

佛祖音容 第四冊

虛雲老和尚略  
無相頌講  
佛教與禪

史  
（知定法師著）  
話  
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香港佛經流通處印行

BUDDHISM  
AND  
THE CHAN SCHOOL OF CHINA

By  
REV. YUNG HSI

佛  
教  
與  
禪  
宗

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**佛教與禪宗 (中英文)**

Empty Cloud, The Teachings of Xu Yun  
The Commentary On Formless Gatha Buddhism & The Chan School

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如是如是  
虛空  
如  
是



**The Abbot Hsu Yun's Calligraphic Message:**  
**"It is thus and this, it is thus and this".**

相法師法熙融主講



Rev. Yung Hsi

The Great Tao is without form,  
The Absolute is without opposite;  
It is both empty and unmoving,  
It is not within the flow of Samsara;  
The Three Realms do not contain it,  
It is not within past, future, or present.

—Nan-chuan.

Like the clear stillness of autumn water—pure  
and without activity; in its tranquil depths are no  
obstructions. Such an one is called a man of Tao,  
also a man who has nothing further to do.

—Lin-yu.

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## BUDDHISM AND THE CHAN SCHOOL OF CHINA

(The Speech was delivered at the New Asia College, Kowloon, Hong Kong, on March 14, 21, and April 18, 1954).

### INTRODUCTION

At the request of Prof. Tang Chun-Yi of the Department of Philosophy of the above college, I am giving this talk on Buddhism and Chan School of China. The subject is too wide and I don't know from which point to start. Today more than a hundred people have gathered, most of whom have received higher education. They are anxious to pursue Oriental culture. Some of these men are famous scholars. I feel very happy therefore to see them. Before I talk on this subject I shall explain my attitude to Buddhism. Forty years ago I remember, I was doubtful about the truth of Buddhism and was against it. Towards the end of the Ching dynasty, I very much liked to read the **New People's Journal** and the Chinese translation of books on western philosophy, literature and so forth. I felt at the time that the 20th century is a scientific age in which religion has no place. That being my view, I had written several articles attacking religious beliefs. At the same time, I was of the view that there was no difference between Buddhism and other religions. I had my doubts about the following five points in respect of the Buddhist religion:

1. Buddhism preached a negative religion, not responsible to society.
2. Buddhists were imagining of another unreal world, and therefore it propagated the idea of unreality.
3. If all men and women become monks and nuns, the world would come to a standstill.
4. If Buddhism was good why India was conquered by the British?
5. The ceremonies and rites of Buddhism led people to superstition.

Bearing these five points in mind, I wrote several articles in newspapers advising monks to be worldly men and nuns to get married. After the establishment of the Republic of China in 1911, there were many Buddhist Upasakas in Shanghai, like Wang Yi-Ting, Po Yi-Shen and Ti Chu-ching. They published a Buddhist journal called **Fu Hsueh Chung Pao**, or **A Collective Journal of Buddhist Learning**, for propagating the religion. Reading their contributions I became very angry. I was in Canton at the time and I sent one hundred Chinese dollars to a friend in Shanghai, asking him to buy Buddhist religious books. The Buddhist book **Liu Tsu Tan Chin** or **Sutra Spoken by the Sixth Patriarch, Hui Neng**, on

the High Seat of the Gem of Law was priced 20 cents only and the book of Surangama-Sutra was sixty cents. Therefore one hundred dollars could buy plenty of Buddhist books. I started reading the books with some prejudice. After six or seven months I got some knowledge of the Buddhist religion and came to the conclusion that everybody should possess some knowledge of Buddhism. Having acquired this knowledge of Buddhism, I am now ready to answer the five points regarding which I had doubts :

Note : Chan means 'Meditation', corruption of the Sanskrit word, Dhyana; also called Tsung-Men, 'Door of Escape.'

1. On the negative side, Buddhism taught people to be above lustfulness, hatred and ignorance and on the positive side Buddhism taught people to follow the commandments and attain spiritual wisdom through meditation. If people followed the principles laid down, they will attain the wisdom of the truth, of the beauty and of the completeness. Therefore such people would be the leading figures of society, in their life, and when they passed away their wisdom will remain in their Alaya or Repository Consciousness, so that they may re-appear when they were re-born in their future life, and whatever station in life they occupied either monks or Upasakas, or high officers, or scientists or philosophers, they would occupy eminent position in society.

