

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Strachwitz Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus Moltke
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
Marx vom Stein Lawrence Irving
von Ossietzky May Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Liebermann Korolenko
Sachs Poe de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



The publishing house **tredition** has created the series **TREDITION CLASSICS**. It contains classical literature works from over two thousand years. Most of these titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades.

The book series is intended to preserve the cultural legacy and to promote the timeless works of classical literature. As a reader of a **TREDITION CLASSICS** book, the reader supports the mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion.

The symbol of **TREDITION CLASSICS** is Johannes Gutenberg (1400 – 1468), the inventor of movable type printing.

With the series, **tredition** intends to make thousands of international literature classics available in printed format again – worldwide.

All books are available at book retailers worldwide in paperback and in hardcover. For more information please visit: www.tredition.com



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, **tredition** offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. **tredition** is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

Buddhism and Buddhists in China

Lewis Hodus

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Lewis Hodus

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8491-6730-1

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

PREFACE

This volume is the third to be published of a series on "The World's Living Religions," projected in 1920 by the Board of Missionary Preparation of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. The series seeks to introduce Western readers to the real religious life of each great national area of the non-Christian world.

Buddhism is a religion which must be viewed from many angles. Its original form, as preached by Gautama in India and developed in the early years succeeding, and as embodied in the sacred literature of early Buddhism, is not representative of the actual Buddhism of any land today. The faithful student of Buddhist literature would be as far removed from understanding the working activities of a busy center of Buddhism in Burmah, Tibet or China today as a student of patristic literature would be from appreciating the Christian life of London or New York City.

Moreover Buddhism, like Christianity, has been affected by national conditions. It has developed at least three markedly different types, requiring, therefore, as many distinct volumes of this series for its fair interpretation and presentation. The volume on the Buddhism of Southern Asia by Professor Kenneth J. Saunders was published in May, 1923; this volume on the Buddhism of China by Professor Hodous will be the second to appear; a third on the Buddhism of Japan, to be written by Dr. R. C. Armstrong, will be published in 1924. Each of these is needed in order that the would be student of Buddhism as practiced in those countries should be given a true, impressive and friendly picture of what he will meet.

A missionary no less than a professional student of Buddhism needs to approach that religion with a real appreciation of what it aims to do for its people and does do. No one can come into contact with the best that Buddhism offers without being impressed by its serenity, assurance and power.

Professor Hodous has written this volume on Buddhism in China out of the ripe experience and continuing studies of sixteen years of

missionary service in Foochow, the chief city of Fukien Province, China, one of the important centers of Buddhism. His local studies were supplemented by the results of broader research and study in northern China. No other available writer on the subject has gone so far as he in reproducing the actual thinking of a trained Buddhist mind in regard to the fundamentals of religion. At the same time he has taken pains to exhibit and to interpret the religious life of the peasant as affected by Buddhism. He has sought to be absolutely fair to Buddhism, but still to express his own conviction that the best that is in Buddhism is given far more adequate expression in Christianity.

The purpose of each volume in this series is impressionistic rather than definitely educational. They are not textbooks for the formal study of Buddhism, but introductions to its study. They aim to kindle interest and to direct the activity of the awakened student along sound lines. For further study each volume amply provides through directions and literature in the appendices. It seeks to help the student to discriminate, to think in terms of a devotee of Buddhism when he compares that religion with Christianity. It assumes, however, that Christianity is the broader and deeper revelation of God and the world of today.

Buddhism in China undoubtedly includes among its adherents many high-minded, devout, and earnest souls who live an idealistic life. Christianity ought to make a strong appeal to such minds, taking from them none of the joy or assurance or devotion which they possess, but promoting a deeper, better balanced interpretation of the active world, a nobler conception of God, a stronger sense of sinfulness and need, and a truer idea of the full meaning of incarnation and revelation.

It is our hope that this fresh contribution to the understanding of Buddhism as it is today may be found helpful to readers everywhere.

The Editors.

New York city, December, 1923.

The Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America has authorized the publication of this series. The author of each volume is alone responsible for the opinions expressed, unless otherwise stated.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTORY

II. THE ENTRANCE OF BUDDHISM INTO CHINA

III. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BUDDHISM AS THE PREDOMINATING RELIGION OF CHINA 1. The World of Invisible Spirits 2. The Universal Sense of Ancestor Control 3. Degenerate Taoism 4. The Organizing Value of Confucianism 5. Buddhism an Inclusive Religion

IV. BUDDHISM AND THE PEASANT

1. The Monastery of Kushan
2. Monasteries Control Fêng-shui
3. Prayer for Rain
 - (a) The altar
 - (b) The prayer service
 - (c) Its Meaning
4. Monasteries are Supported because They Control Fêng-shui

V. BUDDHISM AND THE FAMILY 1. Kuan Yin, the Giver of Children and Protector of Women 2. Kuan Yin, the Model of Local Mother-Goddesses 3. Exhortations on Family Virtues 4. Services for the Dead

