

CHAN BUDDHIST AND EARLY DAOIST DOCTRINES: THEIR RELEVANCE FOR ILLNESS-PREVENTION

by

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1. INTRODUCTION

Illness prevention, or health maintenance, is an ethical commandment vis-à-vis increasing health problems in industrialized and in developing nations alike. Globally, governmental and private spending for the treatment of mental and physical pathology is mounting annually. The prevention of illness is becoming an acute ethical as well as an economical challenge not only on a social and governmental level, but also on an individual one. Illness-prevention, however, modern as it may seem, has already been a focus of Buddhist philosophical thinking before and at the beginning of our era. In this article, early Daoist and Chan Buddhist doctrines will be examined as to their relevance for illness-prevention, first, because these doctrines appear to offer valuable, pragmatic strategies for constructing healthier lifestyles, valid for present day societies. Second, because these doctrines may help us “to walk on the sea of nothingness, buoyant in the absence of demonstrably certain supports” (Smith, 1967, p.XIII). What does this mean?

In present day post-modern societies, the Public Institutions as classic representatives of ideology, of ‘demonstrably certain supports’, are rapidly losing their roles (Tophoff, 2003, p.16). These institutions, constituted by religions and political ideologies, are less and less perceived by the general public as legitimate sources for norms and values or as beacons to turn to for guidance. Our globalized society, in

¹ This paper has been published in *The Oriental Medicine Journal* (2006), vol.XIV, 6: 6-17.

a post-modern sense, is characterized by tendencies toward fluidity, blurring of boundaries, placelessness as well as timelessness.

The lack of formal support systems on the one hand, and the blurring of boundaries and of other stable structures on the other hand, frequently results in an increase of uncertainty and insecurity. The lack of inner and outer support systems provokes anxiety. At the same time, man has to cope with an information-overload and a continuous pressure to perform. These factors, valid for East and West alike, frequently lead to stress-related diseases and other mental and physical disorders.

In his lucid description of post-modernity, Beckford (in: Heelas, (ed.), 1988, p.17) mentions a factor which may contribute to constructing certain points of orientation, to help us navigate the 'sea of nothingness', namely "a willingness to combine symbols from disparate codes of meaning".

In this sense, Daoist and Chan Buddhist teachings may help in our present day search for meaning, in making sense out of the seeming senseless, and in our endeavour to find our bearings on the way towards healthier and more satisfying lifestyles.

2. THE WAY OF DAOISM

2.1. The Huang-Lao Teaching

In Daoist China of the first millennium BCE, both the *Hygiene School* and the *Philosophical School* were devoted to the investigation of what constitutes the way towards health and illness prevention. The Hygiene School discusses the way towards health in rather pragmatical terms as a series of mainly physical exercises and nutritional and medicinal prescriptions, sometimes of an alchemical nature. Ultimately, the Hygiene teaching is directed towards the Daoist ideal, which is the reaching of Immortality. The concept of Immortality, in this context has to be taken quite literal indeed.

In contrast, the Philosophical School of Daoism, with its main representatives Lao Zi (around 500 BCE) and Zhuang Zi (around 400

BCE), while investigating the same issues, took the idea of ‘immortality’ solely as a metaphor for healthy living. As will be shown further on, here the emphasis is less on physical aspects of health, but rather on philosophical and psychological ones.

General Daoist doctrine on health and its preservation is often summarized under the title of *‘The Huang-Lao Teaching’*. It reflects both the names of Huang Di, *‘the Yellow Emperor’*, and the philosopher Lao Zi. Historically, however, their mere existence, let alone the authorship of their scriptures, is debatable and shrouded by legend and myth. Meanwhile, most authors (cfr. Veith, 1972; Welch, 1966) date Huang Di’s text *‘Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wen’* (‘The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine’) around 2500 BCE, and Lao Zi’s seminal text, the *‘Dao De Jing’* (‘Way and Behavior’ⁱ) around 500 BCE.

Before turning to the teaching of Lao Zi and his co-founder of the Philosophical School of Daoism, Zhuang Zi, let us first focus on the teaching of Huang Di.

