world is but an endless phantasmagoria in which everything is modifying itself without interruption. Of all these modifications life and death concern us most intensely. Life and death are only phenomena without substantial reality. Both life and death present only one phase of the transformation of the *Yin* and the *Yang*. "That which has life returns to that which has no life; that which has form returns to that which has no form.... Life must by necessity cease, this ceasing cannot cease."[125] Life and death are only successive and unavoidable phases of eternal change. Death and the life are a going and a returning; to die here is a being born there," or, "the ancients called the dead 'the returned' (*kuei*). If the dead are those who have returned, then the living are those who have gone."[126] The same idea is explained by Chuang-tse in a comparison: "The life of man goes into Heaven and Earth like the jump of a horse which comes running through a ravine and again disappears the next moment. It arrives with strain and disappears and returns without strain. It lives through transformation and it dies through transformation."[127] Our life is only phantasmagoric, both life and death are illusions. Chuang-tse illustrates the illusory character of our individual being in the following way: "Some time I, Chuang-chou, dreamed that I was a butterfly, a butterfly that fluttered around, and I was happy, not knowing that I was Chou. Suddenly I woke up and I was my own self again. Now I did not know whether I was the Chou who was dreaming that he was a butterfly, or whether the butterfly was dreaming that it was Chou."[128]

The realized man does not heed any of these variations, life or

125. Lieh-tse, *ibid.*, p.496.
126. *Ibid.*
127. Chuang-tse, Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.496.
128. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.499.

death, being awake or dreaming. "He knows neither love for life nor hate for death. The entrance into life does not give him joy, nor does the exit from life produce in him aversion against it."[129] When Lieh-tse, walking with a disciple, saw a human skull on the roadside, he said: "I and this skull know that there is in reality no life and there is in reality no death."[130] The elements which during life constituted the living being constitute something also after death. "If the creator transforms my left arm into a cock, I shall make use of it to know the hour during nighttime; if he makes of my left arm a crossbow, I shall make use of it to aim at a crow which I then will roast; if he makes of my abdomen a wagon and of my mind a horse, I shall use them for riding."[131] These are the words of a dying person with Taoist convictions. One must entirely surrender himself to the ultimate principle and not worry about what will happen to him. "When the melter is melting his metal and his metal jumps up and says: 'I will become a sword,' the melter would consider this as unlucky. If I were misusing the human form crying: 'I want to be a man,' the creator would consider this as unfortunate. If we have learned that Heaven and Earth are a big melting pot and the creator a great melter, where then should we go that would be good for us."[132]

The mystic experience gave to the masters of Taoism not only the elements of their metaphysic but also the fundamentals of their psychology. From the point of view of religion, this psychology is of interest insofar as it defines the ego of man. The ego of the individual is different from other egos, but is capable of a union with the absolute principle, the *Tao*. It is subject to the transformations of the *Yin* and the *Yang*; it is therefore differentiated while it is participating in the nature of the absolute principle, with which it can even fuse. Man's ego is of a double nature: one is earthbound and resists the union with the *Tao*; the other tends to unite itself with the *Tao*. The Taoists speak of a human ego and of a heavenly ego. The constitutive elements of the ego contradict each other. Chuang-tse defines this double nature of man as follows: "Horses and oxen have four legs, that is the heavenly element; horses have trappings on their heads, the oxen have their noses perforated, that is the human element."[133] Obviously he means that the human element in human nature is something undesirable and diminishes the intrinsic value of human nature. The heavenly element constitutes the true nature of

129. Lao-tse, *ibid.*
130. Lieh-tse, *ibid.*, p.501.
131. Lieh-tse, *id.*, *ibid.* p.501.
132. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.501.
133. Chuang-tse, in Maspéro, *La Chine*, p.502.

man, the *Tao* itself. The human element is the sum total of all that civilization, education, rites, and morals have made of man. Through these additions the true nature of man has been spoiled, man has lost "the nature of a little child."[134]

Chuang-tse elaborates on the perversion of man's true nature by the five senses: "The loss of the [true] nature [of man] has five causes: the first are the five colors which molest the eyes in a way that they no longer can see; the second are the five tones which molest the ears so much that they can no longer hear; the third are the five scents which molest the nose in such a way that it can no longer smell; the fourth are the five tastes which molest the mouth so that it can no longer perceive tastes; the fifth are love and hate, that is the passions, which molest the mind to such an extent that man's nature has flown away."[135] The senses are the origin of all evil because they lead to perceptions and consequently to differentiations which alienate man from *Tao*. The classes of passions are classes of differentiations which can be summarized in love and hate. To love and to hate means to choose, that is to differentiate, which leads away from the *Tao*. The passions belong to the human element in human nature and must be done away with if one wants to attain sainthood. This psychological analysis of human nature is one-sided, no doubt. The Taoists were interested only in an analysis of the stages on the road to mystic life or, in their words, in a return to nature. This is a psychology for ascetics, for whom the only meaning of life is the mystic union.

As was to be expected, the Taoists developed a theory of government which is a logical evolution of their doctrine. The government by the Taoist saint must, for a model, look to the *Tao* with which he is in union. The *Tao* remains immovable and still produces everything. "The principle is always inactive and there is nothing which it has not produced. If the kings and princes can contemplate the *Tao* [by being in union with it], then all things will become perfect by themselves."[136] The realized man must stick to the principle of non-acting (*wu-wei*), and he must not try to apply his supernatural powers in order to help the world. "The saint contemplates the Heaven and does not help him, he realizes [makes effective] his exteriorized influence (*teh*) without involvement, he conforms with the Tao without making a plan."[137]

Chuang-tse explains by comparison the difference between the

134. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.502.
135. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*
136, Chuang-tse, *ibid.*
137. Lao-tse, *ibid.*, p.503.

realized man of the Taoists and the superior man of the Confucianists and Mo-tse. The Yellow Emperor had reigned for nineteen years and his laws had been adopted throughout the whole empire when he heard that Kuang-ch'eng-tse was on the summit of K'ung-t'ung; he went there to see him and said: "I have heard that you have obtained the perfect principle. May I ask you about the nature of the perfect principle? I want to make use of Heaven and Earth to promote the growing of the grains to feed the people. I want to regulate the *Yin* and the *Yang* in such a way that the well-being of all things is safeguarded. How shall I go about it?" To this question Kuang-ch'eng-tse answered: "That which you are asking me is about the substance of chaos; what you want to regulate is the diversification of things [leading away from the *Tao*]. If you govern the world according to your desire, then the vapors of the clouds will fall down as rain before they have gathered, and the trees and the grasses will lose their leaves and wither away before they have become yellow, the light of the sun and moon will soon be extinguished."[138] The Yellow Emperor wants to act as a Confucian saint is expected to act. The Taoist saint answers him that with all his activity he will only create confusion everywhere, and that, if he really wants the world to be in good order, he must not act at all.

Acting is bad. Man must be left alone in his fundamental simplicity (*p'uo*) in which he is in conformity with the *Tao*. All instruction which leads him away from this simplicity is bad. "The saint, in his execution of the government, empties all minds and fills all stomachs, weakens the will and strengthens the bones. He does everything so that the people seeks nothing, desires nothing. He sees to it that those who have knowledge do not dare to act. If the practice of not-acting is followed throughout, then there will be nothing which is not well regulated."[139]

The ideal society is described in this way: "At the time of the emperor Ho-hsin people all stayed in their houses without knowing what they were doing, and they went out for a walk without knowing where they should go. If their mouths are well filled, people are contented; to show this [frame of mind] they tap their bellies. This was their only capacity."[140]

The Taoist system was unquestionably the most complete and most coherent among the philosophical systems of ancient China. It had many adherents among those who were frightened by the troubled con-

138. Lao-tse, *ibid.*
139. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.504.
140. *Ibid.*

ditions of life in their time. It influenced other systems, even those which accepted neither the mystical practices of the Taoists nor their fundamental theories. It provided a metaphysical foundation for schools with more practical tendencies, such as that of the Confucian Yang-tse and that of the Legalists. The Confucianists of the fourth and third centuries B.C., especially Mencius and Hsün-tse, borrowed ideas from the Taoists.

b. The Taoist Schools

The three major Taoist philosophers were Lao-tse, Lieh-tse, and Chuang-tse. Brief summaries of their contributions follow.

It is probable, though not certain, that Lao-tse lived from 480 to 390 B.C.[141] The authorship of *Tao-teh-king* has been ascribed to him, but this is still a matter of dispute. The book is a collection of unrelated aphorisms, and Lao-tse's disciples may have had a hand in their compilation. The *Tao-teh-king*, with more than 5,000 characters, has two parts; the first deals with the *Tao* (lit. "way"), the second with the *teh* ("virtue"). The *Tao* is the cornerstone of Lao-tse's metaphysic. In the *Tao* all beings originate, the whole world as we experience it. The *teh* is the activity of the *Tao* by which the world is preserved and changed. The concept of the *Tao* is transcendental, going far beyond all human power of comprehension. Lao-tse's sentences about the *Tao* often sound paradoxical. "Being [*esse*] and non-being [*non-esse*] produce each other, the difficult and the easy produce each other, the long and the short give each other form, the high and the low are in rivalry with each other." "The things of the world originate in being [*esse*], being originates in non-being [*non-esse*]."[142] This non-being however must not be pressed too far, it is only the negation of phenomenal being (*esse*). The *Tao* is not something material. Since it rules the world and all things in it, it must be a spiritual potency. The elements which later constitute the universe—form, energy, matter —latently pre-exist in the *Tao*.

Lao-tse knows of three stages in the development of the world. The primordial stage is before the creation of the world, and during this stage the *Tao* remains in its purity, is not known, and cannot be named. The *Tao* is eternal. "I do not know whose son *Tao* is, it seems it has already existed before God."[143] This touches on the question whether the *Tao* is a personal god or not. The text uses *ti* for

141. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.505.
142. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*
143. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.506.

god which in Lao-tse's time was used as an equivalent of Heaven. Heaven is the form in which *Tao* appears in the second stage of its unfolding into the universe and insofar as *Tao* itself is god. Since *Tao* is considered to be the mother of the world and consequently also of Heaven, god can be considered a son of *Tao*; but it is better to consider god as a phenomenon of the ultimate principle and not to designate the two as essentially different things. Heaven is not created by *Tao*, it is "born" by *Tao*, but the *Tao* stays in Heaven, is in it and identical with it, and the activity of Heaven or god is nothing else but the activity or the working of *Tao* in the whole universe. The *Tao* does not create the world, it unfolds into the world; the world is then a phenomenon of the *Tao*, *Tao* unfolded.

The activity of the *Tao* consists in not-acting, or not-doing. But just as the not-being of the *Tao* is not an absolute negation of being (*esse*), so the not-acting is not an absolute negation of acting. It is difficult for the Western mind to comprehend two non-contradictory opposites. "*Tao* is constantly without acting [*agere*], but there is nothing which the *Tao* does not effect."[144] In some way *Tao* must be acting, but this acting is not the same as human acting. The acting of *Tao* is natural, spontaneous, absolutely selfless. *Tao* lets things naturally develop without interfering; it does not pursue its own plans, it is not exceedingly busy like acting men, it works slowly and with simple means, and it is sure of itself. Lao-tse obviously considers human acting as selfish, forcing things to develop against their nature, pushing them toward man's personal goals. All these human qualities Lao-tse wishes to exclude from the acting of *Tao*.

When Lao-tse speaks of Heaven and Earth together he means the cosmos. Often he speaks of Heaven alone. Before Lao-tse, Heaven was the highest principle of the world and this position is not lost altogether in Lao-tse's doctrine. As in the *Shih-king*, Lao-tse's Heaven can still hate, though this is somewhat contradictory in view of Heaven's tranquility and reasonableness. Lao-tse's Heaven often resembles a blind power of nature, but one gets the impression nevertheless that Heaven is a benevolent god who loves his creatures. "It is not Heaven's way to show predilection for anyone, it is however always on the side of the good."[145] One who is on the side of the good must know what good is and where the good men are. This requires reason and intellectual power.

The concept of *Tao* is so complicated that it cannot be translated by one word. The literal meaning of *Tao* in the spoken language

144. Lao-tse, *ibid.*

145. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.507.

is "way," but this word is utterly inadequate to exhaust the meaning of *Tao*, the ultimate principle of all being (*esse*). In fact it was never used in translations and it is best to keep the term *Tao* itself. It is the expression of a new concept and a new concept needs a new word. So far no proofs have yet been offered that the *Tao* concept originates in Indian thinking, that it is the Chinese equivalent of the *Brahman* or *Ātman*, the ultimate world principle of the Upanishads.

The ethic of Lao-tse is most intimately related to his metaphysic. This means that it is thoroughly religious. Between the morality of Confucius and that of Lao-tse the difference is enormous. Lao-tse does not recognize the Confucian virtues because they do not match his idea of the *Tao*. Virtues must be practiced unconsciously and this can be the case only where the *Tao* dominates. The Confucian virtues, according to Lao-tse, became necessary only after the *Tao* had been lost. The virtue based on *Tao* and practiced unconsciously Lao-tse calls the high virtue and it is the only true virtue.

For the attitude of the wise man toward his fellowmen the general rule holds good that one must be good not only to the good but also to the bad, faithful not only to the faithful but also to the unfaithful. Lao-tse strongly believes in the effect of good example: by good example the bad will become good and the unfaithful, faithful. In one point Lao-tse's ethic leaves the Confucian ethic far behind: "One must repay injustice with benevolence."[146]

Though Lao-tse's outlook on the world is that of an ascetic whose first and only concern is the possession of the unworldly *Tao*, he takes no negative attitude toward life. Life is good and the human body as the carrier of life must be treated with care. This respect for one's own person was to play a great role in later Taoism. Lao-tse taught that one has to nourish the body well and protect it against harm. Sensual appetites and passions are harmful. The wise man, therefore, curtails his wishes and activities and thus tries to strengthen his body. One who takes care for his life will not be wounded by wild beasts or in armed fights. The foundation for such statements was Lao-tse's belief in the wondrous effect of the *Tao* on the body of the person possessing *Tao*. Later Taoists gave these words the grossly material interpretation that *Tao* produces invulnerability. Lao-tse's followers, Lieh-tse and Chuang-tse also believed in the magic power which *Tao* gives. Otherwise the *Tao-teh-king* keeps clear of sorcery, which later invaded most of the Taoist literature. The possession of *Tao* makes man immortal because the *Tao* is eternal. The dissolution of the body at death is no obstacle to immortality because the *Tao* is not affected

146. Cf. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.292, n.1; p.293.

by it.

Lao-tse may be called the most original and most independent thinker of the Chinese. His ethic is impracticable in the sense that it is not for men in this world of ours. Lao-tse and his followers condemned not only the false and hypocritical morality of the average citizen but also the good moral principles of Confucius, and taught a morality of acceptance and inactivity. But still it has its positive aspects: moderation, humility, benevolence.

Lieh-tse

The lifetime of Lieh-tse was approximately 440–370 B.C. He was not a direct disciple of Lao-tse, but he knew the *Tao-teh-king*, which he frequently quotes. His books are not the work of one man only but also of disciples who in customary fashion wanted to edit the philosophy of their master. The image his disciples had of him was of a man of clear mind who, however, believed in the possibility of magic and sorcery by means of the *Tao*. Lieh-tse contributed greatly to the further elucidation and consolidation of the doctrine of the *Tao* after Lao-tse. *Tao's* great achievement, he writes, is the creation of the world. The world is the evolution of the *Tao*. Lieh-tse was the first philosopher to build up a cosmogonic theory. His creation story later became common knowledge among all educated Chinese. In contrast, Lao-tse's *Tao-teh-king* does not present more than a few vague sentences on how the world was created. Lieh-tse's strongest point is his philosophy of nature. He said: "Formerly the saints have reduced the whole world to the *Yin* and *Yang*. All that has form originates in the formless. Where do Heaven and Earth originate?"[147] He speculates that in a great change at the beginning energy, form, and matter were produced, but not yet separated from each other; therefore there was chaos. Then the pure and light matter became the Heaven above, the muddy and heavy matter the Earth below. The harmonious fluid in the empty space between became man. All organisms develop the essence of which Heaven and Earth consist.

Lieh-tse's time and space are infinite, but an end will come for the world, after which a new cycle will begin. "All that has form must come to an end. Heaven and Earth will cease as I do. The end enters the unknown. *Tao* ends in its origin, which has no beginning and which is the non-being (*non-esse*)."[148] But there is another passage in Lieh-tse which shows that he was not too sure about the end of the world and was skeptical on this point. He writes that one can say neither that the world will exist forever nor that it will

147. Lieh-tse, quoted and transl. in *ibid.*, p.295, n.2.

148. From the *Tao-teh-king, ibid.*, p.266. Cf. also Forke, *Geschichte*, p.299, n.1.

end, but man need not be concerned about it. He seems to believe that the world will not be destroyed altogether but only changed to new forms. The present world may disappear, but another will follow, because things are forever changing. This idea is in accord with Lieh-tse's assumption that death is not a destruction of life but only a change into another form of existence.

All events in the world are determined by fate, which is only the natural movement of the *Tao*. Heaven and Earth cannot oppose it, the saints and the sages comply with it, demons and ogres cannot interfere with it. Especially life and death are decided by fate. Life is not necessarily something lucky and death something unlucky. Good luck is not a reward and bad luck not a punishment. The perfect man is indifferent to the whims of fate.

Lieh-tse speaks of four quarters of the universe: Heaven, Earth, man, and things. Each of these centers or groups has its own functions. Heaven produces man and things and is their roof, Earth carries man and things and gives them their form. The saint is the main representative of mankind and he works for men by teaching them benevolence and justice. In this respect Lieh-tse falls out of line with Taoist thought since the other Taoists do not think so highly of these two virtues.

Lieh-tse is an evolutionist *sui generis*. Some plants, he says, change to worms and insects, these again to birds. The change goes on in a fantastic way. Finally a plant changes into a panther, and this into a horse, and at the very end comes man. Later the change is retrogressive and all things return to their starting point. Man consists of body and soul. The body comes from the Earth, that is, from the *Yin*-fluid, the soul from Heaven, or the *Yang*-fluid. "The mind is part of Heaven, the bones are parts of the Earth. What belongs to Heaven is pure and tends to expand; what belongs to the Earth is impure and conglomerate. When the mind separates from the body, both mind and body return to their own substance and origin. They are therefore called *kuei* [demon] which means 'returned.' Each [of the two constituent elements of man] returns to its original home."[149]

In his lifetime man undergoes four great changes: in his childhood, in his adolescent years, in his old age, and in death. In childhood his energies of life are concentrated, his will power is not dissipated, there is harmony in the whole person and the virtue of the child is perfect. In the years of his adolescence man's blood begins to get restless, appetites and anxieties develop, virtue is lost. In old age appetites and anxieties abate and the body wants to rest. In childhood man is closest to nature, in old age he is subdued and passive. The

149. *Ibid.*, p.267, n.1; p.299, n.5.

years between are troubled and most remote from pure *Tao*. Death is a return to one's origin. Life, being (*esse*), is not the natural condition of man; non-being (*non-esse*) or death is the natural condition. "The ancients said that the dead are the returned ones. Since they call the dead the returned, the living men are [then] the wanderers."

Lieh-tse is a true representative of the Taoist camp and outstanding enough to leave behind a school of his own. However he would not have subscribed to all the tenets held by that school. He himself did not go so far in his belief in the *Tao* as to use it in a condensed material form to prolong life. He did not believe in the many sorcery and miracle stories which are contained in the book called *Lieh-tse*. Lieh-tse and his companions were devoted mystics who believed that they could obtain supernatural powers by union with the ultimate principle. In their attempts to seize the *Tao* they worked themselves into hypnotic states in which they had visions. These experiences they took for reality, thus keeping the door open for magic and sorcery. Like the Indian Yogins, by the suppression of natural perceptions and sensations they forced upon themselves a state of complete apathy in which they hoped to be filled with *Tao* and to obtain its mysterious powers.

Lieh-tse's neighbor Nan Kuo-tse, who is said to have lived in a room adjoining that of Lieh-tse for twenty years during which the two men took no notice of each other, neither saw nor heard nor spoke anything and was completely absent-minded all the time. Such a condition, Lieh-tse asserted, was the highest degree of perfection. Kang Ts'ang-tse, who is said to have been a disciple of Lao-tse, could perceive things without making use of his eyes and ears, solely by the union of his body with his heart, of his heart with the vital energy, of the vital energy of his mind, and finally by the union of his mind with the *Tao*. This seems to have been a kind of clairvoyance. It is reported of Lieh-tse himself that after studying for nine years under a teacher he no longer knew any distinction among his organs. His heart had grown numb and his body dissolved; he no longer had sensations of heart and body and followed the wind like a leaf. Riding on the wind he went home. He had become pure mind. The basis of such stories probably was that Lieh-tse underwent mystical training and submerged himself in *Tao*.

Tao, and together with it all kinds of magic powers, are obtained by concentrating all thoughts on *Tao* and by holding an unfailing faith in it. Sorcerers, magicians, and spirits are put in line with the perfect Taoists. The perfect Taoists learn magic practices and can compete with professional magicians. Such Taoist adepts can wander about in the air and ride on the wind, can walk through stones and metals,

are invulnerable and safe against fire and water, can make ghosts appear, change animals and birds into other things, can move cities, rivers, and mountains—things of which they have dreamed in their hallucinations and which they did not distinguish from reality. A harp player produced fruits by the power of his music, made the wind blow, the sun shine, and snow fall. Space imitations are unknown to the magicians. With the beard of a barley husk as hook and a thin thread of silk as rod, an angler could catch a cartload of fish and a famous marksman could shoot a flea through the center of its heart. Nothing is impossible. Empires of ghosts, paradises, and strange countries are described, whose inhabitants have the most remarkable shapes and customs. In Lieh-tse, Confucius and his disciples play an unexpected role as messengers and panegyrists of Taoism, renouncing their own doctrine. These are mere inventions fabricated to impress naive minds and to recommend Taoism to them. The Confucianists simply passed over such claims in silence.

