

The Way of the Tao and the Path to Nirvana

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On the face of what can be said about them directly and specifically there is little to choose between Tao and Nirvana. They are both esteemed to be mystic entities—or should we say nonentities—of the ultimate and completely ineffable sort, which by definition are ruled to be beyond definition. They are held to be outside the range of descriptive terms or categorical inclusion, open only to experience, and of a type best “expressed” by silence. Indeed Nirvana lies well beyond the path leading to it, and in its fullness can scarcely be said to be open even to experience.

Ineffabilities do have implications attached to them, however. They are experienced or arrived at or gone toward by certain methods; they can be said to have some sort of locus among human concepts, if not by means of them. Indeed a fence of words or symbols is always thrown up about the ineffable experience as about a holy place, even though that holy place itself contains only conceptual emptiness. Thus, unable to reach the ultimates themselves, we may seek to understand the similarity or difference between those defensive words, images, or “nonconcepts” used by the devotees of each ultimate by which they seek to non-describe the nondescribable in the best possible way. Or, to change the figure, we may travel the path that we are told leads to these ultimate entities or experiences as far as words can take us and, standing there at word-path’s end, observe from whence we have come.

In the case of Taoism the descriptive material—some direct, and some oblique or inferential from Taoist attitude and action—is varied in nature and too long to deal with *in extenso*. But a

few characteristic phrases will indicate the quality of this particular variety of the nonidentifiable:

The Tao that can be told of
Is not the Absolute Tao;
The Names that can be given
Are not Absolute Names.

The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth;
The Named is the Mother of All Things¹

"Tao cannot be heard," said No-beginning, "that which is heard is not Tao. Tao cannot be seen; that which is seen is not Tao. Tao cannot be told; that which is told is not Tao. . . ."

If someone answers in reply to a question about Tao, he does not know Tao. Even the one who asks about Tao has not heard Tao. Tao cannot be asked about, and to the question there is no answer.²

Now Tao by its very nature can never be defined. Speech by its very nature cannot express the absolute. Hence arise the distinctions. Such distinctions are: "right" and "left," "relationship" and "duty," "division" and "discrimination," "emulation" and "contention." These are called the Eight Predictables.³

So much will suffice for the "description" of Tao in the classic texts of Laotse and the philosophic interpretations of Chuangtse. Tao is indeed ineffable, and a conceptual nullity. But it is also obviously the ultimate unconditioned, undifferentiated reality out of which spring (1) the natural world and (2) the varied distinctions of human experience and culture—an undefined but massive organic unity in the cosmos. This organic unity manifests itself best in the order of the natural world. The character of this ultimacy, as conceptually indefinable yet completely pervasive of nature, may be illustrated by these two passages, both from Chuangtse:

The knowledge of the men of old reached the ultimate height. What was the ultimate height of knowledge? They recognized that nothing but nothing existed. That indeed was the limit further than which one could not go. Then there were those who believed that matter existed, but only matter unconditioned (undefined). Next came those who believed in conditioned (defined) matter, but

did not recognize the distinctions of true and false. When the distinctions of true and false appeared, then Tao lost its wholeness. And when Tao lost its wholeness, individual bias began.⁴

What he saw as One was One, and what he saw as not One was also One. In that he saw the unity, he was of God; in that he saw the distinctions he was of man.⁵

Obviously specialized, distinct "knowledge" of the universe is here downgraded in direct proportion to the degree of its specialized distinctions. The highest form of knowledge is a mystical or semi-mystical intuitive awareness of the unity of life. Or we might call it in Northrup's terms, the intuitive knowledge of "the esthetic undifferentiated continuum."

The word "esthetic" is of interest here because it ties directly into another sort of thing said in Taoism about the relation of this undifferentiated Primordial Oneness to nature. And it presents a somewhat more specific and positive relation between the One and the many than the conceptual emptiness of the passage above. Thus Chuangtse:

There is great beauty in the silent universe. There are manifest laws governing the four seasons without words. There is an intrinsic principle in the created things which is not expressed. The Sage looks back to the beauty of the universe and penetrates into the intrinsic principle of created things. Therefore the perfect man does nothing, the great Sage takes no action. In doing this he follows the pattern of the universe. The spirit of the universe is subtle and informs all life. Things live and die and change their forms, without knowing the root from which they come. Abundantly it multiplies; eternally it stands by itself.⁶