2.1.1. Huang Di

Prevention of illness is one of the major topics of Huang Di. He states; “To administer medicines to diseases which have already developed (...) is comparable to the behavior of those persons who begin to dig a well after they have become thirsty” (Veith (tr.), p.105). To fully comprehend what Huang Di’s understanding of ‘prevention’ is, one has to realize that in Daoism the human body is, as Schipper (1993, p.4) remarks, “the reality closest to us”. Even the Emperor has to take care of his body in the first place; only then can he proceed to govern the country in the very same way that he cares for his body, which implies preventing any kind of disturbance, which may lead to disorder: “Who governs his body, governs his country” (Schipper, op.cit.,p. 102).

Another aspect of prevention is depicted in Daoist cosmology. Here, the body is seen as a microcosm. It is governed by the same phenomena as the cosmos. According to Maspero (1981, p. 277) the

cosmos runs quiet by itself: Heaven produces beings and things, Earth nourishes them, the four Seasons follow one another regularly, the Five Elements replace one another by triumphing one over the others in an unending circle, yin and yangⁱⁱ succeed one another. The lesson for man is not to interfere, but to respect this continuous process, less it will be seriously disturbed.

The essential element here is to realize that the gods are not external to man. The Gods are immanent, they reside within the human bodyⁱⁱⁱ. Therefore, the goal is to keep and to nourish the gods inside, since they are necessary in preserving life. Thus, nourishing ‘the body’ is of primary importance. The body, which is divided in three ‘cinnabar fields’^{iv}, is, unfortunately, not solely inhabited by gods. Dialectically, ‘*the Evil Breaths*’ or ‘*the Three Worms*’ have chosen the body as residence. They attack the cinnabar fields, causing illness and death. Obviously, to prevent this from happening, the consequence for man is to nourish the gods and to destroy the three worms. Successful following of certain dietary, respiratory and even spiritual techniques to achieve these goals, eventually leads to the achievement of the Daoist goal par excellence: the reaching of Immortality, in a literal sense of the word.

Since the cosmos, in Daoist view, is continually nourished by the ‘*Three Treasures*’, i.e. different ‘energies’, these energies are also present in the human body as (1) *jing*: associated with sexual fluids; (2) *qi*: characterized by breath; (3) *shen*: associated with consciousness. Originally pure, these energies get ‘tainted’ in the human body by unhealthy lifestyles. To restore purity, and to prevent serious illness and ultimately death, the Daoist practitioner uses certain techniques in order to *return* to this original state, sometimes called ‘the Unborn’^v, eventually to become a ‘spirit embryo’, and to reach a ‘new birth’. As some of these techniques are relevant for the topic of this paper, they will be discussed in a later section.

2.1.2. Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi

The idea that man can disturb cosmic harmony by his interfering with the eternal processes of change, was not only embraced by the Philosophical School of Daoism, but also by the literate followers of Kong Fu Zi (Latin: Confucius), a contemporary of Lao Zi. According to Kong Zi, man must be educated in order to deeply understand the ways of the cosmos, which are reflected in the ways of the microcosm of his body. A deep understanding prevents mindless interfering of man in the way of the cosmos. The philosophical identity of macro- and microcosm implies the intimate connectedness of man with his environment, not only in a cosmical but also in a social and political way – a concept that has been adopted by the Chinese version of imported Buddhism.

The idea of ‘non-interfering’ or ‘*wu-wei*’ (lit. ‘not-doing’^{vi}) is beautifully rendered by Lao Zi in his well known saying that “Ruling a large kingdom is indeed like cooking a small fish” (Waley (tr.), 1956, p. 215): the less the small fish is manipulated, the better it is. *Wu-wei* is not tantamount to passivity or inertia, however. It has to be conceived as acting in an intelligent (Watts, 1975, 76) way, i.e. respecting and profoundly understanding the characteristics of how a phenomenon presents itself within a certain context at a given moment of time, and to act accordingly. In the example of the small fish, the question would rather be to ‘see’ what is really needed to cook it: a minimum of handling, just the right temperature of the charcoal and just the right duration for perfect cooking.

