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### A Comparison of the Christian Doctrine of Sin with that of the Three Religions of China

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A COMPARISON OF THE CHRISTIAN  
DOCTRINE OF SIN WITH THAT OF THE  
THREE RELIGIONS OF CHINA

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A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary  
Department of Systematic Theology

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by  
LeRoy Hass  
May 1947

Approved by: John Theodore Mueller  
E. C. Zimmermann

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what is really so. A person must be convinced that he deserves nothing else than eternal condemnation because of his sin. It is this very conviction which a Christian missionary seeks to implant in the hearts of the heathen so that they recognize their need of a Savior and turn to Jesus in true faith, believing that He alone has saved them from their sins. However, in bringing the heathen to a knowledge of their sin, undoubtedly it would be expedient for the missionary to teach that the heathen think of sin, or at least what their religious teach. Therefore, since the author, had willing, will be China this fall as a missionary of our Methodist Board, it was deemed advisable that he make a study of the notions of sin as held among the Chinese people and compare it with that of the Christians.

The purpose in writing this thesis, however, is not to produce a lengthy dissertation on the Christian concept of sin; this has been done by many excellent Christian theologians. In the next few pages we shall simply reproduce the teachings of Dr. Franz Pieper<sup>1</sup> and Dr. J. J. Mueller<sup>2</sup> on this subject. Hence, very few proof requests or proofs of any kind will be given. The purpose of this thesis is to present the points of the Christian concept of sin in order to prepare the reader for a more intelligent consideration of the topic.

A COMPARISON OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF  
SIN WITH THAT OF THE THREE RELIGIONS OF CHINA

### Introduction

The doctrine of sin is of prime importance in the Christian religion; for, in order to understand, appreciate and accept the teachings of Christianity, it is necessary to know what sin really is. A person must be convinced that he deserves nothing else than eternal condemnation because of his sins. It is this very conviction which a Christian missionary seeks to implant in the hearts of the heathen so that they recognize their need of a Savior and turn to Jesus in true faith, believing that He alone has saved them from their sins. However, in bringing the heathen to a knowledge of their sins, undoubtedly it would be expedient for the missionary to know what the heathen think of sin, or at least what their religions teach. Therefore, since the author, God willing, will sail to China this fall as a missionary of our Missouri Synod, it was deemed advisable that he make a study of the doctrine of sin as found among the Chinese people and compare it with that of the Christians.

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"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth the Law: for sin is the transgression of the Law," 1 John 3:4. The Revised Version translates: "Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness: and sin is lawlessness." Etymologically considered, "lawlessness" (anomia) is a negative concept expressing a lack of conformity to the divine Law (caentia conformitatis cum lege). Melanchthon has said that it is a confusion of the divine order.<sup>3</sup> However, "lawlessness" is also used in a positive sense as contempt of the Law, opposition to the Law, defiance of the Law. The verbs used with anomia show that it means some positive evil: "Doeth also lawlessness;" Christ says in Matthew 7:23, "Ye that work iniquity lawlessness. " Sin therefore is man's lack of agreement with the divine Law (nomos given as norm to men, whether this non-agreement

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1. Dr. Franz Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, Vol. I, pp. 320-353.  
 2. Dr. J. T. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, pp. 210-235.  
 3. Philip Melanchthon, "Melanchthon on the Nature of Sin," Theological Essays, p. 187.

pertains to his condition (status, habitus) or to his individual internal or external actions (actiones internae et externae)

Since sin is "lawlessness" it is necessary to recognize and know the standard, the "nomos", the transgression of which constitutes "lawlessness." The Formula of Concord gives this Scriptural definition: "The Law is properly a divine doctrine, in which the righteous, immutable will of God is revealed, what is to be the quality of man in his nature, thoughts, words, and works, in order that he may be pleasing and acceptable to God."<sup>4</sup> Therefore only God's will addressed to men constitutes Law for them, and only that is divine Law for all men which is taught in Scripture as binding on all. Not even the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament form are binding; they constitute Law for all men only as they are interpreted in the New Testament. There are certain other laws which Scripture applies for only a time and to certain people. Not even the mandata specialia dare be made to refer to all men, e. g., Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. The only Law which is binding on all men is the divine moral Law, authoritative in its every content. Conformity to this Law demands from all men at all times (1) purity of human nature, and (2) purity of all internal and external acts, i. e., thoughts, words, and works. If it be asked, "How can the divine Law be known?", we must say that after the Fall man of himself can no longer ascertain the divine Law with certainty, even though his conscience functions. For,

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4. "The Formula of Concord," Concordia Triglotta p.957,17.

although man's conscience has a revealing and demanding function as well as a judging and condemning function, there is such a thing as a conscientia erronea, i. e., fallen man regards certain things as permitted, yea, even commanded, which God nevertheless has forbidden, and he regards as forbidden what God has permitted. The only inerrant norm is Scripture (Matt. 5:18,19), not man's conscience.

Some very strange things have been said about the cause of sin, even placing the sin directly on God Himself. But God is in no way to be regarded as the cause of sin. The devil was the first to sin; he then seduced men and even now is the impelling power in the unbelievers and the Tempter of the believers into sin. However, even though the devil was the first to sin and tempted man to sin, sinning man himself must also be regarded as a cause of sin.

Whether men like it or not, Scripture tells us that the consequences of sin are horrible. Man now is guilty before God, subject to the curse of God. This curse inflicted by God is: Spiritual death, bodily death, eternal death, and temporal punishments such as war, flood, famine, etc.

Thus far only the more general remarks have been made concerning the doctrine of sin. The two types or classes of sin shall now receive our attention, i. e., original and actual sin. Original sin is the sin which men do not commit, but the one with which they are born since Adam's Fall.

It embraces two things, (1) hereditary guilt--the guilt of the one sin of Adam which God imputes to all of Adam's descendants, and (2) hereditary corruption. Man is so corrupt that the depth of his hereditary corruption can be learned only from Scripture. True, man still has some intelligence in matters of this world, but he is utterly incapable of seeing the truth in things pertaining to the obtaining of God's grace and salvation. The way of the Law he regards as the only plausible way to salvation, but the Gospel (God's way of salvation), is foolishness unto him. Man's will is also corrupted. It is definitely opposed to the Law of God; nor can it be otherwise because it is estranged from God. Man is no longer guided by the light from God. Even when man desires to do, and actually does, things externally good, he cannot do them prompted by the love of God or for God's sake. This hereditary corruption of man's intellect and will may be viewed either as a defect, which is a lack of concreated righteousness, or as concupiscence, i. e., a dispositive internal inclination to evil (a leaning toward, a hankering for evil). Since man is so rotten as the result of original sin, it is no wonder that Jesus declares the hereditary evil condition to be the source of the individual sinful acts (Matthew 15:19). Luther says: "Original sin or nature-sin or person-sin is the truly essential sin. If this sin did not exist, there would be no actual sin either."<sup>5</sup>

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5. Luther, quoted in Pieper, op. cit. p. 340.

Actual sin is every act or omission which is anomia, i. e., conflicts with the Law of God. We present the following grouping of actual sins, keeping in mind that all acts against the conscience are to be classified also as sins: (1) voluntary and involuntary sins; (2) sins of omission and commission; (3) sins against God, the neighbor, and one's self; although all are really sins against God; (4) grievous and less grievous sins; the most heinous sin is the despisal of God and His grace; (5) mortal and venial sins; (6) dominant and non-dominant sins; note: in unbelievers all sins are dominant; (7) taking part in the sins of others; (8) crying sins; (9) the sin against the Holy Ghost.

All sins, both original and actual, merit for the sinner eternal damnation. True it is that only unbelief damns; but where unbelief reigns, all sins assume their condemnatory character. Scripture describes hell in terms of eternal exclusion from God, resulting therefore in the most unbearable suffering of body and soul. However, degrees of torment are taught. It must be noted also that there is a ceaseless sinning on the part of the damned. In considering the location of hell, one must realize that it is not proper to define hell geographically or otherwise; putting this positively, Dr. Pieper says: "Hell is there, where God pours out His endless righteous wrath over the condemned in banishing them from His face." (The contents of this paragraph have been gleaned from Vol. III of Dr. Pieper's Christian Dogmatics, pp. 320-323.)

In preaching to the Chinese it is necessary for the missionary to impress upon their hearts and minds the true concept of sin. To many average Americans "sin" is nothing more than a mistake or at best a serious error. Hence, in our preaching in the United States, it is necessary to put a Christian meaning into the word "sin." The same holds true in China. Many of the Chinese do not feel offended if they are called "sinners" or "criminals;" for sin is regarded merely as misconduct, etc. Three common Chinese terms for "sin" are: tsui 罪, 罪, and kuo 過. "Tsui" is composed of a net and a wrong. It implies "caught in the net of wrong doing."<sup>6</sup> "O" is composed of heart and second; thus it is a secondary or unnatural heart, and means "bad, vicious." "It is sometimes wise to take a man's measure before calling him bad or vicious," says Soothill.<sup>7</sup> "Kuo" consists of a curious formation of a wry mouth and to go. It means to "pass, pass through or by; cross over; sign of the past or perfect tense; to pass beyond the ordinary or proper limit;" hence it is used as transgression, error, fault, or to blame. Thus we can see that a

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6. This word also has many other meanings: a crime, a wrong a fault, retribution, punishment, suffering, penalty, to treat one as a criminal, to give occasion for blame, a violation of order, a breach of the laws of etiquette, a violation of decorum, and to blame. This variety of meanings has lead J. Dyer Ball in his article "Sin (Chinese)," in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, 1928 edition, Vol. XI, p. 536, to declare that the Chinese do not have any word or combination of words which adequately expresses the meaning of our word "sin." W. E. Soothill, in his book The Three Religions of China, pp. 208-212, agrees with Ball. However, two of our missionaries to China, the Rev. E. C. Zimmermann and the Rev. Paul Martens, say that the Chinese terms are very useable and require no more explanation in China than "sin" does in America.

7. Soothill, op. cit., p. 210.

missionary should not have much difficulty in adopting existing terminology to express the Christian concept of sin.

Throughout the centuries many religions, both native and foreign, have tried to leave their impression on the Chinese mind. Among these are the Ancient Israelites, the Chinese Jews, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Shamanists, Manichaeans, Mazdaists, Manchus, fire worshippers, Nestorians, Catholics, and Protestants. The effect of these religions on the minds of the masses has not been very great, at least not until very recently. But there are three which have moulded the religious thinking of the Chinese: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, commonly known as "The Three Religions of China."

It will be our purpose to compare the doctrine of sin as found in each of these religions with that of the Christian religion, so that in the final analysis we arrive at the fundamental difference in the concept of sin between Christianity and the Three Religions of China.

In his discussion of the subject, the author feels that a historical sketch of each religion would be of great aid in understanding its doctrine of sin.

## I. CONFUCIANISM

Confucius was born in 551 B. C. in what was then the feudal State of Lu, a portion of what is now the province of Shan-tung, on the eastern seaboard of China. His family migrated to the present province of Honan. Confucius' surname was K'ung. "The K'ung clan was a branch of the ducal House of Sung, which itself was descended from the kings of the dynasty of Shang, who had ruled from B. C. 1766-1123, and who traced their lineage back to Hwang Ti, the first year of whose reign is said to have been B. C. 2697."<sup>1</sup> There are countless K'ungs now living who boast of being descended from Confucius. Confucius' father, called Shu-liang Hih, is known to us as sustaining an honorable position; he is supposed to have been also a very brave man. In his old age, he divorced his wife, and married a young lady of the family of Yen, of whom Confucius was born in B. C. 551, as said. The father died when Confucius was three years old. The lad developed early the tendencies of his character. He has left us a very brief account of his mental growth, saying that at fifteen his mind was set on learning, and that at seventy he could do whatever his heart prompted, confident that it was right.<sup>2</sup> He married (at the age of nineteen)

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1. Legge, "Confucius and the Religion of China," Religious Systems of the World, p. 61.

2. Ibid., p. 62.

before his mother's death; he "appears to have lived with his wife happily enough for about fifty years."<sup>3</sup> There is not sufficient evidence that he divorced her. Confucius had only one son, merely an ordinary, average man, but who left a son superior to himself, and to whom we are indebted for the most complete and philosophical account of his grandfather's teachings. It appears as if Confucius might have had two daughters also.

He began teaching in his native village when he was about twenty-two years old. But he did not teach boys the rudiments of education. The young and inquiring spirits who resorted to his house were directed to the ancient monuments of their nation's history and literature. At the same time Confucius unfolded to them the principles of human duty and government. It is said that his disciples amounted to three thousand during his life.<sup>4</sup> They always accompanied him wherever he went; they must have been his means of support because he would not accept support or help from a ruler whom he disapproved. Because of the corruption of the government Confucius did not hold government positions very long. Once, after successfully governing a town, he was raised to the Minister of Crime for the whole State. But someone succeeded in alienating the heart of the ruler from Confucius. After losing this position he wandered (from 496 B. C.

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3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 63.

for thirteen years with a company of his disciples seeking an honest ruler who had ears to hear his instruction. The quest was in vain. In 483 B. C. Confucius was called back to Lu; but he hardly reentered public life, devoting the time to completing his literary tasks. After five short years in Lu, he died (the spring of 478 B. C.). When Confucius died, "he uttered no prayer, and he betrayed no apprehension."<sup>5</sup>

One of the greatest followers of Confucius was Mencius (Meng Tzu); he lived 372-289 B. C. His teachings were much like Confucius'. In fact, not only Mencius, but practically all the disciples of Confucius throughout the ages have adhered closely to their master's teachings. The three great schools of commentators in the history of Confucianism were 206 B. C.-220 A. D., 960-1278 A. D., and 1644-1912 A. D. Among the commentators, Chusius (Chu-tzu), 1130-1200 A. D., is regarded as one of the greatest. He, too, taught much as Confucius and Mencius.

Sacrifices to Confucius were second grade till 1907, when the late Empress Dowager raised him to the first grade, thus ranking him with Shang-ti. This was her reply to the western deification of Jesus Christ. However, in the 1920's the Republican Government was strongly opposed to many of Confucius' political sentiments; his books are no longer taught in the schools; and he is regarded as a "backnumber."<sup>6</sup>

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5. Ibid., pp. 65f.

6. Soothill, op. cit., p. 37.

Thus it appears that Legge's prophecy is being fulfilled: "After long study of his character and opinions, I am unable to regard him as a great man. He was not before his age, though he was above the mass of the officers and scholars of his time. He threw no new light on any of the questions which have a world-wide interest. He gave no impulse to religion. He had no sympathy with progress. His influence has been wonderful, but it will henceforth wane. My opinion is, that the faith of the nation in him will speedily and extensively pass away."<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, it appears quite probable that his influence will be felt, at least to a certain degree, for centuries to come.

Although many sayings and writings are commonly ascribed to Confucius, he wrote very little, claiming only the Chun Tsiu as his own. But this book has little interest except for the three supplements to it by other hands.<sup>8</sup> Nor did he claim divine origin for himself or for his teaching.<sup>9</sup> His was the work of editing the Five Classics, thereby reproducing the teaching of the ancients.<sup>10</sup> Hence, in the consideration of our topic the teachings of the ancients and of Confucius and his disciples will be regarded as one, unless otherwise indicated. The Chinese classics which Confucius edited are the Shu King (the Book of History) the

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7. James Legge, Chinese Classics, Vol. I, p. 113.

8. Legge, "Confucius and the Religion of China", Religious Systems of the World, p. 63.

9. Y. C. Yang, China's Religious Heritage, p. 74.

10. J. M. DeGroot, The Religion of the Chinese, p. 90.

Shi King (the Ancient Odes), the Yih King (the Book of Changes or Divination), the Li Ki (the Book of Rites), and Chun Tsiu (Spring and Autumn Record). Four more books are counted among the sacred writings of the Chinese: Ta Hioh (Great Learning), Chung Yung (Doctrine of the Mean), Lun Yu (Analects or Sayings of Confucius), and... the Book of Mencius).

"No theological doctrine of inspiration or supernatural authority has ever been evolved concerning these nine or ten books. Yet they have been actually the most formative single agency in the production and maintenance of the Chinese ideal character."<sup>11</sup> (Even though these books were destroyed by Shih Hunang-ti, the Napoleon of China, about 200 B. C., Legge believes that we still have what Confucius and his disciples gave to their country almost 2,500 years ago.)<sup>12</sup> These books could therefore be compared with the Bible of the Christians--the teachings contained in them are as binding on Chinese as are the doctrines of Scripture on Christians. In fact, whatever the sages, those teachers of antiquity, have taught, is regarded as binding.<sup>13</sup> DeGroot points out that "Mencius is the first sage who categorically defines heresy as everything which diverges from the teachings of Confucius and still more ancient sages."<sup>14</sup> In the worship of Confucius, the Emperor must

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11. R. E. Hume, The World's Living Religions, p. 117.

12. Legge, Chinese Classics, Vol. I, p. 11.

13. Legge, The Religions of China, p. 105.

14. J. J. M. DeGroot, The Religion of the Chinese, p. 97.

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say among other things: "Thy doctrine is complete."<sup>15</sup> Thus, we can easily see that loyalty to the ancestral sages of China as expressed in the Confucian classics is clearly demanded.

Having established the source of the Confucian doctrines, we shall now proceed with the Confucian doctrine of sin. The most famous utterance of Confucius on this subject are these words: "If a man sin [tsui] against Heaven, he has nowhere left for prayer."<sup>16</sup> In order to have a better understanding of this statement, we must know what Confucius means by "Heaven." "Heaven" is the term which Confucius used for his God. He never used Shang-ti, but always spoke of T'ien (Heaven). He quite evidently regarded Him as something abstract, rather than as a living sentient Being, with the physical attributes of man, thus weakening the personality of Him.<sup>17</sup> A Chinese priest says that Confucius didn't believe in a self-existing Creator at all.<sup>18</sup> Legge agrees with this, although he feels that Confucius regarded T'ien as man's Maker and Governor.<sup>19</sup> The Ancients didn't picture even Shang-ti as the Creator or One who demands sole recognition as the one and only god. They felt that a mass

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15. Confucius, quoted in Legge, Chinese Classics, Vol. I, p. 92.

16. Confucius, quoted in C. E. Storrs, Many Creeds, One Cross, p. 111.

17. H. A. Giles, Religions of Ancient China, p. 36.

18. Quoted by E. H. Parker, in Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 215.

19. Legge, "Confucius and the Religion of China", Religious Systems of the World, p. 71.

was already in existence and that Shang-ti just formed and shaped it;<sup>20</sup> however Shang-ti undoubtedly is an echo of monotheism. The present-day Confucianists also do not believe in a personal God. A Chinese scholar says: "We do not believe in a personal God any more." Another scholar says: "To us, the T'ien or Shang-ti is a collective [noun?] and stands for all that is mysterious and unexplained." A third Confucian scholar voices pure agnosticism: "We have no way of finding out what God is like."<sup>21</sup> But the lowest depths are reached by Chu-tzu (1130-1200 A. D.), one of the greatest Confucian commentators, who is accused of denying the existence of God.<sup>22</sup> Since the T'ien of Confucius is nothing more than an impersonal Being, we may say with Kretzmann that the god of Confucius is practically pantheistic.<sup>23</sup>

Although Confucius remained silent as to any personal god (or either had none), yet he "believed in a moral supervision of earth and spoke of the commands of heaven as being inexorable."<sup>24</sup> We might well ask how men were to ascertain these commands of Heaven. T'ang said: "The great God has conferred (even) on the inferior people a moral sense, compliance with which would show their nature invariably right. To make them

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20. P. E. Kretzmann, The God of the Bible and Other Gods, p. 101.

21. Confucian scholars, quoted in T. T. Lew, China Today Through Chinese Eyes, p. 71.

22. Soothill, op. cit., p. 42.

23. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 103.

24. Francis Grant, Oriental Philosophy, p. 125.

tranquilly pursue the course which it would indicate is the work of the sovereign."<sup>25</sup> Men needed assistance in the use of their normal nature, and T'ang felt that it was the work of the sovereign to define the course of duty and assist men to keep it. Throughout the history of China the Emperor has been regarded as the vicegerent of Heaven, the Mouthpiece of Nature, etc. He was the only channel of communication with the Supreme Power or Heaven.<sup>26</sup>

"To learn the commands of Heaven, the Emperor turned to the Divinations which were believed to grant him direct communication with the Celestial wishes. The systems of Divination<sup>27</sup>

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25. T'ang, quoted in Legge, The Religions of China, p. 98.