The lines of connection are now clearer. Behind everything is the unfathomable, ineffable Tao. Its "product" or "creation" or "visible form" is the natural world—though the first two terms seem too activist and conceptual to serve, and the latter suggests a contrast between appearance and reality which is Hindu or Kantian rather than Taoist. It is true that conceptual analysis of the universe is foreign to its ultimate nature, and that apparently the individualized manyness of nature is in some sense an illusory veil cast over its undifferentiated base or the thing-in-

itself. Yet in Taoism there is no sharp dichotomy in nature itself, nor any deep gulf between the perceptual awareness of the many-faceted physical universe and the intuitive realization of its essential oneness. Indeed these two tend to support each other, if used properly: the sense-life may become a vehicle for the appreciation and realization of Primordial Oneness in the form of its manifestation in the harmonies of the natural order.

And here is the beginning of an ethic, or of that esthetic which served for an ethic in Taoism. The good man is one who does what comes naturally, providing he has not been spoiled by human culture and can attune his sensitivities to the order of nature. The simple joys of bodily motion and pleasure, the spontaneous activities and feelings that do not depend upon social station, convention, or the abundance of contrived luxuries may "reveal" or at least relate one to, the cosmic harmony.

One gains the impression that the Taoist found himself in love with his universe and had a strong sense of organic relation to it. Perhaps he gained this from that same core of feeling which produced some of the notable Chinese landscape paintings in which little man is almost lost, yet is fully integral to his surroundings; and in which it is cosmic energy and form that set the scale for all other realities and values. In any case, the beautiful quietly working harmony of natural processes is to the Taoist of supreme value for the guidance of man. To accord with nature, to find in nature the example and pattern for his own life, even mystically to absorb its rhythms is the essence of human wisdom. When properly attuned to each other, cosmic essence speaks to human essence in the wordless language of perfect adjustment.

We might note here in passing that this organic nature-mysticism does not seem to imply any considerable or complicated mystical *techniques*—that would be too contrived and artificial. There is rather the development of the intuitive powers as over against the deliberately intellectual; feeling as opposed to reason or concept; and a deliberate attempt by means of a relatively simple and "natural" life to keep in close sympathetic touch with one's natural environment—all this with a considerable

dash of emotional detachment, a kind of seeing all things under the aspect of eternal process.

One further observation might well be made. The result of the Taoist philosophy, i.e., the practice of the way of Tao, seems initially to have resulted in a kind of pronounced individualism, strongly paradoxical in its verbal expression. Obviously one who seeks to relate himself to cosmos without intermediaries will be contemptuous of conventional social forms and values, as Taoism was of Confucianism, and perhaps by reaction into extremes of individualism will assert his independence. So, also, in consonance with the basic conviction of the desirability of a wordless harmony of relationship between man and his environing world, a gentle sport is had with words, when they are used, and conventions, when they are noted at all. Thus the virtues of the "useless" tree are praised as evidencing the "futility of (that) utility" of the ordinary sort. Chuangtse sang joyously upon the death of his wife, and went fishing instead of attending pompous public conferences on law and order. Opposites are always being paired: the strength of the weak, the greatness of the small and the smallness of the great, the massive force of pliant water, the irresistibility of nonexertive nature, the superior efficiency of inaction, the immoral effects of moralizing effort, governance by passive letting alone, and much more of the same.

It must be noted also that there is another expression of the meaning of Tao, that found in Confucianism. No doubt neither the likeness nor unlikeness of the two interpretations should be exaggerated. They did develop side by side in Chinese culture in a kind of Yang-Yin harmony of opposites. Or to change the figure, Taoist light-heartedness and unconventionality plays a kind of obligato of satiric protest to the basic Confucian pattern of good solid virtues and responsible social organization. There is in both of them an awareness of Tao; and both consider themselves in their schemes of life to be according themselves with Tao as to the primordial cosmic harmony—if Taoism can be said to have a "scheme" of life. The difference has to do with the level or distance at which each relates itself to Tao. It is a direct personal intuitive relationship for Taoism. For Confucianism

this intuitive element is not entirely lacking. Confucius apparently believed that he was making progress in his attentiveness to "Heaven," the surrogate of Tao or its executive agent so to speak, when he said:

At fifteen, I had my mind bent on learning. At thirty, I stood firm. At forty, I had no doubts. At fifty, I knew the decrees of heaven. At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. At seventy, I could follow what my heart desired, without transgressing what was right.⁷

Yet essentially the Confucian filters his relationship to Tao through the refining screen of traditional culture and interprets his mandate from Tao-Heaven, or the Tao (way) of Heaven manward, as best expressed in social relationships. It is true that three of his five great relationships are familial, the fourth small-communal, and only the fifth political; and that these seem to him to be therefore "natural," i.e. integrally related to the basic nature of man. Yet they are social and therefore at once removed from natural nature itself. Hence the Confucian Tao is a refined, trained, cultivated force, not distorted by, but most successfully manifesting itself in, the patterns of civilization. The naturalistic-mystical values of Taoism are not totally eliminated but they are substantially diluted and quite domesticated in the careful Confucian cultivation of the forms of culture and social life.