The above sampling of some of the highlights of Lieh-tse's doctrine enables us to glance into the spiritual world of those times. We see there earnest endeavors to penetrate the ever changing surface of the phenomenal world and to reach the depths of life's meaning and mysteries. Life is full of anxieties and bitterness but man is hopeful and looks for solid ground on which to stand, unperturbed in possession of the supreme principle that gives continuity, calmness, and everlasting happiness. *Lieh-tse* is, however, the first book in Taoist literature in which we also find much of that popularized Taoism which gained a foothold among the Chinese people, who from time immemorial had been prone to believe in sorcery, miracles, and fables. Many Taoist philosophers were keen and sincere thinkers; lesser minds among them we may characterize as neurotic and escapist dreamers or as simply indulging in that habit of myth-making which has beset mankind from its beginnings. The actual religion of the Chinese contains in its syncretism a strong element of popular Taoism. The results of courageous and hard thinking are blended with magic and shamanism.[150]

Chuang-tse

Chuang-tse must have lived in the later half of the fourth century B.C. It seems he held for a short time a governmental position as a

150. We have taken the details or Lieh-tse's philosophy from Forke, *Geschichte*. Other historians of Chinese philosophy interpret Lieh-tse in a somewhat different light. M.Granet is of the opinion that *Lieh-tse* could perhaps be a compilation in imitation of Chuang-tse, probably with later interpolations made in different periods down to the Han Dynasty; see *La Pensée chinoise* (Paris, 1934), p.503.

petty official and turned down offers of a higher rank. What he thought of honorable positions in the public service two anecdotes tell us. Chuang-tse was angling in the P'u River when two messengers of the king of Ch'u arrived asking him to take over the administration of his district. Chuang-tse, holding his rod and not even turning around to look at the messengers, answered: "I heard that in Ch'u there is a wondrous tortoise which has been dead for over three thousand years. The king is keeping it in a shrine wrapped up in clothes and lying on an altar in the royal ancestor temple. What would that tortoise like better, to be preserved as a bone shell after death and be highly honored, or to live and drag its tail behind in the mud?" The two messengers answered: "It would prefer to live and drag its tail behind in the mud." Then Chuang-tse said: "Now go away, I also prefer [to live] and drag my tail behind in the mud." When an envoy came to him in the name of the king offering him the post of a minister, Chuang-tse said smiling: "A thousand gold coins are a big fortune and the post of a minister is honorable, but have you never seen a fattened bull being slaughtered at the sacrifice to Heaven? The bull, after having been fed for several years, is decorated with embroidered silk and then dragged to the ancestor temple. In this situation the bull would prefer to be only a stray calf, but it is too late."[151]

True or not, these anecdotes illustrate the typical attitude of Taoists toward public honors. Confucian scholars never let chances of promotion pass by, a high position gave them an opportunity to put their doctrine on good government into practice. Typical of an inveterate Taoist are also Ch'uang-tse's last words before his death. When Chuang-tse's end came his disciples wanted to prepare a sumptuous funeral. Chuang-tse said: "I shall have Heaven and Earth as inner and outer coffin, sun and moon as round jade disks, the stars and the stellar constellations as pearls and precious stones and all creatures as mourners. Is not everything ready for the funeral paraphernalia?" The disciples answered: "We are afraid that crows and kites might eat up our master!" To this Chuang-tse replied: "Above I shall be eaten up by crows, beneath by mole-crickets and ants. Why be so partial as to rob the first only to feed the latter."[152]

Biographical notes about outstanding Taoist personalities show us how they lived their doctrine and how it shaped their character. A panegyric written by one of the commentators on Chuang-tse has this to say:

> Chuang-tse was delighted by Taoist ideas. He used mysterious and

151. Forke, *Geschichte*, p.305.
152. *Ibid.*, p.307.

> far-fetched words, his language was eccentric and full of expressions difficult to define. Constantly he let the reins of his imagination loose, but he was never uncritical and was not proud of his eccentricities. Because the world had fallen deeply into corruption, he could not talk to it in carefully set words. . . . He personally kept contact with the spirit of the world and did not haughtily look down upon other creatures. He did not heap blame upon the actions of others and could thus live in peace with the people of his time. . . . The wealth of his ideas is inexhaustible. In Heaven he converses with the creator of things and on earth he is a friend of all those who place themselves outside of life and death and recognize neither a beginning nor an end. On the ultimate source of the universe he entertains lofty and noble opinions and opens up new vistas, has great depth, and is independent in his judgments. His understanding of the ultimate principle is precise and to the point, and attains the loftiest heights. With regard to the mutations of and detachment from things his theory cannot be fathomed and is not merely an echo of his predecessors. He is mysterious and cryptic and cannot be explained.[153]

In such statements one can read some answers to the critics of Chuang-tse. The Confucians respected him but with restrictions. Hsün-tse says of him that he knew Heaven but not men. Others found him eccentric and unprincipled. In any event Chuang-tse was great enough to be taken notice of by other philosophers, literati, and historians.[154] Chuang-tse walked in the path of Lao-tse but advanced much farther than the latter in his exploration of the *Tao* and the universe. He laid his doctrine down in a book called *Nan-hua chen-ching*, or *True Classic of Nan-hua*. This title was given to the book by an imperial decree in A.D. 742.[155] On such questions as the *Tao*, the world, and the life of man, the answers of Chuang-tse and other Taoists have been presented above in the outline of Taoist doctrine.

To put Chuang-tse more sharply into relief we shall choose some points which are most characteristic of him. Chuang-tse rejected the old concept of virtue and wisdom as developed by the ancient wise kings and later cultivated by the Confucianists and the disciples of Mo-tse. Virtue, he says, leads to vainglory and wisdom to quarrelsomeness. Man must be left untouched in his unpruned nature. Through the so-called wise men, who wanted to teach sciences, arts, and virtues, evil came into society. The wise kings, and later the disciples of Confucius and Mo-tse, have forged and ravaged human nature. First the wise men must disappear; only then will the bandits also disappear. Without jade and pearls in the world there would not be robbers, without measures and weights there would not be litigations, without contracts natural simplicity and honesty would

153. *Ibid.*, pp.308 ff.
154. *Ibid.*, pp.307 ff.
155. For literature and literary criticism see *ibid.*, p.311 ff.

prevail. In the earliest times, when instead of a writing system people made knots on strings, all were content and the government was perfect.

On benevolence and justice Chuang-tse taught the opposite of Lieh-tse. These two virtues are but tumors and deformations on the body of mankind. To change human nature is as impossible as it is to make the legs of a duck longer and the legs of a crane shorter. Benevolence and justice do not belong to our nature and create only suffering. In the golden age of mankind people possessed all virtues and practiced them, but unconsciously. The virtuous men do not think, are without worries when acting, and care neither for good nor evil, justice or injustice. They do the good spontaneously. The perfect man has no need to train himself in virtues; they are so deeply ingrained in him that he cannot discard them. Another feature of Chuang-tse's radical doctrine is that the negative virtues are the best: modesty, submissiveness, humility.

The Taoist sage is different from his Confucian counterpart who has acquired his wisdom by learning. The Taoist sage is a wise man without wisdom, of which he has no need and which he is not anxious to transmit to others. His wisdom consists in his inborn natural qualities which he keeps pure and in union with the *Tao*. Chuang-tse's optimism with regard to human nature is remarkable for a time in which other outstanding philosophers spoke of man's inborn corruption.

Chuang-tse developed Taoist mysticism to hitherto unseen heights. He arrived at his mysticism by intensifying quietism to an ecstatic state. By suppressing all sensations in his body he induced himself into a hypnotic condition, so that his body was as if dead while his mind was alive like a dragon, the representative of the life-giving *Yang* principle. Thus he merged with the universe and could act upon Heaven and all things and let his voice be heard as loud as thunder. Already in Chuang-tse's time special physical methods were applied to help the mind to attain ecstasy. Breathing gymnastics were known. Some stretched their bodies like a bear and turned their necks around like birds, and the like. Of the perfect Taoists it is said that their breaths come from their heels whereas ordinary mortals breath through their throats.

The body in trance Chuang-tse likens to dried branches and burnt-out ashes. With the extinction of all sensation the individual mind is also extinguished and *Tao* takes its place. The mind becomes the tool of the *Tao*. The perfect man who is completely united with the *Tao* is elevated to a higher level of existence and participates in the transcendence of the *Tao*. He stands above the laws of nature and possesses supernatural powers. His body is preserved by the *Tao*

for hundreds of years until it finally disappears and lives on as a pure spirit forever. Such an ideal man feeds on air and dew, rides on the wind, and dragons are his horses. He frees mankind of ills by the mere power of his mind and produces good harvests. He cannot be drowned in water, does not even get wet, and in fire is not burnt. Wild beasts do not attack him. The Taoist literature abounds in descriptions of the privileges accorded to adepts of the mystic life.

Besides Chuang-tse several other Taoists left books behind, many of which, however, are of a lesser caliber or have been lost. One of the influential Taoists of the Early Han time (202 B.C.—A.D. 9) was Huai-nan-tse. We shall complete our sketch of the Taoist system of thought by examining Huai-nan-tse's versions of the basic Taoist tenets. His ideal man is likewise the saint whose passivity in earthly matters opens his soul for the *Tao*. "The great man is calm and does not worry.... He uses Heaven as a roof and the Earth as a cart, the four seasons as his horses and *Yin* and *Yang* as his drivers. He rides on the clouds, ascends to the ether and unites himself with the live-giving nature.... He orders the rain god to moisten the road and the wind god to sweep the dust away. He uses the lightning as a whip and the thunder as wheel on his cart...." The saint is able to perform these and many other feats because he firmly possesses the *Tao*.

The essence of Huai-nan-tse's teaching is unperturbed indifference of mind. Joy and anger are aberrations from the *Tao*, and so are pain and sorrow, sympathy and apathy. All passions make man sick. Only by abstaining from them can one build up a strong body and sharp senses. True happiness consists in a quiet serenity of mind which only a few mature and harmonious personalities possess. Huai-nan-tse was the last champion of the older Taoism. No new ideas were later added to it. He made some concessions to Confucianism because pure Taoism was unfit for the practical problems of government. Already during the Han period legends made of Huai-nan-tse a Taoist genius who ascended to Heaven with his entire household, chickens and dogs included, after they all had drunk from the elixir of immortality. In the clouds one could hear, the legend says, the clucking of the hens and the barking of the dogs.

For the Confucians religion was a public affair and the gods were worshiped according to a well defined and compulsory ritual. This worship was the expression of an established and sacred order of society. In marked contrast the Taoists had no place in their system for public worship and rites. For them religion is an eminently private and personal affair. The intimacy with the *Tao* no individual can share with others. Taoism has been called the deepest and most coherent philosophical system of the Chinese, but this coherence was

made possible only by ignoring wide fields of reality, down-grading civilization and all positive efforts for acquiring virtues, skills, and knowledge, having a low opinion of the complicated machinery of government, and staying aloof from the trying ordeal and toils of administration. The Taoists started from the dogma of the goodness of man's nature which must not be spoiled by civilization. They thought that the omnipresent and omnipotent *Tao* would turn the world into a paradise by itself, undisturbed by the ambitions and self-confidence of men who think they are responsible for society. *Tao* is the efficient order which rules the entire world. *Tao* is the undefined reality which is the principle of all activity. The *teh*, the other pillar in Lao-tse's system of thought, is the activity of the *Tao* when it is particularized. The Taoists also call the emperor Son of Heaven, because he is the way by which Heaven and Earth communicate with each other. The *Tao* is not itself the *causa prima*, it is an efficient totality, the center of total responsibilities.[156]

The Taoism of Lao-tse and Chuang-tse is a naturalistic quietism. There are no good works. Only silence and calm are efficacious. Actual society is a deceitful system of limitations. Solitary contemplation is the only way to attain knowledge and skill. Civilization degrades nature; for the saint meditation suffices. Civilization extinguishes the *Tao*. Taoism is the expression of the complete dependency of man on the universe and its forces,[157] so Taoism is essentially a religious attitude, the most religious among the philosophical systems of China. The Chinese system of religion "we may call Taoistic since it consists of the doctrine that the world is ruled by *shen* (spirits) and *kuei* (demons) evolved from the *yang* and the *yin*, the vicissitudes of whose operations constitute the *Tao* or Order of the World. The religion built around that frame is consequently likewise called Taoistic—or Taoism."[158]

Popular Taoism

We have delt here with one of the most interesting religious systems of thought of the world. As a philosophy it contributed greatly to Chinese spirituality. In its popular versions it became part of Chinese demonology and magic. "Taoism may . . . . actually be defined as Exorcising Polytheism, a cult of the gods with which Eastern Asiatic Imagination has filled the Universe, connected with a highly developed

156. Forke, *Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Philosophie* (Hamburg 1934); p.36, n.2; 37.

157. Granet, *La civilisation.*

158. De Groot, Religious System, vol.4, pp.66 ff.

system of magic, consisting for a great part in Exorcism."[159] Taoism in a popularized form found wide acceptance and was never to die again. Both the scholars walking on Confucian paths and the Taoist ascetics were a small minority apart from the vigorous Chinese masses. But from both camps ideas filtered down to the masses and worked there as a leaven of spirituality, among other main currents of age-old beliefs and practices. What for Lao-tse was the supreme being, his *epigoni*—yielding to papular taste for fanciful stories and preference for magic tricks—made a tool of sorcery. Huai-nan-tse, otherwise a scholar of no small stature, praised breathing techniques as a means to leave one's body and roam around above time and space. According to Huai-nan-tse the wise rulers of antiquity were already such *Tao* experts who could converse with the spirits in Heaven while being quite natural men on earth. The *Tao* adepts have access to all heavenly joys, on the back of fabulous animals they travel through infinite space, subduing even the gods.

Esoteric Taoism strove after an increase of the energies and the prolongation of life. There were many hermits and ascetics who cultivated their own art of living. While still more or less adhering to the philosophical foundations of Taoism, they were primarily occultists and alchemists rather than philosophers. Their main interest was the production of pills of immortality and elixirs of life. Countless legends are current among the people of how unshakable faith yields its result in the end. The author of a work on the philosophy of nature, in which are also found recipes for concocting immortality pills, tried out such a pill first on his dog who dropped dead at once. In his strong faith he then took the pill himself and died. His elder brother tried the pill with the same result. When his younger brother wanted to bury the three corpses, they came alive and were taken at once into the world of the immortals.

An old belief exists that there are islands of the immortals on which the elixir of life is made, and the immortals live in palaces of gold and silver. In the year 217 B.C. the emperor Shih-huang-ti dispatched a fleet in search in those islands. People tried not only by immortality potions and pills to gain access into the kingdom of the immortals, but also by a life of meditation. In order to extinguish their earthly selves they underwent physical and mental mortifications until they became part of the world embracing *Tao*. One who has obtained the *Tao* must do all he can to preserve his life, in contrast to the indifference to life and death professed by the old opinionated philosophers. Now people believed that an old man who could hold

159. *Ibid.*, vol.6, p.931.

his breath for one thousand heart beats would become young again. Fasting was considered to be wholesome for the body, and it is said there were Taoists who completely dispensed with the habit of eating and lived on air and dew.

The various substances of nature contain *Tao* in different amounts, some prolonging life, others giving immortality. Of plants, *Tao* adepts consumed peaches, Indian sesam, the roots and needles of pine trees; of animals, the crane, the chicken, the tortoise, eggs of cranes and chicken, tortoise soup. A concoction of the shell of a thousand year old tortoise was considered especially efficacious. Of minerals, gold and cinnabar were kept in the highest esteem. Alchemy tried to distil the essence of *Tao* from *Tao*-containing minerals. As in medieval Europe the Chinese alchemists tried to make gold from mercury. In China they did it not to obtain gold for its own sake but because gold was needed for making the elixir of life and because poor *Tao* practitioners could not afford to buy gold. The gold elixir gave immortality only after the fulfillment of many moral conditions and its production had to be carried out only at certain times and places. If instead of immortality death followed, there were always explanations at hand for the failure.

Vulgar Taoism is also linked with the old popular religion with its gods, spirits, and myths, and it developed exorcism, geomancy, magic, and all kinds of divination. Esoteric Taoism was positive about the joys of life and adapted its doctrines on immortality to the comprehension of the common people. It had still in common with the old Taoist metaphysic the belief in the power of the first principle to give and to preserve existence. Otherwise the connection with Lao-tse's teaching had grown thin.

An important constituent of popular Taoism is the world of the *genii*. The Taoist *genii* have contributed abundantly to the Chinese pantheon. Already during Han time biographies of saints were compiled. Some of these saints or *genii* are only the product of imagination; others were famous sorcerers and experts in the art of preserving life. Stories tell about personalities who were formerly good officials but who retired to a solitary life of asceticism. The Taoist philosopher and alchemist Ho Kung, who defended the belief in spirits against the Confucianists, classifies the *genii* in three groups: (1) heavenly *genii* who have ascended to Heaven after having obtained the *Tao*; (2) earthly *genii* who live in solitude on famous mountains; (3) *genii* whose bodies vanish and whose spirits hover away. His belief in the rest of the spirits coincides with the general belief of the people of his time. All important spheres of nature are animated by spirits. The God of Heaven, in cooperation with the God of the Hearth (Tsao-

wang), decides the fate of men. At that time the God of the Hearth ascended to Heaven on every new moon day to report on the behavior of the family members. In modern times he does it only once, that is a few days before the New Year. The God of Heaven then sends the God of Fate to mete out punishment, which consists in the deduction of days from the lifetime of the sinners, of many or only a few in proportion to the degree of misconduct. Evil spirits, wild animals, and snakes can be warded off by spells and talismans. With the aid of the magic mirror spirits can be made to appear.[160] The Taoist religion had become a system devoted in the main to exorcism, practiced primarily by means of the *shen* or gods of light, which constitute the powers diametrically opposed to the *kuei* or demons.

On the origin of Taoism several theories have been advanced. It is very probable that it developed over an old shamanic stratum; shamanic conceptions and the image of the Taoist saint show close affinity. Exposure to storm and lightning which will not harm the man, immunity against harm by water and fire—these feats were asked from the magicians and shamans in their period of initiation. Seasoned shamans were asked to become chiefs of the community in times when pestilences were to be driven away or in order to secure a good harvest. The celestial trips of the shamans were at times even the dreams of emperors. Chuang-tse recalls old religious beliefs when he says that, after one thousand years of life when they have tired of this world, superior men are all raised to the rank of genii and, riding on white clouds, arrive at the residence of the Lord of Above. Like other heroes, King Mu was thus carried up to heaven. A Magician carried him away first to the Palace of the Magicians, then brought him to the City of Purity in a paradisiac landscape, the palace of Heaven shining in gold and silver, in pearls and jade. The Lord of Above there invites visitors to theatrical performances by fairies. Finally, on the other side of the moon he lets the visitors enter a world of pure bliss.[161]

Such long spiritual wanderings were first the privilege of sorcerers and sorceresses who were in the service of the potentates and later of the imperial court. Officially appointed poets praised their feats in a language not different from that of Taoist philosophers. Shih Huang-ti and the Han Emperor Wu liked to be called "superior men" (*chen-jen*, *ta-jen*, or true men and great men respectively), which showed that they were descendants of ancestors who were devoted to the practice of magic arts and of regular visits to the world of the genii. The Taoist thinkers claimed for themselves or for their teachers similar

160. *Ibid.*

161. Cf. M.Eder, *Die Religion der Chinesen* (Vienna, 1951), pp.346–349.

prerogatives and titles which were reserved for those persons who could go on spiritual trips to the lands of bliss whither neither wagon nor boats could travel. Very probably titles like *chih-jen* (supreme man), *chen-jen* (true, or realized man), *sheng-jen* (saint man), were given to members of a sort of college of shamans in the employment of the royal court. Some masters among the shamans were qualified as *teh-jen*, men with *teh*, virtue, meaning persons in whom *Tao* is active. When a master is called *T'ien-shih* (heavenly master) it refers to the *Tao* in him. A disciple salutes the master who performs on him the initiation, with the title *T'ien*, Heaven. The mystic theories of the fathers of Taoism were formed in a milieu in which trips into the wonder world were required as initiation trials for all the masters of esoteric arts. Taoism was always the inspiration and at the same time a reservoir of these secret arts which aimed at the increase of the energies of life which give authority and which are the essence of sanctity.

These arts were all practiced in the interest of a long life, both among the aristocrats and the common people. The aristocrats hoped for an increase of their authority by means of a surplus of vital energies, and this explains the success of Taoism among them. The common people were pleased by the idea that in a saint there is no place for death. The art of living—the longer the better—was the chief concern of the plebeians. There was in antiquity a kind of a sanctifying hygiene, called *yang-shen*, or "to nourish life." It encompassed several techniques concerning eating, sexual life, breathing, gymnastics. As subjects of a more or less esoteric instruction these disciplines could in the course of centuries increase enormously. We cannot simply ignore them as "superstitious practices." The masters of Taoism recognized their significance and there was hardly one among them without connection with the old rites or myths. All these magical, life-increasing techniques were dominated by the idea that every being (*ens*) has to submit itself to a regime that is in conformity with the rhythm of universal life. The life-increasing techniques have their roots in a systematization of the seasonal rules for agricultural life, of which the grand law is the alternation of periods of joyful activity and periods of stagnation. Unrestricted devotion to life is followed by abstinence. Fasting has as its only purpose the preparation of the body for higher accomplishments. The body should not be tortured and mortified, but be purified from all morbid elements which might destroy its vitality.