VI. BUDDHISM AND SOCIAL LIFE 1. How the Laity is Trained in Buddhist Ideas 2. Effect of Ideals of Mercy and Universal Love 3. Relation to Confucian Ideal 4. The Embodiment of Buddhist Ideals in the Vegetarian Sects 5. Pilgrimages

VII. BUDDHISM AND THE FUTURE LIFE 1. The Buddhist Purgatory 2. Its Social Value 3. The Buddhist Heaven 4. The Harmonization of These Ideas with Ancestor Worship

VIII. THE SPIRITUAL VALUES EMPHASIZED BY BUDDHISM IN CHINA

1. The Threefold Classification of Men under Buddhism
2. Salvation for the Common Man
3. The Place of Faith
4. Salvation of the Second Class
5. Salvation for the Highest Class
6. Heaven and Purgatory
7. Sin
8. Nirvana
9. The Philosophical Background
10. What Buddhism Has to Give

IX. PRESENT-DAY BUDDHISM

1. Periods of Buddhist History
2. The Progress of the Last Twenty-five Years
3. Present Activities
 - (a) The reconstruction of monasteries
 - (b) Accessions
 - (c) Publications
 - (d) Lectures
 - (e) Buddhist societies
 - (f) Signs of social ambition
4. The Attitude of Tibetan Lamas
5. The Buddhist World Versus the Christian World

X. THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO BUDDHISTS

1. Questions which Buddhists Ask
2. Knowledge and Sympathy
3. Emphasis on the Æsthetic in Christianity
4. Emphasis on the Mystical in Christianity
5. Emphasis on the Social Elements in Christianity
6. Emphasis on the Person of Jesus Christ
 - (a) As a Historical Character
 - (b) As the Revealer
 - (c) As the Saviour
 - (d) As the Eternal Son of God
7. How Christianity Expresses Itself in Buddhist Minds

8. Christianity's Constructive Values

APPENDIX ONE, Hints for the Preliminary Study of Buddhism
in China

APPENDIX TWO, A Brief Bibliography

BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS IN CHINA

I

INTRODUCTORY

A well known missionary of Peking, China, was invited one day by a Buddhist acquaintance to attend the ceremony of initiation for a class of one hundred and eighty priests and some twenty laity who had been undergoing preparatory instruction at the stately and important Buddhist monastery. The beautiful courts of the temple were filled by a throng of invited guests and spectators, waiting to watch the impressive procession of candidates, acolytes, attendants and high officials, all in their appropriate vestments. No outsider was privileged to witness the solemn taking by each candidate for the priesthood of the vow to "keep the Ten Laws," followed by the indelible branding of his scalp, truly a "baptism of fire." Less private was the initiation of the lay brethren and *sisters*, more lightly branded on the right wrist, while all about intoned "Na Mah Pen Shih Shih Chia Mou Ni Fo." (I put my trust in my original Teacher, Säkya-muni, Buddha.)

The missionary was deeply impressed by the serenity and devotion of the worshipers and by the dignity and solemnity of the service. The last candidate to rise and receive the baptism of branding was a young married woman of refined appearance, attended by an elderly lady, evidently her mother, who watched with an expression of mingled devotion, insight and pride her daughter's initiation and welcomed her at the end of the process with radiant face, as a daughter, now, in a spiritual as well as a physical sense. At that moment an attendant, noting the keen interest of the missionary, said to him rather flippantly, "Would you not like to have your arm branded, too?" "I might," he replied, "just out of curiosity, but I

could not receive the branding as a believer in the Buddha. I am a Christian believer. To be branded without inward faith would be an insult to your religion as well as treachery to my own, would it not? Is not real religion a matter of the heart?"

The old lady, who had overheard with evident disapproval the remark of the attendant, turned to the missionary at once and said, "Is that the way you Westerners, you Christians, speak of your faith? Is the reality of religion for you also an inward experience of the heart?" And with that began an interesting interchange of conversation, each party discovering that in the heart of the other was a genuine longing for God that overwhelmed all the artificial, material distinctions and the human devices through which men have limited to particular and exclusive paths their way of search, and drew these two pilgrims on the way toward God into a common and very real fellowship of the spirit.

A Buddhist monk was passing by a mission building in another city¹ of China when his attention was suddenly drawn to the Svastika and other Buddhist symbols which the architect had skilfully used in decorating the building. His face brightened as he said to his companion: "I did not know that Christians had any appreciation of beauty in their religion."

These incidents reveal aspects of the alchemy of the soul by which the real devotee of one religion perceives values which are dear to him in another religion. The good which he has attained in his old religion enables him to appropriate the better in the new religion. A converted monk, explaining his acceptance of Christianity, said: "I found in Jesus Christ the great Bodhisattva, my Saviour, who brings to fruition the aspirations awakened in me by Buddhism."