2. Followers of Buddhism might covet Amitabha's Paradise of the Western World, but this Western World is in their heart and in their very place.

3. If we follow the Buddhist doctrines we can attain Buddhahood without going to the monasteries. The number of monks and nuns is very small, probably one in a thousand and they can by no means annihilate humanity.

4. After the Buddha attained Nirvana one thousand years ago, Hinduism was making great progress and the Mahayana Buddhism could not make similar progress. Only the Hinayana Buddhism prevailed in Ceylon, so India's conquest by the British had nothing to do with Buddhism.

5. The aim of Buddhist Vinaya or commandments is to teach people how to attain enlightenment. Its aim is not to lead people to superstitious ways.

Now I realized that by writing articles attacking the Buddhist religion I made very great mistake. At that time I wanted to become a monk and give up all worldly affairs and devote my time to the study of Buddhism. Pre-occupation and pressure of works however didn't allow me to do so. Later on I read Saddharma-Pundarika Sutra that Buddhist canons and general books on any subject are in accord with Buddha's Dharma. Therefore, after office hours, I used to do meditation at home, and now I have some idea about spiritual experiences. In the 9th year of the Republic of China (1925 A.D.), one day I felt that Buddhist canons are very valuable for the people to learn. In Canton there are many

Buddhist monasteries occupied by the armies, we are unable to get Buddhist books from there. Therefore I collected some Buddhist friends and opened a Reading Hall of Buddhist Books and a Publishing House at Temple of Grand Buddha in Canton. Thereafter I was doing the work of propagation of Buddhism. This is my confession.

I shall now proceed to give my ideas about Buddhism, the Chan School of Buddhism and the relations between Buddhism and the Chan School.

## CHAPTER I

### BUDDHISM

The Buddha is the final attainment of enlightenment as against mundane affairs and living beings. Ignorance means living beings, and enlightenment means Buddha. Sakyamuni who realized this doctrine had great pity and compassion for living beings. He wanted living beings should be enlightened. He preached his doctrine of Buddhism for forty-nine years. His lectures were collected in books forms called Tripitaka of Twelve Divisions of the Mahayana canons. The Tripitaka is Pitaka of Sutra, Pitaka of Vinaya and Pitaka of Sastra. The Twelve divisions of the Mahayana canons are given as follows :—

- |                   |                |                |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Sutra;         | 2. Geya;       | 3. Gatha;      |
| 4. Nidana;        | 5. Itivrttaka; | 6. Jataka;     |
| 7. Adbuta-dharma; | 8. Avadana;    | 9. Upadesa;    |
| 10. Udana;        | 11. Vaipulya;  | 12. Vyakarana. |

Some people say that among this twelve division of Sutras, two belong to Hinayana and the rest are Mahayana. It is incorrect. As a matter of fact the Sutras of Mahayana and Hinayana which were preached by Buddha are contained in these twelve divisions. If we wish to understand, what Buddhism is we must know what is Five Periods of Buddha's Teachings, the Ten Schools of Buddhism and the Five Vehicles conveying the Karma-reward which differs according to the vehicle.

#### (A) The Five Periods of Buddha's Teachings

Sakyamuni Buddha who preached the doctrines of Buddhism can be divided into five periods of teachings. According to Tien-tai School they are :—

1. The Avatamsaka or first period in three divisions each of seven days, after his enlightenment, when he preached the contents of this Sutra.
2. The twelve years of Buddha's preaching the Agamas in the deer park.

3. The eight years of preaching Mahayana-cum-Hinayana doctrines, the **Vaipulya** period.

4. The twenty-two years of Buddha's preaching the **Prajna** sutras.

5. The eight years of Buddha's preaching the **Saddharma-Pundarika Sutra** (and, in a day and a night, the **Nirvana Sutra**.)

The Tien-Tai School also classified the Buddha's teachings into eight kinds of doctrines, which eight are sub-divided into two groups; the one is four kinds of teaching of the content of the Truth accommodated to the capacity of Buddha's disciples and the other four modes of instruction. The eight kinds of doctrine are given below :—

1. The Tripitaka teaching, for Sravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, the Bodhisattva doctrine being subordinate; it also included the primitive Sunya doctrine as developed in the **Satyasiddhi Sastra**.

2. His later 'intermediate' teaching for Sravaka, Pratyekabuddha, and Bodhisattva, to which are attributed the doctrines of Dharmalaksana and Madhyamika.

