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ABBREVIATIONS

A	*Aṅguttara-nikāya*
AO	*Acta Orientalia*
AM	*Asia Major*
As	*Aṭṭhasālinī*
BEFEO	*Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient*
BHSD	F. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*
BM	*Burlington Magazine*
BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
BSR	*Buddhist Studies Review*
CIS	*Contributions to Indian Sociology*
CPD	*Critical Pāli Dictionary*
CSSH	*Comparative Studies in Society and History*
CSLCY	*Chin-so liu-chu yin*, in TC, no. 1015
D	*Dīgha-nikāya*
Dīp	*Dīpavaṃsa*
EA	*Études Asiatiques*
EFEO	Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient
EJS	*European Journal of Sociology*
EI	*Epigraphia Indica*
ERE	*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, Edinburgh, T.&T. Clark, 1911
HJAS	*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*
HR	*History of Religions*
IASWR	Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions
IBK	*Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū*
IHQ	*Indian Historical Quarterly*
IIJ	*Indo-Iranian Journal*
IT	*Indologica Taurinensia*
JA	*Journal Asiatique*
JAS	*Journal of Asian Studies*
JHR	*Journal of the History of Religions*
JIABS	*Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*

JNCBRAS	*Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JNRC	*Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*
JPTS	*Journal of the Pali Texts Society*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JS	*Journal des Savants*
Kv	*Kathāvatthu*
Kv-a	*Kathāvatthu-aṭṭhakathā*
MCB	*Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques*
M	*Majjhima-nikāya*
Mhbv	*Mahābodhivaṃsa*
Mhv	*Mahāvaṃsa*
Mp	*Manoratha-pūranī*
MSMS	Monumenta Serica Monograph Series
Paṭis	*Paṭisambhidā-magga*
PTS	Pali Text Society
RH	*Revue Historique*
RO	*Rocznik Orientalistyczny*
S	*Saṃyutta-nikāya*
SBE	Sacred Books of the East
Saddhamma-s	*Saddhamma-saṅgaha*
SLJBS	*Sri Lanka Journal of Buddhist Studies*
Sp	*Samantapāsādikā*
SSAC	*Studies in South Asian Culture*
T	The Taishō edition of the Buddhist Canon in Chinese (vol. no.)
Th	*Theragāthā*
TMKFTCC	*Tao-men k'o-fa ta-ch'üan-chi*, in TC, no. 1215
TP	*T'oung Pao*
TC	The Taoist Canon, text numbered in accordance with the Harvard-Yenching Index to its titles
TTD	Tibetan Tripiṭaka, sDe-dge Edition
TTP	Tibetan Tripiṭaka, Peking Edition
UCR	*Univeristy of Ceylon Review*, Colombo
VBA	*Visva-bharati Annals*
Vin	*Vinaya-piṭaka*
Vism	*Visuddhimagga*
WZKSO	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- (und Ost) asiens*
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

Devil's Valley to Omega Point: Reflections on the Emergence of a Theme from the Nō

T.H. Barrett

Despite the mention of Japanese literature in my subtitle, and the naming of a destination on a specifically Christian horizon, the itinerary I propose to lay before the reader lies strictly within the confines of China. The Japanese section of the road has already been well covered by other scholars dealing with the ultimate salvation of plants and trees as a literary theme in mediaeval Japan.[1] As for the twentieth-century conception of an Omega Point towards which creation yet proceeds, although this, too, was arguably the product of a sojourn in China, my reading so far suggests that no more than coincidence is involved here: the singular, lonely intelligence responsible for fusing Christian doctrine and evolution theory into this splendid, dazzling vision seems to have been if anything completely at odds with the religious sensibilities of its Chinese environment,[2] and those who have made it their business to compare Buddhist and Catholic notions of spirituality have (sometimes quite explicitly) kept this particular thinker's work out of consideration.[3]

By bringing in the term Omega Point I wish to indicate merely that more than one civilization has come up with the ultimate in what I would call "cosmic optimism ", the notion that the entire phenomenal world can look forward to a glorious future of religious fulfilment: no more detailed comparison is intended. I do not even wish to tackle the question as to why such "cosmic optimism " should

[1] By Donald H. Shively, "Buddhahood for the Nonsentient: a theme in No plays ", *HJAS*, 20, 1957, 135–161, whence (p. 150) my epigraph; W. LaFleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature ", *HR*, 13.2, 1973, 93–128, and 13.3, 1974, 227–248. LaFleur, 94, note 1, lists the main Japanese studies of the development of the doctrine.

