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0?J a a J Buddhism and the Chinese Culture Cheng Jiahua Abstract Buddhism, as a foreign culture, had undergone mainly three stages of the development in China: with its dependence upon the traditional Chinese culture---Confucianism and Taoism at its early stage, in conflict with the latter later on and to merge with the traditional Chinese culture at its last stage. A process of the development of Buddhism in China is somehow the process of Buddhism Chinalization, or to say localization. Buddhism was so well accepted by China, it is not only because the character of open-minded and all-inclusive of the Chinese nation, but also because that Buddhism has itself a rich and colorful connotation which serves a supplement to the Chinese traditional culture. When Buddhism was just introduced into China, it was regarded as a kind of Taoist practices. This is because the foreign Buddhist monks attempted to propagate Buddhism in China had adapted usually both Taoist and Confucian theories to interpret Buddhism. During the Chinese South and North Dynasties, Buddhism exerted its utmost in conflict with Confucianism and Taoism. A controversy between Buddhism and other traditional Chinese schools was occurred usually on those burden questions such as "whether soul is extinctive or none extinctive", "whether there exists a cause and effect" and "should Buddhist monks pay their respects to the Emperor" so on. During the Tang and Song Dynasties, Buddhism began its process of localization, where Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, the three major philosophic schools flowed together taking on a new aspect in the Chinese society. Confucianism had absorbed a lot from Buddhism and given the birth to Neo-Confucianism. Taoism had done the same and also paved a way for the new sects (Quan Zheng Jiao and Taiyi Jiao) come into being. Buddhism had finally completed its localization and become a major and important part of the Chinese traditional culture. Buddhism had given a deep and tremendous influence to the Chinese Culture together with its process of localization. The inter-flow of the Buddhist philosophy and the classic Chinese philosophy had pushed forward a new question and new method for the development of philosophy. In this paper I focus on an influence of the Buddhist concept of Samsara (transmigration) to the moral principles of the Chinese people, an activity of the translation of Buddhist scriptures brought along the classic Chinese literature advanced, and the Buddhist influence over the Chinese Arts.

Key-words: Taoism Confucianism Buddhism Samsara

When Buddhism was just introduced into China, it was spread with its dependence upon the traditional Chinese culture. During this stage, the foreign Buddhist monks had attempted to propagate Buddhism in China by either adapting Taoist theory to interpret the Buddhist doctrine or showing magic in order to absorb more devotees. This caused directly the native Chinese regarded Buddhism as a kind of Taoist practices at the very beginning. The early Buddhist monk translators had usually interpreted the Buddhist scriptures by making a farfetched comparison with the Taoist terms such as "Wuwei" (inaction) and "Wuji"(none yet absolute). This kind of irrelevant interpretation caused the early Chinese people to comprehend the doctrine of Buddhism in accordance with what was thought of Taoism. As to Confucianism, Buddhism had exerted also its dependence on at the beginning. During the time of the Three Kingdoms (220-265AD), a famous monk named Kang Senghui had made a clever answer when he was asked on a moral question of Buddhism, the theory of cause and effect. The clever answer made in accordance with book Zhou Yi (the Book of Changes)---"one who does good, happiness will befall one's family; one who does bad, miseries will befall (one's family) hereafter." By so addressing, he made a farfetched comparison between Buddhism and Confucianism. In fact, the Confucius theory on cause and effect is based on the concept of "Tiandaoguan", the natural laws. According to Confucianism, retribution goes not actually to the doer self but to his or her whole family possible. However, according to Buddhism, one who gets by what one deserves. Either happiness or suffering from one's actions. This is what the dissimilarity of the two. Master Kong Senghui had also translated and edited the scripture of Satparamita-sutra by adapting the Mahayana concept of benevolence to relevant the Confucius concept of kindheartedness or humanity in order to coordinate with the Confucius politic and moral