26. E. H. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 210.

27. John C. Ferguson, "China", Mythology of all Races, Vol. VIII, pp. 135f, makes these observations on divination: The divinations revealed the will of the Supreme Ruler. Either tortoise shells or stalks of the yarrow plant were used. For example, the tortoise was smeared with blood from the sacrificial victim which was being offered to the discoverer of this kind of divination. The upper shell of any one of the six kinds of tortoises was heated until five cross lines appeared. These referred to the five elements. Only the right and left sections of the upper shell were interpreted. The marks on these shells were called "ssu chao" (four omens). These omens determined decisions concerning eight contingencies, i. e., military expeditions, heavenly appearances, grants, treaties, results, arrival, rain and pestilence. Directly connected with the tortoise and the yarrow plant are the Eight Diagrams. They are eight combinations of lines of full and half length. Out of these Eight Diagrams have developed three philosophical systems of divination known as lien-shang ("connections"), kuei-ts'and ("collections") and chou-i ("transmutations"). Since the time of the T'ang Dynasty the popular methods of divination have been the use of bamboo slips and the dissection of ideographs, or characters. Connected divination is physiognomy, hsiang mien, i. e., reading fortunes by the features of the face. This ancient practise was denounced by Hsun-tzu in the third century B. C. Physiognomy seems to have a greater influence in determining events of national importance than any other branch of the occult sciences.

were found in the mysterious Yi-Ching,<sup>28</sup> the 'Book of Changes,' which by the arrangement of its Trigrams gave forth its auguries."<sup>29</sup> It is said that Confucius consulted the three ancient forms of divination.<sup>30</sup>

However, since all of this is contained in the Confucian Classics, we may say that the will of Heaven is determined by the Confucian scriptures; the Confucianist must turn to the teachings of the sages in order to ascertain the will of Heaven.

Nor have the Confucianists been uncertain as to the content of their ethics, i. e., the Will of Heaven. The examples of the Sage Kings as recorded in the Classics form the basis of their ethics. There were the "earlier kings", Ya,

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This belief in physiognomy is common among all the people today. Geomancy is also practised universally in China today; it is the attention to the winds (feng) and water (shui) in regard to the place of burial. Feng (the wind) must be kept in mind when a burial site is on an elevation, otherwise, the strong winds could blow away the dirt out of which the mound is made; shui (water) must be kept from permeating graves which are in low places.

28. Paul Carus, Chinese Philosophy, p. 7, has some interesting comments, saying that "the Yih King is one of the most enigmatic books on earth, the mystery of which is considered by many beyond all hope of solution; and yet it exercises even to-day a greater influence over the minds of the Chinese than does the Bible in Christian countries. Its divine authority is undisputed and every good Chinese is confident that it contains the sum of all earthly wisdom. There is no Chinese scholar who cherishes the least doubt that there is any truth in science or philosophy that could not be found in, and rationally developed from, the Yih King... There can be no doubt about it that in its present form the Yih King is chiefly used for the purpose of divination." On p. 16 this observation is made: "We read in the counsels of Yu that Shun submitted the question of succession to divination, and abided by its decision in somewhat the same way as among the Israelites problems of grave importance were settled by consulting the oracle of Urim and Thummim."

29. Grant, op. cit., p. 91f.

30. Parker, China and Religion, p. 58.

Shun and Yu (2357-2205 B. C.) and the "later kings", Wen, Wu, and Duke Chou, who was not actually king but who served as regent for his nephew, the son of King Wu. These "later kings" were all of the twelfth century B. C. Between these two worthy trios was T'ang. These seven names, Yao, Shun, Yu, T'ang, Wen, Wu and Duke Chou, are repeated again and again as models of virtuous conduct. The code of conduct and government formulated by the ancient Sage Kings is summed up in the "Way of the Kings." As Han Yu (768-824 A. D.) wrote: "What I call the Way--Yao transmitted it to Shun; Shun transmitted it to King Wen, King Wu, and Duke Chou. Wen, Wu and Duke Chou transmitted it to Confucius, Confucius transmitted it to Mencius."<sup>51</sup>

It was the duty of the people and the Emperor to govern their lives according to this Way, i. e., the Tao.<sup>52</sup> The Tao can be compared with the Law of God; it is the norm or standard according to which men are to conduct their lives. Anything done contrary, even remotely,<sup>53</sup> to this Tao is a collision with the Supreme Power and hence may be classified as a sin against Heaven.<sup>54</sup> This is the Confucian definition of sin. However, lest we receive the wrong impression, Confucius did not say much about the vexed question of sin. He spoke of

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51. Han Yu, quoted in Starr, op. cit., p. 109.

52. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 95.

53. E. Faber, Doctrines of Confucius, p. 67, quotes these words of Confucius: "To go beyond, is as wrong as to fall short." "The intelligent and the distinguished men go beyond it, the fools and unworthy do not come up to it." "To have faults and not to reform them, is a fault."

54. Starr, op. cit., p. 94.

sin only in connection with the practical affairs of life.<sup>35</sup> Thus, we shall see that sin to the Confucianist is something that concerns only human relationships, with no reference (at least very few) to the gods. Confucius subordinated man's duty towards God in every way to man's duty toward his neighbor.<sup>36</sup> This is of course in direct contrast to the Christian concept. For man's first duty is to love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, and mind, and then to love his neighbor. Of course, since Confucianism is practically pantheism, man cannot be said to have a moral responsibility to any god; hence Confucius fails to speak of man's duty toward Heaven, except in terms of duty to man.

We shall now deal more specifically with the Tao (the Law of Heaven) and its definition. To the ancient Chinese the Tao was the celestial order which crystallized into nine evidentiary virtues--firmness with consideration, energy with gentleness, being bold but respectful, imperative but cautious, determined but submissive, unshakable but courteous, careful but not petty, strong but true, irresistible but just. Sin or crime, therefore, was simply the disturbance of the celestial routine.<sup>37</sup> However, as time went on, the definition of the Tao was expanded. Tao to the Confucianist was equivalent to Jen (benevolence, or humanity), Li (propriety, rites, or the rules of proper conduct), Yi (right, justice, or righteousness),

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35. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 210.

36. Giles, op. cit., p. 36.

37. Parker, China and Religion, p. 24.

Ching (sincerity, consciousness, loyalty), and Hsin (veracity or faithfulness); all these concepts taken together equal the Tao.<sup>38</sup> Disobedience to Tao, i. e., these five concepts, is sin and is to be regarded as a transgression of God's will.

However, the attempt to distinguish between each of these concepts presents a problem (at least to the author). Starr says that Jen, benevolence, to Confucius meant inward morality and Li meant outward morality. Jen was equally as important as Li. But by Jen Confucius meant the ideal attitude of the superior to the inferior; not the love of equals, but rather the benevolence of the prince or paterfamilias, kindness rather than love, as expressed in the five relationships--1. Chün ch'en, between prince and master; 2. Fu tzu, between father and son; 3. Hsuing ti, between elder brother and younger; 4. Fu fu, between husband and wife; 5. P'eng yu, friend and friend. In each case, except the last, there is a separate virtue distinguishing the relationship, and the attitude of the superior is different from that of the inferior.<sup>39</sup> Yet, Yang speaks not only of the attitude of the superior but also of the attitude of the inferior in these five relations and calls them the "ten commandments of Confucian philosophy"--The father is to be kind; the son, filial; the husband, righteous; the wife, listening; the elder, gracious; the junior, complacent; the ruler, benevolent;

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<sup>38</sup>. Starr, op. cit., p. 110.

<sup>39</sup>. Starr, op. cit., p. 110f.

subjects or officials, loyal.<sup>40</sup> Obeying these five relationships is obeying God's will.<sup>41</sup> Starr quotes Mencius as saying that filial piety is not a part of Jen but an element of Li; it is merely a fruit of Jen.<sup>42</sup> True, if the outward actions are Li and inward morality is Jen, then the classifying of filial piety as a part of Li is correct. But Confucius does not make filial piety a fruit of anything, but rather he calls it the ROOT of all virtue:<sup>43</sup> "Filial piety is the root of all virtue and the stem out of which grows all moral teaching."<sup>44</sup> Moore says that "filial piety and fraternal love are the root of benevolence [Starr's rough translation of Jen], which Confucius defined as love to all men."<sup>45</sup> Starr's position is strengthened by Davrout who presents some Confucian tracts which classify filial piety among the Rites or rules of propriety.<sup>46</sup> If the author were better acquainted with the Chinese religions, he could undoubtedly find a way of harmonizing these seemingly contradictory ideas. However, since Confucian and many other heathen "religions" have not formulated their doctrines (or perhaps are not too concerned about specific doctrines,) it is not surprising that

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40. Yang, op. cit., p. 82f.

41. Legge, The Religions of China, p. 105.

42. Starr, op. cit., p. 110.

43. Cf. also Soothill, op. cit., p. 203, where he states that Confucius regards filial piety and respect to seniors as the root of all human duty.

44. Confucius, quoted in Hume, op. cit., p. 123.

45. G. F. Moore, History of Religions, p. 36.

46. "Rites and Ceremonies", and Rules of Propriety", quoted by L. Davrout, Moral Tenets and Customs in China, pp. 101 and 139.

men disagree concerning these teachings.

But we shall loosely follow Starr's definition of Li, since he seems to be an authority on Confucianism. Mencius is supposed to have stressed Jen more than Li, although at one time he goes so far as to subordinate everything to Li. To Hsuntze Li is the chief virtue, in fact, the whole of virtue, including every other virtue.<sup>47</sup> Be that as it may, in our discussion we shall regard all outward actions as Li, arbitrarily including even Yi, Ching, and Hsin since Starr fails to cite any examples of these three in his book on Confucianism.

It is the sages who drew up these Rites to guide men; it was necessary to do so because "customs are honest in such a place and bad in another."<sup>48</sup> Everyone and everything is guided by these rites; they are the root of the customs of the people. Confucius said: "When one is respectful, but without manners, he is tiresome."<sup>49</sup> However, mere outward observance of these rites is not enough; an inward sincerity is required in their performance. The rites are so detailed,

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47. Starr, op. cit., pp. 113f; on this same page Starr quoted Hsuntze as saying: "Li is that whereby Heaven and Earth unite; whereby the sun and moon are bright; whereby the four seasons are ordered; whereby the stars move in their courses; whereby rivers flow; whereby all things prosper; whereby love and hatred are tempered; whereby joy and anger keep their proper place. It causes the lower orders of men to obey, and the upper orders to be illustrious; through a myriad of changes it prevents going astray, But if one departs from it, he will be destroyed. Is not Li the greatest of all principles?"

48. "Rites and Ceremonies", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 101.

49. Confucius, quoted in "Rites and Ceremonies", Ibid.

though, that the common people can fulfil only those which are required in the ordinary circumstances of life. "Thus to respect one's parents, to be at peace with one's fellow-countrymen, to serve one's friends, to agree with one's wife, to be polite towards one's relations, everyone is aware of these duties and may follow one's own inspiration without fear of being deceived."<sup>50</sup> It is easy to see that in the concept Li ethics are confounded with external ceremonies.<sup>51</sup> Creel's definition of Li is very good: "Li was the code of good manners made sacred."<sup>52</sup> It will be noticed also that these laws are not binding on all people at all times; if the common people ignorantly break some of the rules of propriety, that's all right. Whereas in the Christian concept of sin, the Law is binding on all men, whether they be poor or rich; and every transgression, whether it be done through ignorance or not, is a sin.

In our discussion of Li, we shall discuss filial piety first, then the relation of men to their neighbors, and finally what we might classify as good manners, etc.

"Filial piety is the root of all virtue, and the stem out of which grows all moral teaching. Our bodies, to every hair and bit of skin, are received by us from our parents; and we must not presume to injure or wound them;" "the services of love and reverence to parents when alive, and

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50. "Rites and Ceremonies," Ibid.

51. Faber, op. cit., p. 83.

52. Creel, op. cit., p. 77.

those of grief and sorrow to them when they are dead: these completely discharge the fundamental duty of living man." What Confucius means by serving the parents when dead may be further explained to include funeral rites and sacrifice-- "Let there be a careful attention to perform the funeral rites to parents when dead; and let them be followed, when long gone, with the ceremonies of sacrifice. Then the virtue of the people will resume its proper excellence."<sup>53</sup> These statements of Confucius contain practically all that need be known about filial piety. Children should pay filial respect because their parents have brought them into the world, reared them, given them a home, a heritage, an education, and a wife.<sup>54</sup>

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53. Confucius, quoted by Hume, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

54. A Confucian tract, "Filial Piety", quoted by Davrou, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-11, says: "Recall for a moment whence came your body. Amongst the men now living upon earth, is there a single one who is not born from parents? Well then, consider in detail the anxieties which you gave to them, and the fatigues which they bore for you from your earliest infancy and you will realise then if you are bound to revere your parents or not.

"When they were still carrying you in their arms and you were hungry, you could only open your mouth and cry, but you were unable to provide yourself with food. If you did not die of hunger, it was because your parents were good enough to feed you. When you were cold, all you could do was to shiver, but you were unable to provide yourself with clothes. If you were not frozen to death you owe this boon to the care of your parents.

"Further your parents were all eyes and ears day and night to watch and listen to you. Were you smiling? they were happy. Were you crying? they immediately sought to amuse you. Later when you had grown up a little and you were trying to walk, your parents stood by your side holding your hands, leading you step by step, lest you should hurt yourself by falling or knocking against anything.

"Still further proofs of their care are the following.

Paying filial respect to the parents when they are alive means (1) to comfort the heart and (2) feed the body of the parents. One should: avoid being lazy, do one's duty properly in whatever duty one is engaged,<sup>55</sup> get along with brothers and sisters, not be given to gluttony, wine, gambling, or opium, and defend the family's interest. "In one word you must try to make every day in the life of your parents be a happy day. You will thus satisfy this obligation of comforting the heart of your parents." Feeding the body of the parents

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At the least suspicion of any sickness your parents grew anxious and could neither sleep nor eat. They did not complain of your delicacy, but accused themselves of being negligent and careless and would have sooner fallen ill themselves than see their child ill. They were only reassured when you were cured. Their sole desire was to see you grow up and reach man's estate. Thus from your infancy till your manhood no one can tell how many fears and fatigues your parents bore day after day and year after year for your sake. At last when you were old enough, your parents gave you a wife that you might have children, they sent you to school to study, they furnished you with a home and they prepared a heritage for you.

"Remember that when you were born you came naked into this world; of all that you wear now you did not bring even a thread. If until the present day you have always had food and raiment you owe it to your parents. You must realise therefore that all your life through you will never be able to repay your parents for all their kindness. In case you should still not understand this obligation let me recall to your mind a proverb: 'Have the management of a household and you will see then how dear are fuel and millet. Bring up your children and you will know what you owe to your own parents.' Remember the worries your own children have given you and you will know how much trouble you gave to your own parents. When your own children fail in their respect towards you, you become angry; thinking of this, how can you be wanting in respect towards your own parents?"

<sup>55</sup>. Being unfaithful in the affairs of the court or betraying the Emperor is regarded as doing it to your parents, Ibid., p. 13.

means supplying them carefully according to the means and wealth of your family, i. e., caring for their health, giving them good food, doing work for them, letting them spend your money, not secretly treasuring up a hoard, or caring only for one's wife and children.<sup>56</sup>

The duty of filial piety is impressed on the children's minds at the earliest possible moment. The first treatise of importance which is placed in the hands of children, after some of the first books of elementary instruction, is The Book of Filial Duty; it is said to date back as far as 400 B. C. "Few books have enjoyed greater popularity amongst all classes in China than The Book of Filial Duty."<sup>57</sup> Along with this book are included The Twenty-Four Examples of Filial Duty. Many of these stories are so far-fetched that we do not wish to quote them; however, to illustrate that which is expected of a filial son we quote the following story:

"During the Chou dynasty lived Min Sun, a disciple of Confucius, who in early life lost his mother. His father subsequently married another wife, who bore him two children, but disliked Sun. In winter she clothed him in garments made of rushes, while her own children wore cotton clothes. Min was employed in driving his father's chariot, and his body was so cold that the reins dropped from his hands, for which carelessness his father chastised him; yet he did not vindicate

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56. Ibid., pp. 11, 13.

57. Ivan Chen, Introduction written for his translation of The Book of Filial Duty, p. 8.

himself. When his father knew the circumstances, he determined to divorce his second wife; but Sun said, 'Whilst mother remains, one son is cold; if mother departs, three sons will be destitute.' The father desisted from his purpose; and after this the mother was led to repentance, and became a good and virtuous parent.

"The filial piety of the renowned Shun influenced Heaven, whilst that of Min renovated mankind. If Heaven be influenced, all below it will be transformed; if men be renovated, from them will spring a power able to cause their families to become good. In all ages men have exhibited a great love for their wives; but dutiful children have often met with unkindness. Min carefully concealed all his grievances, and refused to indulge in any complaint; even while suffering severely from cold and hunger, he maintained his affection unabated. During the long period which he endured this oppressive treatment, his good disposition became manifest; and by his own conduct he was able to maintain the harmony of the family unimpaired. His father and mother were influenced by his filial devotion; and his brothers joined in extolling his virtues. All his friends and acquaintances, with united voice, celebrated his merits; and the men of his native village joyfully combined to spread the fame of his actions. The memory of his agreeable countenance and pleasing manners was perpetuated to the remotest ages; and his example was in many respects like that

of Shun, whose parents were equally perverse."<sup>58</sup>

There is much to admire in the Chinese teachings on filial piety. But overemphasizing one point produces disastrous results. Filial piety often excludes care for one's own body (children harm their bodies to help their parents), love for the truth, love for your neighbor, etc. We are told that "upon earth parents are never wrong."<sup>59</sup> Thus, we can say that, as far as the children are concerned, parents are removed from the class of sinners. This is a distinct clash with the Christian teaching that all human beings are sinners. Also, "filial piety does not require testifying to misconduct of father or of son."<sup>60</sup> It seems that there is a contradiction between these ideas, because a father is here represented as being guilty of misconduct.

Service to the parents while they are living does not complete the duties of filial piety. Confucius was quoted on p. 23 of this paper as saying that funeral rites and sacrifices also should be performed. This respect to the dead parents and ancestors has developed into what might be called the religion of Ancestor Worship. Ancestor Worship is practised almost universally by the Chinese; in fact, according to some

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58. Example No. IV of "The Twenty-four Examples of Filial Duty", quoted in Chen's translation of The Book of Filial Duty, pp. 37-39.

59. A saying of the ancients, quoted in "Filial Piety", which in turn is quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 15.

60. Hume, op. cit., p. 119.

of our returned missionaries, it might be called THE religion of China. Multifarious duties are required of the children in performing the funeral rites for and the sacrifices to the ancestors. However, since a B. D. thesis has been written on this subject by the Rev. E. C. Zimmermann, I shall not go into the subject. Suffice it to say that any other law or laws which the Chinese regard as binding (transgression of which constitutes a sin) has been taken either from Confucianism, Taoism, or Buddhism; also if they do have any doctrine of sin they have learned it from these "religions." Therefore, we are not really disregarding the concept of sin in Ancestor Worship but are including it in our discussion of The Three Religions. For, outside of the duties of worshipping the ancestors, the Chinese decide for themselves what constitutes the norm of their ethics—they are syncretistic. Hence, what may constitute a sin for one may not be a sin for another. In the conclusion of this paper, we shall speak more of the syncretism of the Chinese.

Whatever is contrary to these teachings of filial piety is a transgression of Li, hence of the Tao, and consequently is to be classified as a sin. Mencius goes so far as to say that loving all men equally is unfilial. This condemnation of universal love was occasioned by Mo-tzu's discovery that all the ills in the world are due to the fact that men love themselves and do not love their fellows. If men loved one another as every man loves himself, there would be no more

crime.<sup>61</sup> Mo-tzu felt that the "will of Heaven" sanctioned universal love.<sup>62</sup> Although Mencius criticizes him for this, Mo-tzu seems to have the Shi King on his side:

"Let lovingkindness be the aim of each,  
Nor one strive other e'er to overreach."<sup>63</sup>

Nevertheless, Mo-tzu was roundly condemned. This lack of universal love is also evidenced in another exhortation: "Have no friends not equal to yourself."<sup>64</sup>

We may say then, in summary, that the law of filial piety demands fanatical love for your parents. It seems as if a Confucianist is to love his parents as much as the Christian is to love his God. But of course, the Christian's love for his God will include love for his neighbor, while the Confucianist's love for his parents often excludes love for his neighbor, although we shall soon see that he must treat them very well. Since Confucius advocates filial piety as the root of all virtues, it is not surprising to hear his statement "that of the 3000 offences against which the five punishments were directed there was not one greater than that of being unfilial. This is the sin of sins."<sup>65</sup>

Lest we receive the wrong impression, we must be reminded

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61. Moore, op. cit., p. 38.

62. H. G. Creel, Sinism, p. 105.

63. "On the Completion of a New Palace", quoted in Jennings's translation of The Shi King, p. 206.

64. Confucian writer, quoted in Hume, op. cit., p. 119.

65. Confucius, quoted in Ball, op. cit., p. 536.

that Confucius was not "inclined to split hairs upon the vexed question of sin, or even to speak of sin except in connection with the practical affairs of life. On one occasion he said that, setting aside theft and robbery, there were five capital sins--malignancy, perverseness, mendacity, and two others not very clearly define, but which look like vindictiveness and vacillating weakness."<sup>66</sup> Undoubtedly you have already noticed and will notice that Confucius says nothing about a person's duty toward God, ~~except~~ in fulfilling his duty toward man. Hence, sin is really only an offence against one's neighbor, especially against one's parents.