[2] See Claude Rivière, *En Chine avec Teilhard*, 1938–1944, Paris, 1968, 130–6, 143–5: her summary on page 132 ("le Père aimait peu la Chine et les Chinois") alas says it all.

[3] One recent comparative work does consider the "grass and trees becoming Buddhas" as understood in the T'ien-t'ai tradition of Buddhism, but simply as a prologue to some inter-faith reflections on environmentalism: see Nanzan shūkyō bunka kenkyūjo, ed., *Tendai Bukkyō to Kirisuto-kyō*, Tokyo, 1988, 183–206. For an explicit exclusion of Teilhard from consideration in a comparative discussion of Zen and Christian mysticism, see the following note.

emerge—though I note that some would argue that a sentiment of hope constitutes one of the primary forms of religious life[4]—my only interest is in *how* the idea came to the fore in China; who was the Chinese equivalent of that remarkable Jesuit thinker?

Our journey of discovery must, however, start a long way from Omega Point, a long way even from Devil's Valley, in a dilapidated barnyard (or so it would seem) somewhere in the state of Sung, some four centuries before the Christian era. Here the iconoclastic philosopher Chuang-tzu is represented as discoursing on the Tao, the ultimate unseen Way, with a neighbour. In the translation of Angus Graham:

> "Tung-kuo-tzu inquired of Chuang-tzu
> 'Where is it, that which we call the Way?'
> 'There is nowhere it is not.'
> 'Unallowable unless you specify.'
> 'It is in molecrickets and ants.'
> 'What, so low?'
> 'It is in the weeds of the ricefields.'
> 'What, still lower?'
> 'It is in the tiles and shards.'
> 'What, worse than ever!'
> 'It is in the shit and piss.'
> Tung-kuo-tzu did not reply."[5]

Now as a statement of the omnipresence of the underlying Tao, these remarks attributed to Chuang-tzu could hardly be improved upon, but what they do not tell us about this Tao, this Way, is where it was supposed to lead. Indeed, throughout all the writings ascribed to Chuang-tzu, or to his alleged predecessor Lao-tzu, this does not seem to be an issue: the unchanging nature of the hidden Way is affirmed; any suggestion that it is going anywhere is completely avoided.[6] So we must pass on, and stop off again in the early fifth century of the Christian era, in the southern Chinese capital of Nanking, or Chien-k'ang as it was then known. Here in this vast metropolis the monasteries of an originally alien way of thought,

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[4] See Peter L. Berger, *A Rumor of Angels*, Garden City, New York, 1970, 54–5. William Johnston, *The Still Point: Reflections on Zen and Christian Mysticism*, New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London, 1971, contains the best part of a chapter on Teilhard, but finds him wanting (pages 167–8) in some important respects, and less similar to Zen (page 172) than might be assumed.

[5] A.C. Graham, *Chuang-tzu*, London, 1981, 161; note (page 158) that this passage is seen as part of a cycle of stories later than Chuang-tzu's authentic work and distinguished by themes adumbrating the concerns which emerged centuries afterwards in Chinese Buddhism.

[6] I have referred to G. Finazzo, *The Notion of Tao in Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu*, Taipei, 1968, to check this.

Buddhism, are very much in evidence, and here learned Chinese monks may be found debating the key concepts of the new religion in the light of their own cultural heritage. The greatest of these controversialists is Tao-sheng (c. 360–434), who is particularly exercised by a question of latency, of hiddenness—not quite the same one as Chuang-tzu, though; he seems to have in mind the Confucian thinker Mencius and his theory of the 'beginnings of goodness ' hidden within the individual, which allow every man to become a sage like the paragons Yao and Shun.