Lao Zi frequently uses the metaphor of the waterway to illustrate what *wu-wei* is about (Waley, op.cit., VIII, XV, XLIII, LXVI). The point is to make use of the natural energy of the waterway rather than futilely exhausting one’s energy by trying to row upstream. A corresponding metaphor, used by Lao Zi (Waley, tr., 1958: VI: p.149) is ‘the Valley’ or ‘*the Valley Spirit*’. The valley collects all the water. It becomes the richest resource – by attraction instead of force. While the dao of man can be described as purposeful action, the dao of heaven is characterized by *wu-wei*, by effortlessness.

The Valley Spirit “never dies. It is named the Mysterious Female” (Lao Zi, op.cit., ibid.). The woman can be equated to the earth, a body with of a peaceful nature (Schipper, 1993, p.127) The man should take the earth and the woman as an example^{vii}: “He who knows the male, yet cleaves to what is female (...) he knows all the time a power that he never calls upon in vain. This is returning to the state of infancy.” (Lao Zi, op.cit. XXVIII, p. 178). This brilliant summary of Daoist doctrine reflects both the *yin/yang* dialectics as well as the ‘returning’ to the Original State where the ‘*Three Treasures*’ are pure and inexhaustible.

More implicit than the urge of the Confucian *literati* to intellectually educate people in order to prevent disaster and illness, the Daoists emphasize a deep understanding of the ‘Ways of Heaven and Earth’. Zhuang Zi offers a beautiful illustration: “Can you behave as a newborn baby? A newborn baby can cry all day without losing its voice because it is in the perfection of equilibrium. (...) It can gaze all day without turning its eyes because it is in the perfection of a concentrated mind. (...) This is the way to preserve your life” (Wang Rongpei, tr., 1999, II, p.393). To be able to behave ‘like a new-born baby’ means having returned to the essence, and this is the accomplishment of the Sage, or, in Zhuang Zi’s wording, ‘the man of ease’ (Watson, tr., 1968, p. 301). The ‘man of ease’ is, in fact, identical with the Hygiene concept of ‘the Immortal’ – with that important difference, that the man at ease lives *as if* he were immortal. “The Sage lives long because he models himself on nature”, Welch (1966, p.93) states in his discussion of Zhuang Zi, “because he models himself on nature, he has to die”.

3. THE PATH OF THE DHARMA

3.1. *The Healing Buddha*

The Indian doctrine of Ayurveda (±1500 BCE) already in its name – ‘*The Science of Long Life*’ – emphasized healing and healing processes (Clifford, T., 1994). Prevention of disease had the highest

priority. Whereas in the *Vajrayana*^{viii} these traditions merged with Daoist healing methods in order to transmute the body within the perspective of immortality, in the *Hinayana*^{ix} the teachings of the Buddha were phrased according to these Ayurvedic traditions, emphasizing the healing of the mind.

Consequently, a medical model has been adopted in Siddhartha Gautama's doctrine. The Buddha is often depicted as a doctor - a doctor, however whose medicine is not bitter: "My doctrine is like eating honey: the beginning is sweet, the middle is sweet, the end is sweet" (in Maspero, 1981, p.262). His mission is to offer a cure for suffering. In the words of Birnbaum (1989, p. X) "the prime disease is ignorance of how to live sanely in this world and attune one's mind to the reality of existence". In the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra* (in Clifford, op.cit., p. 23) one is advised to: "(1) consider the teacher (i.e. the Buddha; the Buddhist teacher, M.T.) as doctor; (2) consider oneself as sick; (3) consider the teaching as medicine; (4) consider the practice of teaching as treatment".

The *Four Noble Truths* clearly describe the medical strategy for the ailments of the mind as observation, diagnosis, cause of illness, therapy and its implementation. They are: the existence of suffering, its cause (craving and ignorance), the possibility of a cure (by elimination of craving and ignorance), and therapy (through the *Eightfold Path*). 'De-materialized' Ayurvedic elements can be found in the Buddhist recommendation of the use of the '*Four Medicinal Plants*' (Maspero, op.cit., p. 249). Here, the medical analogy is devoid of any physical content and comprises the essence of Buddhist teaching as: (1) the state of void; (2) the absence of a cause; (3) the absence of an object; (4) the entrance into annihilation^x.