In their paradise the genii live together with the animals and fraternize with them. The Confucian saints, on the other hand, were not anxious to seek company of rhinoceroses and tigers. Beings with blood and breath, whether animal or human, should not be considered different in intelligence and sentiments. The genii do not try to

humanize or domesticate the animals; on the contrary, they want to learn from the animals how to avoid the harmful influences which living in society and domestication exert on man. Domesticated animals die prematurely. Social conventions forbid man to follow spontaneously the rhythm of universal life. The conventions impose on man a constant activity which consumes his vital energy. The example of the hibernating animals shows that active periods of life must alternate with periods of inactivity in the life process. The saint submits himself to retirement and fasting only in order to devote himself the more to long wanderings in ecstasy. One prepares oneself for the paradisiac life by imitating the uninhibited jumping about of the animals. To sanctify oneself one must first make oneself stupid. The saint first learns from the infants, from the animals, from the plants the joyful and simple art of living for life's sake.

The sorcerers fall into trances and are seized by ecstasy while dancing. The saints who have penetrated into the most sublime mysteries and are rightly called "Heaven" (*t'ien*) do not cease to flutter about like sparrows. To nourish the *Tao* in oneself one must dance and jump around as the animals do, in other words, practice naturalistic asceticism. Man must imitate the various behaviors of birds, bears, owls, tigers, apes. The first benefit resulting from these games is increased facility in ecstatic levitation. Intoxication also is a step toward sainthood because it prepares man, like dancing, for ecstasy. Only ecstasy can keep the energies of life intact. Sainthood, or life in its fullness, is obtained from the moment in which one has found refuge in Heaven, or in other words, when one has succeeded in keeping oneself in the condition of an ecstatic intoxication or a permanent apotheosis. Only after he has become pure power, without weight, invulnerable, autonomous, can the saint play in complete freedom from the fetters of the elements. All matter for him is porous. The emptiness which he has created for himself through ecstasy expands in his favor to the whole universe. The mystic masters say that this ecstatic condition is the true nature of man.

The terms "school of *Tao*" and "Taoism" are not quite appropriate, but they have become consecrated by usage. The idea of the *Tao* is much older than the *Tao* school. Its masters wanted to spread wisdom and not a doctrine. This wisdom has a mystic tendency. The Taoism of Lao-tse and Chuang-tse is a naturalistic quietism. "Vomit your intelligence," says Chuang-tse.[162] This is the only rule of wisdom. All dogmas are harmful, and there are no good works. Only silence and calm are efficacious, retirement from life, obscurity, twilight come

162. Lieh-tse; see Granet, *La Civilisation*, p.510.

before everything else. Watch your interior life, shut out the whole visible world. Real life is introverted.

Confucius wished to free psychology from an ancient magico-religious knowledge, praising the educational values of etiquette. The fathers of Taoism wanted to cut psychological knowledge off from science, which is concerned with knowledge of the various behavioral attitudes determined by social conventions. The Taoists always and in everything face the universe. For them the actual human society is not the natural milieu of human life but only a deceitful system of limitations. For Confucius also man was the central concern of wisdom. He and his followers wanted to learn something about their subject by studying the ancient sages, by conversation with the noble men of their own time, by friendship, and by observation. All these sources of information and knowledge mean nothing for the Taoist, for him solitary meditation is everything. "To know the other man, that is science; to know oneself, that is understanding."[163] Lao-tse said: "Do not go out from your door and you will understand the whole empire; do not look out from your window and the Heavenly *Tao* will appear to you."[164] In this vein the never-ending exhortations of the Taoist masters for a more introspective life go on. What was sacred to the Confucianists is desecrated by the Taoists. The most noble virtues of Confucius' school are turned into depravities of human nature by Lao-tse's and Chuang-tse's disciples. The true man (*chen-jen*) is the one who avoids his equals. "The one who does not assemble with other men is like Heaven," says Chuang-tse;[165] This sounds wickedly antisocial to Confucianists. For the Taoists the absolute autonomy of the self is the *condicio sine qua non* of life and salvation. From the moment when the self is only pure life and pure spontaneity it is identical with the universe. Spontaneity is the only law of *T'ien* (Heaven) or *Tao*. One who knows how to be and how to remain autonomous possesses the *T'ien-tao*, the way and the virtue of Heaven.

Spontaneity (*tse-jan*) is characteristic of the *Tao*. The most suitable word to translate *T'ien*, Heaven, is "Nature." Nothing is more alien to Taoist thinkers than personal creation. They never distinguish between spontaneity and nonintervention (*wu-wei*). Impersonality and autonomy are the same for them. Things are not created but evolve naturally from the *Tao*. No other philosophic system of China has given us so many problems to solve as Taoism. Intellectualizing the idea of the *Tao* and insisting on the concepts of impersonality and

163. Cf. Granet, *La Pensée*, p.520.
164. *Ibid.*, p.521.
165. *Ibid.*, p.522.

impartiality, the Taoist masters tried to interpret as the principle of a rational explanation what they took for the first time as the total principle of all order and as the effective principle of magic actions. In other words, they gave magic a metaphysical foundation.

Hidden under the philosophic elegance of its old masters, Taoism takes on a religious aspect of a sectarian character. "Suppress the sages! Expel the scholars! and, the empire will be in good order," says Chuang-tse.[166] Taoism has always encouraged autocratic and sectarian movements. Its old masters showed no respect at all for the established powers. It was an axiom for them that a prince is in no way different from a brigand, and it was another axiom that an individual, noble or not, is a son of Heaven as soon as he is in communion with the *Tao*. With such axioms it was difficult for the Taoists to adopt a credo for an organized church or to constitutionalize their doctrine. In its enmity to all constitutional authority Taoism has inspired many sectarian movements without ever organizing a church on a purely doctrinal basis.

By the end of the fourth century B.C. Taoism was a fashion and began to inspire poetry and plastic art. The potentates liked to have in their surroundings poets who could sing about the magic hoverings of the genii in infinite space and thus contribute to the splendor of court life. Han emperors relished the idea of being *chen-jen*, or true men, or genii who, in possession of the *Tao*, could float around and visit the *Tao* in the "City of Purity," but could also enjoy omnipotence in their earthly empire. The court poets praised their majesty and apotheosized them. The book *Huai-nan-tse* tells us of the headway made by Taoism, during the Han Dynasty;[167] among the aristocrats Taoism was more popular than Confucianism. At the turn of the Western to the Eastern Han period (A.D. 9) a sectarian spirit gained ground which led to a revival of Taoism. Few details are known about it but we know that it was a new religiosity with ascetic tendencies in contrast to the spirit of the older Taoism.

During the Han dynasty Buddhism entered into the religious world of the Chinese. At that time also the Taoists had opened themselves to syncretistic tendencies, one of these being the idea of reward and punishment for good and bad deeds respectively. Chuang-tse had made a surprising concession to religious traditionalism when he said: "Men find the man who does evil in daylight and bring him to justice. One who does evil in the darkness is found and punished by the spirits. Our behavior must be guided by the knowledge that each of our

166. Cf. Granet, *La Pensée*, p.548.
167. *Ibid.*, p.521. Chuang-tse, *ibid.*, p.522.

actions is seen either by men or by spirits, and we must behave accordingly also when alone."[168]

The Han emperors were taught by experience that punishments and rewards must be substantial if they are to yield results. It is a mistake when scholars recommend mild punishments. The administration of justice occupies the greatest part of the writing of the Taoist Han Fei-tse. Besides a good administration of the criminal law he demands of the princes a sound national economy, a strong army, and efficient politics. Only under these conditions will there be peace in the country and no enemies will threaten it with invasion. Of the classic Taoist *wu-wei*, or noninterference, nothing is left in Han Fei-tse's teachings. In his heart Han Fei-tse was a Taoist but in his thinking he was a realistic politician. The Han emperors went through many years of agony in search of the best philosophy of government. They finally settled on a combination of the old classical concept of civilization as upheld by the Confucianists with a solid administration of justice as advanced by the Legalists and first put into practice by the short-lived Ch'in dynasty which had given a solid unification of their country, and a strong central government.

168. Cf. Granet, *La Civilisation*, p.551.

Chapter Three

Buddhism in China

1. The Arrival and Spread of Buddhism

China had a well developed religious world from the earliest times. Early in the Han dynasty, as we have seen, a certain consolidation and standardization were effected in things belonging to the gods and things belonging to the emperor. China had become a well defined theocracy in which Heaven ruled everything on earth through the emperor, the holder of the heavenly mandate. During the eight hundred years of the reign of the Ch'ou, actual or nominal, no foreign religious element except astrology was imported into China. The first foreign religion that entered China was Buddhism. Grown on Indian soil and part of an Indian spiritual life very different from that of the Chinese, it was something strikingly new. Had it come some centuries earlier, at the time when the religious and philosophical discussion between the conflicting schools was at its height, it might have found greater acceptance by the Chinese than in the Han time, when the unified empire finally had established its foundation in Confucianist doctrine.

The early history of Chinese Buddhism brought two things to light—the current thought structure of the empire, which was to clash with the Buddhist religion; and the depth and beauty of Buddhism, which appealed to the Chinese and filled in gaps which Confucianism had left open. The government was concerned that the cornerstones of the state were threatened by Buddhism; but the people longed for the spiritual consolations and satisfactions which Buddhism had to offer. Buddhism as a world religion underwent further changes in China, and new sects were founded there. From China it spread to Korea and Japan. It was simultaneously the vehicle of Indian ideas and of Chinese civilization, which it brought to adjacent countries.

Whether or not the older Hinayana Buddhism was ever carried to China is not known for certain. In India the younger or Mahâyâna Buddhism came into existence at the beginning of our era.[1] There seems to be some agreement that the *Mahâyâna* owes its origin to the religiosity of the Indian lay people. Its ideal is not the world renouncing Buddhist ascetic, the Arhat, but rather the Bodhisattva. These holy beings, almighty and at the same time more accessible to man,

1. See A.Bareau, *Der indische Buddhismus*, vol.3 of *Die Religionen Indiens* (Stuttgart, 1964), pp.120 ff. (hereafter cited as *Buddhismus*).

are always anxious to help meet natural and supernatural needs. *Mahâyâna* means "the great vehicle", inferring that *Hînayâna* is the "small vehicle." It was a reform movement against the outdated forms of Buddhism. The most important Bodhisattvas are Maitreya, Avalokitesvara, and Mañjusrî. Maitreya is the Buddha of the coming aeon, waiting for the right time to be reborn among men. As his name indicates, he possesses love (*maitrî*), the distinctive virtue of the Bodhisattva. Avalokitesvara, whose name has not yet been satisfactorily explained, is the savior in all kinds of dangers and calamities. He is represented as a youth with a lotus flower in his hand. In China he changed into the goddess Kuan-yin, or Kannon in Japanese. Mañjusri too has the form of a youth, "his beauty is charming" and "his voice is graceful." He is portrayed holding a book or the sword of wisdom in his hand and is the patron-saint of scholarship. In China the center of his worship became the Wu-t'ai-shan, a mountain in the province of Shansi.

With the Bodhisattva at the core of its doctrine, Buddhism presented itself agreeably to the peoples outside of India where its missionaries spread it. After their third council under King Asoka, Buddhists began to send missionaries abroad, first to Nepal, Kashmir, Punjab and Kabul.[2] In the second century B.C. Buddhism was carried to Central Asia where it gained ground in Bactria and East Turkestan. The rulers of the Yüeh-chih helped it to flourish in Bactria. To East Turkestan Buddhism came in the first century B.C. and Hotan became its center there. In Kashgar Buddhism was adopted about the year A.D. 100. It is not certain whether Central Asian Buddhism was the *Hînayâna* or the *Mahâyâna*. In India *Mahâyâna* appeared by the end of the first century B.C.[3] It can be assumed that the *Hînayâna* still existed at this time outside India; in some countries the *Mahâyâna* may already have been propagated.

From Central Asia, where Buddhism and Hellenism met, Greek art forms spread to East Asia. Iranian concepts may also have contributed to the formation of the dogmas of the Northern or *Mahâyâna* Buddhism. Already in Central Asia the Buddhist doctrine of love and peace had made a deep impression. In East Turkestan Buddhism continued in force until the arrival of Islam; in the Uigur empire Buddhism remained the main religion, along with Manichaeism and Nestorianism. Among the Mongols Buddhism dispersed an old warlike spirit in favor of monasticism, Tantrism, and polytheism.

---

2. See F.E.A. Krause, *Ju-Tao-Fo: Die religiösen und philosophischen Systeme Ostasiens* (Munich, 1924), p.428 ff.

3. Bareau, *Buddhismus*, p.213.

The acceptance of Buddhism was everywhere facilitated by its tolerance of native cults, which were of only minor significance in the light of the chief objects of the new religion, knowledge of the truth and salvation. In India Brahmanic admixtures, cult forms of the sects of Visnu and Siva, had already made Buddhism a polytheistic religion. When Buddhism arrived in China it brought a number of Indian gods along with it.

The official introduction of Buddhism to China was effected by the Han emperor Ming-ti (58–76) and during the years 65–170 the existence of Buddhism in China became an established fact. The military expeditions of the first Han emperors to the West, and still more the travels of the envoy Chang Ch'ien to the Oxus countries in 128 B.C., were very probably the first occasions for Indian and Chinese contacts. In establishing these ties commercial interests predominated over religious motives. We learn that the Chinese general Huo Ch'ü-ping, when he had defeated the Hiung-nu in Western Kansu in 121 B.C., received among his booty of war a golden statue of Buddha. By the good offices of king I-ts'un of the Yüeh-chih, who was a devout Buddhist, Buddhist books came in the year 2 B.C. to China. Emperor Ming-ti of the Eastern Han sent an embassy to India which brought home both sacred scriptures and the priests to translate them.

It is said that that imperial embassy was sent to India because of a dream of Emperor Ming-ti in 60 or 61 B.C. in which the emperor's attention was called to a still undefined Indian deity. The envoys returned in 67 B.C., accompanied by the two Indian monks Kasyapa Matatanga and Dharmananda, and subsequently the practice of Buddhism was granted imperial sanction. Buddhism was officially brought directly from India to China by emperor Ming-ti after the Chinese had met it in Central Asia, and 67 B.C. is the beginning of its propagation in China. However, for about three hundred years Buddhism in China was represented by foreign monks only as Chinese were not permitted to enter monasteries until A.D. 355.

During the Han dynasty (202 B.C.–A.D. 220) Buddhism did not influence general Chinese spiritual life to any measurable extent. On Buddhism during the Han dynasty not much can be said with certainty. The Annals of the later Han dynasty (*Hou-Han-shu*) mention the imperial embassy only incidentally. The author of the Annals wrote in the fifth century and reported the story as he heard it. The legends about the dream of Ming-ti can be dated back, at the earliest, to the end of the second century A.D. The Annals of the Wei dynasty (220–265), the *Wei-shu*, rightly say that before Ming-ti's time the Chinese had heard of Buddha's doctrine but that nobody yet believed in it.[4]

It seems to be certain, all legends aside, that in the year A.D. 65 Buddhist monks were already in China, perhaps with temples and communities too. In all probability the arrival of Buddhism in China must be dated seventy or one hundred years before Ming-ti. With or without permission, Chinese were also among the monks of early Buddhism. In Lo-yang, the capital, Buddhist convents already existed in the second half of the second century A.D. From various sources it has became evident that already in the first century A.D. Buddhist priests were active in the north and in the Yangtse Valley. The traditionally accepted history of the arrival of Buddhism solely by way of Central Asia is not absolutely certain, for the possibility cannot be dismissed that it arrived from India via the Burma-Yünnan road, at that time already well known, or it may have arrived by the sea route from Tongking to South and Central China.[5]

The full impact of the new religion on Chinese spiritual life was of course felt only much later, considerably later than the end of the Han period. No controversies pro and contra Buddhism were yet fought out during the Han. Neither the Confucianists nor the Taoists then saw in Buddhism a challenge to themselves. While Emperor Ming-ti appeared to have had Buddhist leanings, other emperors were on good terms with Taoist magic and were at the same time correct Confucian monarchs.

The first task the foreign monks had to tackle was the translation of their Sanskrit literature, and it was a formidable one. The convents at the temples Pai-ma-szu and Fa-yün-sze in Lo-yang were the first translation centers. Communication between the Chinese and Indian monasteries was upheld by an increasing number of Chinese monks who went to India as pilgrims. The first outstanding pilgrim was Fa-hsien, who went by land to India in A.D. 399 and returned by the sea route via Java. He translated the acquired texts and wrote the travelogue *Fo-kuo-chi*, "A Report on the Country of Buddha." Hui-sheng and Sung-yün visited India from 518 to 522. Early during the T'ang dynasty (618–906) the monk Hsüan-tsang (602–664) spent the years from 629 to 645 in India, making the return trip across the Pamir plateau and Central Asia. He described 138 countries in his work *Hsi-yu-chi*, "Report on Wanderings in the West," of which the compilers of the T'ang Annals made good use. The pilgrim I-ching (634–713) spent the years from 671 to 690 in India and then described his travels. These works of pilgrims yield a great deal of information on

4. For further discussion of sources on Buddhism, see O.Franke, *Geschichte des chinesischen Reiches* (Berlin, 1930–52), vol.1, p.408.

5. See *ibid.*, pp.409–410.

Central Asia, India, and Buddhism.

From the fourth to the sixth centuries Buddhism enjoyed the favors of many emperors, especially in the north during the Wei dynasty (336–533), in the south during the dynasties of the Liang (502–556) and the Ch'en (557–588). In the middle, however, both the Buddhists and the Taoists were the targets of persecutions.

Once the translation work was started, Chinese Buddhist literature increased to remarkable proportions. Emperor Wu-ti (502–549) of the Liang dynasty, an ardent Buddhist, assembled a collection of 5,400 books, and ordered a catalogue to be made of it. Translations of Sanskrit books into Chinese gradually made up the Chinese *Tripitaka* (*San-ts'ang*), which was concluded in the tenth century and first saw print in 972. The Chinese *Tripitaka* deviates in some respects from the Pâli Canon because it is mostly based on the Sanskrit original. Like the Tibetan *Kanjur* it is larger than the original because it contains texts which did not belong to the old canon and also includes Mahāyāna texts. New additions were made even as late as the fourteenth century. With the Ming text of the Yung-lo period (1360–1424) the compilation of the Chinese *Tripitaka* was finally completed. Emperor Yung-lo was a devoted Buddhist who raised Buddhist priests to high positions in the government. In 1421 loud complaints were heard that some 10,000 priests were maintained in Peking at a time when the people of several provinces were compelled to eat bark and grass.[6]

The parts of the Chinese *Tripitaka* are the same as in the Pāli Canon: *Vinaya-pitaka* (*lü-ts'ang*), *Sûtra-pitaka* (*ching-ts'ang*), and *Abhidharma-pitaka* (*lun-ts'ang*). The *Vinaya-pitaka* consists of rules for the instruction and initiation of new members of the Buddhist brotherhood. The *Sûtra-pitaka* records dialogues between Buddha and his disciples and sermons with illustrative stories and parables. The *Abhidharma-pitaka* is a collection of treatises and commentaries and profound philosophical discussions. The last named *pitaka* (basket) has nothing to do with the Abhidharma text of the Pâli Canon. The originals of many Sanskrit works have been lost and are known only in their Chinese and Tibetan versions. Reading and studying of the *Tripitaka* remained confined to the monasteries because outside of them there was hardly anyone familiar enough with the Indian doctrine and Buddhist terminology. Original Chinese literature on Buddhism also appeared; for example Tao-shih wrote in 668 the *Fa-yüan-chu-lin*, an encyclopedia on Buddhism.

During the Chin dynasty (265–420) Buddhism came to Korea, the year 372 being considered the date of its definite establishment

6. On Yung-lo, see H.A. Giles, *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary* (London and Shanghai, 1898), pp.185 ff. (hereafter cited as *Dictionary*).

there. After 552, Buddhist influence reached Japan, coming as part of Chinese civilization and influence. Of great consequence for Chinese (and other Far Eastern) Buddhism was the arrival of Bodhidharma from India in the year 526, when emperor Wu-ti of the Liang dynasty reigned. Bodhidharma was the twenty-eighth patriarch of the Buddhist community in India and afterwards headed the Buddhist church in China. He propagated the meditation, *dhyâna* (Chinese, *ch'an*, Japanese, *zen*), which was to become a new and strong element in the religious life of the Far East, especially in Japan. Bodhidharma may have been expelled from India by the Brahmans in a persecution of certain Buddhist doctrines. At any rate, he came to China by the sea route via Kanton and lived at the imperial court in Lo-yang. A legend has it that he had sat in his room for nine years without interruption in meditation before an empty wall. In succession to him were five patrriarchs in China. Their seat was the monastery Huang-mei-shan, north of the Yangtse River, near Chiu-chiang-fu.

With the transfer of the dignity of the patriarch to China, Chinese Buddhism entered a new era. Until then the development of Chinese Buddhism had not been a coherent force, as it had been brought to China by different schools each of which followed its own particular principles. The formation of sects had begun early in the fifth century, and in the sixth and seventh centuries new sects were founded. The result was that on Chinese soil Buddhism fanned out into the Ten Schools, or sects (*Shih-tsung*), of *Mahâyâna* Buddhism. Bodhidharma himself became the founder of the Meditation sect (*ch'an-tsung*, in Japanese *Zen-shû*). This split of Buddhism into sects makes it impossible to write a history of Buddhism in China; there can only be a history of its sects; and within each sect the various monasteries had their own histories. Each sect or school developed a genealogy for its founder and other leading personalities. Each sect claimed a direct descent from the teachings of Buddha and possession of the correct line of tradition. The title "patriarch" (*tsu*) was given by each sect to those personalities who were believed to have brought to China the particular form of doctrine from India; in addition, the founders of the oldest monasteries on Chinese soil, the *szu-tsu*, or "temple ancestors," were called patriarchs.