How important then is the Tao concept or Tao-sensibility to the Confucian scheme of things? In any specific or directive sense it seems to be negligible. But as a kind of metaphysical ghost of rightness, harmony, and order hovering in a reassuring way over traditional culture-forms, or in its surrogate form of that Heaven and its good spirits with which the rulers were presumed to keep in accordance and to whose cultivation elaborate state ceremonials were dedicated, Tao may be said to have played a substantial even though vague role in Confucian civilization.

We may turn now to another pattern in the manifestation of Tao: its reincarnation in another form so to speak, or perhaps its syncretist inclusion in something new. And this is the more interesting in view of the fact that this new form is one growing

out of the Taoist contact with Buddhism and represents a combination in some sense of the Way of Tao with the Path to Nirvana. Hence, before we consider the new form itself, we need to turn to a consideration of the Path to Nirvana in order to understand with what it is that Tao is amalgamated.

How shall one describe Nirvana? As with Tao, Nirvana cannot be laid hold of with words. It is best described by silence. If words are to be used at all, they will be negatives, conceptually null and void, though with a positive luminous auro of feeling-tone. There is literally no end of the negative ways in which Nirvana can be "described." It is a "going-out" either into an unrepresentable dimension or a going out of the life-impulse itself through exhaustion of its driving karmic force. It is emptiness, the abyss or voidness; calmness, as the absence of turmoil and strife; coolness, as cessation of life's fever; a haven, as refuge from rebirth; endless, as beyond time; the total destruction of hate, greed, and delusion; deathlessness, as the absence of birth-death, yet also "the graveyard of the mind"; and so forth. The following is an eloquent description of Nirvana in such negative-positive, full-empty terms:

In that state of tranquility, not disturbed by likes and dislikes, not made turbid by passions, not hazed by ignorance, like sunlight that penetrates a rippleless lake of clear water, there arises the supreme insight (*pañña*) of the knowledge that "all birth and death have ceased. . . ." This is the supreme moment of illumination when the Saint (Arhant) sees the whole universe with the vivacity of a living reality.

Such is Nibbana, where the insight of nonself has taken the place of delusion and ignorance; where being will be seen as a mere process of becoming, and becoming as ceasing; where the spell that has kept us in bondage will be broken; where the dream-state will vanish into reality and reality will be realized.

Is Nibbana annihilation? Yes and No. Yes, because it is the annihilation of the lust for life, of the passions, of craving and grasping. . . . But, on the other hand, where there is nothing to be annihilated, there can be no annihilation.⁸

Now it is obviously impossible to penetrate into ultimate Nirvana itself to report on its likeness or difference from Tao—

or if penetrating, to return with or without report. But there is the figure of the arahat (or saint), somewhat comparable to the Taoist Sage and the Confucian Superior Man, who has come as near to Nirvana as physical embodiment allows; and there is the witness of that technique of meditation which he uses to achieve the serenity of his Nirvana-while-still-in-this-life, the vestibule to full Nirvana itself.

From the observation of these vestibule-features of Nirvana, the distinction may be put thus: Tao is, by its locus in experience, naturalistic (or naturistic) as we have seen; but Nirvana is non-naturistic, at least in its classical "conception." Indeed in early formulations, and as indicated by the techniques of the Path leading to it, Nirvana might be called antinaturistic. When one reads the accounts of the experiences of those who have achieved sainthood, in such early accounts as the *Therīgāthā* and *Therāgāthā*, even though many of these meditators lived in the forest, only very infrequently does even the least whisper of their beautiful natural surroundings come through. Indeed such sights have their dangers, for they funnel into consciousness through the bodily senses. And as every Buddhist knows, the physical sensibilities are a deep source of danger; in all their variety they are on fire with the fire of rebirth-producing desire; the body is a wound, infecting and endangering the holy life of the mind. One can only contrast this with the easy harmony prevailing between the Taoist Sage and his environment.