In Hinayana Buddhism, the figure of the *Arhat*^{xi} can be compared to a person who, being his own doctor, has treated himself successfully. His main treatment method is the renunciation of the world and its desires. Likewise, as Kloppenborg (Kloppenborg, 1974) points out, the *Paccekkabuddha* is one who, in a solitary way, is enlightened by himself. To become an Arhat or a Paccakkabuddha, and to be cured

from suffering, one has to embark on a solitary, monastic path, leaving behind the snares of the mundane world.

3.2. *Early Chan Buddhist doctrine*^{xii}

The Buddhist doctrine that arrived in China around 100 CE, had to position itself *vis-à-vis* the Chinese religious establishment, Daoism and Confucianism, in order to gain respectability, money and power. Eventually, there appeared to be a mutual fertilization – not without territorial disputes – between these “Three Teachings”^{xiii}. Whereas, in the collectivistic teaching of Kong Zi and Meng Zi, the benefits for the individual person were subordinate to the wealth of ‘the people’, “those minds which strove towards a personal religion (...) all those left unsatisfied by the Doctrine of the Literati^{xiv} (...) where accustomed to seek comfort in Taoism” (Maspero, *op.cit.*, p.254). A doctrine like Buddhism, emphasizing individual salvation, did not sound strange to Daoists. In order, however, to appeal to the more pragmatic and practice-oriented Chinese, Buddhism had to learn to place its spiritual and lofty teaching right in the marketplace. In this respect one has to consider, as Maspero (*op.cit.*, p.259) rightly does, that the oral explications of Buddhist texts by Indian missionaries were translated by Chinese who usually were Daoists. ‘*Arhat*’, for instance, was translated as ‘*chen-jen*’ (‘Perfect Man’ or ‘Man at Ease’), and the ‘*Six Paramita*’^{xv} as ‘*dao-de*’ (‘Virtues of Dao’).

One of the focal points in Chan is that complete enlightenment is *possible for everyone, in this very lifetime*. This implies that future-oriented, transcendental intentions about hoping to reach paradise after ever so many incarnations, are heavily frustrated by Chan Masters as Linji Yixuan(+ 867), and that enlightenment, so to speak, is ‘democratized’. Enlightenment is possible, in the here and the now, for monk and layperson alike. Thus, the monk becomes ‘nothing special’, and even nowadays Welch (1967, p.385) has “seen monks return a bow and even a kowtow”. Also the concept of the ‘*Arhat*’ is ‘democratized’ in the figure of the ‘*Bodhisattva*’, an enlightened being whose mission in this world is to help other sentient beings along the

path to liberation, to realize their ‘true Nature’ which they already possess. If the First Noble Truth points to suffering as a disease, the natural, healthy state of man could be equated to happiness, which is ‘defiled’ or masked by ignorance, craving and attachment. Disease prevention has to provide knowledge and insight into the ways man is masking his happiness.

4. DAOIST AND CHAN METHODS FOR ILLNESS PREVENTION

In this section, breathing techniques, as well as meditation methods relevant to illness prevention and conducing to a healthier lifestyle will be discussed. Lacking scientific foundation, rather adventurous and magical methods, mainly from Daoist Hygiene traditions, involving the ingestion of poisonous substances or the banning of certain foods, such as grains and cereals^{xvi}, have to be left out here. The positive effects of both meditation and mindfulness have been extensively demonstrated in a vast body of research (e.g., Murphy & Donovan, 1999; Kabat-Zinn, 1982; 1987; 1993; 1996; Teasdale, 1999, 2000; Teasdale et al., 2000; Davidson, 2003; Tophoff, 2003).

4.1. Breathing Techniques

Daoist Hygiene practice is geared towards the realization of immortality, which may operationally be defined as the preservation of breath. In breathing, life continues. The Daoist philosophers, on the other hand, place breath and the awareness of breathing in the context of meditation and stillness.