Although Li emphasizes filial piety, it also includes the relationship of people to their neighbors. (Of course they are not to love their neighbors as much as their parents or as they do themselves, because that would be unfilial.) We shall attempt to classify these relations under the headings of the last six Commandments of the Lord. In general we are to treat our neighbor as ourselves, says Confucius. "Tsze-king once asked him whether there were any one word which might serve as a rule of practice for all one's life. His reply was, 'Is there not shu 恕?' that is, reciprocity, or altruism; and he added the explanation of it:--'What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.' The same disciple on another occasion saying that he observed the rule, Confucius simply remarked, 'Ah! you have not attained to that!' He tells us, indeed, in one important passage--and

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66. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 210f.

we do not think the worse of him for the acknowledgment-- that he was not able himself to follow the rule in its positive form in any one of the relationships."<sup>67</sup> Leaving the general remarks behind, let us proceed with our classification according to the Commandments.

Fifth Commandment--The Confucianists teach that it is wrong to kill, although Confucius advocated vendetta,<sup>68</sup> i. e., the obligation resting upon the relatives of a dead or injured man to take vengeance on the person who caused his death or injury. However, soldiers are condemned for killing people;<sup>69</sup> fighting and molesting people is wrong; concerning those who quarrel, "truly they do a great evil;"<sup>70</sup> envy, enmity, and angry thoughts are wrong:

"From all envy Lit. covetousness and enmity free,  
What deed doth he other than good?"<sup>71</sup>

"Strive, strive to live unitedly,  
And every angry thought restrain."<sup>72</sup>

A very striking parallel to Christ's words, Luke 6, 29 ("Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other") are these words: "In the days of old, under the T'ang dynasty, a certain Lou Shihteï asked his younger brother: 'if anyone

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67. Legge, "Confucius and the Religion of China", Religious Systems of the World, p. 66.

68. Soothill, op. cit., p. 33.

69. "Rites and Ceremonies", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 105.

70. "Rules of Propriety", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 147.

71. "Separation", quoted in Jennings's translation of the Shi King, p. 61.

72. "Untimely Unions", quoted in Jennings's translation of the Shi King, p. 61.

should spit in your face what would you do? His brother answered: 'I should say nothing, but simply wipe my face.' The elder brother rejoined: 'Not so. If you should wipe your face, it would be a kind of reprimand, and your insulter might become more angry. You should smile and, without replying, wait till your face be wiped dry; then it would be all right.'<sup>73</sup> Indeed, the natural law seems to be well developed among the Chinese, but, wait! Confucius adds a sour note to these beautiful thoughts: "Recompense injury with justice [not kindness] and recompense kindness with kindness."<sup>74</sup>

Sixth Commandment--Confucius is said to have described adultery as the chief of sins. However, Mencius considers it worse to leave no son to serve the family altar;<sup>75</sup> he thus sanctioned the use of concubines, if needs be. Yet a Confucian tract says that debauching the wife or the daughter of others "is the greatest crime committed on this earth."<sup>76</sup> These may not of necessity exclude one another, but it appears quite probable that they do. In the ninth century B. C. marriages between persons bearing the same family name were forbidden with few exceptions.<sup>77</sup> The story is told that Swan-Kiang, a widow, "had consented to live with Hwan, the son of her late husband by a former wife. The people condemned this

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73. "Rites and Ceremonies", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 105.

74. Confucius, quoted in Hume, op. cit., p. 119.

75. Soothill, op. cit., p. 34.

76. "Rules of Propriety", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 143.

77. Parker, China and Religion, p. 29.

as incest, but dared only speak of it indirectly."<sup>78</sup> Another story is told of Kung-poh who died, leaving his wife Kung-Kiang. Kung-Kiang's mother wanted her to remarry, but Kung-Kiang refused to commit this "wrong." "The 'wrong' meant here is remarriage. To abstain from this 'wrong' was, and is still accounted a great virtue in China."<sup>79</sup> Not only are these outward actions wrong, but lust also is condemned.<sup>80</sup> We can compare this with Christ's statement "that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."<sup>81</sup> We shall also classify drunkenness under the Sixth Commandment since A. L. Graebner does in his Doctrinal Theology, p. 81. Drunkenness is forbidden by the Chinese.<sup>82</sup> It is easy to see that their knowledge of right and wrong is still quite full.

Seventh Commandment--Confucius has already been quoted (p. 31) as saying that theft and robbery are wrong. Going to law all the time is condemned, as is the attempt to gain the advantage over your neighbor in business transactions. For if you gain, then your neighbor loses. "Hence when exchange is high in one place, this one concealing from that one, that other behind his neighbour's back, will go off to sell at a good price; others again will use big bushels or small weights;

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78. Jennings, op. cit., p. 73.

79. Ibid., p. 72.

80. Soothill, op. cit., p. 204.

81. Matthew 5:28.

82. "Rules of Propriety", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 143.

thus they load their conscience and deceive the people."<sup>83</sup> Embezzling goods is wrong--" 'Money clouds the intelligence of men, ' therefore I exhort you not to covet riches."<sup>84</sup> Gambling also is considered wrong. Three ways to avoid gambling are not longing for another's money, not going near a gambling house so that you learn to play, and not making friends of gamblers.<sup>85</sup> This tract also counts it wrong to spend and waste money on amusements such as fire-works, the burning of incense, etc. They would rather that people practise virtues.<sup>86</sup> Instead of being idle and lazy, men must study and read good books. "The more you read these, the better it will be for you. An old rhyme says, 'When the time has come for using books, one is displeased at knowing so little of them; when one has not made something, he does not know how difficult is the task.' Now, however talented one may be, he can never manage to read all the existing books. As for the useless and obscene books and comedies, they must absolutely be avoided; such reading leads easily out of the right path and brings ruin for life; therefore, above all, keep away from them."<sup>87</sup> We could find many passages of Scripture to compare with these Chinese concepts of right and wrong, but we shall let the reader call to mind for himself some of the more pertinent passages.

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83. "Rites and Ceremonies", quoted in Davrout, Ibid., p. 105.

84. "Rules of Propriety", quoted in Davrout, Ibid., p. 147.

85. Ibid., pp. 147f.

86. Ibid., p. 151.

87. Ibid., p. 143.

Eighth Commandment--Fidelity and honesty are required,<sup>88</sup> while specious or ready talk and boasting are condemned.<sup>89</sup> However, Faber says that "the sacredness of a promise, contract, oath, treaty, etc., is often violated when opportunity is favorable to a personal advantage...Confucius himself broke a solemn oath and excused it. The Chinese moral sentiment is, therefore, misguided...Lying and deceitfulness are so highly developed in China, probably to a great extent, from this cause."<sup>90</sup> Thus, we might say that the Chinese know or should know the truth but deliberately hold it down in many cases.

Ninth and Tenth Commandments--"Do not covet the goods of others."<sup>91</sup> These words, too, compare favorably with the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, but it is doubted that covetousness is regarded as such a great wrong.

The concept of Li is more exacting in matters of deportment than is the Second Table. The "Book of Rites" has left few problems of deportment--whether of public men or the simplest individuals--to chance.<sup>92</sup> Whereas Scripture does not bind men with such heavy burdens. As said, before, the Chinese confound ethics and deportment. A few quotations from Chinese writings should suffice to show the grievous burden which theoretically should rest on the Chinese.

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88. Ibid, p. 139.

89. Soothill, op. cit., p. 204.

90. Faber, op. cit., p. 96.

91. "Heterodox Doctrines", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 129.

92. Grant, op. cit., p. 110.

"Being a man, you must act according to your dignity; that means the accomplishment, all your life, of many good actions. I could not enumerate them all; I shall begin by giving you some concerning the external behaviour.

"Thus the cap on the head must be worn straight, neither set too much on one side, nor protruding in front, so that it hangs over the eyebrows. The clothes you wear, whether old or new, must be clean and not in disorder; they must be worn according to the rules and not thrown on the body so that they remain open either at the shoulders or down the front. The shoes must be put on entirely and not like slippers; all the clothes covering the body, such as cap, shoes, stockings must be dignified, decent, but not too showy nor painted with many colours. All the motions of the body must reveal gravity and modesty and not betray levity or insolence. When sitting you must remain decent; when standing you must be upright without swaying to and fro, without stretching out. In the mutual intercourse, you must be respectful and polite and not show contempt and abandon. While speaking, be attentive and cautious and avoid speaking at random; in conversation, wait before answering till the other has finished, and avoid, regardless of circumstances, interrupting others. In affairs, be careful and not heedless nor inconsiderate. All these ways of behaviour must be learned with great care."<sup>93</sup>

Even looking at other people is governed by the Book of Rites: "The Son of Heaven does not look at a person above his

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93. "Rules of Propriety", quoted in Davrout, op. cit., pp. 137f.

collar or below his girdles. The ruler of a state looks at him a little below the collar. A great officer, on a line with the heart. And an ordinary officer not from beyond a distance of five paces. In all cases, looks directed to the face denote pride, and below the girdle, grief; if directed askance, they denote villainy."<sup>94</sup>

Having read these quotations, we should not wonder that the silly comedians are condemned: "Until one has lost all sense of decency, he does not become a comedian."<sup>95</sup>

A princess of Wei had married a chief of some other state; she desires to visit her home state of Wei that she might see her elder sisters, aunts, and cousins and also visit the old familiar cities and countryside. She plans for her journey:

"Oil me then well my axles, O!  
Back in my carriage let me go.  
Soon should I be in Wei;--but oh!  
Were I not wrong in acting so?"

This "wrong" is visiting the home state after her parents had died; had they still been living, it would have been permissible for her to do so,<sup>96</sup>

Considering these multifarious duties, it is no wonder that Confucius said: "We have not learnt how to serve men: How can we serve the Gods?"<sup>97</sup> Mencius also had nothing to say about our duty towards God.<sup>98</sup> Hence we might call Confucius

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94. Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

95. "Rules of Propriety," quoted in Davrout, *op. cit.* p. 151.

96. "Homesick," quoted in Jennings, *op. cit.*, pp. 66f.

97. Confucius, quoted in Storrs, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

98. Legge, Chinese Classics, Vol. II, p. 75.

a humanist--he was concerned with the problems of men not gods;<sup>99</sup> serving Heaven, obeying the will of Heaven, was performing the required duties toward one's fellowman. Failing in these duties was a transgression of the Tao, that is, offending against Heaven--sinning.

Confucianism does not divide sins into two classes, original and actual, as does Christianity. For Confucianism knows nothing of original sin. Confucius, Mencius,<sup>100</sup> Wang Yang-ming,<sup>101</sup> and Chu Hsi<sup>102</sup> taught that man's endowed nature (original nature) is good. They argued that men were by nature good because their natures were heaven-conferred and only good could come from heaven.<sup>103</sup> What Mencius means by the statement that human nature is good is explained by his words: "From the feelings proper to it, we see that our nature is constituted for the practice of what is good. This is what I mean in saying that the nature is good."<sup>104</sup> Wrong-doing, therefore, would be the violation of the law of man's nature, formed for goodness.

Since man's nature is formed for goodness, we are not surprised to hear Mencius say: "The tendency of man's nature to good is like the tendency of water to flow downwards."<sup>105</sup>

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99. Grant, op. cit., p. 120.  
 100. Soothill, op. cit., p. 205.  
 101. Starr, op. cit., p. 159.  
 102. Yang, op. cit., p. 76.  
 103. Soothill, op. cit., p. 205.  
 104. Mencius, quoted in Legge, The Religions of China,  
 p. 103.  
 105. Ibid.

(For a contrary doctrine compare footnote #106.) If man follows this tendency in his nature, he really becomes a law unto himself; he need not look outside of himself for a guide for his actions. This teaching of Mencius that man is the measure of all things--"everything is within man--he has but to seek within himself and he will find all!"<sup>107</sup> has been carried on by the Intuitionist School of Confucianism. Wang Yang-ming of this school taught that "every individual may understand the fundamental principles of life and of things, including moral laws, by learning to understand his own mind and by developing his own nature. This means that it is not necessary to use

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106. Hsüncius was branded as a heretic by Chusius because he claimed that human nature is evil. By this he did not mean that human nature is totally depraved as Christianity teaches; he merely meant that human nature tends to evil. But it has an infinite capacity in the direction of good as well. "He showed that according to Mencius own statement, that human nature is originally good, and that evil is the corruption of that goodness, Mencius would have to admit that everyone had already corrupted their original nature, and that hence as there was no time when man did not have evil desires, etc.; human nature was already corrupt at birth!... [The criticism omitted here will be discussed later] A third criticism was that Mencius did not give any evidence for his assertions on the subject of human nature," Starr, *op. cit.*, p. 106ff.

Sün K'uang, a younger contemporary of Mencius, also said that man's nature is evil. The fact that man has to strive to do good shows that it is evil. Man's spontaneous impulses are also selfish; hungry man is prompted by nature to satisfy his appetite; if he resists this impulse out of consideration for others it is by a conscious effort and because he has been taught that he ought to do so--not therefore by nature, but against nature. If man were uncontrolled by education and moral discipline or by law and its penalties, there would be a state of universal strife--every man's hand would be against his neighbor. Yang Hiung (53 B. C.--18 A. D.) took an intermediate position; human nature is a mixture of good and evil; he who cultivates the good side becomes good and vice versa. In the end, however, Mencius' doctrine of natural goodness became to be regarded as orthodox. (Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 39).

107. Parker, China and Religion, p. 133.

the criteria of the past as present-day standards. Each individual has the solution of the problem of the universe within himself;" "the individual has within himself the spring of knowledge and should constantly carry into practice the things that his intuitive knowledge of good gives him opportunity to do."<sup>108</sup> "One cannot seek for the principle of filial obedience in one's parents, or in serving one's prince one cannot seek for the principle of faithfulness in the prince, or in making friends or governing the people one cannot seek for the principle of sincerity and benevolence in the friends or the people. They are all in the mind, for the mind is itself the embodiment of principles. When the mind is free from the obscuration of selfish aims, it is the embodiment of the principles of Heaven. It is not necessary to add one whit from without." "Knowledge is native to the mind; the mind is naturally able to know. When it perceives the parents, it naturally knows what filial piety is; when it perceives the elder brother it naturally knows what respectfulness is; when it sees a child fall into a well it naturally knows what commiseration is. This is intuitive knowledge of good, and is not attained through external investigation." "The ability to distinguish between right and wrong is common to all men, so that it avails nothing to seek them in external things." (These quotations of Wang Yang-ming were taken from Starr's Confucianism, pp. 168-171). However, Hsünoius, a Confucianist who was declared a

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108. Starr, op. cit., p. 161

heretic by Chusius, criticized Mencius' position (and naturally this criticism would also be directed against Wang Yang-ming). He showed that according to Mencius' statement that virtue was just the development of innate impulses, there would be no use for the Sage-Kings or for any standard of conduct at all, such as those embodied in the concepts of Li and Yi (proper conduct and justice). This was indeed a sharp criticism, for traditional standards of conduct are the very essence of Confucianism. And yet Mencius' inner source of virtue would logically eliminate all authority.<sup>109</sup> Again we are led to see the inconsistencies in the heathen religions. It would be very fitting to compare this teaching of Mencius that man is a law unto himself with the Christian teaching of the natural knowledge of the Law. However, there is a great difference--Mencius teaches that man's natural knowledge is perfect, while Scripture teaches that since the Fall man's natural knowledge is clouded. His conscience is no longer an inerrant norm.

Of course, the Confucianists require that man follow his normal nature; man is morally responsible for obeying his natural knowledge (on p. 39 Wang Yang-ming was quoted as saying that the individual "should constantly carry into practice the things that his intuitive knowledge of good gives him opportunity to do."). In fact, every faculty of man has its function to fulfil, every relationship its duty to be discharged, for in the Shih we read: "Heaven, in giving birth to

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109. Starr, op. cit., p. 108.

to mankind, to every faculty and relationship annexed its laws. The people possess this normal nature, and they (consequently) love its normal virtue."<sup>110</sup> Accordance with this nature is fulfilling the will of Heaven.<sup>111</sup> Not following the normal nature would be breaking the will of Heaven, i.e., sinning. But, again, we must remind ourselves that this "Heaven" is regarded either as a Nothing, a mere Fate, or the Transcendent.<sup>112</sup> Hence, man cannot truly be morally responsible to anyone.

In spite of the fact that he taught that man should follow his normal nature and that obedience to this normal nature would prove man invariably right, yet Mencius recognized that men are evil in practice.<sup>113</sup> This agrees with what Wan said:

"But men at first from Heaven their being drew,  
With nature liable to change.  
All hearts in infancy are good and true,  
But time and things those hearts derange."<sup>114</sup>

Thus, it is outside influences which cause a man to go astray. Mencius says: "If men do what is not good, the blame cannot be imputed to their natural powers."<sup>115</sup> What then has caused man to become evil? Confucianism as such knows of no devil or evil spirits who try to undermine man's allegiance to God; evil spirits are of a later invention.<sup>116</sup> But of course in

110. "Shih," quoted in Legge, Religions of China, p. 98.

111. Legge, "Confucius and the Religion of China," quoted in Religious Systems of the World, p. 71.

112. Faber, op. cit., p. 25.

113. Starr, op. cit., p. 68.

114. Wan, quoted in Legge, Religions of China, p. 102.

115. Mencius, quoted in Legge, Religions of China, p. 103.

116. Giles, op. cit., p. 15; the operations of these evil spirits were confined chiefly to tearing people's hearts out, etc., for their own particular pleasure.

in Christianity a basic teaching is that the devil caused man to sin.

What then is the cause? For Confucius says that "crime is not inherent in human nature." But an explanation is immediately offered after these words of Confucius--if someone breaks the law of filial piety it may very well be the fault of his superiors for not instructing him.<sup>117</sup> Thus, ignorance of the true doctrine and its demands is the cause of evil; heterodox doctrines have caused man to become evil: "The heart of man is by birth good and upright. It is because evil sects [a sect is anything and everything that teaches any doctrine beyond the Four Books and Five Classics] have arisen which are followed by many and whose teachings are listened to, whilst men are seeking the truth outside the true doctrine, that little by little, mankind has learnt evil."<sup>118</sup> However, a person would be very right in criticizing Confucianism at this point--how could any evil sects arise at all if all men were created good? Because Confucianism teaches nothing about the devil or original sin, it is actually unable to explain the cause of evil satisfactorily. Whereas Christianity knows that the source of all evil is the devil and depraved mankind; inherited corruption is truly the "person-sin," the one out of which all other sins flow. This inability to explain the cause of evil satisfactorily

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117. Confucius, quoted in Chen, op. cit., p. 14.

118. "Heterodox Doctrines," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 113.

is truly a serious shortcoming in the Confucian doctrine of sin.

Nevertheless, Confucianism tried to deal with evil. Not recognizing the fact that natural man is totally depraved and unable to perform any good deeds, they felt that man could train and cultivate his normal nature and give up all evil deeds, if he had sinned.<sup>119</sup> "To make oneself perfect little by little, by study and effort, is within human power and is the common Path," says Confucius.<sup>120</sup> Confucius, however, divided men into two classes(although he offers no explanation for this)--those born as saints and those born as ordinary mortals.<sup>121</sup> A sage "seemed to him from birth to have all the essentials of perfection;" "but if a man was not born a sage, said the Teacher, he still might become a superior man through the practices of life."<sup>122</sup> Sinners were to reform their lives and pattern them after the abstract holy man, the spotless and sinless one, who "is the incorporated law for the rest of men;" "he follows this, his complete and regular disposition [his pure human nature which he has from birth], naturally and without effort."<sup>123</sup> A Confucian tract says: "The superior man... does not, according to him, worry concerning food, comfort, or personal success; his sole concern is that he may find that tao, and hold fast to it."<sup>124</sup> Another Confucian tract says:

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119. Starr, op. cit., pp. 68 & 84.

120. Confucius, quoted in Grant, op. cit., p. 120.

121. Faber, op. cit., p. 82.

122. Confucius, quoted in Grant, op. cit., p. 120.

123. Confucius, quoted in Faber, op. cit., pp. 28 & 35.

124. Confucian tract, quoted in Creel, op. cit., p. 44.

"Good men are always painstaking in the exercise of fidelity, filial piety, humanity and rites; they help the unfortunate, the old and the poor; they do good and protect their neighbour; they use kind words to exhort people, they instruct their sons and younger brothers in the doctrine of the Books; in one word, they try, in all their actions to be useful to men; thus they will not be looked on as having lived in vain."<sup>125</sup>

Since reformation<sup>126</sup> is all that is required, it is not surprising that we find many examples of self-righteousness. Confucius said that he wasn't always perfect; yet we read these words of his: "At seventy, I could do as my heart dictated and never swerve from right."<sup>127</sup> Mencius does not even admit that he had any shortcomings.<sup>128</sup> We offer three quotations from the Shi King as examples: "In him no error nor excess was known."<sup>129</sup> "Perfectly all his acts are done."<sup>130</sup>

"I verily am guiltless,  
Yet stern is thy heaven's displeasure.  
I truly am offenceless,  
Thou harsh beyond all measure."<sup>131</sup>

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125. "Rules of Propriety," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 137.