Buddhism as a spiritual force in China reached its peak in the fifth and sixth centuries, before the T'ang dynasty. From then on it lost force gradually and disintegrated as a consequence of its fusion with native popular magic practices of the esoteric Taoist system. A strong Buddhist development was forestalled by the lack of a common organization, on the one hand, and by the ever growing opposition of the Confucianist state and various political movements, on the other

hand.

The emperors of the T'ang dynasty (618–906) displayed different dispositions toward Buddhism. Already under the founder of the house of the T'ang, emperor Kao-tsu (618–627), Fu I wrote in 624 a treatise against the foreign religion and spoke out for a suppression of the monasteries on the ground that monks and nuns were doing harm by neglecting their duties toward their families and the state. Consequently both Buddhism and Taoism were in 626 prohibited by an imperial edict. Taoism was lumped together with Buddhism on account of its monasticism in imitation of Buddhism. Under emperor Hsün-tsung, or Ming-huan (713–756), a persecution of the Buddhists flared up on the basis of a memorial written by the Confucianist Yao Ch'ung. In 714, 12,000 monks were forced to return to their families. The persecution was aimed at an excessive growth of monastic communities. The state limited their number and decreed that within the fixed number governmental permission for each ordination of monks and nuns was required henceforth. The state now had the necessary tool at hand to keep Buddhism down to a level it found acceptable.

Emperor Tai-tsung (763–780) was a patron of Buddhism, as was emperor Hsien-tsung (806–821). After the latter had agreed that a holy relic, a finger-bone of Buddha, be brought to the capital in a solemn procession, Han Yü, the greatest scholar of T'ang dynasty China, was moved to write in 819 his famous memorial against the worship of relics of Buddha and against Buddhism in general. It was ineffective, and even backfired on Han Yü, who lost his position and was exiled to the South where he died in 824. Under emperor Wu-tsung (841–847) a general persecution of Buddhism and Nestorianism played havoc with the Buddhist monasteries; an edict of 645 led to the destruction of 4,600 convents and the expulsion of 260,000 monks and nuns.

But the next emperor, Hsüan-tsung (847–860), favored Buddhism again. He abrogated the strict prohibition of its doctrine and permitted the reconstruction of the destroyed monasteries. His motive seems to have been a consideration for the strong belief of his people in geomancy, with which Buddhism was by that time already closely affiliated. The *feng-shui*, literally "wind and water," is the belief that luck and misfortune of men depend on topographic conditions in connection with evil or angered spirits. Demons are powerless against such sacred buildings as temples and monasteries, which consequently serve as protection for the population surrounding them.

Owing to the persecutions during the T'ang time and the drastic reduction of the number of convents, Buddhism lost much of its strength. Since then it has been more or less tolerated by the govern-

ment, but always remained officially condemned as a "heresy." In 1019 Emperor Chen-tsung (998–1023) of the Northern Sung (960–1127) canceled all restrictions for entering monastic life and in a short time the convents were crowded again. His successor, Emperor Jen-tsung (1023–1064) interdicted the propagation of Buddhism again and tried to eradicate it completely. In the Sung period (Northern Sung 960–1127, Southern Sung 1127–1279), Buddhism—especially the reform sect of *Ch'an*, or Meditation sect—exercised a profound influence on Chinese spiritual life and perhaps reached its peak in this respect, although its purely religious significance was already on the wane. Under Buddhist influence the great philosophy of the Sung time was newly assisted by a formal logic and thus found powerful expression. The Sung philosophers were orthodox Confucianists and wrote about the traditional topics of Chinese thinking, but now the shaping of Chinese philosophy into a solid system followed Indian methods. In 1035 a school for Sanskrit studies was founded, and even the great Neo-Confucian philosopher Chu Hsi studied Buddhist literature. During the partition of the Sung empire into a northern and a southern state, Buddhism found a cooperative atmosphere in the northern state of the Ch'itan. The penultimate emperor of the Liao dynasty, Tao-tsung (1055–1101), himself professed the Buddhist doctrine.

The Mongol emperors (1260–1368) were generally tolerant toward the religious faiths within their vast empire, and Buddhism enjoyed success during their reign. During the Mongol or Yuan dynasty a second wave of Buddhism, which reached Mongolia from Tibet, also affected China. Hubilai heaped his favors on Buddhism, tried to downgrade Confucianism, and to suppress Taoism. In 1281 he degraded Confucius from a "saint" (*sheng-jen*) to a "sage" (*hsien-jen*). He ordered the Taoist literature to be burned. In Hubilai's time there were in China 42,318 monasteries with 213,148 monks. At Hubilai's court the scholar Phag-pa Lama, who became the founder of the Tibetan hierarchy, flourished. From among the successors of Hubilai, Emperor Wu-tsung or Haishan (1308–11) was especially a patron of Buddhism. Under him its monasteries saw a further increase and Buddhist texts were translated from Tibetan into Chinese and Mongolian.

The founder of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Chu Yüan-chang, had in his youth been a Buddhist monk himself. At the beginning of his reign he favored Buddhism but in 1372 he issued an edict renewing the restrictive measures that the Sung had already taken against both the Buddhist and Taoist clergy. Emperor Ch'eng-tsu (1403–1425, Yung-lo period) was also unfavorably inclined and added more restrictions to the rules for ordination. Nobody could in the future enter a monastery before his fortieth year of age. There was no

change for the better under Emperor Ying-tsung (1436–1450 and 1457–1465). However, the subsequent emperors, Hsien-tsung (1465–87), Hsiao-tsung (1488–1505), and Wu-tsung (1506–1521), showed leanings toward the cult of the Lamaistic church. Under emperor Shih-tsung (1521–1566) hostility flared up again. As Hubilai had degraded Confucius, Shih-tsung struck out at Buddha and his disciples with dishonorable penalties. The harshness with which he raged against the Buddhists provoked a rebellion in which the people sympathized with the monks whose monasteries had been plundered by the soldiers. The ensuing turbulence in the country contributed largely to the downfall of the Ming Dynasty. In 1622 there arose in Shantung the "White Lotus Sect" (*pai-lien-chiao*) which greatly helped to dethrone the Ming.

The rulers of the succeeding Manchu or Ch'ing Dynasty (1644–1911) displayed the same anti-Buddhist spirit as their Ming predecessors. That manifested itself in the law code (*Ta-Ch'ing lü-lu*) which, with regard to heterodox religions, repeats the respective provisions of the Ming code (*Ta-Ming lü-lu*). A still heavier blow was dealt to Buddhism by the holy edict (*Sheng-yü*) of Emperor K'ang-hsi (1655–1723), the seventh paragraph of which condemns *expressis verbis* as heretic those religions which deviate from the official Confucian state doctrine. This condemnation was dictated by the emperor's fear of the machinations of the secret societies which already had made the Ming emperors tremble. When the first Manchu emperors showed themselves favorably inclined toward Lamaism, it was for political considerations; the Manchu wanted to keep Tibet and Mongolia within their realm, and both countries were run by a Lamaistic hierarchy. The emperors' attitude toward Buddhism in their home territory was different.

2. The Relationship of Buddhism to the Government and the People of China

We have just outlined the fate which Buddhism met on Chinese soil. We stayed, however, only on the surface of the events which mark the main phases of Chinese Buddhism. That Buddhism was to become a problem in China is not surprising when one bears in mind the spiritual structure of the Chinese state. Even Taoism, a native thought system, had its difficulties; small wonder that many were in store for foreign Buddhism. How the Chinese people responded to the innovations which Buddhism brought to them, and how Buddhism itself adjusted to the situation in which it found itself in a Confucian

state, are questions that will concern us at length in the ensuing section. But if we might anticipate the answers to those questions in a summary way, they are: (1) that Buddhism fascinated the Chinese people in many ways and satisfied many of their religious expectations; and (2) that Buddhism could not go far enough in its accommodation to the Chinese political structure to avoid frictions. However before discussing these questions, we might examine more in detail how Buddhism presented itself to the Chinese. Under Buddhism came many forms of religious thought and life, often so different from each other that they can hardly be brought together under a common denominator. The reaction of the Chinese to Buddhism was not uniform and consistent, but diversified in as many ways as Buddhism appeared to the Chinese.

That Buddhism was split into several schools was barely noticed by the Chinese before the fourth century, but the diversification of sects was intensified from the fourth century on. No totally satisfactory history has yet been written on the formation of Buddhist sects in China. In most schools of the *Mahâyâna* the philosophy is overshadowed by an emphasis on forms of cult. Only the meditation sect stressed philosophic ideas and mystic life. The other sects in China and later in Japan were unphilosophical, their main function being religious worship. The *Tantra* School occupies a place of its own in the *Mahâyâna* or Northern Buddhism; in Chinese terminology it is called *mi-chiao* "mystery sect," or esoteric sect, in opposition to the *hsien-chiao* "open or evident sects."

The *Mahâyâna* had no fixed canon, and each sect had its own scriptures. The various sects differed mainly in the scriptures which they followed. Further distinctive marks were the recommended methods of salvation. Especially the invocation and worship of certain Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and different meditation methods gave the sects their differences. Each sect had leading convents in which its particular tradition was followed. Changes of sect, however, were possible. In the time between 400 and 700 Chinese Buddhism knew the Ten Sects (*shih-tsung*). Between the seventh and the twelfth centuries these also reached Japan.

Of purely Chinese origin, without an Indian mother sect, are the *T'ien-t'ai* and the *Lü-tsung* sects. The first was founded by Chih-k'ai (531–597), an outstanding scholar to whom the compilation of a large part of the Chinese Tripitaka is attributed. The sect took is name from its main monastery on the mountain T'ien-t'ai-shan, south of Ningpo in Central China. Its principal text is the *Saddharma-pundarika-sutra*, in Chinese *Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching*. A word-by-word translation of the title is "Wonderful-law-lotus-flower-sutra," for brevity's sake called the Lotus sutra. The main tenet of the T'ien-t'ai sect is

that every man is a potential Buddha; he needs only to develop by studying and meditating. The sect is therefore also called "School of Knowledge and Contemplation." The worship of gods and their iconographic representation is regarded as wholesome for the common people but questionable for the true Buddhist. (This sect came to Japan about the year 800 as *Tendai-shû*.)

The *Lü-tsung* (Japanese *Risshû*), or the School of Rules, stresses above all the observance of the rules of monastic life. By meditating on the rules of the community of monks man should purify his heart and apply in his actions moral principles. Instead of contemplation the monk should devote himself to reciting the holy scriptures. The monasteries of this sect have therefore recitation halls (*nien-Fo-t'ang*) instead of meditation halls (*ch'an-t'ang*). They observe strictly the rule of taking no meals after noon.

The *Ching-t'u-tsung* (Japanese *Jôdo-shû*), is the sect of "the Pure Land." The Indo-scythian monk Lokâksin in the second half of the second century A.D.is considered its founder. In China this sect was organized by Hui-yüan or Yüan-kung (333–416). Its main scriptures are those which praise Amitâbha. Because this Bodhisattva is at the center of all worship, the sect is called Amida sect, Amidism (from the Japanese Amida for Amitâbha). It insists on quiet meditation and an incessant invocation of the divine Buddha Amitâbha. By concentrating on Amitâbha one's heart is filled with divine light. Prayer to Amitâbha is the way to obtain rebirth in the Western Paradise (*Sukhâvatî*), the "Pure Land" over which Amitâbha presides. All men can obtain entrance to it by the grace of the divine savior, laymen as well as monks, females as well as males. In the older sects women had first to be reborn as men to be eligible for salvation after death. The sect of the Pure Land offers a short-cut into paradise by requiring only prayer to Amitâbha, dispensing with the more arduous ascetic exercises of other sects. This agreeable doctrine made Amida Buddhism extremely popular in the Far East, though it has hardly anything to do with the teachings of the historic Buddha.

The Meditation sect (*Ch'an-tsung, Zen-shû*) of Bodhidharma stresses meditation (*dhyâna, ch'an, zen*). Meditation had always played a prominent role in older Buddhism. Only in *Mahâyâna*, which puts stress on acts of religious worship, was meditation relegated to a minor significance, but made meditation the decisive requirement for salvation and developed techniques for it, which were a return to Yoga practices. Meditation becomes the way for the extinction of all sensations and imaginations, opening the access to truth by intuition. In a gradational progress the elimination of all disturbing thoughts is aimed at so that finally the cessation of personal consciousness is obtained. In

this condition of emptiness the perfect Buddha, hitherto obscured by outside impressions, is recognized in human nature. For the *Ch'an* sect inner life means everything. Exterior forms are of no importance. The sect has no compulsory text and requires no studies of books. It is the most philosophic branch of Northern Buddhism. Its doctrine is a development of the school of Nâgârjuna, the founder of the *Mâdhyamika* school. The universal relativity of the phenomenal world makes the constant adaptation to one's surroundings an art of living.

The *Ch'an* sect in China came under a strong Taoist influence. With its philosophic relativism it gained many adherents among liberal minds, such as scholars, artists, and poets. An aesthetic Taoism could easily ally itsef with the Buddhist mystic. From elements of both a half stoic, half epicurean world outlook was formed, which gained great significance for the intellectual and spiritual life of the Far East. In the field of painting *Ch'an* mysticism triumphed. A painting became an expression of nature and life, as well as of religious doctrine and philosophic wisdom. With only faint insinuations, the entire dream of the whole was evoked. The poetry of the minute and unpretentious was created. The worship of the aesthetic found in China, and just as much in Japan, a loving acceptance. The preference for the tiniest form and the most fitting expression began to dominate everywhere. Among others, the tea ceremony is a manifestation of Zen spirit. From the thirteenth century on, Zen had conquered the ruling classes of Japan. The religion for the lower strata was Amida-Buddhism.

The successors of Bodhidharma to the patriarchal dignity became the heads of the *Ch'an* sect, which split into northern and southern sub-sects. Of the branch sects only two were significant, the *Lin-chi* sect, named after a place in Shantung, and the *Ts'ao-tsung* sect. The meditation sect was imported to Japan in two stages, first in the eighth century in the form of the northern branch, later about 1200 in the form of the southern branch, that is the *Rinzai* (*Lin-chi*) and the *Sôtô* (*Ts'ao-tsung*) sub-sects.

The *Mi-tsung*, or School of Mysteries, has, through admixtures of foreign elements, strayed farthest away from the basis of the pure doctrine of Buddha and adapted itself most to the religious wants of the common people. Through the conflux of Indian Tantrism and Chinese exorcism it became the most "superstitious" sect of Buddhism, and perhaps the most deformed. The Mystery sect came to China at the beginning of the eighth century. Because of frequent use of magic formulas (*mantra*) this school was also called *Chen-yen-tsung*, that is Sect of the True Words (*chen-yen*, true words, is the Chinese translation of *mantra*, magic formula). One of the outstanding representatives of this school in China was Hui-kuo. To him there came as disciple the

Japanese monk Kûkai, posthumously called Kôbô Daishi (774–835) who founded the Shingon sect in Japan. In Tibet the Mystery sect became the sole basis of Buddhism, into which elements of the native *Bon* religion were mixed. In the cult of this sect the pantheon of northern Buddhism, with many gods from the Hindu mythology, is worshiped. Charms and spells were already used in the oldest texts of the Veda, especially the *Atharva-Veda*. They form an essential part of the *Purâna* in the later literature of Hinduism. From these sources they were from the fourth century A.D. taken over into the sutras of the *Mahâyâna*. The most extensive use of them was in the sects which worship Visnu and Siva, by which Northern Buddhism was strongly influenced.

To the Yoga practice belongs the belief that ascetic training and meditation produce magic power. From the combination of the old Yoga with the younger Siva cult resulted the *Yoga-Tantra*. The mystic and esoteric doctrines of the ascetics merged with popular magic, philosophic ideas were reshaped accordingly, prayer texts became magic incantations, every outward formality took on a magic and mystic significance. Thus the Tantra system came into existence and then gave birth to a bulky literature promoting Sivaism but also to a great extent influencing the sutras of Mahâyâna. The teachings of the *Madhyamika* and *Yogâcâra* schools, the two great schools of Mahâyâna, were tied up with the ascetic and mystic exercises of the Yoga and with the religious rites of Siva worship. In the Tantra literature we find therefore invocations of Buddhist and Hinduistic deities combined with magic formulas (*dhârani*, Chinese *chou*). The single words possessed magic power and every symbol became a tool for exorcism. Thought and wishes too were loaded with secret power. Therefrom resulted a strange gibberish of mysterious syllables which were mechanically repeated to effect the sorcery.

There were exorcistic formulas for changing the weather or obtaining rain, for curing diseases, against poison, for victory in war, for prolongation of life, for a good rebirth and admission to paradise, against wild animals and poisonous snakes, for the birth of sons and daughters, for help against demons, for calling a Bodhisattva, and so forth. Meaningless invocations, continuous repetitions of certain syllables like the mystic sound "om" served as means to obtain magic power and to exercise secret sorcery (*siddhi*).

Such sorcery formulas are found mixed into the text of sutras or in special collections. Also in the rules for monastic life magic words were mixed. The Buddhist scriptures themselves were used as texts for sorcery without regard to their content. This kind of Tantra literature is entirely without meaning and reason, consisting of Sivatic doc-

trines in the guise of revelations of Buddha. With such Tantric practices Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are worshiped and gods and goddesses who were taken into the pantheon of Mahâyâna, among them the female *Sakti* figures. From Sivaism the Tantra schools of Buddhism also took over the erotic element. In the iconography of Lamaism couples of deities are represented in coitus position and phallus worship with its symbols is found. In Sivaism not only are meditation and asceticism, virtues and piety, the avenues to supreme knowledge, but also magic rites and spells, consumption of meat and intoxicating beverages, sexual intercourse and excesses.

The Tantra literature, written in a crude Sanskrit, found a very wide distribution in northern India, Tibet, and China. The most fantastic pantheon of Tantra Buddhism is found in Tibet; the Lamaistic church is organized Tantrism. After 1200 it came to China. As late as the reign of Emperor Ch'ien-lung (1736–96) a Tantra sutra was composed for the purpose of rainmaking, the *Ta-yün-lun-ch'i-yü-ching* of 1780. The Tantra school is also called "school that washes (or moistens) the crown of the head" (*kuan-ting-tsung*), after a ceremony which was first performed in Tibet to confer a religious office on somebody and later gained wider use.

Besides the monastic communities many lay organizations were formed, usually affiliated with a monastery. They mostly practiced charity, followed a vegetarian diet and had special moral observances and religious gatherings in their respective temples. Some engaged in sectarian activities. Many such societies followed Buddhist and Taoist principles at the same time. Under the cover of religious associations of lay people many secret societies were formed in China—the *pi-mi-chiao-hui*—which engaged in humanitarian activities but secretly had also social and political programs.

3. Buddhist Temples, Monasteries and Priests

The first Buddhist monasteries in China were erected in the Han capital, Lo-yang. As long as foreigners were their only inhabitants they were not numerous. From the fourth century A.D. on, when Chinese also could enter, their number increased. They were most numerous in the province of Chekiang, especially around Hang-chou and Ning-po, amidst beautiful scenery and preferably on mountains covered with forests. The island P'u-t'o-shan in the Chou-shan group was dedicated to the Bodhisattva Kuan-yin (Avalokitesvara). The mountain E-mi-shan near Chia-ting-fu in Szu-ch'uan, since antiquity a sacred moun-

tain, became covered with many monasteries.

Buddhist temples are supported with voluntary contributions by the faithful. Some laymen make gifts for various specified purposes, such as decoration of the temple, holding of festivals, performance of solemn rites. Such wealthy donors (*shih-chu*, Sanskr. *dânapati*) like to make vows to live for a limited time the life of monks and enter a cloister, as even some emperors have done. Buddhist temples often contain valuable objects of art; the worship of the many gods in the *Mahâyâna* requires pictures and statues. A Buddhist figure should be only a symbol of the god to draw the worshipers' attention to the founder of the religion. The worship of the figures as such is un-Buddhist. The idea that the figure is animated is of Chinese origin. As the soul of the ancestor is thought to be present in the ancestor tablet, the spirit of the god is thought to be present in his picture or statue. The symbol idea together with the Chinese belief in the presence of the ancestor spirit in his tablet created the veneration of figures. Even abstract ideas could be represented in a figure in human form. The worship of the idols, however, was always confined to the faithful crowds; the inmates of monasteries were cool toward them. The monks and nuns were more interested in the practice of medical arts and in exorcism by which they served their flocks of believers and gained a strong influence on them.

To the gods prayers were said, accompanied by offerings of flowers, incense burning, and lighting of oil-lamps and candles. The prayers began with a laudation of the god or goddess, expressed by the syllables "na-mu," the Chinese for the Sanskrit *namasu*, and ended with praise, "so-ho," Sanskrit *svâhâ*. In the body of the prayer the god, Buddha or Bodhisattva, was asked for help. From the traditional Buddhist point of view, prayers should not be addressed to the gods. It was considered a bad practice to pray to them in all kinds of needs; not even on behalf of others should one pray. Prayers to the gods were tolerated only as a concession to the imperfect faith of the common people. The *Mahâyâna* upheld in principle the same attitude. In practice however people prayed much to the gods in their material and spiritual wants and, since the *Mahâyâna* had means to help also the souls in hell, they prayed fervently for the deliverance of their dead from hell. Temple visitors also prayed for rain and good harvesting weather, against the danger of floods and solar eclipses. For help received from the gods offerings were placed before the sacred images. Oracles and soothsayers could be consulted. A prayer was already merely the enunciation of formulas (*trisarana*) and mechanically repeated formulas made up a kind of litany. Sanskrit was of course not understood by the people and the vast majority of the priests. Not

only the magic formulas (*dhâranî*) of Tantrism but also the text of every sutra, understood or not, could be used for achieving a magic effect. Buddhist prayer was in fact exorcism against evil spirits. In Lamaism prayer-wheels (*lun-ts'ang*) which contained prayer formulas were used, each rotation counting as much as a recitation.