But the question is now posed in a Buddhist form; does everyone possess the 'Buddha-nature', *fo-hsing*, the potential within them for achieving Buddhahood? Tao-sheng's answer is yes, even the most depraved have this capacity. Nor did he stop there: such a capacity could, he declared, be realised very rapidly, 'in one go', as it were. This proved to be a particularly controversial thesis, generating a protracted argument over 'sudden' versus 'gradual' enlightenment, even though (to judge by the recent research of Whalen Lai) Tao-sheng seems to have wandered almost nonchalantly into this controversy: maybe it was just that there was an argument there already waiting to happen.[7]

One point that was not in dispute for Tao-sheng or for his Buddhist successors in the following two centuries was that Buddhahood, fast or slow, was the prerogative of sentient beings only: the external world remained, as in Indian Buddhist thought, no more than a vessel, no more than a backdrop against which the great drama of enlightenment was played out.[8]

But, meanwhile, what of Chuang-tzu's spiritual descendants—or at least those who claimed him as their forefather, the Taoists? Their monasteries, too, were in the first half of the fifth century on the verge of spreading across the land also, in emulation of the Buddhists. Originally Taoist clergy had not lived apart from the faithful, it seems, except in small hermitages—though some of these were by this time well established. A source contemporary with Tao-sheng, for instance, notes that a Taoist hermitage already existed in Ching-chou (modern Hubei province) on a mountain by a stream known as the Clear Brook or (through a minor orthographic alteration) the Blue Brook, Ch'ing-hsi.[9] The author of this record would have known that a poet of the early fourth century, Kuo P'u (276–324), had already written of a mysterious 'Taoist of the Blue Brook' glimpsed in

[7] . See Whalen Lai, "Tao-sheng's Theory of Sudden Enlightenment Re-examined ", in Peter N. Gregory, ed., *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, Honolulu, 1987, 169–200: note that the historical development uncovered by Lai actually suggests a process the reverse of that given in my summary: the notion of a universal Buddha-nature was a by-product of polemics over sudden enlightenment.

[8] The *bhājana-loka* of standard Buddhist texts.

[9] See the *Ching-chou chi*, as preserved in Wang Mo, ed., *Han-T'ang ti-li shu ch'ao*, Peking, 1961, 414.

the vicinity, and that in his poetic imagination this lone figure had been identified with Kuei-ku-tzu, the Master of Devil's Valley, a shadowy political thinker and strategist almost as ancient as Chuang-tzu.[10] Other places claimed the Master for themselves; other places claimed the name Blue or Clear Brook.[11] But on the basis of Kuo's poetic flight of fancy this scenic valley in Ching-chou seems to have become a favourite haunt of religious recluses and scholars.

The Buddhists arrived about a century later, in the person of the redoubtable monk Tao-hsien, who in 517 started a twenty-eight year occupancy of Blue Brook mountain in the face of sustained hostility from the Taoists already present.[12] By 594, when the Buddhist polemical essayist Fa-lin (572–640) arrived, the mountain was evidently a major centre of learning, for we read that he was able to acquire an education in both Confucianism and Taoism there, besides a training in his own faith:[13] the wealth of citations in his works of the literature of his opponents' traditions gives ample testimony to the accuracy of this account.[14] A brief picture of the communal life of study and meditation practised by Buddhists on Blue Brook Mountain in the late sixth century may also be found in the biography of Fa-hsi (572–632), who appears to have had some forty students to his name.[15]

Another older Buddhist contemporary, Fa-lun (528–c. 605), on the other hand, seems to have supplemented his studies (evidently, again, encompassing Taoism and Confucianism)[16] at the Blue Brook by recourse to a separate Buddhist centre some fifty kilometers away, the Jade Spring Monastery, Yü-ch'üan ssu.[17] There are perhaps some grounds for wondering whether two separate monks, both called

[10] See Hsiao T'ung, comp., *Wen-hsüan* 21, Hong Kong, 1960, 461: commentary on this passage provided Wang Mo (see preceding note) with the fragment of the *Ching-chou chi* just cited.

[11] The spot most usually favoured for the location of Devil's Valley was quite elsewhere, at Yang-ch'eng in Henan, to judge from the materials collected in Ch'in En-fu, ed., *Kuei-ku-tzu*, Beijing, 1985, reprint of 1805, though the valley of the Blue Brook did at one time lay claim to a cave allegedly inhabited long ago by the Master: see Wang Hsiang-chih, *Yü-ti chi-sheng* (comp. 1227), Taipei, 1962 reprint of 1860 ed., 73.7b. *Cf.* also note 33 below. Identifying the Blue Brook has been a matter of some concern to Japanese scholars: *cf.* Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, Dōkyō to Bukkyō, Vol. One, Tokyo, 1959, 311–14; Kamata Shigeo, Chūgoku Bukkyō shisōshi kenkyū, Tokyo, 1969, 173–218; the matter has been resolved by the discovery of the new source cited in n. 32 below.