126. We quote an example from Giles, op. cit., pp. 10f, which shows that reformation is sufficient--Emperor T'ai Mou began to reign in 1637 B. C. "His reign was marked by the supernatural appearance in the palace of two mulberry-trees, which in a single night grew to such a size that they could hardly be spanned by two hands. The Emperor was terrified; whereupon a Minister said, 'No prodigy is a match for virtue. Your Majesty's government is no doubt at fault, and some reform of conduct is necessary.' Accordingly the Emperor began to act more circumpsectly; after which the mulberry-trees soon withered and died."

127. Grant, op. cit., p. 125 f.

128. Confucius, quoted in Legge, Chinese Classics, Vol. II, p. 74.

129. "On the Completion of a new Temple Built in Honour of King Wu-Ting," quoted in Jennings, op. cit., p. 383.

130. "Lamentful Praise of Duke Chang of Lu," Ibid., p. 119.

131. "A Slandered Official," Ibid., p. 227.

The fact that Confucianism taught that all men could (and some men have) attain perfection through reformation from wrong-doing shows the shallowness of the Confucian concept of sin. Sin is not something that corrupts the sinning subject, or otherwise reformation would not be sufficient. Chu Hsi compares man's moral nature with a clean mirror that is covered with dust and needs only a little dusting off."<sup>132</sup> Sin is merely "the excess in human desires and endeavors; by reverting into the right path, it ceases."<sup>133</sup> It is no wonder that Legge says, "The moral shortcomings of a Confucianist, when brought home to him, may produce a feeling of shame, but hardly a conviction of guilt."<sup>134</sup> Nor do we have a conviction of guilt if we fail to show good manners. We do not feel that we have been corrupted. But Christianity teaches that sin is something vicious--it is the destruction of God's image, the abandonment of God and the turn to evil.

Sin is so vicious that "the wages of sin is death"--spiritual, temporal and eternal. But the Confucianist would fail to agree with this. If he were spiritually dead, he could not attain perfection. Nor does the Confucianist say that <sup>the</sup>wages of sin is temporal death; he is unable to explain temporal death because he is generally devoid of a deeper insight into sin and evil.<sup>135</sup> Confucius says: "We do not

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132. Yang, op. cit., p. 76.

133. Faber, op. cit., p. 85f.

134. Legge, Religions of China, p. 296.

135. Faber, op. cit., p. 42.

know about life: How can we know about death?"<sup>136</sup> Although sin may not be regarded as the cause of death, it will shorten a man's life.<sup>137</sup> Not only does the Confucianist know nothing of spiritual and temporal death, but he is ignorant also of eternal death.<sup>138</sup> However, it seems as if both the good and the bad pass into some state of conscious existence(although Chu Hsi denies a conscious existence after death<sup>139</sup>), where they may be happy, being in heaven; they are occupied with the care of the same concerns that interested them on earth.<sup>140</sup> However, T. Richards thinks that there are some vague rewards and punishments after death;<sup>141</sup> if there are, they are very, very vague. In fact, the Confucianist regards it as unfilial to think of his ancestors as being in hell.<sup>142</sup> Thus it may be the system of ancestor worship which has prevented the development of the doctrine of a future retribution; we are told that people even prayed to tyrants.<sup>143</sup> Giles, also, offers a very plausible solution as to why this doctrine of retribution after death was not found among the ancient Chinese:

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136. Confucius, quoted in Storrs, op. cit., p. 11.

137. Grant, op. cit., p. 91, tells of Emperor Wu Ting (1324-1264 B. C.) who was frightened one time by an evil omen. A Minister said: "Be calm your Majesty. Heaven looks down on those below and grants them years according to their compliance with the Immutable Laws. It is not Heaven which cuts off man's years prematurely, but man himself, who rejecting virtue, whithers his own destiny."

138. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 211.

139. Moore, op. cit., p. 47.

140. Legge, Religions of China, p. 300.

141. T. Richards, Calendar of the Gods in China, p. v.

142. Soothill, op. cit., p. 217.

143. Legge, Religions of China, p. 115.

"Though no distinct traces of the doctrine of retribution after death can be discovered among the ancient Chinese, it must be remembered in this connection that all the books which are the sources of our knowledge of their religion before Kong-tse [Confucius], have passed through the hands either of himself or his followers, and he always refused to express an opinion on souls and their destiny. The doctrine of retribution was held by the sect of the Tao-sse, and reached among them a very elaborate form, so that it may be regarded as probable that it was not unknown to the religion of the Old Empire."<sup>144</sup>

However, the Confucianists do speak of divine retribution for sins, but only in this life.<sup>145</sup> (Christianity also teaches that the ills in this world are caused by sin.) Good and bad fortune are the direct results of good and evil deeds (sins)-- Yü says: "It is accordance with the path of right which brings good fortune; it is going against it which brings ill fortune-- like the shadow or the echo."<sup>146</sup> When famine prevailed in a certain state, the question was asked: "Ah, what sin sin we today?"<sup>147</sup> Anything done contrary to the Tao, even remotely, is a collision with the supreme power and will bring evil

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144. Giles, op. cit., p. 29.

145. The first mention of divine retribution is in the days of Shun (the second emperor) who declares that Heaven sends judgment on the prince of Miao because this man was a rebel to the way of Heaven and virtue and a poor ruler. It was because of his moral delinquency that this ruler was punished, Soothill, op. cit., p. 210.

146. Yü, quoted in Soothill, op. cit., p. 195.

147. "King Swan's Lamentation in a Time of Drought and Famine," quoted in Jennings, op. cit., p. 324.

results."<sup>148</sup> Hence, the Chinese recognize that God is not held responsible for the sufferings of mankind: "It is not God who has caused this evil time, but it is you who have strayed from the old paths."<sup>149</sup> The Confucianists believe, too, that Heaven used human instruments to punish the wicked at times; T'ang said: "The king of Hsia extinguished his virtue and played the tyrant...Suffering from his cruel injuries ...you(people) protested with one accord your innocence to the spirits of heaven and earth. The way of Heaven is to bless the good and to punish the bad. It sent down calamities on Hsia, to make manifest its crimes. Therefore, I (its) child, receiving the will of Heaven with its effulgent awe, did not dare to forgive, but presuming to offer a sable bullock, and making clear announcement to the spiritual

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148. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 94.

149. T'ang, quoted in Giles, op. cit., p. 21. Giles also quotes a conversation between Wei Tao-tzu and Yü Li-tzu to show that there was doubt in their minds concerning God's love for good and hatred for evil--"Is it true that God loves good and hates evil?" "It is," replied Yü. "In that case," rejoined Wei, "goodness should abound in the Empire and evil should be scarce. Yet among birds, kites and falcons outnumber phoenixes; among beasts, wolves are many and unicorns are few; among growing plants, thorns are many and cereals are few; among those who eat cooked food and stand erect, the wicked are many and the virtuous few; and in none of these cases can you say that the latter are evil and the former good. Can it be possible that what man regards as evil, God regards as good, and vice versa? Is it that God is unable to determine the characteristics of each, and lets each follow its own bent and develop good or evil accordingly? If He allows good men to be put upon, and evil to be a source of fear, is not this to admit that God has His likes and dislikes? From of old until now, times of misgovernment have always exceeded times of right government; and when men of principle have contended with the ignoble, the latter have usually won. Where then is God's love of good and hatred of evil?"

Sovereign of the High heavens, requested leave to deal with the ruler of Hsia as a criminal."<sup>150</sup>

We shall now deal with a brief summary and evaluation of the Confucian doctrine of sin--The source of the doctrines is the Confucian Classics; these Classics teach men to live according to the Tao. This Tao is the Will of Heaven, disobedience of which constitutes a sin. If we were to stop here in our summary, one might be inclined to think that the Confucian doctrine is very similar to ours. But, of course, we must go on, remembering that Heaven to the Confucianist is identified with the universe (pantheism) or at best is a Supreme Power. This being the case, an intimate relation with a personal God is not taught.<sup>151</sup> In fact, to be consistent, man should not be held morally responsible to such a Being. However, Confucianism does bind man with certain commands of Heaven, i.e., the Tao. But these commands speak of a person's relation to his fellowman--fulfilling the will of Heaven is fulfilling your duty to your neighbor; transgressing the will of Heaven (sinning) is the non-performance of the duty toward your neighbor. This sinning includes not only what we might call sins against the Second Table but also sins against good manners, customs, etc.--a confounding of ethics with external ceremonies. However, ignorance of these laws often excuses trans-

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150. Soothill, op. cit., pp. 213f.

151. Faber, op. cit., p. 34.

gression. This leads us to the fact that the Confucianist does not regard sin as a horrible monstrosity--the fundamental difference in the concept of sin between Christianity and Confucianism; the Confucianist does not regard sin as an offence against the Majesty of a righteous and holy God, One who punishes sin with spiritual, temporal and eternal death and all manner of ills in this world. Man is created holy; and sin, which concerns only human relationships, merely dulls the luster of his moral nature; reform from wrongdoing is a sufficient pancea for this. Therefore, "the necessity of an Atonement<sup>152</sup> is not conceived, because neither the holiness of God, nor the depth of human sin are taught

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152. Legge, Religions of China, pp. 53f, says that the sacrifices of the ancients in no way expressed a sense of guilt, nor was the sacrifice intended to bear the sins of the people and of the emperor in its body, nor in its death to carry them away. "The idea of substitution is not in the solstitial or in any other of the religious services of the Chinese people." These sacrifices expressed merely a feeling of independence. Legge says, however, that even though the idea of substitution is known in Chinese history, it has not found its way into religion. There is in the Shu a document of the date 1766 B. C.--The story is told of T'ang, a truly noble and heroic man, who having overthrown the dynasty of Shang, announces that through his new principles they would enter a new life. At the conclusion he said, "When guilt is found anywhere in you who occupy the myriad regions, let it rest on me, the One man. When guilt is found in me, the One man, it shall not attach to you who occupy the myriad regions." However, a seven years' drought followed. It was suggested that a human victim be offered in sacrifice to Heaven, and a prayer made for rain. T'ang said, "If a man must be the victim, I will be he." He fasted, prepared himself, dressed in white, and then was drawn in a plain carriage by white horses to a forest of mulberry trees. He then prayed there, asking what error crime of his had caused the calamity; when he finished speaking rain fell.

in the Classics."<sup>153</sup> As a final remark we may add that the Christian missionary will not find that the Confucianist doctrine of sin has prepared the Chinese people for the Gospel, for it has failed to give them a deep sense of sin and sinfulness and the consequences thereof.

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153. Faber, op. cit., p. 86.

153. Dr. Mark Bodde, "Further Remarks on the Identification of Lao Tzu," Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 61 (January-March, 1941), pp. 241; for further references, if necessary, see JAOBS, December 1941, pp. 215-221. Bodde writes as follows: "Professor H. H. Dubs has advanced a very plausible theory for the identification of Lao Tzu (the purveyor of the Tao-te-ching philosophy). His theory hinges upon three facts or assumptions: (1) the Shih Chi's biography of Lao Tzu's son, whose personal name was Tsung, as having been entangled through into servitude, or vassalage, at a place called Tsun-kan (2) elsewhere in the Shih Chi, under the year 277 B. C., there is a reference to a certain Viscount of Tsun-kan (3) in the parallel passage in the Shih Chi's, Tsun-kan this Shih Chi passage is drawn, the same individual is referred to as Tsun-kan Ch'ang (4) the orthographic and phonetic differences between Tsung and Ch'ang are of no significance and Lao Tzu's son, Tsung, is therefore to be identified with the Shih Chi's Tsun-kan Ch'ang and the Shih Chi's Viscount of Tsun-kan (5) hence Lao Tzu himself may be dated around the year 200 B. C., or perhaps somewhat earlier, rather than of the sixth century B. C., as traditionally supposed." Dr. Mark Bodde had a friendly discussion in the JAOBS with Professor H. H. Dubs and advised that Dubs' identification of Lao Tzu's son, "as an absolute probability, even though, in the nature of things, it can never be absolutely proved." There are also noted prominent Chinese scholars who have claimed the identification of Lao Tzu's son, Tsung, with Tsun-kan Ch'ang: they are: Yao Fan (1702-1771), Yao Hsueh (c. 1897), and Lo Yen-iao. Lo Yen-iao cited his two fellow countrymen and then elaborated further on the theory.

## II. Taoism

The birth of Lao-tzu is generally regarded as being about 604 B. C. However, Prof. H. Dubs has advanced a very plausible theory placing the date of Lao-tzu's birth about 300 B. C. or somewhat earlier.<sup>1</sup> Lao-tzu was known as Li Er and honored with the posthumous title, Poh-Yang, i. e., Prince Positive (representing the Male or strong principle). However, he was simply

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1. Derk Bodde, "Further Remarks, on the Identification of Lao Tzu," Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 64 (January-March, 1944), pp. 24f; for further reference, if necessary, see JAOS, December 1941, pp. 215-221. Bodde writes as follows: "Professor H. H. Dubs has advanced a very plausible theory for the identification of Lao Tzu (the puzzling figure of Chinese philosophy). His theory hinges upon these facts or assumptions: (1) The Shih Chi's biography of Lao Tzu's son, whose personal name was Tsung 宗, as having been entfeoffed [given into servitude, or vassalage] at a place called Tuan-kan 段干; elsewhere in the Shih Chi, under the year 273 B. C., there is a reference to a certain Viscount of Tuan-kan; (3) in the parallel passage in the Chan-Kuo Ts'e, from which this Shih Chi passage is drawn, the same individual is referred to as Tuan-kan Ch'ung 崇; (4) the orthographic and phonetic differences between Tsung and Ch'ung are of no significance, and Lao Tzu's son, Tsung, is therefore to be identified with the Chan-kuo ts'e's Tuan-kan Ch'ung and the Shih chi's Viscount of Tuan-kan; (5) hence Lao Tzu himself may be dated around the year 300 B. C., or perhaps somewhat earlier, rather than in the sixth century B. C., as traditionally supposed." This Derk Bodde had a friendly discussion in the JAOS with Professor H. Dubs and admits that Dubs' identification of Lao Tzu's son, "as an excellent probability, even though, in the nature of things, it can never be absolutely proved." There are also three prominent Chinese scholars who have claimed the identification of Lao Tzu's son, Tsung, with Tuan-kan Ch'ung; they are: Yao Fan (1702-1771), Kao Heng (b. 1899), and Lo Ken-tse. Lo Ken-tse cites his two fellow countrymen and then elaborates further on the theory.

called Lao-tzu, i.e., the Old Philosopher. The story is often told of a meeting between Lao-tzu and Confucius, but even many of the advocates of the early birth of Lao-tzu regard it as tradition. And if the later birth date of Lao-tzu is given credence, then the meeting of these two philosophers is entirely fictitious.

Another story is told of Lao-tzu's withdrawal from public life; on reaching the frontier of his state, he was asked by the warden of the pass to commit his principles to writing for the benefit of humanity. The Tao Teh King is said to have been the result. The authenticity of this tale is also disputed. Yet, the Tao Teh King undoubtedly contains many of Lao-tzu's views with various additions.<sup>2</sup> "Teh" is "virtue;" "King" is "classic;" and the definition of "Tao" will be discussed shortly; although Lao-tzu discusses "Tao" in the first chapter, and hence the name. We may then call it the "Classic of Tao and Teh." It was given this name by Hsüan Tsung, the seventh Emperor of the T'ang dynasty, about the eighth century A. D.<sup>3</sup> The style of the Tao Teh King is very terse, and consequently extremely difficult to translate and understand. "He often seems to be struggling to express thoughts too deep for his vocabulary."<sup>4</sup> The Tao Teh King is the sacred scripture

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2. Soothill, op. cit., p. 46.

3. J. C. Ferguson, The Mythology of All Races, Vol. VIII, p. 18.

4. Soothill, op. cit., p. 49.

of Taoism;<sup>5</sup> although DeGroot mentions the Four Books and Five Classics as being the scripture of Taoism also.<sup>6</sup> However, this statement undoubtedly refers to later Taoism. For Lao-tzu's teachings are much different from those of Confucius and the Classics.

Tao is not the name of a person but of a concept or idea. Primarily it means "way" or "path;" then "doctrine;" in the discussion of Confucianism we saw that it was used in the sense of the right path in which one ought to go--both Lao-tzu and Confucius would agree on this definition, but the manner in which one is to travel the Way is their point of departure; Tao is also used in John 1:1 as a translation of the "Word," "Logos;" "many European scholars have boldly translated it Reason, thereby identifying it with the Platonic Logos."<sup>7</sup>

It is a very difficult matter to define Tao. Legge remarks that if Lao-tzu found it difficult to express his own idea of Tao, it is not to be marvelled at, that students of his book after 2500 years find the same difficulty.<sup>8</sup> "The very name of Tao is only adopted for convenience' sake," says T'ai Kung Tiao.<sup>9</sup> Lao-tzu discusses the Tao in the first chapter of his Tao Teh King.<sup>10</sup> Soothill would have us try to

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5. Hume, op. cit., p. 135.

6. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 24.

7. F. H. Balfour, "Taoism," quoted in Religious Systems of the World, p. 77.

8. Legge, Religions of China, p. 212.

9. T'ai Kung Tiao quoted in Soothill, op. cit., p. 55; Soothill mentions that Legge translates thus: "The name Tao is a metaphor, used for the purpose of description."

10. Carus translates the first chapter of Lao-tzu's Canon of Reason and Virtue, p. 73f, as follows, using "Reason" for

"conceive of the idea, in the pantheistic sense, of a Power, 'a power that makes for righteousness,' immaterial, indefinable, eternal, ubiquitous, which finds the differential expression in multitudinous forms, or powers, then you will have some conception of the idea which Laoicius seems to be striving to exhibit."<sup>11</sup> Tao is described as the first cause and creative force in Nature, which permeates the universe, also sustaining and regulating it by the Tao's eternal, immutable laws--"Tao begets one. One begets two, etc."<sup>12</sup> Lao-tzu speaks of the Tao as impersonal and again as loving, which is definitely a contradiction in itself; for an impersonal Being cannot love or hate. Tao is supposed to have existed from all eternity; Lao-tzu says that the image of it existed before God Himself. It is all-pervasive; there is no place where it is not. Huanan-tzu, an eminent writer on Taoist philosophy asked, "What is Tao?" "It is that which supports heaven and covers the earth; it has no boundaries, no limits; its heights cannot be measured, nor its depths fathomed; it enfolds the entire uni-

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Tao: "1. The Reason that can be reasoned is not the eternal Reason. The name that can be named is not the eternal Name. The Unnamable is of heaven and earth the beginning. The Namable becomes of the ten thousand things the Mother.

"Therefore it is said:

2. 'He who desireless is found  
The spiritual of the world will sound.  
But he who by desire is bound  
Sees the mere shell of things around.'

"3. These two things are the same in source but different in name. Their sameness is called a mystery. Indeed, it is the mystery of mysteries. Of all spirituality it is the door."

11. Soothill, op. cit., p. 47.

12. Yang, op. cit., p. 149f.

verse in its embrace, and confers visibility upon that which of itself is formless...It is so tenuous and subtle that it pervades everything just as water pervades mire. It is by Tao that mountains are high and abysses deep; that beasts walk and birds fly; that the sun and moon are bright; and the stars revolve in their courses...When the spring winds blow, the sweet rain falls, and all things live and grow. The feathered ones brood and hatch, the furry ones breed and bear; plants and trees put forth all their glorious exuberance of foliage, birds lay eggs, and animals produce their young; no action is visible outwardly, and yet the work is completed. Shadowy and indistinct, it has no form. Indistinct and shadowy, its resources have no end. Hidden and obscure, it reinforces all things out of formlessness. Penetrating and permeating everything, it never acts in vain."<sup>13</sup> Balfour thinks that our word "Nature" is much the same thing. "Translate Tao, as used in this sense, by our common word Nature--or, if you prefer it, Principle, Course, or Way of Nature--and I think we shall have discovered the key to Taoism; using the word, of course, not as applied/poetically to the visible Universe, the natura naturata, but in the sense of natura naturans, the abstract Cause, the initial Principle of life and order, the hypostatic quiddity which underlies all phenomena, and of which they are a manifestation only."<sup>14</sup> We may therefore say

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13. Hui-nan-tzu, quoted in Balfour, op. cit., p. 77f.