principles. Until the Chinese South and North Dynasties, with the scriptures of all Buddhist schools of India were introduced and translated systematically in China, Buddhism had altered its early way of dependence on the Chinese traditional culture and began to have a contradiction and argument with the latter. The controversy held in various areas particularly on such questions like "should the Buddhist monks pay their respects to Emperor", "whether soul is extinctive or non-extinctive" and "whether there exists cause and effect", so on. Should the Buddhist monks respect Emperor is a question related not only to the religious etiquette but also the political ethics. Since the Chinese West and East Han Dynasties, the superiority of to serve one's country and the Emperor and the superiority of to wait upon one's parents had been highly advocated in the Chinese feudal culture. This kind of priority of clansman and state departmentalism, of course, contradicts to the Buddhist way of life---to renounce the worldly life, to ignore the secular proprieties and to wander here and there. According to Confucianism, Buddhism is one that puts a slight upon either parents or emperor or etiquette. The quarrel between Buddhism and both Confucianism and Taoism had been sustained till the end of the Tang Dynasty. As a result, Buddhism was defeated. It had no alternative but to accept the concept: Renwang ji fawang --- the secular ruler is as the same to the Dharma Raja. So it was forced to give up the tradition--- that the Buddhist monks are not necessary paying respect to both the Emperor and their parents. Buddhist theory of cause and effect in three periods of time have been put forward on the base of the law---Paticcesamupada (Dependant Origination). According to Buddhism, man consists of five elements, there is no soul or substance lives hind. However, owing to the Chinese people traditionally being blinded by prejudice of belief in demons or ghosts, so they considered that the theory of cause and effect in three periods of time advocated by Buddhism was to aim at advertising theory of immortality of soul after life. Even to those who were good at Confucianism come to study Buddhism had got stuck in miscomprehend and irrelevant the doctrine of Buddhism. Represented by Hui Yuan, a famous monk of the East Jun Dynasty, who had advocated the immortality of soul which caused a long-drawn-out controversy on either the mortality of soul or immortality of soul. A heated argument between Buddhism and Taoism is also a tough event of the day. Because of, doctrinally differences between Buddhism and Taoism, it caused contradictions in various aspects. The Buddhist monks and Taoists had always argued about the superiority of each own religion so as to fight for the high position in the society politically. In order to show Taoist superiority to Buddhism, some Taoist monks of the Jun Dynasty had fabricated the so-called Buddhist sutra "Lao Zi Huan Hu Jing". It says that the founder of Taoism Lao Zi went to west (here means India). After having converted Sakyamuni to be his disciple Lao Zi advised him to found Buddhism. Buddhism waged a tit-for tat. Buddhist monks did the same. They had also created Taoist sutra named "Qing Jing Fa Xing Jing" (Sutra of Pure Conduct) so as to oppose diametrically to Taoism. It say that the Buddha used to send his three disciples to China to convert people to Buddhism. The so-called Rutong Boddhisattva is actually Confucius, Guangjing Boddhisattva is actually Yangyuan and Mahakasappa is actually Lao Zi. The controversy had lasted till the end of Tang Dynasty. Buddhism in mergence with the traditional Chinese culture began from Tang and Song periods. Since then the so-called three religions, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism flowed together and that the three religions merged into one had taken on a new aspect. Master Dao An of Jun Dynasty had considered: "There is no difference among the three religions, for each of the three advocates wholesomeness of conduct. Doctrinally, the methods adapted by the three are differed one from the other, yet the three have something in common." Zhi Yuan of Song Dynasty thought: "Confucianism is good for one's physical accomplishment and Buddhism is good for one's psychological accomplishment." So he advocated that both Confucianism and Buddhism could be mutually complementary and mutually beneficial. This shows somehow a strong thirst of Buddhism by making rooms for compromise with either Confucianism or Taoism. The so-called "San Jiao He Yi" (the three religions merged in one) has become a mean stream of social phenomenon. Confucianism, after having absorbed from Buddhism formed a new type of philosophy---Neo-Confucianism. Taoism had done the same. After it was nutritionally benefited from Buddhism the new forms of Taoist schools come into existence one after the other which were named Quanzhen Jiao and Taiyi Jiao. At the same time, Buddhism had also completed its process of localization and become the most important part of the Chinese traditional culture. With the process of localization, Buddhism had infiltrated in various aspects of the Chinese culture and had given a deep and tremendous influence to the Chinese philosophy. The interflow of the Buddhist philosophy and the traditional Chinese philosophy had given impetus to a new development of the Chinese philosophy. Neo-Confucianism was deeply influenced by Buddhism. It shows clearly that the philosophic concepts put forward by Neo-Confucianism were deeply influenced by Buddhist ones. For instance, concepts like "pure heart", "true heart", "peaceful heart",