This does not, of course, precisely mean body-hatred leading to asceticism and self-torture; the Buddhist middle way is this side of that extreme by a comfortable margin. And so closely twined together are the physical and mental elements in a man's being according to Buddhist thought that one cannot abuse the one without injuring the other. Spiritual insight has a generally beneficial effect on the body, and bodily health on the mind. Yet given the traditional Buddhist distrust of the sense-life, the body and its experiences get but a cool and aloof reception on the part of Buddhism. Indeed on occasion the body is viewed with contempt; at least part of the victory of saintly enlightenment is victory over the body, the achievement of a kind of life that is not moved in the slightest by bodily suffering or pleasure

or sensibility. And obviously that world of sight-sound-touch-taste of which the body makes us aware, is likewise to be distrusted and disvalued, at least on the highest levels of the Path to Nirvana. The disciplines of the Path to Nirvana are of this same character. They are part of a calculated technique devoted to establishing the mental-spiritual qualities firmly, and ultimately absolutely, over the physical; or better, the highest mental over all other factors, both mental and physical. This process is crystallized and focalized in the meditational technique whose major thrust is to enable a man to achieve such complete mental mastery over all the factors and conditions of his life in the space-time sense world, that he can constantly experience an inner realization of equanimity completely untouched by the outer life. Nirvana is but the final and irreversible absolutizing of the states of highest absorption of this interior sort, an absorption which is completely oblivious to external stimuli, utterly beyond their reach or agitating excitement.

Such is the nature of the Buddhist absolute and the way to it: intensely subjective, withdrawn into a self-created inner world as detached as possible from the world of nature and men. Yet by a kind of reversal of expectation, even in its contemplative form, to say nothing of its lay-form as popular religion, Buddhism did create fellowship and community in a way that Taoism never achieved. If we ask why, perhaps any answer will be purely speculative. But let us speculate and say that the very antinaturalistic, intense, subjectivism of the higher reaches of the Path to Nirvana brought its travelers into a sort of fellowship because they had withdrawn from Nature. A direct relationship and mystical attachment to Nature, without the ritual celebration of that attachment, may isolate men from each other more effectively than a severely subjective but uniformly structured pattern of meditative discipline. Perhaps the very lack of an outer nature into which to sink oneself, or identify with, draws men inevitably into some sort of fellowship.

Or it might be put in another way. If one emphasizes the emptiness of all things, even of the self, there is perhaps an unconscious compensatory movement toward fellowship among the not-selves. So also the very diffusion of "selfhood," impartially

and indifferently between myself and other selves, leads to a kind of infinite extension of self and self-concern to all beings. There results a dilute compassion that knows no distinctions of individuality, but which produces a sense of oneness (if not fellowship) with all beings. Thus it is that Buddhist compassion, generalized and universalized beyond the particular subject-object relationship, substitutes a *personal-impersonal spiritual* continuum in which to relate oneself to the universe, for the *totally impersonal-natural* continuum of Taoism.

It may be noted in passing that somewhat, though not closely, analogous to the Confucian-Taoist dichotomy with regard to the meaning of Tao, the Buddhist community also divided in its interpretation of the Path to Nirvana. For in Hinayana and Theravada Buddhism, there has been a greater emphasis upon the historical and moralistic features of that Path than of the mystical. Theravada Buddhism wishes to keep its interpretation of the Path directly related to its scriptures, to the closely knit though not closely organized Order of monks, and to the sober morality of the lay-disciple built around the observation of the Five Precepts. The "mystical" elements—a term which contemporary Theravadins distrust—and Nirvana-hope itself have been hidden far back among the inner recesses of monkhood; and though monkhood by definition is given to the direct pursuit of Nirvana through meditation, its communal life and teaching duties have actually hulked much larger in practice. Thus Nirvana seems as far away and remote for most monks, and even more so for the layman, as Tao-Heaven for the Confucian. The ardors of securing a better rebirth consume all of most persons' best time and effort.

Though Mahayana keeps a genuine sense of the transcendence of Nirvana, it is of a different sort. It is not in the form of a direct emphasis upon Nirvana as a transcendent goal; the Nirvana-emphasis here has been highly modified by the introduction of a kind of immanentism into it. Nirvana, in general, is not seen so much as that temporally far-off goal to which a man may aspire after a thousand more lives or so of virtuous effort, but as a dimension which is even now at hand and open to all, laymen as well as monks—though the latter have some built-in advantages.