14. Balfour, op. cit., p. 78.

that Taoism is the philosophy of Nature, and Taoists are naturalistic philosophers. "To sum up then, Laozius presents us with an impersonal Tao, that is to say, an impersonal Principle or Power, which, viewed in the absolute sense, is inscrutable, indefinable, and impossible to name. Viewed in the relative sense, it appears under many guises and in every part of the universe. It cannot be correctly translated as God. Indeed, in one obscure passage he says, 'It appears to have been before God.' Tao is, however, the source and support of all things. Calmly, without effort, and unceasingly, it works for good."<sup>15</sup>

Considering this definition of Tao and the fact that Taoism is evolutionistic,<sup>16</sup> the question has been raised as

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15. Soothill, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

16. Balfour, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-80, describes the Taoist's evolution of the world--Chuang-tzu says: "There was a time when all things had a beginning. The time when there was yet no beginning had a beginning itself. There was a beginning to the time when the time that had no beginning had not begun. There is existence, and there is also non-existence. In the time which had no beginning there existed Nothing--or a Vacuum. When the time which had no beginning had not yet begun, then there also existed Nothing. Suddenly, there was Nothing; but it cannot be known, respecting existence and non-existence, what was certainly existing and what was not." Lieh-tzu, another prominent writer of this school says: "There is Life that is uncreated; there is a Transformer who is changeless. The Uncreated alone can produce life; the Changeless alone can evolve change. That Life cannot but produce; that Transformer cannot but transform. Wherefore creations and transformations are perpetual, And these perpetual creations and transformations continue through all time. They are seen in the Male and Female Principles of Nature, They are displayed in the Four Seasons. The Uncreated stands, as it were, alone; The Changeless comes and goes; His duration can have no end, Peerless and One--His ways are past finding out." An Emperor wanted to know whether matter has existed from all eternity; the philosopher evades by saying that no records remain of the

to whether or not the Taoist system includes a Personal Creator and Moral Governor of the Universe. This is a very difficult question--true, there are frequent references in the Taoist classics to some Being, Power, etc., who is spoken of as the Creator. "Ti"(God?) also appears. "But such allusions are very obscure, very vague, very indefinite; while the term which is generally used for the verb 'to create' implies less creation, as we understand it, than transformation or metamorphosis."<sup>17</sup> Nor does there seem to be any relation between this "very shadowy Creator" and the Tao. Tao is supposed to be impersonal and passionless, and therefore cannot be God; in fact, the Tao Teh King speaks of Tao in direct antithesis to God. Then again we see that the workings of the Tao explain everything so that there is neither the room nor necessity for a Personal Creator. In the words of Lucretius: "Nature is seen to do everything of herself spontaneously, without the meddling of the gods."<sup>18</sup> However, Legge is inclined to believe that Lao-tzu did believe in a God.<sup>19</sup>

It would seem as if Taoism should speak of no moral responsibility since there is no personal God, and since man is to be regarded as simply a part of the Universe, an off-

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time before matter existed, and that all such knowledge is beyond the scope of humanity. About the extent of the universe he says: "Heaven and Earth are simply contained in the great whole of the infinite Universe; and how can we tell whether there may not be an Unseen Universe, above, and beyond that smaller Cosmos that is within the range of our perception?"

17. Balfour, op. cit., p. 80.

18. Lucretius, quoted in Balfour, op. cit., p. 80.

19. Legge, Religions of China, p. 227.

shoot of creation, a manifestation, like everything else of the universal and inherent Tao.<sup>20</sup> But they teach that Tao is the Supreme Law of Nature; hence man must conform to the Tao.<sup>21</sup> For, since the original constitution of every man is the direct gift of Tao--or rather, an actual part of Tao itself--it follows that it should be jealously preserved intact, in all its pristine purity. This preservation of his Heaven-implanted Nature(Tao) is the grand and primary object of the true Taoist;<sup>22</sup> it is his law, the transgression of which(i.e., the loss of the Heaven-implanted Tao) is a sin. Anything which disturbs the natural or inherent constitution of man, i.e., His Heaven-implanted Tao, is called the human Tao or the human nature of man, in contradistinction to the Heavenly Tao.<sup>23</sup>

Both Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu taught that there was a time when man had no human Tao; he was governed completely by the Heavenly 'Tao--this was the primitive state of innocence. "In the days when natural instincts prevailed, men moved quietly and gazed steadily. At that time there were no roads over mountains, nor boats, nor bridges over water. All things were produced each for its own proper sphere. Birds and beasts multiplied; trees and shrubs grew up. The former might be led by hand; you could climb up and peep into the raven's

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20. Balfour, op. cit., p. 81.

21. Yang, op. cit., p. 152.

22. Balfour, op. cit., p. 81.

23. Ibid., p. 84.

nest. For then man dwelt with birds and beasts, and all creation was one. There were no distinctions of good and bad men. Being all equally without 'knowledge', their virtue could not go astray. Being all equally without evil desires, they were in a state of natural integrity, the perfection of human existence... [omission of almost a page] In that Golden Age of innocence the people were upright and correct, without knowing that to be so was righteousness; they loved one another, without knowing that to do so was benevolence; they were honest and leal-hearted, without knowing that it was loyalty; they fulfilled their engagements, without knowing that to do so was good faith; in their simple doings they employed the services of one another, without thinking that they were conferring or receiving any gift."<sup>24</sup> Might it not be possible to compare this state of innocence with that of Adam and Eve? Although we do not wish to state the following as a doctrine or engage in a quarrel over it, yet it would seem that Adam and Eve also knew only good. True, God had given them a negative command, not to eat of the forbidden tree, but their will coincided exactly with God's. Their nature was so constituted that they obeyed God's will without striving, without making a choice, etc. Intuitively they did good, without, perhaps, realizing that not to do so was evil. In other words, was it possible that they didn't distinguish good and evil as such, since, they performed only that which was good? At least, it

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24. Chuang-tzu, quoted in Soothill, op. cit., pp. 59-61.

might be said that this Taoistic Golden Age of innocence is an echo of the original state of innocence. It must be regarded only as an echo, for no mention is made of God, of His will, and of the other details mentioned in Scripture.

Man is supposed to have fallen from this state of innocence, but the Taoists fail to tell us when this occurred. But, in contrast to the Christian doctrine, they do not regard the devil as the driving force behind the fall. In fact, very little is said about the devil.<sup>25</sup> Taoism rather places the blame for the fall directly on the sages, those whom the Confucianists regarded as embodiments of virtue and whose teachings were to be followed.<sup>26</sup> (Of course the Taoists fail to explain who or what caused the sages to fall from the state of innocence and thereby become evil.) Chuang-tzu says that the people were innocent until "sages came to worry them with ceremonies and music in order to rectify them and dangled charity and duty to one's neighbour before them in order to satisfy

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25. Carus, Canon of Reason and Virtue, p. 152, Lao-tzu's theory is that the devil's nature consists in attempting to act like God. This is the only reference to a devil which I have found in earlier Taoism.

26. Soothill, op. cit., p. 63f, quotes an old fisherman: "As to Yao and Shun, what claim have they to praise? Their fine distinctions simply amounted to knocking a hole in the wall in order to stop it up with brambles; to combing each individual hair; to counting the grains for a rice-pudding. How in the name of goodness did they profit their generation? ..The struggle for wealth is so severe. Sons murder their fathers; ministers their princes; men rob in broad daylight, and bore through walls at high noon. I tell you that the root of this great evil is from Yao and Shun, and that its branches will extend into a thousand ages to come, A thousand ages hence, man will be feeding upon man."

their hearts--then the people began to stump and limp about in their love of knowledge, and to struggle with each other in their desire for gain. This was the error of the sages."<sup>27</sup> Teaching people to perform certain duties, instead of letting them follow their natural instincts, leads them away from Tao, the original state of innocence.<sup>28</sup> This departure from the Tao constitutes sin;<sup>29</sup> it is the root of all evil. A Taoist says: "When the Great Method [Tao] was abandoned, benevolence and righteousness came in; wisdom and shrewdness arose, and there ensued great hypocrisy. When harmony no longer prevailed throughout the six kinships, filial sons became known; when states and clans fell into disorder, loyal ministers appeared."<sup>30</sup> "Benevolence is rather an offensive virtue than otherwise, for the mere idea of it connotes inferiority and misery of one man, and the condescending patronage of another; but I cannot give you a cast-iron rule for all hypothetical sets of circumstances," says this Taoist.<sup>31</sup> Thus, filial piety, benevolence, righteousness, etc., which are the highest ethical notions of Con-

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27. Chuang-tzu, quoted in Soothill, op. cit., p. 61.

28. Chuang-tzu illustrates this theory with an example of horses: "Horses live on dry land, eat grass, and drink water. When pleased, they rub their necks together. When angry, they turn around and kick up their heels at each other. Thus far only do their natural dispositions carry them. But bridled and bitted, with a plate of metal on their foreheads, they learn to cast vicious looks, to turn the head to bite, to resist, to get the bit out of mouth, or bridle into it. And thus their natures become depraved--the fault of Poh Loh the one who captured them." Quoted by Soothill, op. cit., p. 60.

29. Parker, China and Religion, p. 45.

30. Taoist Philosopher, quoted by Legge, Religion of China, p. 53.

31. Taoist, quoted by Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 72.

fucianism, are in the eyes of Lao-tzu a decay for morals; for the so-called virtues owe their existence to the prevalence of the opposite vices.<sup>32</sup>

The true Taoist wants to return to this original state of innocence if he has fallen. If he has not fallen, his primary objective is the preservation of his Heaven-implanted Nature.<sup>33</sup> Both of these ideas mean the same thing: conformity in all things to Tao,<sup>34</sup> living as did men in the state of innocence. The virtues as such should be abandoned if filial piety is to return and crime to cease. Lao-tzu says: "1. Abandon your saintliness; put away your prudence; and the people will gain a hundredfold! 2. Abandon your benevolence; put away your justice; and the people will return to filial piety and paternal devotion. 3. Abandon smartness; an outward show of learning give up greed and thieves and robbers will no longer exist."<sup>35</sup> One should not try to improve upon things as they are in their natural state, nor should he interfere with anything. A person should be completely passive, for by yielding himself to Tao, unresisting, unstriving, he will reach his highest wellbeing.<sup>36</sup> Balfour very fittingly calls it "masterly inactivity."<sup>37</sup> "In addition to the idea of undisturbed quiescence it embraces also

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32. Legge, Religions of China, p. 55.

33. Balfour, op. cit., p. 81.

34. Soothill, op. cit., p. 48, says that Tao enters into human life as a moral principle in the form of Teh or virtue--hence the name Tao Teh King, or Classic of Tao and Teh.

35. Lao-tzu, Canon of Reason and Virtue, translated by Carus, p. 85.

36. Ibid., p. 49.

37. Balfour, op. cit., p. 82.

that of spontaneity and designlessness; so that even the rigid adherence to an inactive policy is robbed of its virtue if it be adopted with intent. The very effort to obtain possession of Nature Tao, says Chuang-tzu, defeats itself, and for the simple reason that it IS an effort."<sup>38</sup> A man must not form schemes or plans; he must simply accept things as they come. The Taoist condemns over-legislation, justly pointing to the peddling, meddling system of so-called paternal government as the cause of anarchy and ruin. Leave the people alone, is the maxim of Taoism; don't harass them with perpetual interference; cause them to be desireless.<sup>39</sup> Let things take their course and find their level; let the people develop their resources in a natural and spontaneous way. The rulers are not to disturb the native simplicity of their subjects; this excludes the introduction of new tools, etc. "The secret of happiness is to be found in quiescence, simplicity, and content; and the only way to attain these is to bring body, passions, intellect, and will into absolute conformity with Nature Tao."<sup>40</sup>

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38. Ibid.,

39. Lao-tzu, Canon of Reason and Virtue, p. 75, says: "1. Not boasting of one's worth forestalls people's envy. Not prizing treasures difficult to obtain keeps people from committing theft. 2. Not contemplating what kings desire keeps the heart unconfused. 3. Therefore the holy man when he governs empties the people's hearts but fills their stomachs. He weakens their ambition but strengthens their bones. Always he keeps the people unsophisticated and without desire. He causes that the crafty do not dare to act. When he acts with non-assertion there is nothing ungoverned."

40. Balfour, op. cit., pp. 82f.

It would be well therefore to give up all study and the pursuit of knowledge,<sup>41</sup> and return to the absolutely simple life of Tao.<sup>42</sup> This has lead many Taoists to become hermits.<sup>43</sup> Balfour expresses their idea of happiness thus: "Perfect indifference to love and hate; the annihilation of all passions, desires, and even preferences; no striving or wishing to strive; nothing but profound apathy and absolute insensibility to those things which, painful or pleasurable, wear out the lives of men."<sup>44</sup>

However not all Taoists become hermits. Their "masterly inactivity" is not really supposed to exclude activity. (But the ideal<sup>o</sup> hermits definitely does). This we have set forth in the following statement: "Therefore the true Sage looked up to Heaven, but did not (meddle with its course by) 'assisting' it; perfected himself in virtue without its embarrassing him;

41. Chuang-tzu protested against the reverence paid to tradition, books, and to authority by the Confucian school. He also said: "Wherever one's treasure may be, thither will the heart of man follow it." Ibid., p. 85.

42. Soothill, op. cit., p. 49.

43. Balfour, op. cit., p. 84, says that some of these Taoist hermits are supposed to be in the mountains; "their faces are washed by the rains of heaven, and their hair combed by the wind. Their arms are crossed upon their breasts, and their nails have grown so long that they curl around their necks. Flowers and grass have taken root in their bodies and flourish luxuriantly; when a man approaches the, they turn their eyes upon him, but do not speak. Some of them are over three hundred years old; some, not much over a century; but all have attained to immortality, and some day they will find that their bodies, which have been so long in wearing out, will collapse from sheer withdrawal of vitality, and their spirits will be set free."

44. Ibid., p. 83.

proceeded according to Tao without planning (and scheming); allied himself with virtue without trusting to it; pursued righteousness without laying it up; responded to ceremonies without tabooing them; undertook and did not withdraw from human affairs;<sup>45</sup> adjusted their laws so as to be without confusion; trusted the people and did not slight them; made use of (men and) things, and did not discard them; (while recognizing his own, or the things') insufficiency for doing, yet that there could be no not doing."<sup>46</sup>

Whether a Taoist becomes a hermit or remains in contact with society, he is to give himself over completely to Tao.<sup>47</sup> Since this includes humility, the absence of every taint of selfish motive, the power of meekness to overcome evil,<sup>48</sup> and the return of good for evil,<sup>49</sup> Lao-tzu would justly condemn

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45. The Taoists may even be statesmen, but they are always the same whether living in the palace or living in a mean and dirty lane and drinking from a gourd--they are the trusted ministers of the monarch; Balfour, op. cit., p. 83.

46. Chuang-tzu, quoted in Soothill, op. cit., p. 65.

47. A Taoist told Legge that his study had convinced him that he could never attain the ideal of Lao-tzu. He had almost resigned himself to despair; but one day he read some Christian tracts and said: "I read them, and it was as if scales fell from my eyes." Legge, Religions of China, p. 297.

48. Balfour, op. cit., p. 88, refers to the "Book of Plain Words," (245 B. C.) and compares it with our "Book of Proverbs." Among the many words of wisdom are these: "There is nothing that will enable you to pursue your course in greater peace than the patient bearing of insult."

49. Legge, Religions of Chins, p. 262; Balfour, op. cit., p. 84, quotes Lao-tzu's famous words: "Recompense injury with kindness."

haughtiness, war,<sup>50</sup> strife, selfishness in thought, word, and deed, etc., etc. Small wonder then that Lao-tzu made this observation: "There is no sin greater than giving rein to desire; there is no misery greater than discontent; there is no calamity more direful than the greed of gain. Therefore the sufficiency of contentment is an everlasting sufficiency."<sup>51</sup> However, Lao-tzu makes very few specific references to sin; he mentions vices, etc., but does not enumerate them. His emphasis was on the return to Tao; as a fruit of the return the vices, whatever they may be, would vanish. The only concept of sin which can be gleaned from such a philosophy is that sin is "an outrage upon the eternal principles of Nature Tao."<sup>52</sup>

A return to Tao will purify the most wicked of men and will free the most guilty from punishment.<sup>53</sup> Lao-tzu says: "By purifying, by cleansing and profound intuition he can be free from faults."<sup>54</sup> In Taoism as in Confucianism, sin is something which can be cast off by man himself. It does not corrupt the entire man as Christianity teaches. Nor would it seem as if sin should require any kind of atonement. But Lao-tzu speaks otherwise: "Therefore the holy man says:

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50. When the world is in conformity with Tao, "race horses are reserved for hauling dung;" when it has left Tao, war horses are commonly bred, says Lao-tzu, Canon of Reason and Virtue, p. 106.

51. Lao-tzu, quoted in Balfour, op. cit., p. 84; cf. Carus' translation of these words, op. cit., p. 106.

52. Parker, China and Religion, p. 43.

53. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 72.

54. Lao-tzu, Canon of Reason and Virtue, p. 79.

'Him who the country's sin makes his,  
 We hail as priest at the great sacrifice.  
 Him who the curse bears of the country's  
 failing.  
 As king of the empire we are hailing.'"<sup>55</sup>

"In China the emperor takes the guilt of the whole nation upon himself when he brings his annual sacrifice, a full burnt offering, to Shang Ti the Lord on High, and this is expressed in the quotation of this chapter which thus bears a remarkable similarity to the Christian doctrine that Christ as the High Priest takes the sins of mankind upon his own shoulders. Here is another coincidence of the East with the West. The priest according to the primitive custom speaks in the name of the sacrificial animal, and the sacrificial animal represents the god himself," says Carus.<sup>56</sup> What part this doctrine played in Lao-tzu's philosophy we are unable to state.

The punishment for sin, for departure from Tao, is recognized. The law of cause and effect is immediately put into operation; Parker says that the penalties of Tao are sharp and prompt.<sup>57</sup> But reference to these penalties is quite vague--"trouble and an unnatural death."<sup>58</sup> But the cause of death is not to be found in sin; death is the common

55. Ibid., p. 128.

56. Carus, comments on his translation of The Canon of Reason and Virtue, pp. 185f.

57. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 72.

58. Ibid., p. 170, Carus gives Lao-tzu's words are given this meaning: "While the mass of mankind are violent and self-willed, which leads to trouble and an unnatural death..."

lot of all and is a going home. Lieh-tzu says: "Poverty is the common lot of scholars, and death is the end of us all. What cause for sorrow is there, then, in quietly fulfilling one's destiny and awaiting the close of life?" "Death is to life as going away is to coming. How can we know that to die here is not to be born elsewhere? How can we tell whether, in their eager rush, for life, men are not under a delusion? How can I tell whether, if I die to-day, my lot may not prove far preferable to what it was when I was originally born?" "Ah! men know the dreadfulness of death; but they do not know its rest." "How excellent is it, that from all antiquity Death has been the common lot of men! It is repose for the goodman, and a hiding-away of the bad. Death is just a going home again.<sup>59</sup> The dead are those who have gone home, while we, who are living, are still wanderers."<sup>60</sup> This is the philosophic Taoism which regards sin as a transgression of the immutable laws of Nature and which knows nothing of an eternal punishment for sin.

But the Taoism which prevails in China today is in no way connected with the philosophy of Lao-tzu and his Tao Teh

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59. Chuang-tzu says: "How do I know that the love of life is not a delusion, and that the dislike of death is not like a child that is lost and does not know the way home?" Soothill, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>60</sup>Lieh-tzu, quoted in Balfour, op. cit., p. 81.

King.<sup>61</sup> Huang-ti, the Yellow Emperor, is claimed as the real founder,<sup>62</sup> although it is Chang Tao-ling (b. 34 A. D.) who moulded the religious thinking of the Taoists. "From the days of Tao Ling, the progress of Taoism has been downwards."<sup>63</sup> Tao Ling's teachings were based on "The Book of Changes" rather than on the ethical teachings of Lao-tzu;<sup>64</sup> the emphasis was placed on the magical side of Chinese philosophy and practice. Yang, however, thinks that the mysticism of Lao-tzu, appealed to Tao Ling and his society; and, feeling the need of a sacred book, they borrowed the Tao Teh King for this purpose; realizing also that they had no outstanding figure as the founder of their society, they appropriated Lao-tzu.<sup>65</sup> Be that as it may, it is generally known that this Taoism was a mass of superstitions and sacrifices not digested into any system.<sup>66</sup> But after the introduction of Buddhism into China, Taoism began to take shape as a religion; it was the Buddhistic influence which did much to mould Taoism as a religion.<sup>67</sup> Although Taoism and

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61. Yang, op. cit., p. 143. "Its development in China from the T'ang dynasty onward would not have been much different from what it has been if no relation with Lao Tzu had been established. The true source of Taoism is rightly placed in the mythical...Yellow Emperor and the ascetic Chang Tao-ling rather than in the ethical recluse, Lao Tzu," writes Ferguson, op. cit., p. 22.

62. Huang-ti is reported to have ruled at the dawn of history. Not only did he, the Yellow Emperor, have a miraculous birth, but his whole reign was filled with marvelous events, says Ferguson, op. cit., p. 21.

63. Soothill, op. cit., p. 73.

64. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 13.