everything in this world including man has a 'Taiji' (the supreme ultimate)" and "phenomena might differed from one and the other yet reason just one" which have something to with those Buddhist terms like "with a clear heart (mind) one sees true "and "mind is nothing but Buddha". Therefore, we can say that the theory of "Xin Xing" (Heart Nature) of Neo-Confucianism is in direct line of succession of the Buddhist theory of "Fo Xing" (Buddha Nature). Buddhism had given a deep influence to the Chinese literature as well. The process of translation of the Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit into Chinese had given impetus to a new development of the Chinese poem, prose and novel. The produce works of novels in the Jun and Tang dynasties were inspired very much by those Buddhist sutras like Vimalakirtinirdesasutra, Sadharmapundarikasutra and the Sutra of the 100 Parables. The ideological aspects of Parjnaparamitasastra and the Chinese Zen School had given an influence over the works of those ancient Chinese poets such as Tao Yuanming, Wang Wei, Bai Juyi and Su Shi. Bianwen (a popular form of narrative literature flourishing in the Tang Dynasty, with alternate prose and rhymed parts for recitation and singing) and the quotations of Zen School had a close relation with the Chinese popular literature. Fanqie (a traditional method of indicating the pronunciation of a character by taking two other characters) in Chinese language was actually developed by a phonetic influence of Sanskrit. According to incomplete statistics, with a project of Buddhist sutras translated into Chinese, there are over 35,000 foreign words and technical terms brought in China so that it has no doubt enriched the Chinese language and culture. Buddhism had also given an influence to the classic Chinese art in various aspects. The architectural style of the Buddhist temples and pagodas in China shows a great influence of Buddhist culture over the Chinese Architecture. The Brick Pagoda of Songshan Songyue Temple of China's Henan Province, the Wood Pagoda of Yingxian of Shanxi Province and the Stone Pagoda of Kaiyuan Temple of Fujian Province, all of these have served as the valuable objects for the study of history of the ancient Chinese architecture. As a treasure house of the ancient artistic carving, the Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen Grottos were created and developed with Chinese characteristics after absorbing something from the ancient Indian art, especially the art of Gandara. The Mogaoku of Dunhuang Grottos, an artistic palace erected in the desert reflects the organic synthesis of arts between India, Central Asia and China. The Buddhist Jatak stories were usually good materials for those ancient Chinese artists to paint. The freehand brushwork in traditional Chinese painting has something to do with the Zen Buddhism. The Chinese Buddhist music was created generally by absorbing from Tianzu Yue, Qiuzi Yue and Anguo Yue. Buddhism had contributed a great deal and given a influence to China's astronomy and medicine. There are a number of aspects on medicine and pharmacy in the Buddhist Tripitakas. According to those historical books of both the Sui and Tang dynasties, there are over 10 kinds of medicine and pharmacy books that were translated from Indian languages into Chinese. From the discussion above we see clever that through the cultural exchange between China and India in ancient time, Buddhism has given a tremendous influence to the various areas of Chinese culture.

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