3. His differentiated, bodhisattva teaching, definitely Mahayana.

4. His final, perfect, bodhisattva, universal teaching as preached in the **Saddharma Pundarika Sutra**.

The four methods of instruction are :

1. Direct teaching without reserve of the whole truth, e.g. the **Avatamsaka Sutra**.

2. Gradual teaching, e.g. the **Agama**, the **Vaipulya** and **Prajana Suttas**.

3. Esoteric teaching, only understood by special members of the assembly.

4. Indeterminate teaching, from which each listener would derive benefit according to his intertation.

The five divisions of Buddhism according to the Hwa Yen (Avatamsaka) School as follows :—

1. The primary stage of Mahayana, with two sections the realistic and Idealistic.

2. The Hinayana which interprets Nirvana as annihilation.

3. The Mahayan in its final stage, teaching the 'Suchness' and universal Buddhahood.

4. The intuitive school, e.g. by right concentration of thought, or faith, apart from 'works'.

5. The perfect teaching of the Hwa Yen, combining all the rest into one all-embracing vehicle.

The above five are now differentiated into ten schools of thought:

1. The school of the reality of self and things.
2. The school of reality of things but not of soul.
3. The school of things which have neither creation nor destruction.
4. The school of present things are both apparent and real.
5. The school of common ideas are wrong, fundamental reality is the only truth.
6. The school of things are merely names.
7. The school of all things are unreal.
8. The school on Bhutatathata is not unreal.
9. The school of phenomena and their perception are to be got rid of.
10. The school of the perfect, all-inclusive, and complete teaching of the One Vehicle.

The above said ten schools of thought, from the first to the sixth are belonging to the Hinayana Buddhism, while the seventh belongs to the primary stage of Mahayana, the eighth to Mahayana in its final stage division, the ninth belongs to intuitive school and the tenth belongs to the school of perfect teaching of Hwa Yen.

Besides the classification of Buddha's teachings by the School of Tein Tai and Hwa Yen and there is also as defined by the Dharmalaksana School into three periods such as:—

1. When Buddha taught the reality of the Skandhas and elements, but denied the common belief in real personality.
2. When Buddha negated the idea of the reality of things and advocated that all was unreal.
3. The Madhyama, that mind is real, while things are unreal.

### **(B) The Ten Schools of Buddhism**

The traditional number of Schools is ten and their names are derived either from the principal Scriptures or from fundamental doctrine, or from the locality where they were founded or flourished later, e.g.:—

(1) The School of Chu She: The name of this school is derived from the Sanskrit word, Kosa, meaning **Abhidharma-kosa-sastra**, which composed by Vasubandhu, its principal scripture. This is also called the School of Reality.

(2) The School of Cheng Shih: This school based itself on a Scripture of which the Sanskrit name is **Satya-sidhi-sastra** of Harivarman, from which its name 'True Success' is taken. It is the Chinese equivalent of a subdivision, called Sautrantika, of the Madhyamika School in India.

(3) The Vinaya School: This school takes its name (Lu Tsung) from the Chinese word 'Lu', which is used as the equivalent of the Sanskrit

Vinaya. Another name for it is the Nan Shan Tsung, taken from that of hill in Shensi province. The founder was Tao Hsuan, who laid little stress on doctrine but considered strict discipline essential to religious life.

(4) The School of Three Sastras: This school takes its name (San Lun Tsung) from the fact that it is based on three Sastras. The names of the three Sastras on which it is based are as follows:

- (a) **Madhyamika Sastra** by Nagarjuna;
- (b) **Dvadasanikaya** by Nagarjuna; and
- (c) **Sata Sastra** by Aryadeva.

(5) The Tien Tai School: This school found by Chih-I of the Sui dynasty. It is nominally based on the scripture known as **Saddharma-pundarika Sutra**, from which the school derives its alias.

The School of Tien Tai founded the theory of "Three Chih or Cessation", "Three insights", "Three dogmas" and the 'Six stages of Bodhisattva developments' etc.

The School denied the reality of all phenomenal existence, and defined the noumenal world in negative terms, its aims seems not to have been nihilistic, but the advocacy of a reality beyond human conception and expression, which in our terminology may be termed a spiritual realm.

Note: (1) In practice there are three methods of attaining the Samadhi, 1. by fixing the mind on the nose, navel etc.; 2. by stopping every thought as it arises; and 3. by dwelling on the thought that nothing exists of itself, but from a preceding cause.