65. Yang, op. cit., p. 144.

66. Legge, The Religions of China, p. 170.

67. Ibid. Balfour, op. cit., p. 76, gives this general characterization of Taoism and the Buddhistic influence: "Taoism

Buddhism differed greatly in doctrine, there was hardly an attempt on the part of Taoism to refute any of the doctrines of Buddhism. True, Taoism was a revolt against Buddhism because of its foreign origin, but "at the same time it did not hesitate to copy slavishly its whole system of organization."<sup>68</sup> Thus, only after Buddhism entered, did Taoism have temples, liturgies, forms of public worship, so-called "priests," etc.<sup>69</sup> It reached the stage of an organized religion in the seventh century A. D.<sup>70</sup>

During the Yüan Dynasty (1280-1368 A. D.) the position of Lao-tzu really became fixed in Taoism. Previously Lao-tzu had been canonized by T'ang T'ai Tsung (d. 649 A. D.) with the title of Hsüan Yüan Huang-ti, "Emperor of Mysterious Origin." The Yüan dynasty connected itself with the first two characters in Lao-tzu's name (Hsüan Yüan) in the same way as T'ai Tsung had connected himself with Lao-tzu because of their having a common surname. The connection of Lao-tzu with the

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with which we have to deal to-day, bears, it is true, many of the outward and visible signs of a religious system; but this is a mark of degradation, and is due in a very large measure to the contaminating influence of its contact with those grosser developments of popular Buddhism which flourish so rankly among the lower classes of Chinese. At present Taoism is a base and abject superstition, a religion in the worst and lowest sense, a foolish idolatry supported by an ignorant and venal priesthood commanding the respect of no single class in the community; a system of unreasoning credulity on the one hand, and of hocus-pocus and imposture on the other."

68. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 16.

69. Legge, Religions of China, p. 180.

70. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 14.

reigning houses (T'ang and Yüan) had a profound influence<sup>71</sup> on the people, causing the religion to spread quite rapidly.<sup>72</sup>

A sketch of Taoism would not be complete without a few paragraphs concerning the "priests." The present (1910) Pope, High Priest, or Grand Wizard is Chang, commonly spoken of as Chang T'ien Shih, or Chang the Heavenly Teacher.<sup>73</sup> There is also a regular order and a lay order of priests. The regular priests are unshaved; the lay priests are generally married. The priesthood does not seem to be limited to the male sex only, for there are lay priestesses, pythoresses, or exor-

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71. Soothill, *op. cit.*, p. 73, claims that the influence of Taoism is greater than generally realized--emperors have been its devotees; it has affected the Court of China, politics and the national religion for hundreds of years. In fact, Taoism may have been the cause of the burning of the ancient books by Ch'in Shih Huang-ti.

72. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 25; on this page Ferguson also states that during the reign of the Yüan Emperor, T'ien Li (1329-1332 A. D.), Chao Meng-fu wrote on an immense stone table, which is well preserved in the large Tung Yo Temple outside the Ch'ao Yang Men. The inscription is one of the most authoritative expositions of Taoism. Taoism is here referred to as Hsüan Chia instead of Tao Chiao. "The T'ang dynasty founded Taoism and the Yüan dynasty stabilized it."

73. Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 90; he adds this bit of interesting information on the Taoist Pope: "He claims, and is believed to be the direct lineal descendant by metempsychosis of a celebrated sorcerer named Chang Tao-ling, who lived early in the Christian era. He possesses the secret of immortality, and is regarded with the utmost veneration by the more uneducated classes in China. He is a great exorcist, and is believed to wield dominion over all the spirits of the Universe and the unseen powers generally, by means of a magic sword. His palace is situated in the province of Kiang-hsi, where he mimics imperial state, has a large retinue of courtiers, confers ranks and honours among ghosts, spirits, and minor deities with all the dignity of an actual sovereign, and keeps a long row of jars full of captured demons, whom he has disarmed and bottled-up from doing further mischief."

cizers who are much like their brethren.<sup>74</sup> The Chinaman is afraid of spirits, and to this dread the Taoist priests pander. It is their means of livelihood. This fear is very conveniently encouraged by the teachings of the priests. These Taoist "yellow tops" are gifted with the powers of a magician who with charms<sup>75</sup> and liturgies fight against the malevolent demons.<sup>76</sup> In fact, they are prepared to take a hand in any kind of superstitious business to get a little money. "The Taoist priest, and especially the lay priest, or exorcizer, has a mind so utterly warped that it is almost beyond the possibility of being straightened."<sup>77</sup>

The Taoist priest is very instrumental in helping the Chinaman conform to Tao. Conformity to Tao demands a knowledge of the happy and unhappy influence which days may exercise upon man. Man ought to perform all the important acts of his life on felicitous days, and, if possible, at felicitious hours. On this account, chronomancy is an indispensable element in the Taoist system. It is considered a principal function of the government to perform the holy duty of supplying the people with an almanack. And as a matter of course it is incumbent on the Taoist priests to help the illiterate in deciphering and interpreting its indications. This chrono-

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74. Soothill, op. cit., pp. 143f.

75. The phrenatical zeal displayed in the Boxer uprising was due to charms; hundreds of thousands believed that weapons could not harm them and that their horsehair whips could turn back upon the marksman the bullet he had fired--all because they had been blessed by the Taoist priests and had Taoist charms. Soothill, op. cit., p. 75.

76. Legge, Religions of China, p. 197.

77. Soothill, op. cit., pp. 143f.

matic system has developed into such a mess that DeGroot calls it "a web of complicated nonsense."<sup>78</sup>

Among other things, the Taoist priests publish many tracts and pamphlets which are said to be exhortations from the state gods and other dieties.<sup>79</sup> Among these is the "T'ai-Shang Kan-Ying P'ien," i.e., "The Treatise of the Exalted One on Response and Retribution." The work is ascribed to the "Exalted One" (Lao-tzu) but improperly so.<sup>80</sup> The bulk of the book consists of one sentence, 1400 words long.<sup>81</sup> Undoubtedly, few Americans have heard of this book, but it has passed through more editions than any other book, including the Bible.<sup>82</sup> "Thought it is not a canonical book, its authoritative character is generally recognized in China, and it may be regarded as a typical exposition of the moral convictions of the average Chinese. It has become the most important guide of the people's conscience."<sup>83</sup> In the following pages some of its more important teachings on Law and sin will be set forth; the reader is asked to call to mind for himself the parallel passages in Scripture, if there are any.

Universal love is advocated--"With a compassionate heart turn toward all creatures. Be faithful, filial, friendly,

78. DeGroot, op. cit., pp. 157f.

79. Legge, Religions of China, p. 185.

80. Ibid.

81. Balfour, op. cit., p. 89.

82. Carus, introduction to his translation of Lao-tzu's

Kan-Ying P'ien, p. 3.

83. Ibid., p. 5.

and brotherly."<sup>84</sup> "Take pity on orphans, assist widows; respect the old, be kind to children."<sup>85</sup> "Be grieved at the misfortune of others and rejoice at their good luck. Assist those in need, and rescue those in danger. Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and regard your neighbor's loss as your own loss."<sup>86</sup> There are men who do not practise this love--"They are partial in their hatred and partial in their love."<sup>87</sup> "In evil they delight. With brutality they do harm and damage. Insidiously they injure the good and law-abiding."<sup>88</sup>

Evil in three forms is condemned: "Speaketh what is evil...thinketh what is evil...practiseth what is evil."<sup>89</sup>

Secret sinning is likewise condemned: "Do not sin in secret."<sup>90</sup>

Leaving the more general remarks we now turn to a classification of quotations under Commandment headings.

First Commandment--"They accuse heaven and find fault with men."<sup>91</sup> "They rail at spirits and claim to be right themselves."<sup>92</sup> "The last day of the month and the last day of the year they sing and dance. The first day of the month, the first day of the year, they start roaring and scolding. Facing the north they snivel and spit; facing the hearth,

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84. Lao-tzu, Kan-Yang P'ien, p. 52.

85. Ibid., p. 53.

86. Ibid., p. 53.

87. Ibid., p. 63.

88. Ibid., p. 54.

89. Ibid., p. 66.

90. Ibid., p. 52.

91. Ibid., p. 60.

92. Ibid., p. 60.

they sing, hum and weep. Further, with hearth fire, they burn incense, and with filthy fagots they cook their food."<sup>93</sup>

"They spit at falling stars and point at the many-colored rainbow. Irreverently they point at the three luminaries; intently they gaze at the sun and at the moon."<sup>94</sup>

Second Commandment--"When their requests are not granted they begin to curse and wax hateful."<sup>95</sup> "They point at heaven and earth to make them witnesses of their mean thoughts."<sup>96</sup> "They curse and swear to seek vindication."<sup>97</sup>

Third Commandment--"With heresies they mislead others."<sup>98</sup> For actions on "holy" days, see the First Commandment.

Fourth Commandment--"Stealthily they despise their superiors and parents. They disregard their seniors and rebel against those whom they serve."<sup>99</sup> "They resist and provoke fathers and elders."<sup>100</sup> "Respect the old."<sup>101</sup>

Fifth Commandment--"They hold in contempt the lives of Heaven's people."<sup>102</sup> "They murder men to take their property, or have them ousted to take their places. They slay the yielding and slaughter those who have surrendered."<sup>103</sup> "They

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93. Ibid., p. 63.

94. Ibid., pp. 63f.

95. Ibid., p. 58.

96. Ibid., p. 61.

97. Ibid., p. 62.

98. Ibid., p. 67.

99. Ibid., p. 54.

100. Ibid., p. 59.

101. Ibid., p. 51.

102. Ibid., p. 55.

103. Ibid., p. 55.

endanger others to save themselves."<sup>104</sup> "Bear no grudge."<sup>105</sup>  
 "Even the multifarious insects, herbs, and trees should not  
 be injured."<sup>106</sup> "They shoot the flying, chase the running,  
 expose the hiding, surprise nestlings, close up entrance holes,  
 upset nests, injure the pregnant, and break the egg."<sup>107</sup>  
 "They employ drugs to kill trees."<sup>108</sup>

Sixth Commandment--"They break up betrothals."<sup>109</sup> "They  
 cannot see beauty without cherishing in their hearts thoughts  
 of seduction."<sup>110</sup> "Their lusty desires exceed all measure."<sup>111</sup>

Seventh Commandment--"They impoverish others for their  
 own gain."<sup>112</sup> "They destroy the crops and fields of others."<sup>113</sup>  
 "They delight in fraud, they delight in robbery, they make  
 raids and commit deprivations to get rich."<sup>114</sup> "Seeing the  
 wealth of others, they wish them bankrupt and ruined."<sup>115</sup>  
 "Extend your help without seeking reward. Give to others and  
 do not regret or begrudge your liberality."<sup>116</sup>

Eighth Commandment--"Do not call attention to the faults  
 of others, nor boast of your own excellence."<sup>117</sup> "First rec-

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104. Ibid., p. 56.  
 105. Ibid., p. 53.  
 106. Ibid., p. 53.  
 107. Ibid., p. 56.  
 108. Ibid., p. 59.  
 109. Ibid., p. 57.  
 110. Ibid., p. 57.  
 111. Ibid., p. 61.  
 112. Ibid., p. 56.  
 113. Ibid., p. 57.  
 114. Ibid., p. 59.  
 115. Ibid., p. 58.  
 116. Ibid., p. 53.  
 117. Ibid.

tify thyself and then convert others."<sup>118</sup> "They slander their fellow-students. Liars they are, bearing false witness, deceivers, and hypocrites; malevolent exposers of kith and kind."<sup>119</sup> Carus also quotes some stories which illustrate the teachings of the Kang-Yang P'ien; in the story, "Misuse of Books", we find these words: "Now it is a greater sin to waste sacred books than to mock and slander sages and saints. Paper, whether written or printed often contains maxims that wise men have bequeathed on us. If we use it for unclean purposes, if we trample it underfoot, instead of carefully preserving it, we are committing a crime as serious as if we slandered them."<sup>120</sup>

Ninth and Tenth Commandments--"They conceal and keep a treacherous heart."<sup>121</sup> "They are greedy and covetous without satiety."<sup>122</sup> "If a man's heart be awakened to evil, though evil be not yet accomplished, evil spirits verily are already following him."<sup>123</sup>

Needless to say, The T'ai-Shang Kang-Ying P'ien represents a high standard of heathen morality. Of course the polytheism, chronomancy, protection of animal life,<sup>124</sup> and

118. Ibid., p. 52.

119. Ibid., p. 54.

120. This story quoted by Carus as illustrative of Lao-tzu's Kang-Ying P'ien, p. 102.

121. Lao-tzu, Kang-Ying P'ien, p. 57.

122. Ibid., p. 61.

123. Ibid., p. 65.

124. The respect paid animal and plant life is undoubtedly due to the influence of Buddhism and its doctrine of the transmigration of souls.

and the respect paid paper are undesirable features. But we must admit that the natural knowledge of the Law is well developed. This is further substantiated by the author of the Kang-Ying P'ien who says that the people are quite aware of their duties and mistakes.<sup>125</sup> An eighteenth-century Chinese philosopher quoted by Ball says: "When you have advanced sufficiently in knowledge of yourself, you will find it a grief. There will be, as it were, two men in your bosom. When you desire to do good, evil will come between. Again, when you wish to do wrong, a sense of shame will oppose you. Thus a battle goes on within you."<sup>126</sup>

Even though it is not stated in the Kang-Ying P'ien, the Taoists recognize sin as an offence against the gods (not against the one true God as do the Christians): "Even the secret thoughts one has in an obscure room must be such that they do not offend heaven and earth, the kui and Shen."<sup>127</sup>

The universality of sin as taught by the Taoists is set forth in a quotation which Ball has taken from a Taoistic book: "The most of what you do, what you say, the thoughts you think...are on the side of evil."<sup>128</sup> Of course, this does not mean that men are wicked at all times, as Scripture teaches; for all men sin, even when performing good works. Taoism accuses not only men of sinning, but also the gods--

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125. Lao-tzu, Kan-Ying P'ien, p. 56.

126. Chinese philosopher, quoted in Ball, op. cit., p. 537

127. "Rewards and Punishments," quoted in Davrou, op. cit., p. 267.

128. Ball, op. cit., p. 537.

"The gemmeous ruler of Taoism had a covetous heart, so one of his three souls had to become incarnate in 'the dusty, troublesome world.' Again, the Neptune of Taoism, the Sea Dragon, was disobedient, and his son was a drunkard, and the god of fire (originally a Buddhist god) committed theft."<sup>129</sup>

"Those who have committed sin, must consider it as a sickness, try to get rid of it as soon as possible, and be resolved not to commit it in the future. Those who did not commit any, must dread it as they dread a wolf or a tiger."<sup>130</sup> True, sin is regarded as vicious, but it is not contaminating; for this quotation states that man is capable of ridding himself of sin. If a man has sinned, he can compensate for his evil deeds by performing good ones; for example, stopping a fight counts plus 3; gossiping with an evil tongue counts minus 3; inducing people to abstain from eating flesh for one year counts plus 20; betrayal of a neighbor's secrets counts minus 50, etc.<sup>131</sup>

Taoism also teaches a retribution for sin. Recall for a moment the translation of "T'ai-Shang Kang-Ying P'ien," i.e., "The Treatise of the Exalted One on Response and Retribution." The idea of retribution is conceived to work in a mechanical and external way, being doled out in exact proportions of merit and demerit. "The reward of good and evil is

129. Ibid.

130. "Rewards and Punishments," quoted in, Davrout, op. cit., p. 265.

131. Carus, comments on Lao-tzu's Kang-Ying P'ien, pp. 133f.

like the shadow accompanying a body, and so it is apparent that heaven and earth are possessed of crime-recording spirits."<sup>132</sup>

Sins are punished by misfortune in this life, by the shortening of one's life, by a stay in purgatory, and finally, if needs be, by an everlasting stay in hell. "According to the lightness or gravity of his transgressions, the sinner's term of life is reduced."<sup>133</sup> Not only is his term of life reduced, but poverty also strikes him. Often he meets with calamity and misery.<sup>134</sup> His neighbors hate him. Punishments

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132. Lao-tzu, Kang-Ying P'ien, p. 51. We also read, pp. 51f, that the hearth spirit and the "three councilor spirit-lords of the northern constellation" record men's sins and crimes. Carus, pp. 71f, writes that the Chinese also say that the vital functions of man's body are presided over by three body-spirits called san chi shen (Upper chi, middle, and lower chi), residing in the head, stomach, and abdomen. When a man falls asleep on Keng-shen day (the day of judgment in the heavenly courts; it is the fifty-seventh day in the sexagesimal system of the complicated Chinese calendar), the spirits leave and go to the Heavenly Master, telling about the sins which they have witnessed.

133. Lao-tzu, Kang-Ying P'ien, p. 52, says that the greater offences cause a loss of twelve years, while smaller ones cause a loss of only one hundred days. On p. 65 he says: "Those who unlawfully kill men will in turn have their weapons and arms turned on them; year, they will kill each other."

134. Carus, in his "Moral Tales Illustrative of the Kang-Ying P'ien," relates the story of "The Spirit of the Hearth," to show the Chinese belief that misery is brought about by particular sins.--Yu Kong labored and studied very diligently but was still poverty-stricken. "Although he worked incessantly year after year, his misery only increased from day to day. So he examined himself, and finding he had committed no great sin, became resigned, although not without murmuring, to heaven's chastening hand." A god visits Yu Kong and tells him that his incessant prayers, etc., have not been answered because of his sins--he permitted his pupils to misuse paper which had characters on it; he wasn't sincere; he ate "kids and lobsters without

and curses pursue him. Good luck shuns him. Evil stars threaten him; and when his term of life comes to an end, he perishes.<sup>135</sup> It seems strange that Taoism does not regard sin as a cause of natural death; the Taoists are strangely silent on the question of death, quite evidently regarding it as something which must come to pass, without attempting to explain it.

"If at death an unexpiated offence be left, the evil luck will be transferred to children and grandchildren. Moreover, all those who wrongly seize others' property may have to compensate for it, with wives or children or other family members, the expiation to be proportionate up to a punishment by death. If the guilt be not expiated by death, they will suffer by various evils, by water, by fire, by theft, or by robbery, by loss of property, by disease and illness, and by ill repute, to compensate for any unlawful violence of justice."<sup>136</sup> This form of retribution is quite unjust. For Scripture says:

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considering that they had life; even though he was careful in his speech, he hurt others' feelings by beating them in arguments; he was sarcastic with his opponents; true, though Yu Kong hadn't committed any actual sins, "but when you meet a beautiful woman in another's home and cannot banish her from your thoughts, you have committed adultery with her in your heart." The god sees nothing in Yu Kong's heart but "thoughts of hate and ingratitude towards your benefactors and your friends. These thoughts grow on you; so plentifully they swarm in the depths of your heart that I could not enumerate them all." He saw also thoughts of avarice, envy, selfishness, pride, scorn, ambition and hate; Yu Kong always had a wrong motive, not a noble one. However, if Yu Kong were to amend his sinful ways, he would be able to appease Heaven and cause it to change its decision.

135. Lao-tzu, Kang-Ying P'ien, p. 51.

136. Ibid., p. 64.

"The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."<sup>137</sup>

The Taoists also have the tortures of purgatory for the punishment of sin; the score of guilt must be obliterated before the individual enters his new life.<sup>138</sup> Very vivid pictures are painted of the excruciating pains which the inhabitants of purgatory must experience, but, since the Taoist purgatory is patterned after that of the Buddhists, we shall reserve the description for our discussion of Buddhism.

For those who fail in their transmigrations an everlasting hell is reserved.<sup>139</sup> Thus, Taoism, in contrast to Buddhism, has the belief that the soul must live on forever in its individuality and that people can be everlastingly condemned to hell. Legge quotes a Taoist as saying: "Truly these men do not know that the body alone perishes, but the soul lives forever and ever; and that whatsoever evil they do in this life, the same will be done to them in the life to come."<sup>140</sup>

In summary, therefore, we may say that Taoism makes a fine distinction between right and wrong, that it recognizes sin as an offence against the gods, and that it teaches a

137. Ezekiel 18:20.

138. Legge, Religions of China, p. 302.

139. Legge, Religions of China, p. 301.

140. Taoist philosopher, quoted by Legge, Religions of China, p. 195.

divine retribution of sins. However, because of its polytheism, Taoism recognizes no single almighty, everlasting, and just God who regards all sins, even the "lesser" ones, as rebellion against Him and threatens to punish each sin with eternal condemnation. True, the Taoist teaches an everlasting punishment, but only as a last resort if a person fails to atone for his evil deeds by the performance of good deeds or by a stay in purgatory. He can make atonement for his evil deeds because he fails to recognize the guilt and the contaminating influence of sin.

Thus, we see that sin, which was hardly recognizable in philosophic Taoism, now plays an important role in the present-day Taoistic religion.

1. Fergusson, op. cit., p. 155, says that Buddhism entered China from Central Asia in 67 A. D.  
 2. Karl B. Mitchell, *Islam and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism*, pp. 57.