The birthdays of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, of Brahmanic gods, and of the founders of the respective sects were celebrated as festivals. There was a festival of Wei-t'o, that is the Hindu god Veda, protector of the Law of Buddha and Buddhist temples[7] and festival of the Dragon-kings (Lung-wang, Sanskr. *nâga-râja*).[8] Celebrated also were the birthday of the ruling emperor and those of the earlier emperors of the ruling dynasty, the New Year, and the main seasonal festivals of the solar year. On the last day of the sixth month the festival of the hungry spirits was due and the fifteenth day of the seventh month was All Souls Day, *ullambhana*, or Lantern Festival. The concern of Buddhism for the dead earned it great popularity among all classes of society. The Hindu ceremony of releasing souls from Hades was brought to China by Amogha about A.D. 733 and was frequently performed with great solemnity and expense. Buddhist priests were also employed in the service of the state as administrators of Confucian state temples and imperial mausolea. Buddhism as a systematic religion existed in China only in the temples and monasteries of the various sects.

To millions of Chinese *Mahâyâna* Buddhism was attractive because of its beautiful liturgy and art, its saviors, and its care for the dead as illustrated in the *ullambhana*, the festival of the *prêtas*, or hungry ghosts. The Chinese call the festival *Yü-lan-hui*. The gates of hell are opened on this day and all demons are allowed to return to earth for thirty days. To the deceased relatives offerings of rice, incense, paper money, and fruit are made in the home, and outside the door similar offerings are given to the orphan spirits. In the towns processions are held. Paper or reed boats with small lamps on board are floated by the thousands in the harbors and on the rivers, and in the streets thousands of lamps made of cotton wool dipped in oil are placed as guides to the hungry spirits. In the temples and on the streets the priests chant prayers for the release of the poor souls from their punishments. The festival lasts until Ti Tsang's birthday, at which time the souls have to return to the underworld. As evil influences may emanate from the souls, the people treat them most considerately during the

7. Cf. E.T.C. Werner, *A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology*, (Shanghai 1932), pp.258 ff.

8. *Ibid.*, pp.553 ff.

days of the festival, and providing food or money for them at any time is considered meritorious. In Japan the festival is still honored as *o-Bon matsuri*, though its meaning is narrowed down to a festival for the ancestor souls.

Before drawing a picture of the composite religion of the Chinese we will first examine the atmosphere that existed for the unfolding of religious thought and life in the empire after the Han emperors had declared Confucianism as the foundation of the state and other religions as heterodox and heresies. This declaration could have spelled the end to non-Confucianist religions if applied consistently and rigorously. We can however safely say that the government was much more concerned with eventual political implications of non-Confucianist religions than with their religious principles as such. As long as there was no friction with the administrative machinery of the state, the religious convictions of law-abiding citizens remained a private affair. But as soon as religious groups and communities formed, the watchful organs of the state got suspicious and were prone to interfere.[8a] Theoretical pronouncements of philosophers against different views, in their eyes heretic, never needed to be taken to heart. The philosophers of the later Ch'ou proscribed each other and were used to proscription. Mencius hurled the shafts of his indignation against Yang Chu, a preacher of epicureanism, and against Mo-ti, the advocate of universal love.[9] But that one philosopher found the philosophy of others utterly ruinous for the state happened many times, without further consequences. In Mencius' mind every doctrine was heretic which deviated from the teachings of the old sages, notably Yü the Great, Ch'ou Kung (Duke Ch'ou), and Confucius. The Confucianists were, among their colleagues of other

8a. *Ibid.*, pp.309 ff., and p.321.

9. Cf. J.J.M. de Groot, *Sectarianism and Religious Persecutions in China*, p.27, with quoted texts and translation. This book of de Groot first appeared in 2 volumes in Leiden 1901 and was reprinted in Peking 1940. De Groot scanned the official historical sources of all dynasties for references to decrees with prohibitions and often persecutions of sects and heresies. The relevant Chinese documentary texts are always given under the line, above the line they are translated and interpreted and brought into the right historic and cultural focus. As the author states in his Introduction, his voluminous work was occasioned by the events of the last years of the nineteenth century, leading again to fierce attacks against the Christian missions, and by serious accusations in the foreign press brought up against the missionaries of being the cause of the persecutions themselves. De Groot wrote his two volumes to find the answer, once and for all, to the question: Did and does the Chinese government recognize freedom of religion? If not, why not. "A chimera has to be banished from our minds and to make room for the conviction that we approach a great deal nearer the truth by admitting the Chinese State to be the most intolerant, the most persecuting of all earthly governments". (p.3).

schools, known for their intolerance and arrogance, but because of lack of executive power they could do no harm.

Things became different from the Han dynasty on. As we have already noticed, Taoism during the Han dynasty made concessions to Confucianism as a necessity of statemanship. The religion which had to bear the brunt of the first persecution at the hands of the state was Buddhism. This happened during the reign of the Northern Wei dynasty (336–533), when the Tartar house of Toba reigned in Lo-yang, showing in the whole a favorable disposition toward Buddhism. In the still extant "Description of Lo-yang Monasteries" (*Lo-yang kia-lan* ki), compiled by Yang Hsüen in the sixth century,[10] ten convents are listed for the city and 36 for its vicinity. Emperor Wu the Warlike (424–452), known in history by his posthumous name Shih Tsu, put an end to the heyday of Lo-yang's monastic life. He had received a Confucian education, came under Taoist influence, and also respected Buddhism. What made him then turn against the monks? While suppressing a rebellion he encamped near a monastery where weapons were found hidden. Thereupon the monastery was sacked and its inhabitants executed. Subsequently the Throne issued a decree which contained accusations against Buddhism in general. It blamed the Buddhist religion for the weakness of the later Han dynasty and vowed eradication of the western religion and its idols. Shih Tsu's death put an end to this ruthless persecution and the sun began to shine again over the Buddhist church, as among the tyrant's successors were once more benevolent patrons. An official census covering the period from 512 to 516 states that there were 13,727 monks and nuns within the dominions of the Toba empire.[11]

But persecution began to rage again within the realm of another contemporary dynasty, that of the Sung (420–478). In 458 the emperor saw fit to blame Buddhism for a rebellion in a decree which shows the predominating opinion of Confucianist officialdom concerning Buddhism: it is of no use to the Confucian state and corrupts the time-honored customs. An interesting document with regard to the attitude of ruling Confucianists toward Buddhism comes from the Northern Ch'ou Dynasty (557–581).[12] In 573 both Buddhism and Taoism were prohibited, and the monks of both had to return to secular life. The Buddhist monks were called shamans, that is, they were put on the same level as the despised indigenous soothsayers and sorcerers, and accused of having no respect for their parents; besides,

10. *Ibid.*, p.27.
11. *Ibid.*, p.33.
12. *Ibid.*, p. pp.33 f.

the foreignness of their religion is presented as reason enough to destroy their monasteries and temples.

The lengthy memorial presented to the emperor by the T'ang Dynasty minister Fu Yih contains a list of misbehaviors of the monks:[13] they are disloyal to their ruler, they ignore the rule of submission to their parents, they are idlers and itinerant mendicants, they have assumed another garb in order to escape the paying of ground rent to the government. The Buddhist doctrine of Karma, according to which man is the master of his happiness or misery, is also attacked: "punishment and intimidation, and the bestowal of blessing and happiness are the business of the sovereign," but the Buddhist clergy with their lies maintain that Buddha is the distributor of justice, thus contradicting the principle that only the omnipotent sovereign has the right to punish and to reward. Fu Yih's document even goes so far as to see the time before the spread of Buddhism in a rosy light; Buddhism is responsible for the fact that the government later became corrupt and cruel and the reigns of the emperors short.

The minister then casts a gloomy horoscope for the reigning dynasty with a hundred thousand monks and nuns in the world "who cut clothes of silk, and dress and adorn clay images, which they then employ to suppress devils, and lead myriads of people astray." The fervent Confucianist then counsels the emperor to order the monks and nuns to marry one another; what a blessing this would be to the country! Hundred thousand lay families shall be formed who shall give birth to sons and daughters; when these have grown up to their tenth years, and when a second period of equal length shall have been devoted to their education and instruction, they will then be an element useful to the dynasty, and yield a sufficient contingent of warriors [for the maintenance of the Imperial power], while, besides, calamities in the cultivation of silk and food shall be prevented in all parts of the world between the four seas. If the people be in this way made to understand with whom rests the power to intimidate and to create happiness, those heretical deceptions will naturally die off, and the transformation into a state of purity and simplicity will flourish again.[14] The ministerial council was divided on the propriety of Fu Yih's memorial. The Minister for Imperial resolutions retorted that "Buddha was a sage, and Fu Yih's argumentation was not that of a sage, but breathed a lawless spirit; therefore he proposed that a severe punishment should be administered to him." Fu Yih defended himself, and had the emperor not abdicated he would have acted according to the advice

13. *Ibid.*, pp.36 f.
14. Text quoted and translated *ibid.*, pp.39 f.

of his staunch minister.

The accusations raised by Fu Yih and others against Buddhism, followed by halfhearted measures of the T'ang government, testify to the true motive of the Confucian attitude toward Buddhism: they believed that it deceived the people by instituting ceremonies for raising the dead into a condition of higher bliss regardless of the expense involved. Another reason for the Confucians to oppose Buddhism was that since the arrival of Buddhism both the life of man and the reign of dynasties had been considerably shortened. Another reproach was that the monks were useless drones, did not engage in agriculture, and paid no ground rent or land tax to the emperor. Furthermore, retirement to a convent for the sake of salvation of one's own soul is a sin against filial piety, depriving parents of the progeny to perform the acts of ancestor worship. Buddhist monks were frequently slandered for admitting women into their pale and placing them on the same footing with men.

From the T'ang time on the Buddhist clergy was placed under strict state supervision. Altogether 5,358 convents were allowed to exist, 3,235 for monks and 2,123 for nuns, besides 1,687 Taoist monasteries, 776 for the male and 988 for the female sex. The number of Buddhist monks was restricted to 75,524, and that of nuns to 50,576.[15] In addition, ordination certificates were instituted, without which one was not considered a member of the monkhood and could not live in a convent or wear a religious habit. The law by which the T'ang dynasty curtailed monachism was taken over by succeeding dynasties and actually resulted in curbing the activities of the monks and preventing them from attaining in China an influence comparable to that in other Asiatic countries. The religious and the secular worlds in China were one closely knit unit. Buddhism could fill gaps in the religious world of the Chinese but could not change its structure as a whole.

From the few quoted examples of official documents anent Buddhism we learned that both ethical and economic reasons were given by the concerned state officials for suppressing or curbing Buddhism. From a purely economic point of view, in which every state has a legitimate interest,[16] Buddhist monasteries and temples have a tendency to siphon national wealth away from the population at large and to

15. *Ibid.*, p.52.

16. On Buddhism seen in the light of the national economy we have the monograph by J. Gernet, *Les Aspects économiques du Buddhisme dans la société chinoise du V^e aux X^e siècle*, Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, vol.39 (Saigon, 1956); hereafter cited as *Les Aspects*.

accumulate it within the cloister walls for specific purposes. On this score an illustrative story has been recorded. Early in the sixth century a Parthian merchant was plying his two ships loaded with pearls and jewels on the Yangtse River between Sze-ch'uan and the ocean. On one of his travels he came to Mount Niu-t'ou where he happened to meet the monk Ta of the Meditation (*dyâna*) sect who initiated him into the Buddhist doctrine. The merchant then said to himself: "The best is that I throw all my riches into the river and rid myself of my attachment to them. My happiness will be to lead a simple life without worries." Thereupon he scuttled one of his junks in the river. When he was about to scuttle the second, a group of monks came up and entreated him not to do it, but to use the rest of his goods for pious works.[17]

In all epochs nearly one percent of the total population lived on the religious trade. The Buddhist movement lived at the expense of agriculture and involved costly items such as the construction and adornment of temples and convents. Precious metals were getting scarce and so was copper, which was in demand in the mints. The convents kept huge reserves of coins and needed great quantities of metals for the casting of their statues. In the T'ang time Buddhist statues were also traded. The monastic communities enjoyed the privilege of immunity from certain taxations. Attempts were made in vain to subject the monks to a fiscal regime which should reduce the disadvantages for the public treasury. From the fifth century up to the T'ang time many monks were not registered and many laymen claimed to have entered religious life. There were monk-farmers and private monks in wealthy families and private groups of disciples of monks—all evading taxation at a time when the deficit of the public treasury was a pressing problem. An indirect taxation was the sale of monastic titles by the secular authorities at the end of the Northern Wei Dynasty (336–533). From the beginning of the eighth century the imperial princesses engaged in issuing ordination certificates to their favorites. After the rebellion of Ngan Lu-shan (756) ordination certificates were officially sold. Provincial governors took advantage of the weakness of the central government to profit from this system.

In North China agrarian colonies were by the end of the fifth century entrusted to the Buddhist church with a double goal: through their loan bureaus the religious communities should regulate the grain market and at the same time secure support for the convents. This

17. See *ibid.*, p.XI. The story is found in the *Siu-kao-seng-chuan*, k. 25, p.651a. We are making use of some of Gernet's findings as they are summarized in the appendix in "Table analythique des matières", pp.325 ff.

was in itself a well calculated scheme but in the hands of the administrators of the ecclesiastic land it could be turned to the one-sided advantage of the monastic landowners. The families who worked on the temple land became bondage-serfs. In the ninth and tenth centuries there was in Tun-huang in Kansu Province, close to the border of Sinkiang, a class of serfs who were by heredity attached to a monastery and thus outside the reach of the secular power. They were divided into groups each of which grew its kind of cereals so that the monastery could dispose of considerable quantities of grain. It happened frequently that the imperial government delegated its power of taxation to certain religious communities, which taxed not the land but the cultivator of it. The farmers were anxious to place themselves under the protection of a monastery and were ready to turn in to it part of the crop. Such farmers, more or less an integral part of the Buddhist church, were out to evade control by the secular power.

But except in marginal districts where colonization was still going on, the basic landownership of monasteries comprised not huge farmlands but estates among hills and mountains with gardens, orchards, and pastures. The initial size of the estate could be enlarged by further clearance of land, by purchase, or by donations by the state or private owners. Under such circumstances monasteries were often surrounded by undefined territories which served as pastures for cattle. Cattle breeding was a favorite occupation of the monasteries in Shensi and Kansu.

In the eighth century far-reaching social and economic transformations took place during which much farmland was deserted by its tillers. The system of farm-rents became general. The monasteries knew how to profit from these changes by expanding their rights to farmland. Of industrial installations in the monasteries the hydraulic flour mills and oil presses were lucrative assets, and in Tun-huang they were the chief source of income. These costly installations were rented out to the tenant farmers against a part of the product or on the basis of annually paid fixed taxes. The monasteries in Tun-huang claimed a monopoly on flour and the by-products of the mills and the oil-presses.

Primitive Buddhism categorically condemned any mercantile activity of the monks, but lay practices made their inroads in the religious communities. In China we find, from the fifth century on, stalls within the temple precincts. Money lending also started; from the end of the fifth century monasteries set a ground capital apart for money lending against security, an Indian practice. The borrowers were either laymen of rank or farmers. Grain for sowing was lent too. Long-term loans of money and textiles were also made. The fiscal records

from Tun-huang show that the basic income of the monasteries came from profane sources. Pious offerings were only of incidental significance. But no distinction was made between income from profane sources and pious donations, as both were used for the purposes of worship and the sustenance of the monks and were considered meritorious. The same is true of financial contributions to the organization of festivals and public and private ceremonies for the salvation of departed souls.

In the second half of the seventh century some monasteries in North China were outstanding in works of charity. In Ch'ang-an there was a "Court of the Inexhaustible Treasure." Offerings were either moderate daily contributions by the common people or consisted of cartloads full of money, textiles, or precious metals, which donors from the upper classes brought at the New Year. The gifts were used to help the poor and sick among the faithful. Hospitals and lodging houses for travelers operated in the monasteries free of charge. A deeply held belief in the hearts of Buddhists was that by donations to the temples one could redeem oneself from sins. The ornamentations of the sanctuaries consumed huge sums. Banquets at which monks were entertained were considered religious acts. The monks also practiced with considerable profit magic arts and medicine.

From the fifth century on a great number of religious associations appeared. Supernatural interests of the people were strong and manifold, not instigated exclusively by the monks. At the same time bonds of social life were cultivated. Wealthy people had their private sanctuaries and liked gorgeous funerals. An intimate relationship often existed between relatives of the emperor and court ladies with monks and nuns. Charitable works were looked on favorably by the government and encouraged, but luxury in pious works was condemned. From the eighth century on, avarice and corruption of many monks did great harm to the Buddhist movement and led to its degeneration. Buddhist charity was welcome to the sovereign as another form of humanitarianism if it remained subordinate to his polity. When the empress Wu Tse-t'ien decided to construct a colossal statue in the outskirts of Lo-yang, her project stirred up violent criticism among the literati who found that it ran counter to the vocation of Buddhism which is to bring help to suffering mankind.[18]

Yao Ch'ung wrote in a memorial to the throne in 714: "In order to put the principles of Buddhism to perfect practice, it is enough to be just, forgiving and charitable; it is enough to do good and to avoid what is bad. Why find pleasure in fables and why let oneself be

18. See Gernet, *Les Aspects*, p.289.

misused by the monks? Why take as real currency mere allegories, copy sutras, cast statues, ruin oneself, dissipate one's patrimony and go even as far as to sacrifice one's life without any remorse? This is really the height of aberration!"[19] Chang T'ing-hui made the point when in connection with the costly pious project of the Empress Wu Tse-t'ien he said: "The rule of conduct of the Bodhisattvas is to bring happiness to all beings."[20]

The above quotations of official opinions about Buddhism and its activities permit us only a few glances into the minds of those who were responsible for the welfare of the state. We can conclude that on the side of the Buddhists not all was holy and on the side of their opponents not everything was ill will. We need only think of how much an uninhibited Buddhism sapped the vitality of the Mongols and we will have the proper sympathy for the Confucian literati who saw the reverse side of the coin in the Buddhist movement.

In proverbs we find the main points of the Buddhist doctrine reflected as if people had learned their catechism well. The comments on the priests, nuns, and temple life are not always flattering. The opinion the people have of the priests in the monasteries and express in current sayings can be summarized thus: "The great majority of the monks live a life of leisure with plenty to eat and wear, and with no need to care for the future. Consequently the larger part of the priests is a lazy and shiftless class, delighting in ease and comfort and avoiding work when possible by putting off their tasks onto the newer and younger arrivals. Thus the life of the priests, aside from the worship, the menial tasks of the temple and begging from the surrounding neighborhood, is spent in enjoyable leisure."[21] "The old priest has entered into the state of contemplation" (204, 1200), i.e., has become stupid. "A magistrate is never at leisure; a bonze always is" (204, 1203). "When a priest sees money he will sell his sutras" (206, 1211). "Ten priestesses and nine are bad [women], the odd one left is doubtless mad" (207, 1219). "One person alone should not enter a temple, two persons should not together look into a well" (208, 1223), i.e., one with no one to help him might suffer at the hands of the priests, and one might be accused of pushing the other into the well, should anything happen while they were together. "In front of the gate of Hell there are many Buddhist and Taoist priests" (208, 1225),

19. The Chinese source from which this passage is quoted is indicated in *ibid.*, p.289, n.5, namely the *Kiu-t'ang-shu*, or Older T'ang Annals.

20. See *ibid.*, p.289, n.4.

21. C.H.Plopper, *Chinese Religion Seen through the Proverb* (Nanking, 1935), pp.204–205.

used of priests not living up to their teaching. "Keep up to the end your first priestly ardor, and it will be more than enough to make you a Buddha" (209, 1227). But good priests were found in the midst of hypocrisy and depravity, and legends about them were current. Such a sincere man was the priest Wang Shen of the Liang dynasty. "He, when he could not get men to listen to the words of light, went out and preached to stones, becoming so eloquent that they nodded in approval. Another such a one was Yün Kuang who so ably explained the sutras that flowers fell from heaven during his discourse" (Plopper, p. 208). A reference to this legend is the saying, "The flowers of heaven falling in disorder, and the coarse stones nodding their heads" (208, 1226).

One who has lived long enough in China to have made his own observations can testify to the genuineness of the *vox populi* with regard to the Buddhist priests. As a whole, during the Republican years—that is from 1912 to the Communist revolution in 1949—Buddhists lacked the ardor and impetus which they once displayed. The last two dynasties dealt severe blows to them from which they never recovered. In a commentary to the Ch'ing code (*Ta-Ch'ing lu-li*), which deals in its third title with the Taoist and Buddhist clergy, we find the following sentences: "When the Taoist and Buddhist clergy increase, the population decreases: this is a natural law. These folks do not plough, and have no trades or callings; so they dress and eat at the cost of the people; why then shall we allow them to build and thereby waste the wealth of the people; why allow them to bind up people's hair or shave their heads, and thus empty their dwellings?"[22] De Groot, who had seen the China of the last decade of the nineteenth century, wrote in 1901: And now we ask in conclusion: is this dying-condition to which the policy of the government has reduced Taoist and Buddhist life, very noticeable? He who has travelled in China with eyes more than half open to the existing state of things, and who from Chinese books has gathered some idea of what the two religions have been in their glorious times of yore—he can but answer this question with a decided "yes."