Sometimes this immanence is expressed in the form of the Buddha-nature or mind of enlightenment which is in all men, awaiting only to be developed ("The Buddha is your own Mind"⁹); or it may be expressed, beginning with Nagarjuna, as the metaphysical equivalence of *Samsāra* (the birth-death realm from which one hopes to escape) and Nirvana (that utterly transcendent haven from *Samsāra*). Their difference is to be found in the attitude with which one views *Samsāra*; for *Samsāra* viewed with total detachment is Nirvana realized here and now.

We cannot pursue here this subject throughout its ramifications in Mahayana Buddhism at large and in general. It will be more significant to take Zen as that variety of Mahayana Buddhism in which this immanentist tendency comes to its sharpest focus. And most interestingly, and not by accident, this is precisely the area in which Buddhist Nirvana and Taoist (rather than Confucian) Tao intermingle their substances. Indeed in some sense Zen *satori* or enlightenment is Tao Nirvanized, or Nirvana Taoized.

The contact of Buddhism with Taoism in China is an interesting chapter in the historical development of both which has not been adequately explored. Here we shall only note that the immediate product of this contact was Ch'an Buddhism, later exported and somewhat modified in Japan as Zen Buddhism. Parenthetically one may speculate as to whether Ch'an-Zen did not crystalize and appropriate the Taoist heart of Taoism, leaving only its peripheral features to become the essence of a degenerate popular religion in China. In any case we may note the net result in Zen Buddhism.

Three features of Zen Buddhism will be mentioned as indicating that kind of cross-fertilization of Tao and Nirvana which takes place in Zen, all of them closely related to the *satori* or enlightenment experience. First we may observe the Buddhist feature of this synthesis. It is the highly organized system, or better, deliberate intensity, of the meditational technique. Here is where the rather casual, *laissez-faire* intuitive approach of the Taoist to nature and its Tao, has been replaced by a Buddhist attitude. The religious ultimate in Zen can be approached only by those of completely steadfast intention and by an intensive

discipline. The would-be monk is made to kneel for two days outside the Zen monastery even in order to be admitted to the novitiate. And as every Suzuki addict knows, the going from that point on has been, and still is, very rough. Long disciplined hours of meditation; a seemingly infinite number of levels to be attained, or perhaps better, encouraging but insufficient enlightenings to be passed through. This elaborate and lengthy discipline, along with Buddhist terminology of course, represents what we may call the Buddhist structure of Zen.

But we may note, secondly, that the Taoist influence is quite obvious in the way in which this Buddhist structural technique of meditation actually operates. It is quite true that there is a rigid meditational framework and discipline in Zen, inherited in great part from India. Yet where the meditational progress in the Southern Buddhist Scriptures and tradition is sharply defined by stylized procedures and stages, with only a minimal degree of flexibility apparent, in Zen the case is quite other. Within the general framework there is a high degree of originality and spontaneity, especially at the higher levels of attainment. Ch'an and Zen tradition is full of the seemingly eccentric behavior of the sages of the movement, one might even say an outrageously eccentric behavior that has no regard or reverence for any of the traditional doctrines and rites of Buddhism, and that seems often to deride its own fundamental sanctities. It is as though the liberated ones were in the end liberated from even the Buddhist rigor and intensity of spiritual quest. It is as though, once having arrived at enlightenment, the liberated man says, "How foolishly, how wrongfully, how effortfully I pursued liberation all these years!" Thus writes an early Japanese Zen master:

Those who have not seen into their own Nature may read the Sutras, think of the Buddha, study long, work hard, practice religion throughout the six periods of the day, sit for a long time and never lie down for sleep, and may be wide in learning and well informed in all things; and they may believe that all this is Buddhism. But all the Buddhas in successive ages only talk of seeing into one's Nature.¹⁰

Something of this eccentric quality—quite in the spirit of Chuangtse—seems to spill over even into the methodology of Zen,

despite the militaristic barracks-room approach in the lower levels, or external features, of its monastic forms of discipline. At other levels, and in other types of practice, one is struck with the irrational randomness of the "method" of instruction, which appears to proceed by whimsical intuition. There is a constant sense of paradox expressed in the logically senseless *koan* against which one batters his spiritual head until he despairs, either of meaning or sanity; or the stewing in the juice of one's own inferiority, the empty-meditation technique of the Soto school, with little help of any sort except exhortation to empty one's ordinary mind, until his true mind can form and grow. Nor are there lacking those tales of cudgeling from the instructor, in the hope of startling the disciple into *satori*, as it were, by physically precipitating the muddled unsettlement of his psyche into sharp new patterns of spiritual consequence. Here surely one has the wry genius of the Taoist sage at work.