### III. Buddhism.

Buddhism was formally introduced into China in the reign of Ming-ti (58-76 A. D.). Reichelt says that Buddhism began its propaganda in China openly about the year 61 A. D.,<sup>1</sup> after Emperor Ming had had his famous dream. However, long before this, the ground had been prepared through fantastic legends and communications from China's neighbors to the west. (1) The religious conditions at this time were ripe--Confucianism gave no answer to the real problems of life and death; Taoism had awakened the desire for religious speculation. (2) China acquired a knowledge of India through caravans. During the reign of Emperor Wu (140-86 B. C.) of the Han Dynasty, Chang Ch'ien was sent to China's southern and western borders to deal with certain tribes. One of these journeys carried him as far as Parthia. Upon his return he related an account of Buddha's golden statue. During the following years Buddhist literature began to sift into China so that in 60 A. D. there was among certain circles in China an acquaintance with Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> Soon two Buddhist monks, Motanga and Boharana, brought with them Buddhist books which they are said to have carried on the back of a white horse. They settled at Lo-yang, the

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1. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 188, says that Buddhism entered China from Central Asia in 67 A. D.

2. Karl L. Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, pp. 8f.

capital of China. The first monastery in China, "The Monastery of the White Horse", was built for them by the Emperor. Beal thinks that after 73 A. D. Buddhism spread quite rapidly among the Chinese.<sup>3</sup> However, this observation seems to be incorrect. Ferguson says that the progress of Buddhism was slow until the latter part of the third century. During this time the monks, who were all foreigners,<sup>4</sup> devoted their time to translation work. But soon, under the Chin dynasty, Buddhism began to flourish under Imperial patronage; likewise, during the succeeding dynasties, it enjoyed a fine growth. Wu-ti (502-550 A. D.), the founder of the Liang dynasty, took monastic vows and publicly preached the doctrine of Buddhism. Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth successor of Buddha, migrated to China in 526 A. D., and was well received by the Emperor at Nanking. Soon Bodhidharma founded the Mahayana School (Zen), which later became the most prominent and widely diffused sect of Buddhism in China.<sup>5</sup> "This religion was rec-

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3. Sam Beal, "Buddhism in China," Religious Systems of the World, p. 175.

4. Soothill, op. cit., pp. 104-108, gives the distinguishing doctrines of the Mahayana cult: 1. In contrast to the belief of the orthodox school, Hinayana, the concept of a Supreme and eternal Being is taught. This Absolute Being has manifested Himself in countless ways, especially through the Buddhas, of whom Gautama was one, as were the great Sages of the world, even Jesus. Their belief in a Trinity may be summed as follows: Buddha, the Dharma (Law), and the Sangha (Church, or body of monks). 2. Bodhisattvas--they are ready to enter the final stages of Buddhism, but have denied themselves this privilege in order to help mankind. Appeals are more frequently addressed to them than to Buddha. 3. Salvation by faith--This is directly opposed to the Hinayana doctrine of salvation by

ognized as foreign in origin, but it was claimed to be Chinese in reality as far as its teachings were concerned."<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, it was persecuted in the fifth, eighth, and tenth centuries A. D. Soothill also mentions the persecution under Wu-tsung (c. 850 A. D.); at this time more than 260,000 Buddhist monks and nuns were compelled to return to secular life.<sup>7</sup> But since Buddhism so resembled the contemplative asceticism of the followers of Tao, it weathered these storms of persecution.

As has been indicated, Buddhism adapted itself in every possible way to Chinese opinions. The architecture for its temples was Chinese. It also allowed the government to impose upon it a form of organization after the pattern of that of the State. This adaptation to Chinese thought involved not only outward changes, but also doctrinal changes. By invoking and honoring spiritual beings whom it found already existing

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works. 4. The soul restored--Mayahanism ignores or puts aside the doctrine of Anatman. The Chinese are allowed the possession of a soul, which, to all intents, is immortal. 5. Heaven and hell--this is a natural outcome of a religion of salvation. 6. Prayer and invocation--Prayer is made to those divine beings who yearn to help humanity; but prayer is a foreign element to early Buddhism. Throughout China, temples are found well supplied with devas, bodhisattvas, and arhats to whom incense is lighted and invocation made. Where Lamaism prevails, the praying-wheels are very much in evidence. 7. Clerical order--"There are of course good and sincere, and surely there must occasionally be even learned men amongst them, but the mass are illiterate, sometimes immoral, and almost restful enough to need no further nirvana."

6. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 189; he also mentions that its ethical teachings agreed with the Tao Teh King, while the practise of its hermits corresponded to those of the early ascetic followers of the Tao.

7. Soothill, op. cit., p. 95.

in China, it departed from original Buddhism. The development of the worship of Kuan Yin is due entirely to Chinese influence. With her is associated Ta-shi-chih, and together they are placed with the historic Buddha as a Trinity of Three Holy Ones.<sup>8</sup>

The Chinese likewise have borrowed from the Buddhists. Many Buddhist dieties brought from India have been adapted by the Chinese--the best known of the celestial Buddhas is O-mi-t'o-fo(Amitabha); his name is recited as the beads of the rosary are counted. By constant meditation on his name, the Buddhists feel that they will be saved. The ancient Chinese recognized the supervision and control of human affairs by higher powers who rewarded the good and punished the wicked. Their worship of ancestors showed their belief in the continued existence of the soul after death. . It was therefore easy to accept the Buddhistic teaching of rewards and punishments with its accompaniments of heavens and hells, and also the doctrine of the reincarnation or transmigration of souls. This syncretism on the part of the Chinese and Buddhists has been so great that there has never been any clear-cut distinction between Buddhism and the teachings of the Liberal School which culminated in the Taoist religion. "Notwithstanding the adherence of the people to many of the external observances of Buddhist temples, it must be remembered that the people of China share very little in the genuine ideas of Buddhistic

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8. Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 194ff.

teaching. They observe such ceremonies as conform to the general principles of their own indigenous religion which is represented on the one hand by the State ceremonies, and on the other by the tradition embodied in Taoism. China cannot be considered as a Buddhistic nation."<sup>9</sup> Buddhism, as Dr. Morrison has observed, "is decried by the learned, laughed at by the profligate, yet followed by all."<sup>10</sup>

For the Buddhist Life or the Life is represented by a Wheel of Life.<sup>11</sup> This wheel is in the hands of the Evil One, Mara, the Devil and is composed of three sections: (1) Hub-- "three root-evils," i.e., the sources of all disturbances and annoyances of life; these three evils inherent in man's heart are: (a) ignorance or insanity, (b) desire or cravings, and (c) hatred. (2) Spokes--these six sections indicate the six worlds or phases of life (in the process of reincarnation), i.e., (a) heaven, (b) man, (c) demons, (d) beasts, (e) hungry ghosts, and (f) hell. (3) Outer rim--it is composed of the twelve Nidanas or links in the chain of cause and effect; they are "not necessarily a chain of links in the sense that each of them is the antecedent cause of the next following; but they are the twelve 'causes'--factors and forces--which link the 'inner man' with the 'outside world,' and set in motion

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9. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

10. Morrison, quoted in Soothill, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

11. Yang, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-131, will form the basis of our discussion of the Buddhistic teachings on Life, the Law of Karma, the path of escape, salvation, etc. All information and quotations will be taken from these pages unless otherwise indicated.

the wheel of life. Perhaps the best illustration is to say that twelve Nidanas form a sort of switchboard with switches which can turn on the current of life and set the Wheel of Karma to turn."

The inherent badness in the heart is stimulated by the twelve Nidanas [i.e., (1) ignorance, (2) disposition, (3) cognition, (4) name and form, (5) five senses and the mind, (6) contact, (7) feeling, (8) craving, (9) grasping or attachment, (10) becoming, (11), birth, and (12) old age, sickness, death.<sup>12</sup>] and causes the wheel to turn, "producing deeds which must be adjusted according to the law of Karma," i.e., the law of retribution. All sentient beings are forever chained to this Wheel of Karma. It is impossible to be released until the uttermost farthing is paid. But a person is a slave forever, because it's very probable that one's demerits are greater than one's merits. "Therefore, as a slave of sin, man is forever chained to the Wheel as a debtor to Karma."

However, Buddhism offers a way of escape, but it does not attempt to conquer this Wheel or Law of Karma. The way of escape is wisdom and knowledge, since ignorance is the root of all evil. "If we suffer because of the curse of our own deceptive illusions, then we shall cease to suffer when this veil of inner darkness is lifted; and we shall dwell in the light of illuminating wisdom." It is this discovery which

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12. Dr. J. B. Pratt, "The Pilgrimage of Buddhism," quoted in Yang, op. cit., p. 115.

Buddha is supposed to have made after sitting under the Bodhi Tree for forty-nine days. His "revelation" was summed up in four "truths": "1. That life is suffering.<sup>13</sup> 2. That desire is the cause of suffering--it is sin.<sup>14</sup> 3. That by bringing about the cessation of desire we can put an end to the cause of suffering, and thus remove suffering itself. 4. That the way for the elimination of desire is through adhering to the Eightfold Right Path." Unswerving adherence to the Eightfold Right Path demands that we constantly keep ourselves "right in thought and deed, in mood and frame of mind, in understanding and perspective." We must have the understanding and insight to see through the miserable deceptive transiency of the world." For the Buddhist this means that there is nothing real in the world. All things, including ourselves, are actually empty and non-existent. The world is therefore purely subjective to the Buddhist. "When a man's desire ceases to stir, then the world ceases to exist for him." In its extreme view Buddhism denies even the existence of the ego, the personality or the soul of man.

Nevertheless, Buddhism teaches that each person experiences a series of transmigrations. We might call it

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13. "Life is a drama with four scenes: birth, old age, sickness, and death."

14. Suffering is nothing else than disappointed hopes, unrealized desires, and unsatisfied cravings. This again shows that desire is sin and consequently the cause of suffering. The cause of evil is within man and does not come from without. "Life is full of suffering, because we are full of desires. So long as desires exist, there will always exist pain and suffering or the possibility of pain and suffering."

a type of evolutionism, but the evolution is not only upward but also downward. A man could have been a monkey in the past, but if he doesn't walk circumspectly, he can degenerate into a monkey or donkey in the next life. Each person lives in the past, present, and future: We came from the past world, live in the present, and will be born into the future world. This transmigration continues eternally. But it is carried on according to certain rules: we must always start from where we left off before. What we are now is due to what we were before, and what we'll be in the future is determined by what we are now. But it is better to escape this process of transmigration, since human beings are so frail, for the Law of Karma is very unrelenting and the forces of evil are overwhelming. Our escape is to be made to Nirvana, that state of perfect peace and tranquility. Hinayana Buddhism says that it is the "extinction of illusion." Mahayana Buddhism speaks of it as the "attainment of truth." These two views are regarded as representing only the positive and negative views of the same concept. But Yang says that the concept is essentially negative: Nirvana is supposed to be a state in which there is no evil to cause suffering, no annoyance to disturb the soul; no worry, no care, only complete relaxation; there is no joy and active happiness but only sighs of relief; for the way to Nirvana is supposed to be such a long and arduous exertion<sup>15</sup> that, when you finally arrive, your only wish is to relax.

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15. The way of salvation is supposed to have been so

Our consideration has shown us then that Buddhism is the path of escape from suffering--suffering which is caused by sin. In order for us to understand what constitutes a sin, we must view the moral precepts of Buddhism.

These precepts are the will of Heaven: "Do your duty as a man and obey the will of heaven; thus you will be happy, all your lifetime."<sup>16</sup> Several classifications of the precepts of Buddhism have been made,<sup>17</sup> but we shall follow that of a Buddhist tract quoted by Davrout;<sup>18</sup> all quotations which are not marked with footnotes will be taken from this tract.

"Buddhism has ten precepts which are: first, let the unfaithful and impious, the cruel and unjust men become converted

difficult that Hui-yuan, a Chinese monk (333-416 A. D.) started teaching salvation by grace through faith in the Amitabha Fu (Buddha of Infinite Splendor). Salvation is to be obtained not merely by doing small good works but by constantly keeping in mind (with thoughts undisturbed) the Amitabha Buddha, constantly trusting in him and calling upon his name. Therefore the most repeated prayer in China is "Nan-Mo O-Mi-T'o fu;" "Hail to thee, Amitabha Buddha," or "I turn to Amitabha Buddha in reverence and trust."

16. "Precepts and Retribution," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 333.

17. Reichelt, op. cit., p. 322, mentions Buddhism's Five Great Commandments: (1) not to kill any living things; (2) not to steal; (3) not to commit adultery; (4) not to lie; (5) not to take intoxicating liquors. The next five are intended only for monks and nuns; but these commandments are regarded as having historical interest only: (6) abstinence from perfumes and flowers; (7) abstinence from singing and dancing; (8) abstinence from the use of big, comfortable beds; (9) abstinence from taking irregular meals; (10) abstinence from acquiring or possessing valuable things.

18. "Precepts and Retribution," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 333. The quotations taken from this source constitute one continuous sentence in the text of the tract, but, for convenience's sake, the sentence has been divided into paragraphs with several other thoughts added.

and be faithful, pious, compassionate to all men and to all beings." The commandments must be learned, recited, printed, reprinted, etc.; one must also preach the Mahayana, that is, the opening of the way of salvation to all the world. It is a grave sin to refuse to listen to sermons on the holy religion, or to treat a foreign preacher or apostle carelessly; religious books must be treated with idolatrous care, even offering sacrifices to them.<sup>19</sup> Complete forgiveness for any wrong is required; therefore all revenge is wrong. The sick are to be nursed and the slaves to be ransomed (no slave-dealing or slave-holding).<sup>20</sup> Charity and almsgiving are to be practised; the greatest charity is the diffusion of Buddhist knowledge. A Buddhist must also take the time for reflection and meditation if he wants to become holy.<sup>21</sup>

"Second, do not steal in secret and do not seek your own advantage at the cost of your neighbour; try to gain merits and help the unfortunate." **You are to give your possessions to others without the slightest regret or avarice.** Incorrect weights and measures and arson are prohibited as well as cheating by word and gesture.<sup>22</sup>

"Third, do not kill any living being to gratify your gluttony; be compassionate to animals." It is considered a sin to keep cats and dogs or trade in animals.<sup>23</sup>

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19. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 185.

20. Ibid., p. 183.

21. Yang, op. cit., p. 137.

22. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 183.

23. Moore, op. cit., p. 90.

The rescue of creatures from imminent death at all times and places <sup>is</sup> ordained. Consideration for animals is carried to such absurd lengths that one is required to give his flesh to satisfy the hunger of wild beasts.<sup>24</sup> Respect for animals is a natural outgrowth of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. These words are put in the mouth of an ox:

"My murderers shall come to grief,  
 Along with all who relish beef;  
 When I'm a man and you're a cow,  
 I'll eat you as you eat me now."<sup>25</sup>

Needless to say, the killing of men is frowned on. In fact, it is considered a sin to borrow or buy and sell weapons, enter a military camp, look at soldiers, or even serve as an ambassador, since diplomacy often leads to war.<sup>26</sup>

"Fourth, do not commit adultery with the wife or the daughter of another, thus ruining their life, spoiling their virtue, offending the geni." "Among all vices, lust is the worst. When the lascivious appetite is aroused in the heart of a man, he becomes mad, unable to do any good."<sup>27</sup>

"Fifth, do not destroy the good relations of your neighbour; bind together by good words the hearts of your countrymen;

"Sixth, do not slander good people and do not praise yourself." All injury, insult, etc., intended for others is to be diverted upon yourself, while, at the same time, you

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24. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 183.

25. Buddhist poem, quoted by Giles, op. cit., p. 65.

26. Moore, op. cit., p. 90.

27. "Precepts and Retribution," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 337.

hide your own virtue and excellence.<sup>28</sup>

"Seventh, do not get drunk, do not over eat; grant to nature and to body what is necessary;

"eighth, do not covet continuously and do not gather wealth, without taking pity upon the poor;

"ninth, do not make friends with bad men; keep company only with men better than yourself and who may teach you;

"tenth, do not speak much, do not cry nor laugh too loud; be sedate, simple and exercise yourself in virtue. These ten precepts should always be present in one's memory."

In general, anything which will induce others to sin, such as selling liquors, committing incest, etc., is a sin and to be avoided.<sup>29</sup>

However, for a fuller concept of sin, we must turn our attention to the Buddhist doctrine of hell, which is in reality a purgatory. Legge<sup>30</sup> and Reichelt<sup>31</sup> describe this purgatory as having eighteen courts, but a Buddhist pamphlet which we shall use as the basis of our description speaks of ten courts only. This does not mean, however, that there is necessarily a fundamental disagreement among these men; they have probably adopted different methods of division.

If during his lifetime a person commits more good than evil, he is not punished in hell. He comes before the tri-

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28. DeGroot, op. cit., p. 182.

29. Ibid.

30. Legge, Religions of China, p. 189.

31. Reichelt, op. cit., p. 369.

bunal of the first court, "led by a good devil, and his account being examined, he is immediately sent forward to the tenth district and changed again into a human being; a man becoming a woman, a woman becoming a man; receiving wealth or poverty, a long or short life, all strictly in proportion with the merits or ill-merits in the former life."<sup>32</sup> If a person's good deeds do not predominate, he will be tortured in the ten courts of hell;<sup>33</sup> after his release he enters life, only to meet with poverty, misfortune, etc., or to find himself in some lower form of existence. He is now in another stage of the eternal metempsychosis with the opportunity of bettering his future existence; but if he remains evil, he goes through purgatory, etc., and enters life in a still lower form, an eternal slave of the Law of Karma.

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<sup>32</sup>. "The Ten Courts of Hell," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., p. 345.

<sup>33</sup>. Our description of these ten courts of hell, or purgatory, in this footnote will be based entirely upon the Buddhist pamphlet, "The Ten Courts of Hell," quoted in Davrout, op. cit., pp. 345-391. Before proceeding with the description, we must always bear in mind that, even though a person is terribly mutilated in one court, when the time comes for his departure to the next, he appears again as he was at the time of his death and is tortured in the same body.

**THE FIRST COURT**--It is presided over by Ch'in-Kuang wang and is situated under the Great Sea, at the foot of the Wochiaoshih mountain, towards the West. The evil people are led before a huge mirror and there see the evil things which they were guilty of on earth. Here a man is led to understand that nothing material can follow him into the next world; only good and evil deeds follow. Having gone past the mirror, he is sent to the second court where his tortures begin.

At this point, the author of the pamphlet discusses suicide as being wrong in most cases unless it was for the sake of fidelity, the Prince, filial piety, chastity, justice, or

war. But the souls of those who committed suicide without sufficient reason ~~is~~<sup>are</sup> sent back to the place where the suicide was committed. There they will have to suffer without end the pangs of its agony and hunger and thirst. Nor will they be able to receive any sacrifices or offerings from men. Only when the man who was harmed by the suicide forgets the suicide, only then will the soul enter the first eight courts of hell. Upon its arrival at the ninth court, it is imprisoned in the "City of Suicides" and excluded from metempsychosis. But, if the soul had frightened someone while at the place of his suicide, he is immediately tied up head downwards for ever and excluded from metempsychosis. It is counted a sin even to entertain the idea of suicide or to speak of it to frighten others.

All bonzes ("priests") who received money from people to recite prayers and then omitted letters or made a mistake in the response are punished here. He must supply a hundredfold all the sentences he omitted in his life. But such mistakes as this are not counted as sins for the laity, for the intention of their heart was right.

**THE SECOND COURT**--It is governed by Ch'u Chiangwang and is situated below the Great Sea, at the foot of the Wochiao-shih towards the South. This section contains sixteen smaller dungeons: "1. The dungeon of dark dust; 2. The dungeon of liquid dung; 3. The dungeon of the five pronged forks; 4. The dungeon of hunger; 5. The dungeon of thirst; 6. The dungeon of purulent discharges and blood; 7.8. The dungeons of boiling caldrons and coppers; 9. The dungeon of iron armour; 10. The dungeon of the great scales; 11. The dungeon where men are pecked by cocks; 12. The dungeon of ashes; 13. The dungeon of the chopping knife; 14. The dungeon of swords; 15. The dungeon of wild beasts; 16. The dungeon of ice."

The ones punished in this section are: those who have kidnapped small boys or girls to make them little bonzes; those who have without reason vowed to become monks or nuns; those who receive a deposit and then feign its loss so that they can keep the goods; those who tear out the eyes, cut the ears or legs or arms of others; those who are fake doctors and receive money for their services; those who do not allow grown-up slaves to be redeemed; and the go-betweens who don't relate all the details about the parties concerned.

**THE THIRD COURT**--It is governed by Sung-Tiwang and is located under the Great Sea, at the foot of Wochiao-shih, towards the Southeast. It also contains sixteen dungeons; "1. The dungeon of salt and soda; 2. The dungeon of ropes, wooden-collars and chains; 3. The dungeon where ribs are pierced through; 4. The dungeon where the face is scraped with copper and iron instruments; 5. The dungeon where the fat is scraped off the body; 6. The dungeon where the heart and liver are torn out; 7. The dungeon where the eyes are torn out; 8. The dungeon where flaying takes place; 9. The dungeon where feet are cut off; 10. The dungeon where fingers

and toes are cut off; 11. The dungeon of the blood drinking; 12. The dungeon where people are suspended head downwards; 13. The dungeon where the body is sawn in halves; 14. The dungeon of vermin; 15. The dungeon where the knees are crushed; 16. The dungeon where the heart is pierced."