The fact is that Taoist monasteries have almost entirely disappeared and, as to the Buddhist abbeys, their days seems numbered. The hundreds of stately edifices with shining, curved roofs standing out elegantly against the sky, with lofty pagodas and ancient parks, which, as books profusely inform us, once studded the empire, picturesquely breaking the monotony of the mountain-slopes; buildings where the pious sought salvation by thousands, thronging the broad Mahâyâna to eternal bliss

22. Quoted and translated in de Groot, *Sectarianism*, pp.96–97.

and perfection, and whither the laity flocked to receive initiation into the commandments—these institutions can now at most by counted by dozens.[23]

The Kuomintang government, after it had succeeded in wresting the country away from the warlords and starting its modernization program, closed down many temples and discarded a great number of gods, branding their worship as superstition. But religious beliefs and customs die slowly. When the writer lived in Peking (1938–1949), he saw at New Year the great Buddhist and Taoist temples crowded with worshipers and visitors. The income netted on such occasions, plus the contributions from still existing religious confraternities, may be enough to keep the main temple buildings more or less intact and to support a few Buddhist or Taoist priests. Funerals of people of better standing are still embellished by the colorful robes of the participating clergy. A few attempts also have been made toward a Reform Buddhism with new stress on meditation and charitable works.[24] People certainly may think ill of the old-type temple monks, but Buddhist ideas are still strong in the hearts of the common people. Buddha has often occupied as high a place as Heaven, and he is highly respected and praised. People will not give up an old faith unless they can change it for an obviously better one.

23. *Ibid.*, pp.131–132.
24. See C.B.Day, *Chinese Peasant Cults* (Shanghai, 1940), p.199.

Chapter Four

The Syncretism of Chinese Religion

The religious heritage of the Chinese stems from many sources and ages. The whole nation with all its inhabitants participates in it, and there has been continuity in religious tradition for several thousand years. In the foregoing pages we have analyzed the constituent elements of this religion, its beliefs and practices. We found that the Chinese lives in a world which is one; man, both before and after death, gods, ghosts, demons, all belong to one and the same world, and the whole world is ruled by Heaven. Man's earthly activities have their religious significance in the total. Government and politics too are religious functions. The Han emperors knew why they needed the religious doctrine of Confucius to keep the country together in peace and order. The ideas of the various schools of thought were often conflicting, but still they belonged together as thesis and antithesis in the great dialectic struggle for truth. The two greatest topics of discussion were the ultimate principle and man, man in his two relationships, to the ultimate principle and to other men. Religion and ethics are most intimately tied together. The ethical norms and roots lie outside man in the ultimate principle.

It is usually said that the Chinese have three religions: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. This can be said only if necessary distinctions are made. True, Buddhism did not develop in China, it came from a different cultural area and runs against several basic strains of Chinese thought. But there are few Chinese who do not know at least something about its fundamentals, such as the Karma doctrine, the transmigration of souls, its moral commandments. There may be Chinese who never worshiped at a Buddhist temple, but they still will entrust the care for the souls of deceased relatives to the Buddhist priests who are specialists in this respect or, if need be, avail themselves of the magic powers of these priests. In the field of magic, Taoists and Buddhists stand on common ground. In abstract thinking the three systems of religion can be separated, in actual religious life they intermingle and overlap. There are many gods who are worshiped by all regardless of Buddhist or other affiliations, as we shall see when we examine the synchretistic pantheon. Taoist mystics and experts in Ch'an meditation understand each other fairly well. The Taoists

imitated at an early time the monastic organization of the Buddhists.[1]

1. Religious Annual Festivals

If we want a cross-section view of the great number of gods of various extraction, we need only to look at the gods the average Chinese worships at New Year. The New Year festival is a true compendium of the Chinese religion. The heart of the festival, and of the whole festive New Year period which lasts to the middle of the New Year month, is the worship of the gods and ancestors at midnight between the old and the new year. It is a family ceremony, a fact that is in itself typical of Chinese religion. The most important centers of the acts of worship are not the temples of the different denominations; the center of piety is for the Chinese in the intimacy of his home where he feels nearest to the supernatural world. And how could it be otherwise since the spirits to which the members of the family show the greatest confidence and devotion are their ancestors.

At New Year the entire family gathers in the best room where an altar for the gods and one for the ancestors stand. The family first enjoys a good meal. Then the father, or other family head lights incense sticks which he offers first to the house gods and then to the ancestors. Then the children and the servants all prostrate themselves in the same way before the family head. The next ceremony is the welcoming of the gods. For this purpose a small altar has been built in the courtyard; on the altar stands in a simple wooden frame a bundle of cheap woodblock prints of many gods, with the God of Heaven on top. Offerings are made and all prostrate themselves before the heavenly beings who are supposed to descend at midnight to the world of men. The bundle of pictures contains about sixty sheets, on each of them a woodblock print representing a god, under the picture the name of the god. The worship of these gods is called "veneration of Heaven and Earth." Among them there are Confucianist, Taoist, and Buddhist gods, that is Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. They are the gods also most commonly worshiped in temples. After the veneration the gods are again sent back to Heaven, which is done by burning their pictures.

Thereafter the family members return to the main room where the god of the hearth (Tsao-wang) is worshiped. This god is outstanding insofar as he is the guardian and supervisor of the family. On the twenty-third day of the twelfth month he is seen off for his visit to the

1. The first to build up a Taoist hierarchy was Chang Tao-ling (34–156), cf. Giles, *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary*, p.43, and Day, Chinese Peasant Cults, pp.50–51, and 135–136.

Heavenly Emperor to whom he presents a report on the conduct of all family members throughout the year and on important family events. There hangs in every house a picture of the hearth god. For the farewell ceremony offerings are placed before it; among them must be sweet confectionery which should make the mouth of the god sticky so that he cannot talk too much and disclose all he knows about the happenings in the family. About the role of the hearth god in the family we are informed by the prayers which the family head addresses to the departing god: "Old grandfather Tsao, you are the Lord of the entire family, you know everything first, you must partake from the offerings first. Report much good about us and only little bad." Or, "Tsao-wang, Tsao-wang [King Hearth], when you arrive at the Heavenly compartments and see the Heavenly Emperor, tell him much good and do not go into many details, and when you come back, bring us some strong babies!" In a folksong the prayer to the hearth-god is more elaborate: "The gongs sound, the firecrackers explode—We are offering money, we are offering a horse [painted on paper]. Please, from this dusty earth do not report our loose talk, but good words you should say before the Jade Emperor [Heaven]. We also ask you for protection of our children. When you come back, we shall ask you for your blessing and offer you new sacrifices. Do not mind the quarrels [in our house], on your table we lay out many dishes as offerings." The worship of the hearthgod underlines the close connection between the God of Heaven and the ethical behavior of the family. The hearthgod acts as the eye of Heaven. At the New Year people reflect on their obligations toward the Supreme Lord in Heaven.

The whole year is sprinkled with big and small festivals at which the world of the gods enters that of men. On the second day of the New Year people make offerings to the god of wealth (Ts'ai-shen) in their homes and flock to the god's temple in the city. There huge bundles of incense sticks are offered so that the flames in the brazier are blazing all day long. By midmonth of the New Year, the lantern festival occurs, a joyous affair when homes and temples are decorated with a great variety of lanterns. Many gods are worshiped in the temples. The deeper meaning of the festival is fire magic to increase the fertility of men and animals and plants.[1a] On the nineteenth day of the second month the birthday of Kuanyin is celebrated, on the

1a. For a detailed description and interpretation of the lantern festival see M. Eder, *Spielgeräte und Spiele im chinesischen Neujahrsbrauchtum. Mit Aufzeigung magischer Bedeutungen.* In *Folklore Studies*, vol.6 (1947); pp.19. ff.

third of the third month that of Hsi-wang-mu.[2] In the third month falls one of the three annual festivals for the death, the Ch'ing-ming festival, or festival of "Pure Brightness." The graves are cleaned and offerings placed before them. The eighth day of the fourth month is the birthday of Buddha; on the nineteenth day of the same month people visit the temples of the God of Medicine.[3]

One of the most significant festivals of the year is the "Festival of the Fifth Month." It is distinguished by a dragon-boat race. The original meaning of the race is still visible in the dragon shape of the boats. The old meaning of the regatta has however been obliterated by the superimposition of a commemorative festival for the magistrate and poet Ch'ü Yuan, who, pressed by the intrigues of a rival, felt compelled to drown himself in the river. We find here the general tendency of the Chinese to historicize imaginary figures and events from legendry. The boat race was originally intended to induce rain. At the time of the dragon-boat race, on the fifth day of the fifth month, people also try to counteract the dangers from the "five poisons," which are the snake, the scorpion, the centipede, the toad, and the lizard. The herbs taken as medicine on this day should prevent the contraction of the diseases which threaten at the beginning of the hot season.

In the following weeks fall the festivals of the Dragon-king, the god of horses, the war-god Kuan-ti, the five tiger-gods. On the seventh day of the seventh month the herdsman and the weaving girl are believed to have the only opportunity of the year to meet each other

2. We met this mythological figure already on page 6. The goddess lives in the K'un-lun mountain range, where the Immortals have their abode. Many details in the Hsi-wang-mu legend show that she was dear to the Taoists. She lives among Immortals in a Taoist paradise. In a regularly held banquet dishes are served which produce longevity. There was a peach tree which put forth leaves every three thousand years, and after another three thousand years peach fruit ripened, in time for Hsi-wang-mu's birthday for which all Immortals assembled to celebrate a great feast. From this legend the custom arose to present women of fifty years with an image of Hsi-wang-mu. People pray to her for long life. Cf.Werner, *A Dictionary,* pp.163 ff.

3. This god seems to have split in two, one is the Indian Bodhisattva, the Medical Buddha, Baishajyagura, in Chinese called Yao-shih-fo. Originally he dispensed only spiritual medicine, but in popular medicine and magic he is supposed to help in physical ailments. Sick persons touch that part of the statue of the god which corresponds to the sick part of their own body, and apply the hand or the finger to that painful part. Another god of medicine is Yao-wang, King of Medicines. The legends make of him a Chinese Saint whose biography is known, cf. Werner, *A Dictionary*, pp.586 ff. Yao-wang is a nationalized Indian Bodhisattva.

in the Milky Road.[4] Women and young girls pray to the weaving girl for skill in needlework and making fancy flowers. The two deities are the stars Aquila and Vega. On the fifteenth day of the same month is All Souls' Day.[5] Graves are visited and dramatic performances given, the content of which is taken from the legends about Mu-lien who knew how to release souls from Hades. The third day of the eighth month is the birthday of the hearth god (Ts'ao-wang). On the fifteenth day of the same month falls the mid-autumn festival, a moon festival. An altar is built in the courtyard and offerings are made there. On the altar a picture of the moon is placed on which a standing hare can be seen who with his pestle is grinding ambrosia in a mortar. In Chinese imagery a hare is pictured in the figures of the moon.

The first day of the tenth month is again a day for the commemoration of the dead.[6] People burn a paper bag which contains clothing made of paper to be given the dead as winter garments. On the eighth day of the twelfth month people offer gruel made from a fixed recipe to the gods and ancestors and eat some of it themselves. The ingredients used have magic significance, and the gruel is expected to keep away cold and demonic influences and epidemics.

2. Religion at the Three Most Important Events in Life

Above we covered a cross-section of the annual cycle of festivals and observances. Another way to find out to which gods prayers are offered by the population at large is to examine the life cycle of religious ceremonies and celebrations. Birth, marriage, and death are important occasions to manifest piety and belief. To obtain offspring people pray to several goddesses, first of all to Kuan-yin. The daughter of the god of the sacred mountain T'ai-shan, called T'ai-shan empress or T'ai-shan goddess, is also helpful in this respect. Her ladies-in-attendance are the "goddess who hastens deliverance," the "baby-bestowing goddess," the "goddess of offspring," and the "goddess of fertility." In other regions prayers are addressed to the "Holy Mother, the Queen of Heaven." Male gods also can grant offspring. Literati pray to the god of literature, also to Kuan-ti, the god of war and of literature, to Lü Tung-pin, one of the Eight Genii (Pa-hsien), and to Chang Kuo-lao, whose pic-

4. See Werner, *A Dictionary*, pp.73 f.

5. Cf. K.L.Reichelt, *Der chinesische Buddhismus* (Basel 1926); pp.84 ff. The same author also wrote: *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism. A Study of Mahayana Buddhism*, first edition 1927, 4th ed. Shanghai 1934. (hereafter cited as *Buddhism*).

6. See Reichelt, *Buddhism*, p.89.

ture, showing him riding on a donkey, is frequently hung up in the nuptial room of newly-wed couples.

To hasten the arrival of offspring, magic means are applied. Commonly practiced is the custom of fetching a little clay figure of a baby from a temple containing an altar of an offspring-bestowing goddess. The figure is treated at home as a live baby until the desired real baby is born. At New Year's time lanterns are sent by relatives to couples desirous of a baby in order to help them. Frequently married couples make a vow that if a son is born to them he will become a monk to serve a particular god in a Buddhist or Taoist monastery. If then a son is born, the vow can be fulfilled by substituting a paper figure for the boy and by making a monetary donation to the monks.

After birth a soothsayer forecasts the fate of the child by looking into its horoscope. Furthermore, the so-called "Seven-Star-Lamps" are lighted which have to burn for seven days and nights to prevent the baby from dying within the first seven days. Arrows made of peach-wood are shot in all directions or hung up over the head of the baby to keep evil spirits away. Amulets made of hair of a dog, necklaces made of copper coins and little bells are hung on the child as protective measures. In order to deceive demons who grudge the parents their child, the child is given the name of an animal or called a slave-girl. On growing children a silver lock is often hung which ties the child to its parents in case evil demons want to waylay it. Boys often wear earrings to make them look like girls, in whom demons are less interested. Such deceptive devices exist in great number. It is common practice to hang coins on the neck of a child in the belief it will make the child wealthy. Until his sixteenth year of age the child has to pass through thirty critical periods, the dangers of which have to be met with magic countermeasures.

At the betrothal and the fixing of the wedding day the twelve zodiacal signs are of importance. Every Chinese is born under such a sign. The respective signs of the bridegroom and the bride may not always match and something must be done to forestall an evil effect resulting from the discrepancy. When the bridegroom is about to step into the palanquin to fetch the bride, he first bows before the tablets of Heaven and Earth and his ancestors. In details of the wedding ceremonies there are regional variations, but everywhere they are full of magic and forebodings. When the palanquins of the bridgeroom and of the bride leave the house, their openings must be pointed in that direction where on this day the god of joy happens to be, a fact ascertained by consulting the calendar. Upon arrival at the house of the bridegroom the bride is conducted to the tablets of Heaven and Earth where candles and incense sticks are burning. The young couple kneels

down before the ancestor tablets of the bridegroom and before the picture of the hearth god.

When a dying man is about to breath his last, his soul is entreated not to leave. As a last recourse to prevent death the statue of a temple god is brought into the death-room. Accompanied by bonzes the statue is carried in a procession and received in the house with due honors. The god is asked to cure the sick man or at least to indicate a good medicine. For this purpose the statue is carried to a pharmacy where the god is asked to select the right medicine. The pharmacist points with his finger to one of the drawers where the medicine is kept. If the god does not move, another drawer is tried. If the statue moves (with the help of its carriers), the right medicine is found.

After the demise the soul is considered a higher being, on the same level as gods and spirits, and is to be worshiped. The Chinese concepts of gods, spirits, and souls are theologically not as clear-cut as Christian concepts. Life after death is imagined along the lines of life on earth, and the dead are therefore provided with clothings, valuable objects, money, houses, horses, occasionally autos, women and servants, a storehouse, cooks, all these things being made of paper and burnt at the funeral.

Every family has its own burial ground and the farmers bury their dead in a field. The Chinese landscape is scattered with these conic tombhills in the shadow of little groves. The preparation of the corpse for the funeral and of the coffin, the conduct to the burial ground, and the deposition of the coffin in the grave are subject to so many rules that only experts can perform everything as required. The ceremonies all stem from filial piety according to the Confucian ethic and at the same time from a concern to keep the departed soul in a friendly mood so that it will not bring down punishment on the family. The mourning rites for minors and unwed are extremely simple. Small children are buried without any ceremonies. Their corpses are wrapped in straw mats and deposited at a ridge between two fields so that dogs can take care of them, the sooner the better. People believe that in this way the little soul will disappear from this world forever and not harm the family in revenge for lack of care.

The two religious cycles show that most religion is practiced without the help or interference of priests. Religion in China has its center in the home. The house altars, the ancestor shrines, and the graves are the main places for the performance of religious acts. To be sure, there are many temples and the people flock to them on many occasions to burn incense and to bow to the gods, expecting in return help from them. But worship in temples is done in addition to that in the home, an extension of family-centered religion. We can also say that the

basic religious practices are older than the construction of temples.

In fact the first religious architecture apart from the home was begun during the Han time with the building of Buddhist monasteries and temples. With the differentiation and specialization of religious interests and practices, and the more intense social stratification of society, the construction of temples was the natural course. There were ceremonies which could be better performed outside the house, ceremonies for groups with common interests and religious associations. Besides the peasants, other social groups increased in number and importance. The question can be raised whether rites performed outside a temple stimulated practices of the rites in temples, so that in temples the same rites are performed as outside, only with more impressive iconography and a more elaborate ritual. Or are the rites outside the temples only replicas of those inside? We find the first alternative more plausible.

There are, however, areas of religious life in which the faithful have to rely more on temples and priests than in others. One such area is the worship of the gods of the underworld with its effort to bring comfort and eventual salvation to the souls of the deceased. Buddhism made the Chinese conscious of the life after death. It brought the belief in the transmigration of the soul and of a paradise and a hell. Before, though the Chinese believed in life after death, they were more concerned with life on earth and with the protection their ancestors gave them in this earthly life. Under Buddhist guidance a cult of the afterlife grew up in China and waxed especially strong during the T'ang time. To the old worship of ancestors solemn masses for the dead were added. The idea of hell was given vivid expression, to foster morality by showing the tortures which await sinners. Buddhist saviors who could deliver souls from hell rose to prominence and were adopted also by the Taoists, who turned them to indigenous Chinese in their legends. This underworld is for the common man such a complicated labyrinth that he needs experts to guide him in his belief.

In no other field did the Chinese come so much under the sway of Buddhist priests as in the eschatology. The priests alone knew about the mysteries of the other world and about how to extricate souls from the claws of the horrible demons there. The Indian Tantra-Buddhist Amoghavajra (705–775) brought his system to China where it lost its erotic element because of the influence of Confucian ethics and also gave up much of its gross magic. The great contribution of Amogha to Chinese Buddhism was the introduction of salvation services for the dead. He himself organized the first solemn and pompous "Festival for the Souls of the Dead" (*Ullambana*, in Chinese *Yü-lan-pen-hui*),

which was to become popular throughout the entire Far East.[7]

The Buddhist popular literature relates a typical story of the pious son Maudgalyayana, whom the Chinese name Mu-lien. How he saved his mother is described as follows by storytellers and in theatrical performances. A pious mother fell ill and tried in vain all kinds of medicines. One of her sons claimed to be able to restore his mother to health if she only were willing to eat meat. The mother ate and recovered at once. One of the slaves in the house revealed to Mu-lien the true state of things and Mu-lien, worried that his mother might have forfeited every chance to salvation, passed the information on to his mother. Protesting her innocence, the mother called all gods as witnesses that she did not eat meat. "If I have eaten meat," she said, "the gods may throw me into the deepest hell." In the same moment blood gushed from her nose, mouth, and eyes, and the devils dragged her down into Hades. Mu-lien did everything to help her. He underwent all kinds of torment to atone for her sin. One night he sees her in a dream: her clothes in rags, her face expressing extreme pain. Mu-lien sees how the devils are stealing the food and money that he had burned as her sustenance. He hears her crying: "Come, help me!" He decides to go to Hades himself, that is to die. He wanders through the many zones of hell and finally finds his mother. She had been thrown into a huge cauldron where she was to be cut in pieces and boiled. Mu-lien throws himself at the feet of the devils and begs them to let him take the place of his mother. This is granted. Mu-lien endures all torments with utmost heroism. But then Buddha appears radiant with light and glory and announces the good tidings that the mother can obtain salvation if a number of monks assemble and perform the salvation ritual. Soon thereafter a row of monks assembles before the picture of Buddha, chanting sutras and playing instruments. After a short while the gate of Hades is thrown open and out come the happy son and his mother. The scene ends with a jubilant hymn of praise for Buddha.

This story, also a favorite play of the Chinese stage, shows how the first *Ullambhana* was held. Later it became a popular institution. Its intention is to bring help to the sinful souls as fast as possible. If there are enough wealthy relatives and pious sons and daughters at hand who can put into motion the whole apparatus of salvation services, the salvation can be accomplished in a short time. The relatives need only to ask the inmates of a monastery or a temple to perform the rites

7. An essay on the basic religious value which salvation from Hell constitutes, we find in Day, *Peasant Cult*, pp.117–130, Chapter VIII: Salvation from Hell.

in the courtyard there or they can call the monks to their own homes and have them chant there for days or even weeks. The expenses for the gratification, the food of the monks, lamps and candles are no small matter, and religious associations and other humanitarians consider it highly meritorious to organize such celebrations for the deceased souls as magnificently as possible. This kind of celebration appealed to the Chinese masses enormously and its popularity contributed greatly to the success of Buddhism. There are many cases known of governmental officials who, as Confucianists, had to fall in line with the anti-Buddhist attitude of their emperors, but who privately did not deny their deceased relatives the benefit of the salvation ceremonies. It was the Chinese concern for the ancestors which facilitated enthusiastic acceptance of the new rites, and, in addition, the ancient shamanism was not yet completely forgotten; its practitioners too were able to establish direct contact with the souls in the other world.