(2) The Three Studies (Insights): 1. Study of all as void; 2. Study of all as unreal; and 3. Study of all as the Via Media inclusive of both.

(3) The Three Dogmas laid down by Tien Tai School are: 1. By Sunya is meant that things causally produced are in their essential nature unreal; 2. though things are unreal in their essential nature their derived forms are real; and 3. but both are one, being of the one or reality.

(4) The Six Stages of Bodhisattva developments are: 1. Realization that all beings are of Buddha-nature; 2. the apprehension of terms, that those who only hear and believe are in the Buddha-law and potentially Buddha; 3. advance beyond terminology to meditation; 4. approximation to perfection in purity; 5. discrimination of truth and its progressive experiential proof; and 6. perfect enlightenment i.e. fruition of holiness.

(6) The Hua Yen School: It is taken from the title of the **Buddhavatamsaka Mahavaipulya Sutra**, meaning **The Expanded Sutra of the Adornments of Buddha**. Hsien Hsiu is regarded as the first patriarch of the School in China.

(7) The Tzu En School: It is taken from the name of a Buddhist monastery in the province of Shensi and was founded by Hsuan-tsang, the founder of Dharmalakshana School of the Tang dynasty. His disciple, Kuei-chi who lived in the Tzu En Monastery through his whole life, and it therefore also called.

(8) The Chan School: It is also called the Hridaya School, and shall be discussed later on.

(9) **The School of True Word:** It is also called *Mi Tsung*, 'Secret Teaching.' Its two chief texts are: the *Vairocana Sutra* and the *Sutra of Vajra Apex*. The three esoteric duties of body, mouth, and mind are to hold the symbol in the hand, recite the *Dharanis* as the principle of the eternal.

(10) **The School of Pure Land:** Established by Priest *Hui-yuan* of the *Tsin* dynasty. The chief tenet of this School is salvation by faith in *Amitabha's Sukhavati* (Pure Land). It is also called the *Lotus School*, because the founder lived in a monastery by the side of a lotus-pond at *Lu-shan* mountains.

Only half of the above said Ten Schools of Buddhism was produced in China itself. They talk about doctrines like heavenly flowers dropping everywhere and technical terms so thickly gathered like groves. I cannot explain it within such a short time, I think most of the young audiences will feel mystified and will not be able to catch the point. As a matter of fact, at Buddha's time there were not so many schools. I want you to understand it easily, I will give a sketch on *Dharmaparyaya* of the Five Vehicles of primitive Buddhism in order to make you like a bird which survey the surroundings.

#### (c) **Dharmaparyaya of the Five Vehicles of Buddhism.**

The five vehicles conveying to the Karma-reward which differs according to the vehicle; they are generally summed up as follows:—

1. Rebirth among men conveyed by observing the five commandments namely against killing, stealing, adultery, lying, and drinking intoxicating liquors. The observance of these five ensures rebirth in the human realm and away from sufferings of the three directions of reincarnation, the *Naraka-gati* or that of hells; *Preta-gati*, of hungry ghosts and *Tiryagyonigati*, of animals.

2. Rebirth among the *Devas* by the ten forms of good action. It will ensure the people away from the eight distresses—birth, age, sickness, death, parting with what we love, meeting with what we hate, unattained aims, and all the ills of the five *skandhas*.

3. Rebirth among the *Sravakas* by the four noble truths. The four are *Duhkha* (suffering), *Samudaya* (cause of suffering) *Nirodha* (cessation of suffering) and *Marga* (noble path which leads to salvation). if we wish cessation of the sufferings as void and extinct, we have to cultivate the *Bodhipaksika Dharma* or thirty-seven conditions leading to Buddhahood. *Arhat* is the highest type among the *Sravakas*.

4. Rebirth among *Pratyeka-buddhas* by the twelve *Nidanas*. The observance of these twelve *Nidanas* ensures to attain the *Pratveka-Buddha* one who seeks enlightenment for himself, defined in the *Buddhist Sutra* as a believer who is diligent and zealous in seeking wisdom, loves loneliness and seclusion, and understands deeply the *Nidanas*.

5. Rebirth among the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas by the Six Paramitas. The six Paramitas are the six things that ferry one beyond the sea of mortality to Nirvana as follows:—

- (a) Dana Paramita, charity, including the bestowing of the truth on others;
- (b) Sila Paramita, keeping the commandments;
- (c) Ksanti Paramita, patience under insult;
- (d) Virya Paramita, zeal and progress;
- (e) Dhyana, contemplation; and
- (f) Prajna Paramita, wisdom, the power to discern reality. It is the last which carries across the Samsara to the shores of Nirvana.