In Daoist Hygiene practice, correct observation of the physiology of breathing is combined with outright alchemist magic. Leaving out the alchemy, one could state that the essential Daoist aspect of breathing is the motion of returning, the motion of the Dao. As I stated earlier, this refers to returning to the Source, to the embryonic state, even to the Unborn, using breath as the vehicle. Where the alchemists advise the swallowing of the *jade broth*, saliva plus breath, post-modern man

could practice *soft breathing* or *womb breathing*, “without causing a feather to tremble” (Waley, 1958, 118). Soft breathing as a prerequisite for inner stillness is an essential element in various meditation methods as will be shown further on.

Lao Zi uses the softness of the infant’s breath as a metaphor for *wu-wei*: “Can you, when concentrating on your breath, make it soft like that of a little child?” (Waley, tr.1958, p.153).

4.2. Meditation and Compassion

The Daoist practice of soft breathing corresponds with the Hinayanan Buddhist *Anapana-Sati*, emphasizing awareness of movement and duration of breathing in the course of in- and exhalation. While *Anapana-Sati* per sé may be practiced anywhere ‘on the marketplace’, it is a preliminary practice for developing the ‘Four Foundations of Mindfulness’ in *Satipatthana Meditation*, which is likewise quite suited for daily practice. Here, the meditator, in increasing levels of difficulty, directs his attention first to his body, than to his feelings, to mind processes and to mental concepts.

The early Buddhist concept of *dhyana* (meditation), as the vehicle to attain enlightenment, is reflected in the Chinese *Chan-na* or *Chan*. Relevant for post-modern man and entirely practicable are both *meditation*, operationalized as ‘meditation-in-action’, and the practicing of *compassion* toward sentient beings.

In the *Linji* School of Chan, meditation is placed squarely on the marketplace as *meditation-in-action*. Meditation-in-action is the *practice* of mindfulness, mindfulness being one of the most important steps of the Buddhist *Eightfold path*. Mindfulness, “characterized by awareness and by an attentive openness toward the present moment, can be seen as a continuous meditative state which is continued into the action itself” (Tophoff, 2006, p.129).

In the *Caodong* School, especially in the teaching of Rujing Tiantong (1136-1228) meditation per sé is cultivated in close conjunction with compassion. Emphasizing the ethical commandment of compassion, however, is not uniquely a Buddhist doctrine. The founding father of

the Daoist *Quanzhen* School, Rujing's contemporary Wang Chongyang (1113-1170), likewise advises practicing of compassion: "Their hearts (of the Daoists, M.T.) give rise to mercy and compassion, and they practice great virtue" (Eskildsen, tr., op.cit., p.115).

Both Masters base their teaching on a long Chan Buddhist tradition of practicing compassion. Already Shenxiu (605(?)-706) emphasizes a compassionate attitude: "One should reside in meditation, saving the weak and helping the downfallen, having pity for the poor and love for the aged"(McRae.tr., 1986, p.212).

It is interesting to note that both Daoists and Chan Buddhists stress the importance of mindfulness, generalizing the meditative state to our day-to-day living situation, operationalizing meditation as an activity 'on the marketplace', characterized by compassion: "(Never quitting the meditative state) during walking, standing still, sitting and laying down (one should) save sentient beings wherever possible"(Shenxiu, in McRae, op.cit.ibid.). Wang Chongyang, too, puts the meditative state into daily living: "Whether staying, going, sitting or laying, throughout all your motion and stillness, make your mind like Mt.Tai – unmoving and unwavering" (Eskildsen, tr., op.cit., p.25).

This 'unmoving mind' however, may only be realized after 'a sustained and strenuous effort' (Eskildsen, op.cit., p.25). Meditation-in- action as the practice of mindfulness has to be trained.