The soul festivals took on a very theatrical quality and swallowed plenty of money. Great quantities of fruits and other vegetarian foodstuffs had to be purchased, as well as rolls of silk and paper. Hundreds or thousands of paper boats with lights on them were set adrift on a river, and a great number of monks and lay helpers had to be on hand. The commercial and lucrative aspect of the pious performance often gained the upper hand, but there were always many faithful who were guided by a sincere compassion for the lost souls. When during the First World War leading Buddhist monks read in the newspapers of the hecatombs of soldiers killed at the front, they spontaneously organized salvation ceremonies.[8]

From all this we see that even the foreign Buddhism could contribute a strong element to the syncretistic pool of Chinese religion. The theaters and the storytellers have always exerted a powerful educational influence on the population and much religious cargo has been carried by their extremely popular vehicles. The Taoists adopted from the Buddhists the underworld empire, only substituting Chinese names for the original foreign names. Pictures and sculptures of the various departments of hell are exhibited for moralizing purposes both in Buddhist and Taoist temples. In the course of many centuries different currents have contributed to the immense ocean of religious beliefs, customs, and practices of the Chinese. In religion man prays to beings which are superior to him and possess the power and the will to help him in his needs when no help on the human plane with human means is in sight.

8. See Reichelt, *Buddhism*, p.89.

3. The Syncretistic Pantheon of the Chinese

Many of the Chinese gods we have already met in the two cycles of religious events and practices. Everyone living in China and studying Chinese religion on the spot has ample opportunity to get acquainted with the gods there by visiting the temples, large and small, Taoist and Buddhist.[9] In addition the gods worshiped in the homes have to be studied. The temple iconography will in most cases be identical with that found in homes, representations of the gods on picture scrolls or on simple woodblock prints. The pantheon as it is found in our century is the result of an evolution which has been going on for many centures. As stated above, Confucianism stood for the ancient gods and for ancestor worship. Confucianism did not create any gods, except human beings who have later been deified through Confucianist initiatives. Confucianism was aristocratic by nature insofar as acts of worship were performed by the rulers on behalf of the ruled. Ancestor worship in its more elaborate and solemn form was also a prerogative of the aristocrats. Confucianism was concerned with a few official gods and with a moral conduct of life, neglecting the manifold individual religious interests and aspirations of man in his thousands of situations of life. To summarize, we can say that the Chinese pantheon comprises the old nature gods, a great number of gods of Buddhist and Brahmanic origin, saints as the Taoists mean them, and deified human beings.

It is a phenomenon of Indian religion to bring gods together in triads. The Chinese pantheon includes a good number of such groupings. Under the name "The Three Saints" Lao-tse, Buddha, and Confucius are worshiped together. Buddha sits in the center, proof of the fact that he is the most venerated among the people and occupies the highest rank in the esteem of the masses. Of this triad many statues are found in the temples and many devotional pictures in the homes. Popular pictures are those in which the whole pantheon, in a very condensed form, is seen assembled. For instance, there is a picture with sixty-six gods arranged in five rows. The top row shows Buddha, Confucius, and Lao-tse, in the next lower row Kuan-yin is sitting, in the third the Taoist genius Lu Shun-yang, beneath him Kuan-ti, the god of war and literature. At the bottom is the god of wealth, Ts'ai-

9. A good study in monograph from on one of the most popular temples of the Peking with typical syncretism has been written by Ann Swann Goodrich, *The Peking Temple of the Eastern Peak. The Tung-yüeh-miao in Peking and Its Lore*, IV, 285 pages. Published by *Monumenta Serica*, Nagoya (Japan), 1964. Mrs.Goodrich was in Peking in 1930–1932. See our review in *Asian Folklore Studies*, Vol.27, pp.163 ff.

shen. Each of these four objects of worship is surrounded by a suite of additional gods. Many such combinations are current among the people. They are the object of worship in the most solemn hour of the year, that is at the midnight worship of New Year, and show how unbiased the Chinese are in selecting their gods and bringing them together in groups.

A triad of Taoist origin is called "The Three Pure Ones" (San-ch'ing). The central figure shows the Jade Emperor (Yü-huang), the supreme deity of the Taoists. His name was given him because his palace with a golden gate stands on a mountain of jade. The second place is given to the god who regulates the time and mutual interaction of Yin and Yang. The third is Lao-tse, the propagator of the true doctrine. But other configurations also go under the name "The Three Pure Ones." There are Buddhist triads, the composition of which is not uniform in India, Tibet, Mongolia, China, and Japan. Another Taoist triad is named "The Three Officials" (San-kuan). It consists of Heaven as the bestower of happiness, the Earth as the forgiver of sins, and Water as the liberator from misfortune. There are also "Three Beginnings" (San-yuan); they are the rulers of the three sections of the year, the first section comprising the period from the first to the seventh month, the second from the seventh to the tenth month, the third from the tenth to the last month. Another explanation of the San-yuan points to the three early emperors Yao, Shun, and Yü.

The greatest luck for a young man was, through successful examinations, to find access to a brilliant career in the public service. It is only natural that for this aspiration a helpful god was found. Originally an astral diety functioned as patron of such candidates. But as god of literature, or Wen Ch'ang, are also worshiped several deified persons who were outstanding as scholars and officials. Also an historic person was the god of war, Kuan-ti. He lived from 162–220 and was a hero on the battlefield in the defense of the doomed Han Dynasty. The Sung and the Yuan emperors bestowed on him honorific titles and the Ming emperor Wan-li promoted him to the rank of guardian god of the empire. Kuan-ti is for the military class of the same significance as Confucius is for the literati. Kuan-ti is at the same time also worshiped as god of literature, because he is said to have been an ardent student of the classics in his youth.

In the following we shall concentrate on the most important Buddhist gods, by "gods" meaning worshiped supernatural beings in a broad sense. There is a female saint called "the Burning Lamp" (Jan-teng-fo). A legend says that there was in India a mendicant woman who in spite of her poverty gathered enough coins to keep a little lamp burning on the altar of Buddha. Buddha rewarded her by

foretelling that she would be a Buddha of a future aeon, whereupon the woman entered a nunnery. According to a Taoist tradition Jan-teng was a celebrated Tao master in China. In India Buddha had heard of this miraculous saint and started on a journey to China in search of him. The two met and Jan-teng initiated his Indian disciple within thirteen days into his doctrine of perfection. After returning to India Buddha preached the wisdom thus obtained in China and became known by the name of Sakyamuni.

An extremely popular figure is Maitreya, the Buddha of the Future, in Chinese Mi-lai-fo. His appearance is the opposite of a world renouncing ascetic. He radiates joy of life, is fat, has full cheeks, a big mouth, and a round belly shown nude; the whole figure is almost as broad as it is high, and thus he sits on his throne if he is not shown reclining on a couch. In one hand he is holding a miraculous little bag which contains air from the primordial heaven, the germs of all past worlds. In the other hand he is holding a rosary of which each bead represents a period of one thousand years, each period he has gone through doing good works. He is an amusing and attractive figure. Many believers claim to know of letters which have fallen from heaven annoucing the arrival of Maitreya, who is still living in heaven whence he will descend into the world of men full of love and mercy for mankind. His appearance in this world must happen about five thousand years after the historic Buddha has entered Nirvana and when the Buddhist doctrine has outlived its time and is getting decrepit. The significance and efficacy of each Buddha extend over three periods: his debut, the progress of his doctrine, and finally its decay. For Sakyamuni the first period, beginning after his death, has lasted for five thousand years, the second for one thousand years, and the third will last for three thousand years. After that the time for the arrival of Maitreya will have come.

The most invoked Buddhist gods are Amida and Kuan-yin. Amida is the Buddha of the Western Paradise. This paradise is the realm where those happy souls live who have escaped the circle of birth and rebirth. This land is separated from our earth by ten thousand worlds each one of which is ruled by a Buddha. Admission to the Western Paradise is the great hope of all Buddhists. The veneration of Amida was introduced to China by Indian translators. Devoted Buddhists incessantly spell out the name of Amida, hoping by doing so to accumulate so many merits in their lifetime that they will after death be taken at once into the paradise. Amida is usually represented sitting on a lotus flower. From the countless lotus petals which are floating on the waves of the great ponds of the paradise, the elected ones are born into their blissful life. Amida has vowed to abstain temporarily from obtaining

the highest degree of perfection in order to remain within reach of men who need his help, especially when they pray to him in their last moment before death. He resides in the Western Paradise postponing his last step to enter Nirvana. In Amida-Buddhism we have a kind of a *sola-fides* doctrine: not good works, good in the Buddhist sense, are decisive, but faith in the mercifulness of Amida is everything. This faith is a gift of Amida. The belief in Amida is very consoling, and it is only natural that the worship of Amida became the most widely accepted form of Buddhism.

Another savior-god of Buddhism is known under the name of Medicine-master Buddha (Yao-shih-fo). This name has been given him because of his intense desire to deliver men from the many evils which beset them. He is a Buddha of earlier world aeons and has also made the vow to devote himself entirely to the redemption of men from all diseases and physical and spiritual defects.

P'i-lu-fo, or Vairocana in Sanskrit, is the ideal essence, the Buddha of abstraction, of the Nirvana. He wanted to be reborn in the savior Buddha Sakyamuni, and this love for mankind made him worthy of veneration. The Taoists made of him a disciple of one of their saints who lived in the most ancient time. Later he attached himself to another Taoist master whom he followed into the Western Paradise. With this background he is worshiped on altars of Taoist temples. The "Twelve Great Heavenly Masters" are the educators and saviors of mankind, remarkable for their benevolence and willingness to help those who invoke them. All their statues can be seen together in Buddhist temples.

Kuan-yin as a savior-goddess is equal in rank to Amida. Although originally she was only co-regent in the Western Paradise, on Chinese soil she found independent veneration as the goddess with the compassionate heart. The name Kuan-yin means literally "the one who listens to the sounds," the sounds of prayer. She is often represented with many arms, called then "the thousand-armed Kuan-yin." Sometimes she has several eyes and heads, a representation originating in Tibet. By such devices the manifold helpfulness of the goddess is symbolized. Some pictures show her crossing the sea, and she is invoked by sailors in distress to whom she appears over the waves. Best known is the picture in which the goddess is holding an infant in her arms; barren women pray to her as "Child bestowing Kuan-yin." The guess that this picture has something to do with the Christian Holy Mother Mary is without any foundation. It is true however that the Japanese Christians during the persecution by the Tokugawa regime used this Kuan-yin picture as a disguise for their continued veneration of Our Lady.

The lord of the underworld, whose Chinese name Ti-ts'ang-wang, means "king of the entrails of the earth," is thought of not as a fearful hellish monster but as a deified Buddhist benefactor of mankind. As we mentioned in another context, during the T'ang time (618–906) the Indian monk Amogha introduced at the imperial court several practices by which help could be extended to the souls of the dead. Among others Amogha organized the so-called "festivals for the wandering souls," which consisted in inviting Buddhist priests to banquets which lasted for several days. During these days the invited priests had to surrender all their merits, prayers, and other pious efforts to the poor souls for whose salvation the festival was intended. Rich persons saw to it that during these days also the play "Mu-lien saves his mother" was enacted. The play lasted for three days and three nights, involving great expense. At the end of it the souls for whose benefit the play was staged were released from hell at once. Mu-lien was rewarded for his filial piety by being made king of the underworld with the ten kings of hell as his subordinates. Both Buddhists and Taoists pray to him in various needs, especially for preservation or liberation from the punishments of hell.

The underword of the Chinese is a huge administrative apparatus like the earthly courts of justice. For passing judgment on various misdeeds specified tribunals and judges are competent. The highest is Mu-lien, the king of the underworld. On his birthday on the thirtieth day of the tenth month, the ten judges of ten departments gather to offer their congratulations to Mu-lien, who on this occasion grants his amnesties: the souls whose term in hell has expired return to earth to be reborn there as men, fish, or birds, etc.; the punishments of the others are either reduced or waived altogether. Amida and Kuan-yin can also effect an act of mercy.

The Buddhist hell of the Chinese is located in a mountain in the province of Sze-ch'uan in the southwest. At night the heart-rending cries of the miserable souls are heard in the wilderness of the mountain and can send shocks of horror down the spine of the lonely wanderer. The first of the ten sections of hell is a kind of an anteroom to the torture chambers, the tenth chamber is for the dismissal of the inmates. The remaining eight chambers serve for the execution of the sentences. Each of them has one great hall and sixteen small ones. In addition there is also a blood lake and the city of those who have committed suicide. Altogether there are therefore 138 places of punishment. The Buddhist hell is not eternal; after having served out its sentence the soul is reborn to a new existence. But there are some incorrigible souls, who are handed over to the devils who club them to death and thus extinguish their existence. The Buddhist hell cannot last forever,

because after a world period (*kalpa*) has elapsed every being is changed to a new one.

In the first section of hell, or its anteroom, the registers of the living and the dead are kept. The length or the shortness of a human life is determined here. When a soul arrives here whose misdeeds do not exceed the good deeds, this soul is passed on to the tribunal which handles the rebirths, from there it returns either to a better or to a worse existence on earth, depending on the balance of good and bad deeds. One who has done more bad than good is first made to see in a mirror all his or her sins and is then sent to the competent tribunal for receiving judgment and punishment. All cruelty that human imagination can invent is inflicted on the condemned. The Chinese hell is not second to that of Dante in his *Divina Comedia*. In side halls of temples of the city god and in Buddhist and Taoist temples one frequently sees the tortures of hell represented in crude and gaily colored clay plastics as a constant warning for the living to avoid sins. Since the horrors of hell have become common knowledge among the entire population, they have a wholesome influence on the moral conduct of the people.

To return now to the lighter side of the pantheon, the so-called Lohan also belong to the inhabitants of heaven. These are saints who have entered Buddhahood and are no longer subject to the transmigration of souls. There is a set of eighteen Lohan and one of five hundred. Similar to the Lohan are the "Sixteen Venerable Ones," also saints of Buddhism. Their pictures and statues are common temple iconography. The same is true of the statues of the twelve guardian spirits of the year. Every year one of them is alternately on duty and is then worshiped at childbirths, wedding ceremonies, and funerals.

"The Four Heavenly Kings" (Sze-ta-t'ien-wang) are worshiped by both Taoists and Buddhists. They are the four kings who rule the slopes of the world-mountain Meru. In temples one finds their huge and gorgeous statues, usually inside the entrance gate since they are the protectors of the temple. One foot may rest on the figure of a devil, a representative of their subjects on the slopes of the world-mountain whom they have to keep in subjugation. To the Four Heavenly Kings the regulation of wind and rain is also entrusted in accordance with the needs of men. Each of the kings holds some equipment in his hands as a symbol of his function. One of them produces wind and he is holding a magic sword which he whirls around with such vigor that by cleaving the air he produces the rustling of the wind. Another one has to regulate the wind thus produced. He is holding a guitar with one hand, with the other hand he is tuning its strings which signifies the regulation of the wind. The third king

produces rain and is therefore holding an umbrella. The fourth is responsible for the right amount of rain and is holding a snake in his hands. We have here a play upon words: the kind of snake the king is holding is called by a word which is synonymous with the word for "measured" or "adequate." These four Indian gods held also for the Chinese a very practical significance.

Perhaps the most ubiquitous god in all of China is, as far as his places of worship go, the dragon god (Lung-wang). The dragon is the ruler of the seas, lives in caves and lakes or on mountain-crests, is the moving force in storms, and causes earthquakes. He is worshiped foremost as giver of rain. In all village temples his statue is found because the harvest depends on him. During winter the dragon rests in the depths of the ocean, in spring he rises up to the clouds and gives rain. In times of a drought the villagers carry the statue of the Dragon King out in a procession. If he still refuses to give rain after many incense offerings and the procession, the people put him under pressure by letting his statue stand uncovered in the scorching heat of the summer sun until he cannot endure it any longer and gives rain. Otherwise his statue may be smashed to pieces and a new dragon-king installed by governmental decree.

We should mention the six patriarchs of Chinese Buddhism who have acquired special merits for having spread the doctrine. Known to almost every Chinese are many heroes of Chinese novels, such as the *Hsi-yu-ki*, or "Report on a Travel into the Western Paradise." This novel dramatizes the introduction of Buddhism to China, describing the adventures of the monk Hsüan-tsang and his companion who in the seventh century traveled to India and, after a sojourn of seventeen years there, returned to China with many religious books, pictures, and holy relics. The monkey Sun, the main figure in the novel, excels with his tricks by which he masters the most complicated situations. Only the Buddhist doctrine can mend his dissolute nature. This monkey is an allegory of the human heart, wild at birth and defying all gods and spirits. Lao-tse succeeds in throwing a ring around the animal which fits smoothly to its body as long as it is calm, but which cuts into its flesh when it gets restless. Only Buddha succeeds in effecting a true conversion of the brute when it finds itself powerless against Buddha's superior might. The monkey Sun joins the pilgrims under the monk Hsüan-tsang. The monk tames the swine Chu-pa-chieh, a symbol of the animal side in human nature, and makes it also join the pious group. The most dangerous adventure is crossing a river on a simple plank to which only the monkey dares to entrust himself. Finally a boat arrives for the passage into heaven. Hsüan-tsang boards it but falls into the water because the boat has no bottom. He is

however saved. When they have already crossed half of the river, a corpse comes floating on the waves which Hsüan-tsang recognizes as his own earthly self. All congratulate him on his salvation. When they land on the other river bank the ferry-man disappears. All arrive at their final destination and are safe forever. This generally known novel gives much information on the religious world of the Chinese.

The pictures of the Eight Genii (Pa-hsien) decorate many objects. We find them on fans, on picture scrolls for the decoration of rooms, on embroidery, on ceramics, and even impressed on cookies. The Eight Genii are symbols of good luck. Another immortal, whom every child knows, is the boy Liu Hai. He is represented swinging a cord with coins attached to it over his head. He helps to accumulate riches and is invoked by businessmen.

There are also astral gods, T'ai-i, "the Great One," for instance. He is the product of cosmological speculations and is identified with the polar star and ranks higher than the Five Heavenly Emperors. Both by Taoists and Buddhists T'ou-mu, "Mother of the North-pole," is worshiped. Among the inhabitants of heaven there exists a well organized officialdom. There is a ministry of thunder which commands all gods of thunderbolts, thunder, rain, and wind. The ministry of medicines is composed of cultural heroes who in the myths are given credit for curing diseases. There is also a King of Medicines (Yao-wang) to whom many temples and statues are dedicated. There is a god of surgery, an eye goddess, a goddess of easy delivery, a divine midwife, a specialist for curing smallpox. Well staffed is the ministry of water. Other ministries are responsible for matters of fire, for the elimination of epidemics, for time, for the five sacred mountains, for exorcism, for literature, for war, for finances, for public works. Subordinates of the ministry for public works are the guardian spirits which are worshiped by the craft and trade guilds. There are gods of luck and several gods of wealth, and there is a god of longevity. There are guardian spirits against hail and locusts.

In the pantheon as outlined above we find assembled at random gods which have been worshiped since time immemorial, then gods produced later by the fancy of the people or of literati, spirits and gods of every extraction and for every purpose. Many of them have fallen or are falling into oblivion, new ones emerge. It has happened even in modern times that a temple was dedicated to an outstanding man whose relatives are still alive. The Chinese pantheon comprises personified and deified forces of nature, ancestor spirits, Buddhist saints, Taoist genii, and spirits of deified outstanding men.[12]

12. Cf. Goodrich, *ibid.*

We look however in vain for traces of Islam or Christianity in it. This is understandable in view of the negative attitude of the Confucianist government toward these two foreign religions. Mohammedans are found all over China in the cities and along the trade routes; they are in general law-abiding citizens, but in religious matters they formed their own exclusive communities and were left alone. With the expansion of the empire to the west during the Manchu dynasty a cautious attitude in handling the Mohammedan subjects was adopted, though Islam was in principle considered a heresy.[13] As to the lack of Christian elements in the Chinese pantheon, in matters of faith Christianity could not and did not accommodate itself to any other religious world. Furthermore, it has not been in China long enough to have made any impact on the popular religion of the Chinese.

4. Demonology and Exorcism

The Chinese know at least as many demons as gods. Demonology occupies much space in Chinese religion.[14] The same is true of exorcism, the art of neutralizing and subduing the demons. Many demons we have already studied in connection with the care for the dead by Buddhists and Taoists alike. After death the soul is helplessly exposed to hordes of hostile spirits. Buddhism has brought to China the belief in the *karma*, or rewards and punishments after death for man's behavior during life. The dark fate a soul meets in the other world may be just and well deserved, but still human compassion tried to find ways and means to extend help even to the justly condemned. They can be saved from their misery only by an act of mercy, and Buddhism knows of merciful saviors, the Bodhisattvas.