The above-mentioned five vehicles conveying the Karma-reward are the process of leading laymen to Buddha-hood. Buddha preached these Five Commandments, the Ten Forms of Good Action, the Four Noble Truths, the Twelve Nidanas and the Six Paramitas upon the ordinary people are very common things. There is nothing strange or wonderful about them. Everybody can cultivate spirituality by following these methods and thereby attain Buddhahood. This is the original phase of primitive Buddhism. Every one should depend on himself to cultivate spiritual life. There was no such thing as superstition. The twelve divisions of Buddhist canons which were preached by Buddha were meant for bringing out wisdom and make people realizes that Buddha-nature is inside them. The Buddhist Sutras are like fingers that point to the moon, but the finger is not the moon. A Buddhist sage said: "Sutras are like yellow leaves which being brought before a child make him stop crying." If we study the Sutras word by word, we shall do just as we cut the yellow leaves into different shapes. A Buddhist scholar Su Shan-jen said; "If we speak only a yard, we do just as much as we do by speaking one foot." It means that it is better to do a little than to speak too much. The man who has too much knowledge from the books is always away from spirituality.

We have noted the Dharmaparyaya of Five Vehicles of Buddhism. There were no Mantras or ceremonies, neither any emphasis on spell or charms. Seven hundred years after Buddha had attain Nirvana, there were not many eminent Buddhists to succeed to his position, therefore Hinduism came into prominence again. One Nagarjuna was born. He introduced Hindu rites and ceremonies into Buddhism. Therefore a School of True Word was established. There are many Gods of the School of True Word that were taken from Hinduism, for example, the Ming-Wang of Three Periods like Mahatejas etc. incarnation of Lord Shiva. Such things Buddha did not mention in his time. The School of True Word which was introduced in China during the Tang dynasty. Though it contains many good things deal with spiritual cultivation. But from that time till now there was none to follow its true methods to attain Buddhahood. We only



have seen those followers of this School who pray for fortune and other good things for the people, and when people die they chant mantras and make prayers. They may go to heaven. But still they have many good ideas. Afterwards the followers of this School were influenced by the Taoists. They make paper dolls, paper horses, paper houses etc. They have forgotten their own original ideas and changed the face of Buddhism. It is for this reason that many people think that Buddhism would lead to superstitious ways. This evening there are many eminent scholars here, who should study this Dharmaparyaya of Five Vehicles of Buddhism. An ancient worthy said: "There is an immortal on the edge of colourful clouds. He holds a red silken fan which covers his half face. People should quickly see the immortal, but not his fan."

## CHAPTER II

### The Chan School

The doctrine of the Chan School is the superior truth of Buddhist religion. We cannot explain it by speech or words. There are many followers of the Chan School, but few with whom we can discuss things. During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), I was a layman, and I was serving under the Government at Northern Kuantung province. During my leisure hours, I used to contact an eminent Buddhist monk whose name was Hsu Yun. He is a great abbot of Chan Buddhism. Afterwards I became his disciple, and he gave me a Buddhist name called Kuei Yun. This old abbot always asked people to recite Buddha's name. If any one asked him what was Chan Buddhism, he answered by saying who is reciting Buddha's name? Therefore, only one or two people were able to be taken by him as Sthavira disciples. During this period of degeneration and extinction of the Buddha-Dharma, very few people could understand the true meaning of Chan Buddhism. It was not that Abbot Hsu Yun didn't wish to teach people, but it was the people would not understand his teachings. To-night more people have attended my lecture than last time. This goes to show that more people are interested in Chan Buddhism. This is a sign that Buddha-Dharma has passed the period of decay, and is now rising. I shall divide this chapter into six sections:

#### (A) The Origin of the Chan School.

Sakyamuni Buddha who had been forced to modify his doctrines to suit the capacity of his disciples, once picked up a flower and held it up for the assembly of monks to see. One of them, Mahakasyapa, responded to this gesture with a smile, indicating that he alone understood the profound truth it signified. The Buddha then called him aside and said: "I have here a True Dharma, a wonderful way leading to Nirvana. This is the reality which is not seen and a very subtle form of the Dharma. I now