4.3. Mindfulness-training as illness-prevention

In this section two practicable sets of methods to train mindfulness, conducive to illness prevention, will briefly be addressed. First, meditation techniques, and second, the method of Sensory Awareness. Most well-known meditation methods, e.g. *zazen* (sitting meditation), are based on the *Xiuxin Yaolun* ('Treatise on the Essentials of Cultivating the Mind') by students of Hongren^{xvii} (Mc.Rae, 1986, p.120), and the *Zuochan Yi* ('Principles of Seated Meditation'), attributed to Zhanglu Zongzi (Bielefeld, 1986, p.130). The student is instructed to sit erect, in quiet surroundings, hands loosely together,

lips and teeth gently closed, eyes half open to maintain a compassionate connection with the outside world. Mental activity either is ‘observed’, watching the flow of mental events without holding on to it, or is directed toward an image or an event by means of visualization.

Whereas the Quanzhen Masters recommend the removal of attention from all external sense data (and advise the swallowing of the ‘jade fluid’ – saliva, and the visualization of the ‘Elixir Field’^{xviii}), the Chan Buddhists stress the observing of perceptual data whatever their origin – without clinging to them.

Recent methods of mindfulness-training, include Kabat-Zinn’s *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction*^{xix} (MBSR) (Kabat-Zinn, 1982, 1987, 1993; 1996). It consists of exercises from *Hatha yoga*, of periods of meditation and a *body scan*, where attention is systematically focused on separate body parts and regions.

Another method of mindfulness-training is called *Sensory Awareness*^{xx} (Brooks, 1974; Selver & Brooks, 1966; Selver 1989; Tophoff, 2000, 2003). This holistic approach to human functioning deals with a non-verbal exploration of what the student is experiencing during the most ordinary day-to-day activities which Buddhists call ‘*The Four Dignities*’: sitting, walking, lying and standing. As shown earlier, these activities have already been emphasized by Chan and Daoist Masters alike. Work in Sensory Awareness consists not of prescribed exercises, which the student has to execute, but of a series of here and now experiments, which do not have a correct way to be carried out. The student, in his explorations, gradually discovers ‘*how it wants to be*’ within his organism, in the structure of his musculature, in breathing, in standing, etc. The student learns to attend to the dynamic process of change in his organism and how he may hinder or allow this change.

4.4. Lifestyle

Mental and physical health, defined along Daoist lines of thought, refers to a lifestyle of living in harmony within the microcosm of the

body, respecting and understanding the *dao* through *wu-wei*. What does this mean?

To live sanely, it is not necessary to distance oneself from the world or to start living as a monk. The Bodhisattva-ideal is already fully present in early Daoism. The Chan doctrine of ‘meditation-on-the-marketplace’ has in fact essentially been described by The Yellow Emperor Huang Di. He posed the question why ‘the people of old’ lived over a hundred years in good health, remained active and did not become decrepit in their activities. Because, he says, ”They (i.e. the Sages, the men-at-ease, M.T.) roamed and travelled all over the universe and could see and hear beyond the eight distant places. (...) They did not wish to separate their activities from the world (my ital.). (...) They exercised restraint and reduced their desires. They were tranquilly content in nothingness (...) Their vital (original) spirit was preserved within. Their hearts were at peace and without any fear. Their spirits followed in harmony and obedience (i.c. to the Dao, M.T.). (...) They could achieve whatever they wished. (...) To them it did not matter whether a man held a high or a low position in life” (Veith (Tr.),1949, p.97-101).

Living in harmony with the Dao, means, as the Chan Masters would say, just doing what has to be done. Within the Chan tradition, doing whatever one does with complete mindfulness, is tantamount to illumination, to realizing one’s True Nature. Chan literature gives examples in abundance. “Eating when hungry, shutting your eyes when sleepy”, is attributed to Dazhu Huihai (780), almost four centuries later echoed by Wang Chongyang (Eskildsen, op.cit., p.24). This, in fact, is meditation-in-action, a meditative way of life.