It is in the third aspect where perhaps the essence of Taoism has found its fullest expression and notably bridged the gap between primordial Tao and Nirvana. This is found in the Zen appropriation of the nature mysticism of Tao. As noted earlier, the classic Buddhist road to Nirvana had little of either time or interest in nature as such. Rather it turned away from nature as in any sense a guide or holy entity, to the most subjective of inward experiences for guidance and methodology. But in Zen the classic Buddhist coldness to, or distrust of, nature is overcome, and once again, as in Taoism and to a lesser degree in Confucianism, man and cosmos are reunited. For the Zen, *satori* is often a thrilling new sense of the oneness of man with his cosmos:

One night, sitting far into the night, I kept my eyes open and was aware of my sitting up in my seat. All of a sudden the sound of striking the board in front of the head monk's room reached my ear, which at once revealed to me the "original man" in full. . . . Hastily I came down from the seat and ran out into the moonlit night. . . . Looking up into the sky I laughed loudly, "Oh how great is the Dharmakaya! Oh, how great and immense for evermore!

Thence my job knew no bounds. I could not quietly sit in the Meditation Hall; I went about with no special purpose in the

mountains, walking this way and that. I thought of the sun and moon traversing in a day a space 4,000,000,000 miles wide. . . . Thinking thus, I felt all the bonds snapped that had been tying me for so many ages. How many numberless years I had been sitting in the hole of ants.¹¹

But *satori* is also a sense of one's oneness with his own nature in all its phases, an integral personal expression in all of his actions, even the most stylized and artificial conventional actions. It is the rebirth of the person himself as a fully organic unity in which the simplest actions of eating, speaking, or physical living are no longer divorced from his inner spiritual essence, but completely unified with it. The dichotomy between "outward" body and "inner" mind, thought and action, intellect and feeling, is destroyed, and personal integrality, or in existential language "authenticity," is achieved. A dynamic spontaneity and wholeness of being and action arise. The *total* man acts in every action.

Even in the twinkling of an eye, the whole affair is changed, and you have Zen, and you are as perfect and normal as ever. More than that, you have in the meantime acquired something altogether new. All your mental activities are now working to a different key, which is more satisfying, more peaceful, and fuller of joy than anything you ever had. The tone of your life is altered. There is something rejuvenating in it. The spring flowers look prettier, and the mountain stream runs cooler and more transparent.

Again, you and I sip a cup of tea. The act is apparently alike, but who can tell what a wide gap there is subjectively between you and me? In your drinking there may be no Zen, while mine is brimful of it. . . . In my case the subject has struck a new path and is not at all conscious of the duality of his act; in him life is not split into object and subject or into acting and acted. The drinking at the moment to him means the whole fact, the whole world. Zen lives and is therefore free.¹²

To be sure, this is no longer the simple naturalistic intuition of Taoism. Zen "nature" is filtered through, and into, the subjectiveness of my own psyche by a carefully refined technique—despite the seeming randomness of it. The "nature" with which I am in accord has thus been subjectivized and psychologized in

many respects, and the end-goal is more that of making nature serve one's self-ends than of naïvely yielding oneself to her processes. The Zen yielding to nature is a sophisticated and subtilized device, contrived for the purpose of making man superior to nature, conquering her from within, rather than a simple intuitive discipleship of nature as in Taoism. Thus in the end it is perhaps Buddhism that conquers Taoism in the Zen synthesis. But in so doing the Path to Nirvana has imbibed so much of the quality of the Way of the Tao that the two become an identical essence, one of the most successful amalgams of diverse spiritual traditions to be found in the world of religion.

NOTES

1. Lin Yuang, ed., *The Wisdom of Lao-tse* (New York: Modern Library, 1948), p. 41.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
7. Robert O. Ballou, ed., "Analects of Confucius," *The Bible of the World*, Book II (New York: Viking Press, 1939) p. 399.
8. G. P. Malalasekera, "Some Aspects of Reality as Taught by Theravada Buddhism," *Essays in East-West Philosophy*, Charles A. Moore, ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1951), p. 194.
9. D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series (New York: Harper & Row, 1949) p. 233.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 255.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 264-65.