But human existence is constantly harassed, justly and unjustly, in this present world. The Yin-yang doctrine is the ideological background of the fear of demons, but the demons were already feared before the Yin-yang doctrine had been developed in cosmological speculations and before Buddhism came. Darkness, decay, and death are those facts in human life which make us feel insecure and which mankind has always tried to eliminate. Where there is *yang*, or light, life, health and prosperity, there must be lurking the *yin*, the limitation and destruction of life. The personified agents of both the *yin* and the

13. The Moslems are also covered in de Groot, *Sectarianism*, Vol.2. See Index under Moslems.

14. On demonology in antiquity cf. Maspéro, *La Chine*, pp.160 ff. Later demonology is given extensive treatment in de Groot, *The Religious System*. Vol.6, part 4. The War against Spectres. Chapter I: The Place of Demonocracy and Exorcism in the Taoist System, pp.929 ff.

yang are spirits, invisible forces. A *shen*, a good spirit or god, comes from the beneficent half of the universe; a *kuei*, a demon or spectre, from the opposite half. Every good in the world comes from a *shen*, and every evil is inflicted by a *kuei*. The Chinese religion is as polytheistic as it is polydemonistic. Gods, or *shen*, are, e.g., heaven, sun, moon, stars, wind, rain, clouds, thunder, fire, the earth under the influence of heaven, sea, rivers, mountains, rocks, stones, plants; also the souls of men. The greatest *yang* power is Heaven, it controls the doings of all demons, and no demon can harm man unless with authorization or silent consent of Heaven. The demons swarm around everywhere in infinite numbers, they are the agents of Heaven and of gods who under Heaven as their overlord administer the world. There are myriads of demons who wantonly and of their own accord bring distress to the world. But demonocracy remains limited by Heaven and the gods.

The belief in demons and specters is in China not superstition or a deformation of religion; it is a cornerstone of China's universalistic religion and has also great moral significance. It is a deterrent to vice and it has as a source of ethics fulfilled an indispensable mission to the many millions of Chinese.

The main function of Chinese religion is to stimulate the operation of the *shen*, or gods, in order to muzzle the *kuei*, or demons. It is exorcising polytheism. Magic and exorcism are mainly in the hands of priestly experts, but the lay world, too, is every day engaged in a constant defensive and offensive war against evil beings. A study of the means and methods to fight the omnipresent demons is "a study in national philosophy and popular intellect, and at the same time a study in the boundless sway which superstition exercises over all minds in China, from the most unlearned man in the street up to the ministers and emperor." (de Groot)

Medical art in China is to a great extent magic applied to curing ailments of the body which are caused by demons. Exorcism is powerless against the orders of Heaven, and also against gods of walls and moats or against the Eastern Mountain (T'ai-shan). These gods distribute justice in the name of Heaven. Their attacks are to be borne with resignation as fate or destiny, *yun*, *ming*. They can be warded off only through redemption of guilt by meritorious acts, by self-humiliation, reverence, sacrifices. But there are countless specters who only want to extort food from men by intimidation, and are not authorized by Heaven. They are timorous and soon yield to exorcising methods and objects.

As we have seen, exorcism was practiced in antiquity when male and female *wu*, sorcerers, were active at funerals and in purification

rites in the palaces. During the Han time, exorcism was practiced on a large scale. Light and fire and noises made with gongs and firecrackers were means to drive the swarms of ghosts away. But the expelled specters might return at any moment. "When grain is dried in the yards, and fowls and sparrows pick it up, they decamp as soon as the owner chases them away or throws anything at them, but no sooner does he leave them alone than they come back; they will not be kept in dock unless he keeps watch the whole day." Powerful preventive charms are affixed to the gates and doors of the house at New Year in order to ward off the demons for the whole year.[15] The custom of pasting huge woodblock prints of the two ghost killers on the house doors at New Year was still very much alive before 1949, only the personalities of the killers were, in the course of centuries, exchanged for other ones. The peach-tree and its wood and fruit remained always conspicuous in sorcery.

The few pages above on demonology and exorcism can be only a reminder that Chinese religion, like a huge tree, has strong branches with the *yin* as their sap, the dark principle of the universe. Space limitations do not permit us to elaborate more on this aspect of the supernatural world of the Chinese.[16]

Epilogue

To survey the religion of the Chinese in the allotted pages of this book was not easy. Has everything been said that should have been said even in a condensed presentation of the subject, and were the various items presented proportionate to their importance in the whole?

15. On door-gods, cf. Day, *Peasant Cult*, pp.88 ff.

16. The great standard work on Chinese folk religion no doubt is still Henri Doré, Recherches sur les superstitions en Chine, 17 vols. (Shanghai 1911–1938); English translation by M.Kennely, Researches into Chinese Superstitions. The term "superstition" sounds odious and could have been avoided. Clarence Burton Day, Chinese Peasant Cults, to which we have made frequent references, is a well balanced and handy representation of folk religion, covering not only the religion of the farmers, but that of the merchants and artisans as well. Both Doré's and Day's material has been gathered mainly in the provinces of the Central Chinese Plain, but many findings hold good also for other parts of the country. Of more recent publications we may mention Niita Noboru, The Industrial and Commercial Guilds of Peking and Religion and Fellow-countrymenship as Elements of Their Coherence, in: *Folklore Studies*, Vol.9, 1950.—Li Wei-tsu, On the Cult of the Four Sacred Animals (*Szu-ta-men*) in the Neighborhood of Peking, in: *Folklore Studies*, Vol. 7, 1948.—William A. Grootaers, Rural Temples around Hsüan-hua (South Chahar), Their Iconography and Their History, in: *Folklore Studies*, Vol.11,2, 1951.

What puts the mind of the author at ease is that the reader has at least an opportunity to complement the information given here by consulting additional literature. The author feels confident, however, that he has succeeded in conveying to the reader the impression that the Chinese have a very rich religious world. Many of their religious concepts and ideas will also appeal to thoughtful minds elsewhere in the world. That this religion is of no use for the present political regime in China surprises nobody. Even Confucius, to whom the republican government after 1912 continued to pay high respect, was declared a feudalistic class enemy. Temples are now used for profane purposes and their statues thrown away. Only as monuments of art are some buildings preserved. In an attempt to create a popular literature along party lines the old genres of myth, legend, and folktale are used as vehicles to convey party ideology.[17]

Whether the government in China were communist or not, many fanciful products of religious imagination would have crumbled anyway under the impact of modern civilization, and had in fact to a great extent crumbled already before 1949. But even with the most modern civilization mankind has to struggle with problems and riddles which defy all human efforts toward a solution on the human plane only. Human nature has a transcendental component and religious problems will always occupy the human mind to an intense degree. The contributions of the Chinese religious thinkers to the search for the truth about the infinite have, as efforts of finite man, to remain fragmentary, but they still belong to the best that the human mind has produced.

17. Cf. Chun-Chiang Yen (in Chinese sequence: Yen Chun-chiang), *Folklore Research in Communist China*, in: *Asian Folklore Studies*, Vol. 27, 2 (Tokyo 1967); pp.1–62.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adam, Leonhard. *Buddhastatuen: Ursprung und Formen der Buddhagestalt.* Stuttgart, 1925.

Barreau, André. *Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Vehicule* (Publications de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 38). Paris, 1955.

———. *Der indische Buddhismus* (Die Religionen Indiens, vol. 3). Stuttgart, 1964. With references to the Chinese ramifications of Buddhism.

Brough, John. "Comments on Third-century Shan-shan and the History of Buddhism." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (University of London) 28 (1965): 582–612. Shan-shan is one of the "Western Countries" frequently mentioned in the Chinese histories, and of significance in the transmission of Buddhism to China.

Bulling, A. *The Meaning of China's Most Ancient Art: An Interpretation on Pottery Patterns from Kansu (Ma Ch'ang and Pan-shan) and Their Development in the Shang, Chou and Han periods.* Leiden, 1952. Important clues to the most ancient Chinese religion.

Chan Wing-tsit. *Religious Trends in Modern China.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1953.

Chang Hsiang-wen. "An Early Chinese Source on the Kaifeng Jewish Community." *Folklore Studies* (Peking) 4 (1945): 327–331.

Chao Wei-pang. "Games at the Mid-Autumn Festival in Kuangtung." *Folklore Studies* (Peking) 3 (1944): 1–6.

———. "The Chinese Science of Fate-Calculation." *Folklore Studies* (Peking) 4 (1946): 279–315.

Chavannes, Edouard, editor and translator. *Des Documents chinois decouverts par Aurel Stein dans les sable du Turkestan oriental.* Oxford, 1913. With much bearing on the history of Chinese Buddhism.

———. *Le T'ai chan.* Paris, 1910. A monograph on the sacred mountain T'ai-shan and its position in Chinese religion.

———. *Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale* (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vols. 13–14). Paris, 1913–15. Volume 13 is in two parts: Part 1, La Sculpture à l'époque des Han; Part 2, La Sculpture bouddhique.

China Islamic Association, editor. *Chung-kuo Mu-ssu-lin heng-huo* ("Moslems in China"). Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1953. Texts in Chinese, Arabic, and English.

Cohn, William. *Asiatische Plastik.* Berlin, 1932.

Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Meditation.* London, 1956.

———. *Buddhist Thought in India: Three Phases of Buddhist Philosophy.* London, 1962.

Creel, H. G. *Chinese Thought from Confucius to Mao Tse-tung.* Chicago, 1953.

Day, Clarence Burton. *Chinese Peasant Cults: Being a Study of Chinese Paper Gods.* Shanghai, 1940. With good bibliography.

Dehergne, Joseph. "Les Chretientés de Chine de la periode Ming (1581–1650)." *Monumenta Serica* 16 (1967): 1–136.

Doré, Henri. *Recherches sur les superstitions en Chine.* 16 vols. Shanghai,

1911–1929; English translation by M. Kennelly, *Researches on Chinese Superstitions*, 10 volumes, Shanghai, 1914–1946.

Dubs, H. H. *The Works of Hsüntze*. London, 1927.

Dumoulin, Heinrich, S.J. *The Development of Chinese Zen after the Sixth Patriarch in the Light of Mumonkan*, translated by Ruth Fuller Sasaki. New York, 1953. *Mumonkan* is the Japanese for *Wu-men-kuan* ("The Pass without a Gate"), a Zen book of the 13th century.

———. *Zen, Geschichte und Gestalt*. Bern, 1959.

Eberhard, Wolfram. "Temple-building Activities in Medieval and Modern China." *Monumenta Serica* 23 (1963): 264–318.

Eder, Matthias. *Die Religion der Chinesen* (Christus und die Religionen der Erde, vol. 3). Vienna, 1951.

Eichhorn, Werner. "Die Wiedereinrichtung der Staatsreligion im Anfang der Sung-Zeit." *Monumenta Serica* 23 (1963): 205–263.

Fairbank, John K., editor. *Chinese Thought and Institutions*. Chicago, 1957.

Fairbank, John K., et al. *East Asia: The Modern Transformation*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1964.

Foucher, A. *L'Art greco-bouddhique du Gandhara: Etude sur les origines de l'influence classique dans l'art bouddhique de l'Inde et de 'Extrême-Orient* (Publications de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, vols. 5, 6). Paris, 1905–06.

Forke, Alfred. *Geschichte der alten chinesischen Philosophie*. Hamburg, 1927.

———. *Geschichte der mittelalterlichen chinesischen Philosophie*. Hamburg, 1934.

———. *The World Conception of the Chinese*. London, 1925.

Franke, Otto. "Das religiöse Problem in China." *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 17 (1914): 165–196.

———. "Der geschichtliche Konfuzius." *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, n.s. 4 (1925): 163–191.

———. "Die religiöse und politische Bedeutung des Konfuzianismus in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart." *Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie* 8.Jg. (1930): 579–588.

———. *Geschichte des chinesischen Reiches*. 4 vols. Berlin, 1930, 1936, 1937, 1948.

———. *Studien zur Geschichte des konfuzianischen Dogmas und der chinesischen Staatsreligion: Das Problem des Tsch'un-ts'iu und Tschung-schu's Tschu-ts'iu fan lu*. Hamburg, 1920.

Frauwallner, Erich. *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus*, 2d ed. Berlin, 1958.

Fung Yu Lan. *A History of Chinese Philosophy*. Peking, 1937.

Geisser, Franz. *Mo Ti—der Künder der allgemeinen Menschenliebe*. Bern, 1947.

Gernet, Jacques. *Entretien du maître de Dhyâna Chen-houei du Ho-tsö* (668–760) (Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 31). Hanoi, 1949. Important for the history of Zen Buddhism.

———. *Les Aspects économiques du Bouddhisme dans la société Chinoise du Ve au Xe siecle*. (Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 39). Saigon and Paris, 1956.

Giles, H. A. *Chuang Tsu, Mystic Moralist and Social Reformer*. London, 1889.

———. *Confucianism and Its Rivals*. London, 1905.

———. *Religion of Ancient China*. London, 1905.

Goodrich, Anne Swann. *The Peking Temple of the Eastern Peak*. Nagoya

(Japan), 1964. With 20 plates. Appendix: Description of the Tung-yüeh Miao in 1927, by Janet R. Ten Broeck.

Gotô Kimpei. "Studies on Chinese Religion in Postwar Japan." *Monumenta Serica*, 15 (1956): 463–511.

Graf, Olaf. *Dschu Hsi, Djin-si lu. Die sungkonfuzianische Summa mit dem Kommentar des Yä Tsai* (Monumenta Nipponica Monographs No. 12). Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1953.

———. Tao und Jen, Sein und Sollen im sungchinesischen Monismus. Wiesbaden, 1970.

Granet, Marcel. *La civilisation chinoise.* Paris, 1929.

———. *Danses et légendes de la Chine anciennes.* Paris, 1926.

———. *Fêtes et chansons anciennes de la Chine.* Paris, 1919.

———. *La pensée chinoise.* Paris, 1934.

———. *La religion des Chinois.* Paris, 1922.

Grimm, Tielemann. *Erziehung und Politik im konfuzianischen China der Ming-Zeit.* Hamburg: Gesellschaft für Natur-und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1960. Important for history of later Confucianism.

Groot, J. J. M. de *Les fêtes annuellement célébrées à Emoui (Amoy): étude concernant la religion populaire en Chine.* 2 vols. Paris, 1886.

———. *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China.* 2 vols. Amsterdam, 1904; reprinted Peking, 1940.

———. *The Religion of the Chinese.* New York, 1910.

———. *The Religious System of China.* 6 vols. Leiden, 1892–1921. Excerpts of Chinese texts with translations and interpretation.

———. *Universism.* Berlin, 1918.

Grootæ̀rs, William A. "Les temples villageois de la région de Tat'ong (Chansi-Nord), leurs inscriptions et leur histoire." *Folklore Studies* 4 (Peking, 1945): 161–212.

———. "Une Société secrète moderne: I-Koan-Tao. Bibliographie annotée." *Folklore Studies* 4 (Peking, 1946): 316–325.

Grube, Wilhelm. *Die Religion der alten Chinesen.* Tübingen, 1908.

———. *Religion und Cultus der Chinesen.* Leipzig, 1908.

———. *Zur Pekinger Volkskunde.* Berlin, 1901.

Heiler, Friedrich. *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion* (Die Religionen der Menschheit, Vol. 1). Stuttgart, 1961. For a general orientation in science of religion.

Hentze, Carl. *Bronzegeräte, Kultbauten, Religion im ältesten China der Shang-Zeit.* 2 vols. Antwerp, 1951. One volume text, one volume plates.

———. *Die Sakralbronzen und ihre Bedeutung in den frühchinesischen Kulturen.* Antwerp, 1941.

———. "Mythologische Bildsymbolik im alten China." *Studium Generale* 6.5 (1953).

———. *Tod, Auferstehung, Weltordnung. Das mythische Bild im ältesten China.* 2 vols. Zürich, 1955.

Hirth, Friedrich. *The Ancient History of China to the End of the Ch'ou Dynasty.* New York, 1908.

Hsiao Kung-ch'üan. "K'ang Yu-wei and Confucianism." *Monumenta Serica* 28 (1959). 96–212. On a reformer of Confucianism of the late 19th and the early 20th century.

Hurvitz, Leon. *Chin-i (583–597): An Introduction to the Life and Ideas of a Chinese Buddhist Monk* (Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques, vol. 12).

Brussels: Institut belge des hautes études chinoises, 1963. Important for the history of the Amida and Pure Land Sects.

Kalff, D. *Der Totenkult in Südschantung.* Yenchowfu, 1932.

Köster, Hermann. "Zur Religion der chinesischen Vorgeschichte." *Monumenta Serica* 14 (1949–55): 188–214.

Kraft, Eva. "Zum Huai-nan tzu. Einführung, Übersetzung und Interpretation." *Monumenta Serica* 16 (1957) 191–286; 17 (1958): 128–207.

Krause, F. E. A. *Ju-Tao-Fo: Die religiösen und philosophischen Systeme Ostasiens.* Munich, 1924.

Latourette, K. S. *Christian Missions in China.* New York, 1929.

Laufer, Berthold. "A Chinese-Hebrew Manuscript, a New Source for the History of the Chinese Jews." *Folklore Studies* (Peking) 4 (1945): 319–326. Originally appeared in *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 47 (1930): 189–197.

———. "The Development of Ancestral Images in China." In *Reader on Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach,* edited by William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt, pp. 445–450. 2d ed. New York, 1965.

Legge, James, editor and translator. *The Chinese Classics: With a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and Copious Indexes.* 5 volumes in 8 parts. Hong Kong, 1861–72. The Standard translation. Vol. I: Confucian Analects, the Great Learning, and the Doctrine of the Mean; vol. II: Mencius; vol. III: the *Shoo King*; vol. IV: the *She King*; vol. V: the *Ch'un ts'iu* and the *Tso chuan.*

Lessa, William A. "Chinese Body Divination." In *Folk Religion and Worldview in the Southwestern Pacific,* pp. 85–96. Tokyo: Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1968. A collection of papers read at the 11th Pacific Science Congress, Tokyo, 1968.

———. "Somatomancy: Precursor of the Science of Human Constitution." *Scientific Monthly* 75 (1952): 355–365.

Liu Wu-chi. *A Short History of Confucian Philosophy.* London, 1955.

Loewenthal, Rudolf. "The Early Jews in China. A Supplementary Bibliography." *Folklore Studies* (Peking) 5 (1946): 353–389.

———. "The Nomenclature of Jews in China." *Monumenta Serica* 12 (1947): 97–126.

———. *The Religious Periodical Press in China.* Peking: Synodal Commission in China, 1940. Part I: the press of the Christian missions; part II: the press of the three main religious groups in China; part III: the press of the religious minorities in China.

Mallmann, M. T. de. *Étude iconographique sur Mañjuśri* (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 55). Paris, 1964. A contribution to Buddhist iconography.

Maspéro, Henri. *La Chine antique* (Histoire du monde, vol. 4). Paris, 1927.

———. "Le songe et l'ambassade de l'empereur Ming, étude critique de sources." *Bullétin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* (Hanoi) 10 (1910): 95–130.

———. *Le Taoism.* Paris, 1950.

———. editor. *Les documents chinoises de la troisième expédition de Sir Aurel Stein en Asie centrale.* London, 1953.

Pelliot, Paul. "Rapport sur sa mission au Turkestan chinois." *Bullétin de*

l'École française d'Extrême-Orient (Hanoi) 10 (1910): 00–000.

Plopper, Clifford H. *Chinese Religion Seen through the Proverb.* Nanking, 1935. With Chinese text, literal translation, and commentary.

Rachewiltz, Igor de. "The Hsi-yu lu by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai." *Monumenta Serica* 21 (1962): 1–128. Shows the polemic between the Buddhists and the Taoists in the Mongol Empire under Cinggis Qan.

Reichelt, Karl Ludwig. *Der chinesische Buddhismus. Ein Bild vom religiösen Leben des Ostens.* Basel, 1926.

Reischauer, Edwin O., and Fairbank, John K. *East Asia: The Great Tradition.* Boston, 1960.

Schipper, K. M. *L'empereur Wou des Han dans la légende Taoist* (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 58). Paris, 1965.

Seidel, Anna. *La Divinisation de Lao Tseu dans le Taoisme des Han* (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 00). Paris, 1969.

Teng Ssu-yü. "Dr. Sun Yat-sen and Chinese Secret Societies." In *Studies on Asia,* edited by Martin D. Lewis et al., vol. 4. London, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1963; reprinted as a Monumenta Serica monograph Nagoya, Japan, 1963.

———. *Historiography of the Taiping Rebellion.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, East Asian Research Center, 1962.

Tobar, Jérôme. *Inscriptions juive de K'ai-fong-fou* (Variétés sinologiques, no. 17). 2d rev. ed. Shanghai, 1912.

Tsukamoto Zenryû. "The Sramana Superintendent T'an-yao and His Time," translated by Galen Eugene Sargent. *Monumenta Serica* 16 (1957): 363–396. A document on the first persecution of Buddhism and the antagonism between Buddhists and Taoists during the Northern Wei Dynasty (336–533).

Tun Li-ch'en. *Annual Customs and Festivals in Peking, as Recorded in the Yen-ching Sui-shih-chi,* translated and annotated by Derk Bodde. Peking, 1926.

Vandermeersch, Léon. *La Formation du Legisme: Recherches sur la constitution d'une philosophie politique charactéristic de la Chine ancienne* (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 56). Paris, 1965.

Wei Hwei-lin. "Categories of Totemism in Ancient China." In *Folk Religion and Worldview in the Southwestern Pacific,* pp. 73–84. Tokyo: Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1968. A collection of papers read at the 11th Pacific Science Congress, Tokyo, 1968.

Werner, E. T. C. *A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology.* Shanghai, 1932.

White, William Charles. *Chinese Jews. A Compilation of Matters Relating to the Jews of K'aifeng Fu.* Toronto, 1942.

Wieger, Léon. *Histoire des croyances religieuses et des opinions philosophiques en Chine, depuis l'origine jusqu'à nos jours.* Hien-hien, 1917.

Willeke, H. Bernward. *Imperial Government and Catholic Missions in China during the Years 1780–1785.* New York, 1948.

Wright, Arthur F. *Buddhism in Chinese History.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959.

Yang, C. K. *Religion in Chinese Society.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961.

Zürcher, E. *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China.* Leiden, 1959.

INDEX