Where Daoism emphasizes harmonious living between ‘heaven and earth’, Buddhism stresses the ethics of a healthy lifestyle within the context of ‘interbeing’, our relationship with other sentient beings. The Hinayana *Metta Sutra* teaches the practice loving kindness or unlimited friendliness towards other beings as a fundamental attitude in an ethical and responsible lifestyle. This lifestyle coincides with the *Bodhisattva Path*, where a life of virtue is realized according to the

four *Brahma-vihara*'s (Meier, 1978), the 'Divine states of dwelling'. In this meditation-in-action practice, the meditator generates within himself a positive attitude towards other beings, such as: limitless kindness, limitless compassion, limitless joy and limitless equanimity. A healthy, i.e. mindful lifestyle, as the day-to-day practice of illness prevention, characterized by harmony with the dao and compassion towards other beings, is the result of, as has been said before, 'strenuous work': the training of mindfulness. The student of mindfulness, however, should also perceive himself with a compassionate attitude. He should not be too eager or too stern in pursuing meditative practice. Already The Yellow Emperor Huang Di warns against over-eagerness: "(The Sages) did not over-exert their bodies at physical labour and they did not over-exert their minds by strenuous meditation. They were not concerned about anything, they regarded inner happiness and peace as fundamental, and contentment as highest achievement" (Veth, tr., op.cit., p.101). Within the Linji tradition of Chan, the Japanese Zen Master Hakuin Egaku (1686-1769), one of the most creative thinkers in Zen Buddhism, warns against the isolated use of meditation periods, which can be a risk for the meditator. Instead, he stresses meditation-on-the marketplace, where one can be fully involved in the business (of Imperial Government), and at the same time "trodding the bottom of the sea of Buddhism" (Yampolsky, tr., 1971, p.56).

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ⁱ This translation is from Yu Wei Wun (Tophoff, 2003, p. 38)

ⁱⁱ In Chinese philosophy there is a dialectic of light elements forming Heaven and heavier ones forming Earth. This unending process of rising and sinking is the model for the dialectics of change. In Chinese this is depicted by *yin* and *yang*, respectively the mossy or the shady and the dry or the sunny side of a hill

ⁱⁱⁱ The Daoist notion of the immanence of god within man precisely is one of the reasons why the Buddhist ideas ('*True Nature*' or '*the Buddha*' reside within), which were introduced to China in the first century CE, did not sound too foreign to Chinese ears.

^{iv} The human body is divided in three cinnabar (i.e. mercuric sulphide) fields, namely: 1. *The palace of Ni* (brain); 2. *The Scarlet palace* (heart); 3. *The lower cinnabar field* (the region below the navel).

^v This concept has been integrated in Chan Buddhism, culminating in the Zen monk Bankei's discourse (cf. Waddell (tr.), 1984).

^{vi} For a more extensive description of *wu-wei*, see Tophoff (2003, p. 31-33)

^{vii} Within this context, Cleary (1996, p.VII-VIII) remarks pointedly: "This in contrast to the half-understood reductionist visions of Japanese Zen filtered through centuries of male-oriented samurai-culture".

^{viii} Lit. 'The Diamond Vehicle'.

^{ix} Lit. 'The Small Vehicle'.

^x Or: extinction = nirvana.

^{xi} ‘The Worthy One’ – a person who has reached liberation for himself and is thus freed from rebirth.

^{xii} The emphasis in this brief discussion is mainly on the *Linji Zong* and *Caodong Zong*.

^{xiii} The (Daoist) *Quanzhen School* supported the ‘*Three Teachings*’: “The Three Teachings, when investigated, prove to be but one school” (Wang Chongyang, in: Eskildsen, 2004, p.21).

^{xiv} Confucianists.

^{xv} The virtues perfected by an enlightened being are: generosity, discipline, patience, vigor, meditation, wisdom.

Very much in the radical style of the *Linji Zong*, the famous Master Huangbo Xiyun (720-814), the teacher of Linji Yixuan (+ 867) called these austere paramita’s: “meaningless practices” (in Blofeld, 1958, p.30).

^{xvi} Said to nourish the ‘Three Worms’.

^{xvii} Hongren (602-675), the Fifth Patriarch of Chan.

^{xviii} Or ‘*dantian*’, the cinnabar field in the lower abdomen, the ‘*ocean of breath*’.

^{xix} For an extensive description of *Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction* the reader is referred to Kabat-Zinn’s lucid papers.

^{xx} For a complete description of this method, see: Tophoff (2003).