Just as it has been said that they do not know England who know England only, so it may be said with equal truth that they do not know Christianity who know it and no other faith. There are many in China like the old lady at the temple, who have found in Buddhism something of that spiritual satisfaction and stimulus which true Christianity affords, in fuller measure. The recognition of such religious values by the student or the missionary furnishes a sound

foundation for the building of a truer spirituality among such devotees.

As will be seen in what follows, religion in China is at first sight a mixed affair. From the standpoint of cruder household superstitions an average Chinese family may be regarded as Taoists; the principles by which its members seek to guide their lives individually and socially may be called Confucian; their attitude of worship and their hopes for the future make them Buddhists. The student would not be far afield when he credits the religious aspirations of the Chinese today to Buddhism, regarding Confucianism as furnishing the ethical system to which they submit and Taoism as responsible for many superstitious practices. But the Buddhism found in China differs radically from that of Southern Asia, as will be made clear by the following sketch of its introduction into the Flowery Kingdom and its subsequent history.

II

THE ENTRANCE OF BUDDHISM INTO CHINA

Buddhism was not an indigenous religion of China. Its founder was Gautama of India in the sixth century B.C. Some centuries later it found its way into China by way of central Asia. There is a tradition that as early as 142 B.C. Chang Ch'ien, an ambassador of the Chinese emperor, Wu Ti, visited the countries of central Asia, where he first learned about the new religion which was making such headway and reported concerning it to his master. A few years later the generals of Wu Ti captured a gold image of the Buddha which the emperor set up in his palace and worshiped, but he took no further steps.

According to Chinese historians Buddhism was officially recognized in China about 67 A.D. A few years before that date, the emperor, Ming-Ti, saw in a dream a large golden image with a halo hovering above his palace. His advisers, some of whom were no doubt already favorable to the new religion, interpreted the image of the dream to be that of Buddha, the great sage of India, who was inviting his adhesion. Following their advice the emperor sent an embassy to study into Buddhism. It brought back two Indian monks and a quantity of Buddhist classics. These were carried on a white horse and so the monastery which the emperor built for the monks and those who came after them was called the White Horse Monastery. Its tablet is said to have survived to this day.

This dream story is worth repeating because it goes to show that Buddhism was not only known at an early date, but was favored at the court of China. In fact, the same history which relates the dream contains the biography of an official who became an adherent of Buddhism a few years before the dream took place. This is not at all surprising, because an acquaintance with Buddhism was the inevitable concomitant of the military campaigning, the many embassies and the wide-ranging trade of those centuries. But the introduction of Buddhism into China was especially promoted by reason of the

current policy of the Chinese government of moving conquered populations in countries west of China into China proper, The vanquished peoples brought their own religion along with them. At one time what is now the province of Shansi was populated in this way by the Hsiung-nu, many of whom were Buddhists.

The introduction and spread of Buddhism were hastened by the decline of Confucianism and Taoism. The Han dynasty (206 B. C.-221 A. D.) established a government founded on Confucianism. It reproduced the classics destroyed in the previous dynasty and encouraged their study; it established the state worship of Confucius; it based its laws and regulations upon the ideals and principles advocated by Confucius. The great increase of wealth and power under this dynasty led to a gradual deterioration in the character of the rulers and officials. The rigid Confucian regulations became burdensome to the people who ceased to respect their leaders. Confucianism lost its hold as the complete solution of the problems of life. At the same time Taoism had become a veritable jumble of meaningless and superstitious rites which served to support a horde of ignorant, selfish priests. The high religious ideals of the earlier Taoist mystics were abandoned for a search after the elixir of life during fruitless journeys to the isles of the Immortals which were supposed to be in the Eastern Sea.

At this juncture there arose in North China a sect of men called the Purists who advocated a return from the vagaries of Taoism and the irritating rules of Confucianism to the simple life practised by the Taoist mystics. When these thoughtful and earnest minded men came into contact with Buddhism they were captivated by it. It had all they were claiming for Taoist mysticism and more. They devoted their literary ability and religious fervor to the spreading of the new religion and its success was in no small measure due to their efforts. As a result of this early association the tenets of the two religions seemed so much alike that various emperors called assemblies of Buddhists and Taoists with the intention of effecting a union of the two religions into one. If the emperor was under the influence of Buddhism he tried to force all Taoists to become Buddhists. If he was favorable to Taoism he tried to make all Buddhists become Taoists.

But such mandates were as unsuccessful as other similar schemes have been. In the third century A. D. after the Han dynasty had ended, China was broken up into several small kingdoms which contended for supremacy, so that for about four hundred years the whole country was in a state of disunion. One of the strong dynasties of this period, the Northern Wei (386-535 A. D.), was distinctly loyal to Buddhism. During its continuance Buddhism prospered greatly. Although Chinese were not permitted to become monks until 335 A. D., still Buddhism made rapid advances and in the fourth century, when that restriction was removed, about nine-tenths of the people of northwestern China had become Buddhists. Since then Buddhism has been an established factor in Chinese life.