The following are punished in this court: "The mandarins who, during their life, are ungrateful to the Emperor, who do not protect faithfully the Empire, who sell justice, oppress the people and live on their salary without doing anything for the Emperor; the common men who are ungrateful for the benefits received; the women who insult their husband; those who after having given their son to be adopted by some man, are so lacking in conscience that when this son has inherited, they bid him return to his own family [thus depriving the adopter of posterity]; the servants who offend against their master; the soldiers and satellites who offend against their mandarin; the clerks and cashiers who cheat their employers; the prisoners who escape from prison; the exiles who run away; those who having been arrested and having obtained permission to return home because someone became bail for them, profit by it and flee, thus bringing ruin on their bail; those who do harm to their parents and friends and do not repent." Likewise, all those who disregard some of the gods and thus delay people in making their funerals in due time; those who don't care properly for a coffin which has been dug up or uncovered, or who plow up a cemetery; also those who cause their neighbors to break the laws; those who stir up law suits; "those who distribute anonymous pamphlets; those who write divorce deeds; those who forge deeds, letters, bank-notes, silver, seals, accounts; those who receiving the amount of a debt, do not give a receipt and claim it again from the debtor's descendants." A person is to be punished according to the number of sins which he has committed; however, if "on the eighth of the second moon," anyone makes up his mind to avoid these sins during his life, he will escape the torments of this section.

THE FOURTH COURT--Wu-Kuan wang presides over this court which is situated under the Great Sea, at the foot of Wochiaoshih, towards the East. There are sixteen dungeons: "1. The dungeon where the deceased is hurled headlong into a roaring stream; 2. The dungeon where he must kneel on bamboo splinters; 3. The dungeon where his hands are burnt; 4. The dungeon where he is whipped till the blood comes; 5. The dungeon where the tendons are cut and the flesh scraped off the bones; 6. The dungeon where the arms are cut off; 7. The dungeon where the flesh is pierced with gimblets; 8. The dungeon where one sits down on sharp stones; 9. The dungeon where one wears iron clothes; 10. The dungeon where one is crushed under rafters, stones and earth; 11. The dungeon where the eyes are pierced; 12. The dungeon where the mouth is filled with lime; 13. The dungeon where one is forced to

swallow hot drugs; 14. The dungeon where one must walk stumbingly in a road strewn with oily beans; 15. The dungeon where the lips are notched; 16. The dungeon where one is buried under pebbles."

Those punished are cheats, deceivers in regard to money matters, sales or bargains; those who fail to deliver a letter, thus causing someone harm; those who open a letter and use it for evil purposes; those who steal bricks from a pagoda or the bricks left in a street or at one's door; those who rob oil from the pagoda lamp; the poor who behave badly; the rich who fail to give alms; those who promised to lend but broke their promise and caused harm; those who know remedies for the sick, but don't give them the benefit of their knowledge; those who litter up the streets; "those who enroach upon the grounds of others or damage their buildings;" and those who injure the gods or spread nasty rumors to frighten people--punishment is meted out according to the number of transgressions and the harm done to others. However, if on the eighteenth of the second moon you purposely resolve to avoid the sins mentioned above, you may escape the tortures of this fourth tribunal.

The author then makes some general remarks--if you don't help your neighbor when he needs you, if you are ungrateful, or bear a grudge, not only will you be punished in hell, but you may be changed into a wolf, serpent, tiger, etc., for about a hundred years. If you then amend your ways, you may become a man again; but if you do not repent and frighten people, then you will be struck with lightning and will wander eternally without any possibility of ever assuming bodily form again. (Eternally, i.e., to the end of kalpa and then the chi will be annihilated). Soldiers who were quarrelsome and committed man-slaughter will have one more degree of guilt added for each sin of this kind. But those soldiers who have performed deeds of valor will pass directly from the first to the tenth tribunals without suffering.

THE FIFTH COURT--Yen-Luowang is the ruler of these sixteen dungeons: "In the first, the heart is torn out of those who did not believe in the shen, in Fo, or in the after-death retributions; the second is for those who killed living beings; the third is for those who made promises of amendment, did not keep their word and remained bad as they were before; the fourth is for those who tried to get immortality by magic arts; the fifth is for the brutish and cowardly fellows who wished the death of others; the sixth is for those who used deceit to injure their neighbor; the seventh is for the men who outraged women, and for the women who ensnared men; the eighth is for those who did not save their neighbour from death; the tenth is for those who coveted the riches of others; the eleventh is for the ungrateful men and for those who are burning with revenge; the twelfth is for those who, full of rancour and venom, spread discord; the thirteenth is for those who deceived and fooled people; the fourteenth is for those who liked quar-

reling and made others unhappy; the fifteenth is for those who envied the talent of others and carped at their zeal for good; the sixteenth is for those who being guilty, did not amend and cursed others in their heart."

The harlots and brigands are punished in the dungeon of this court; "in this dungeon there are short pillars; the guilty one is tied to these with copper chains; he sits down on an iron block, his feet and hands being tied, then with a small knife, very sharp, his chest and belly are opened; the heart is torn out with a hook; it is cut in pieces and thrown to wolves, dogs and serpents to be devoured; all this happens with most excruciating suffering." The following also are punished by having their heart torn out: Those who do not believe in retributions after life, those who lead people away from good, those who misuse written paper, who reveal the faults of others, who swear, who burn pious books, who curse the bonzes, who envy good men, who level a cemetery, who kill animals, who make men old, "who impose upon old men, or upon weak workingmen, a work above their strength so that, after some exertion, they become invalids for life," who do not bury the corpses of cats and dogs, etc. On the eighth day of the first moon they may resolve firmly to avoid these sins and then escape these torments.

THE SIXTH COURT--It is situated at the foot of Wochiao-shih, towards the North; Pien-Ch'engwang is the ruler of this court and its sixteen dungeons: "1. Where culprits kneel down on iron filings; 2. Where they are soaked with dung, soiled-water and mud; 3. Where they are crushed in a mill; 4. Where their mouth is pricked with needles; 5. Where they are gnawed by rats; 6. Where they are nipped by grass hoppers; 7. Where they are flattened under a roller; 8. Where they are sawn asunder in halves; 9. Where fire is introduced into the mouth; 10. Where culprits are burnt by a slow fire made with mulberry-tree wood; 11. Where they have to drink dung-water; 12. Where they are kicked by donkeys and trampled upon by horses; 13. Where they are beaten with iron mallets; 14. Where they have their head split by sabrecuts; 15. Where they are cut in two at the waist; 16. Where they are flayed and their skin is stuffed."

The following sins are punished in this sixth court: Murmuring ~~against~~ Heaven and Earth; blaming the wind and abusing the rain; hating cold and heat; weeping, crying, and committing indecency turned towards the Great Bear; stealing copper Buddhas to make money; taking the silver and gold out of the statues of the shen; taking the names of the shen in vain; not burning obscene books or pictures; emptying dirty water in the rays of sun and moon; not sweeping cleanly before the shrine of the shen; carving or delineating upon utensils the symbol of the t'ai-chi (this is the symbol which represents Chinese cosmogony in a nutshell), or the picture of stars, or the names of the two immortals Ho and Ho, or of

the Mother Wang or of the Star of Longevity; weaving upon pieces of silk images of the shen or designs of the dragons and phoenix. One may escape this court by firmly resolving, on the eighth of the third moon, not to commit these sins and by practising continence on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the fifth moon.

THE SEVENTH COURT--T'ai-Shanwang presides over this court, which is situated under the Great Ocean at the foot of Wochiao-shih, towards the Northwest. "It contains, as the other sections, sixteen dungeons: 1. The dungeon of remorse; 2. The dungeon where the legs are burnt; 3. Where gashes are cut; 4. Where the mouth is filled up with hair; 5. Where the ankles are bitten off by dogs; 6. Where the head is loaded with a stone; 7. Where the forehead is scalped; 8. Where culprits are devoured by dogs; 9. Where the flayed skin is eaten away by pigs; 10. Where the body is pecked by eagles and vultures; 11. Where the body is suspended, head downwards by means of a bow-string fastened to the toes; 12. Where the teeth are pulled out; 13. Where the culprits are disembowled; 14. Where the body is trampled on by donkeys and bitten by badgers; 15. Where the hands are ironed with hot irons; 16. Where the body is plunged into a caldron of boiling oil."

These people receive punishment in this court: Physicians who use parts of the human body to make remedies; people who violate a tomb; those who spread discord among the parents; those who sell a girl (who was really brought up at home to be made a wife) as a slave; slovenly teachers; those who hate and injure superiors; those who cause quarrels; those who stir up troubles by false rumors; those who use living beings for making remedies, even though it is done out of kindness; and those who commit cannibalism.

THE EIGHTH COURT--This court is situated under the Great Sea, at the foot of Wochiao-shih, towards the West, and is under the rule of Tu-Shihwang. As usual there are sixteen dungeons: "1. Where the body is run over by cars; 2. Where it is shut up in a huge saucepan; 3. Where it is minced up; 4. Where it is confined in a hole; 5. Where the tongue is cut out; 6. Where one is plunged into manure; 7. Where the arms and the legs are amputated; 8. Where boiling oil is poured into the mouth; 9. Where the bones are burnt; 10. Where the bowels are torn out; 11. Where the internal parts and organs are burnt away; 12. Where the belly is cut open; 13. Where the chest is cut open; 14. Where nails are driven into the top of the head; 15. Where one is struck by lightning; 16. Where the body is pricked with steel forks.

"Those who do not serve, feed and bury their parents, who are to them a cause of fear, of anger, of dissatisfaction and do not amend themselves" are cast headlong by some cruel devils into the eighth hell where they pass through all the dungeons; when coming before the tenth court, they are changed into animals. However, by certain resolves and prayers it is possible to avoid this punishment.

THE NINTH COURT--It is situated under the Great Ocean, at the foot of Wochiaoshih, towards the Southwest; P'ing-Tung-wang is the ruler. The sixteen wards are: "1. Where the bones are scraped; 2. Where the tendons are torn; 3. Where crows devour the heart and the liver; 4. Where dogs eat away the bowels and lungs; 5. Where the body is scalded with boiling oil; 6. Where the head is crushed in an iron ring; 7. Where the brain is taken out and the skull filled with a hedgehog; 8. Where the head is steamed; 9. Where oxen gore the body with their horns; 10. Where it is flattened between two planks; 11. Where the heart is filled; 12. Where the body is scalded with boiling water; 13. Where it is stung by wasps; 14. By scorpions; 15. Where it is bitten by ants; 16. Where snakes bore holes in it."

One is punished here for: not obeying the laws; being guilty of one of the ten great crimes, of arson, of concocting abortives or philters, and of painting obscene pictures or reading bad books. In this ninth section of hell "they are tied to a hollow brass-pillar, which is rubbed over with grease and filled inside with fire; then the feet and hands are cut; the culprit is then ripped open; his heart is torn out and placed in his mouth; it is only when those to whom they did harm, are born again under other forms, that the guilty ones are allowed to leave this dungeon and to appear before the tenth court where they are changed into beasts.

At the right of this ninth court stands the City of the Suicides, which is a place of torture.

THE TENTH COURT--Chuan-Sunwang presides over this court which is situated at the foot of Wochiaoshih, towards the east. The souls of the dead who passed through the previous courts are brought here; all souls, both good and bad must appear here. From here they will be sent to the four continents to become men or animals. Every living being, whether human, animal, insect, etc., is called kui after death. Infallible justice (Reichelt, op. cit., p. 71, says that God is absolute goodness, holiness, and justice) determines what form the kui must have in the reincarnation. "The living beings that were killed and eaten by men, are allowed to take their revenge for the wrongs they suffered during their former life."

Before entering the new body, all kui are made to drink the tea of oblivion so that they forget everything, not being able to recall the torments which took place. After drinking this tea, they are pushed into a raging torrent of blood-red water which runs to the four continents. They float along looking for a mother's womb into which they may enter.

Davrou, op. cit., p. 402, makes the comment that there is another torment in this hell which is not mentioned: Women who bear children or who die at childbirth are plunged into the Lake of Blood where they have only blood to drink; they must suffer there forever without any other hope than annihilation at the end of the world. Only the bonzes and taoshih have the power to save all mothers from this dreadful torment. The principle at the bottom of this cruel teaching should be a shock to any human being: maternity is a crime!

Because of this doctrine of metempsychosis, Buddhism can teach no doctrine of original sin as does Christianity. True, Buddhism speaks of evil as inherent in man, but this doctrine is probably based on the assumption that desire is sin; and since desire is inherent in every human being, evil likewise is inherent.

Nor is Buddhism able to speak of the destructive activity of the devil; in fact, the author found very few references to the devil and his cohorts. It is therefore impossible for him to state that the Buddhist devil seeks to undermine man's allegiance to God.

An Absolute Being, who is absolutely holy and just, is spoken of, but the moral responsibility to this Being is not discussed. In reality, it would be impossible to speak of a moral responsibility to One who is not your Creator. Therefore a fundamental difference in the concept of sin between Christianity and Buddhism is that Christianity recognizes sin as rebellion against the one true and absolute God who created the world, whereas Buddhism does not even teach a moral responsibility to this God. By its polytheism Buddhism also destroys the responsibility to any one God.

The basic concept in the Buddhist doctrine of sin is that ignorance is the root of all evil--since man is ignorant that all things in this world are actually non-existent, desires stir in his heart and cause suffering, for desire is sin. But, if it were true that all things are non-existent,

it would be impossible for desires and suffering to exist. Since Buddhism recognizes the fact that they do exist, it thereby refutes its fundamental proposition that everything is non-existent. The Buddhist ideal of the cessation of desires is also an impossibility, for Christianity teaches that neutrality in religion is a psychological impossibility--if we are not for Christ, we are against Him; if we do not love the Lord our God with all our heart, we hate Him.

In its dealings with man, Buddhism seems to recognize its inconsistent teaching that desire is sin; for its moral precepts mention the desire to help one's neighbor as something meritorious. Nor would they go so far as to classify the desire to escape punishment and attain Nirvana as a sin. Nevertheless, because of this teaching that desire is sin, Buddhism is able to enumerate hundreds of sins, convincing the majority of people that their evil deeds outnumber their good deeds.<sup>34</sup> The amount of suffering which they are required to endure testifies to this fact.

It is the Buddhist's wish to be relieved of this burden of suffering. To this end, the Buddhist priests perform

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34. Reichelt, op. cit., pp. 73f, brings forth these interesting facts: The Chinese believe that there are gods who keep a record of their good and evil deeds. The whole earth is divided into sections, each with its local superintendent (usually called "t'u-ti"); images are made of him and his family and are placed in small temples or covered altars. Such "earth altars" and small local temples are seen all over China in city and country. These local superintendents are under a great "official;" in the cities they are called "ch'eng-huang" (city gods) and "ti-huang" (district gods) in the country.

masses and ceremonies, pleading the cause of the sin and guilt-burdened people with the local dieties who dispense justice and retribution.<sup>35</sup> Even though the people are described as "sin and guilt-burdened," we must keep in mind that their concept of sin is different from that of the Christians. Sin is more a calamity or misfortune than a moral evil.<sup>36</sup> It is to be eradicated because its existence is the cause of suffering.<sup>37</sup> True, if a man's good deeds outnumber his evil deeds or if he truly sorrows over his sins,<sup>38</sup> suffering can be avoided; but Buddhism teaches that the majority of frail man's deeds are on the side of evil. We see man pictured as the poor, unfortunate being who is burdened with a body<sup>39</sup> which desires, and thereby causes suffering; frail as he is, he has no chance in his struggle against evil, but is an eternal slave of the Wheel of Karma, reaping suffering as his reward.

Although Buddhism does not ignore the relationship between sin and suffering, "its major emphasis and primary concern is simply on the fact of suffering."<sup>40</sup> Buddhism's empha-

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35. Reichelt, op. cit., p. 74.

36. Ball, op. cit., p. 536.

37. Yang, op. cit., p. 185.

38. Reichelt, op. cit., p. 366, quotes a Buddhist prayer of penitence: "All the evil I have committed in the past time, all the endless sin of wicked desires, evil plans and vain thoughts, all that I have done, spoken or thought wrongly, I will to-day abstain from. All the sin which has arisen in my heart is now mourned by the same heart. When the heart mourns the sin it is thereby exterminated, and the whole has become as nothing."

39. Yang, op. cit., p. 171, calls it "excess baggage."

40. Ibid., p. 185.

sis on suffering and its inability to strengthen man in his struggle against evil have had the effect of obscuring the idea of sin and have exerted a weakening effect on the moral nature.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, we may say with S. Wells Williams that Buddhism has "left its devotees with no sense of sin against any law."<sup>42</sup>

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41. Ball, op. cit., p. 536.

42. S. Wells Williams, The Middle Kingdom, Vol. II, p. 223.

### Conclusion

One may very well ask the question: "Which of these concepts of sin prevails among the Chinese? Is it that of Buddhism, Taoism, or Confucianism?" The answering of this question presents many difficulties, for among the people the three religions are not mutually exclusive. "It is impossible, therefore, to divide the Chinese into three separate mutually exclusive churches or religious communities, as is the case, say with Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics," etc.<sup>1</sup> To determine what the Chinese really believe is a difficult problem; however, S. Wells Williams presents a very fine analysis of the problem in these words: "The want of a well understood and acknowledged standard of doctrine, and the degree of latitude each one allows himself in his observance of rites or belief in dogmas,<sup>2</sup> tends to confuse the inquirer; while his own diverse views, his imperfect knowledge, and misapprehension of the effect which this tenet or that ceremony

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1. Soothill, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

2. Smith, Chinese Characteristics, p. 313, says that the Chinese care little for distinctions in doctrines, etc.; "In China polytheism and atheism are but opposite facets of the same die, and are more or less consciously held for true by multitudes of educated Chinese, and with no sense of contradiction. Its absolute indifference to the profoundest spiritual truths in the nature of man is the most melancholy characteristic of the Chinese mind, its ready acceptance of a body without a soul, of a soul without a spirit, of a spirit without life, of a cosmos without a cause, of a Universe without a God."

has upon the heart of the worshipper, contribute still further to embarrass the subject. This, at least, is the case with the Chinese, and notwithstanding what has been written upon their religion, no one has very satisfactorily elucidated the true nature of their belief<sup>3</sup> and the intent of their ritual. The reason is owing partly to the indefinite ideas of the people themselves upon the character of their ceremonies, and their consequent inability to give a clear notion of them; partly also to the variety of observances found in distant parts of the country, and the discordant opinions entertained by those belonging to the same sect; so that what is seen in one district is sometimes utterly unknown in another province, and

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3. Scarborough, quoted in C. H. Plopper, Chinese Religion Seen through the Proverb, pp. 13f, says: "To discover what are the religious sentiments of a people like the Chinese is no easy matter; but it is not unlikely that we can get nearer the truth by observing what the people say in their common talk, than by reading what authors and sages say in books but seldom read."

That which "the people say" is often expressed in proverbs. Bacon, quoted on p. 3 of this book, says that "the genius, wit and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs." This holds true in a special measure of the Chinese language which is rich in proverbs--they are quoted by the most learned scholar and ignorant coolie for every occasion, subject, time, place, etc. Many of the proverbs are very old, dating from the time of Confucius. These ancient proverbs are held high in the estimation of the Chinese, for they feel that it is wrong to criticize or even change anything of the past--"From time immemorial the highest ideal of Chinese thinkers has been to bow in modesty and submission to the insuperable grandeur of their ancient traditions. Criticism is very meek, originality of thought is strangled ere it can be developed, and any attempted progress beyond the old Masters appears to them as insanity," says Paul Carus, who is quoted on p. 3 of this book. Thus, it is not difficult to see that the proverbs of the ancients shape and influence public opinion, religion, etc. The proverb therefore becomes the "unwritten law" (p. 7 of this book) and largely determines the moral conscience of the people.

the opinions of one man are laughed at by another."<sup>4</sup> Applying this directly to the Chinese doctrines of sin, we may quite correctly observe that the Chinese regards as his "law" the mores<sup>5</sup> of his community. The transgression of this "law" is sin. But "sin" does not mean an offence against the majesty of the righteous and holy God who threatens to punish each transgression with spiritual death, temporal death, temporal calamities and misfortunes, and eternal death.<sup>6</sup>

The Christian missionary, therefore, has a tremendous task ahead of him in preparing the way for the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to enter the hearts of the Chinese. May God grant that each missionary will properly divide Law and Gospel so that all the elect may be gathered from the four corners of the earth to sing with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"<sup>7</sup>

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4. Williams, op. cit., pp. 191f.

5. "Mores" may be defined as fixed customs or folkways imbued with an ethical significance; they are customs or conventions which have the force of law.

6. Parker, Studies in Chinese Religion, p. 12, says: "Though the Buddhist stories of Heaven and Hell are freely repeated, no Chinaman seriously believes them, nor is his conduct ever motivated, as it is with Christians, by hopes and fears of what may happen in a future life."

7. Revelation 5:12, RSV.

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Divinity

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May 1947

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