[12] See Tao-hsüan (596–667), comp., *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 25, 651a–b, in T, vol. 50.

[13] See Yen-tsung, *T'ang hu-fa shamen Fa-lin pieh-chuan* 1, 198b, in T, vol. 50.

[14] See Ishii Masako, Ōfuchi Ninji, comp., *Rikuchō, Tō, Sō no kobunken shoin Dōkyō tenseki mokuroku, sakuin*, Tokyo, 1988, 312–321, for a complete listing of the Taoist works cited in his writings.

[15] *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 19, 587a-b.

[16] *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 9, 500a.

[17] To judge by Chih-p'an, comp. (c.1270), *Fo-tsu t'ung chi* 9, 199c, in T, vol. 49.

Fa-lun, may not have studied consecutively at the two centres,[18] yet the Jade Spring and the Blue Brook were certainly in communication during the seventh century, in the person of another monk named Tao-yüeh, who started his career at the former site, but for most of his life lived on Blue Brook Mountain.[19] The Jade Spring Monastery was a much newer factor in the religious life of Ching-chou: it had first been constructed and served as a base during the years 592 to 595 for Chih-i (538–597), the great systematizer of the T'ien-t'ai school of Chinese Buddhism.[20]

Here later followers of the school maintained throughout the seventh and eighth centuries a centre of doctrinal study independent of the school's main base in the T'ien-t'ai mountains of Zhejiang.[21] Though the T'ien-t'ai tradition as a whole seems to have possessed a coherence spanning such local centres unusual for Buddhist groups in China at this period,[22] continuing support for the school in the Ching-chou area was to be expected, since Chih-i himself hailed from the region,[23] and many Ching-chou monks like Fa-lin and Fa-lun could claim some connection with him.[24]

But a word is now necessary once more concerning the Taoists, who by the seventh century were in a difficult position, despite strong imperial support. Taoism during this period has been described as "crypto-Buddhist",[25] which is an unjustified slur, since the religion had ancient and purely indigenous roots, whether it went back to Chuang-tzu or not. But certainly the Chinese had always been staggered by the overwhelming prolixity of Buddhist literature,[26] and it is quite

[18] It is clear that Chih-p'an, as cited in the preceding note, does not explicitly identify his Fa-lun with the famous Fa-lun who died early in the seventh century; there are also grounds for believing that the famous Fa-lun was already too prominent and too busy by the time of the founding of the Jade Spring Monastery to have had any opportunity to study there: *cf.* L. Hurvitz, *Chih-i*, 538–597: An introduction to the life and ideas of a Chinese Buddhist monk, *MCB*, 12, 1962, 154.
[19] *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 25, 661c–662a.
[20] Hurvitz, *Chih-i*, 154-7.
[21] Sekiguchi Shindai, *Tendai Shikan no kenkyū*, Tokyo, 1969, 185–205.
[22] There are signs that T'ien-t'ai saw itself not simply as a teaching tradition but as a much more organized system of both theory and practice: see Muranaka Yushō, "Tendai shoki gyōhō no shūsei ni tsuite ", *IBK*, 23.2, March, 1975, 561–6.
[23] See Hurvitz, *Chih-i*, 106.
[24] For Fa-lin, note the point raised by Muranaka on the last page of the article cited in note 22 above. For Fa-lun, see Hurvitz, *Chih-i*, 154, note 1, and *cf.* Fo-tsu t'ung-chi 7, 186c. For a general study of Chih-i's disciples, which reveals a strong Ching-chou connection, see Ikeda Rosan, "Chigi metsugo no Tendai kyōdan to dōkō ", *IBK*, 21.1, December, 1972, 338–343.
[25] Thus A.F. Wright, in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 3, Cambridge, 1979, 77. In fairness to Professor Wright's memory, he did do much to promote the scholarship which has led since his death to a revision of this view.
[26] See the remarks of Mou-tzu (early fourth century?) preserved in Seng-yu, comp., *Hung-ming chi* 1, 2b, in T, vol. 52.

clear that, faced with such fecund opposition, the Taoists succumbed to the temptation to plagiarize Buddhist materials more or less wholesale—a practice in which they were, of course, found out and which drew from the Buddhists quite predictable ridicule. For the Taoists had been at times quite mechanical in their rewriting, replacing 'Buddha' with 'Tao'[27]—and hence, it seems, 'Buddha-nature' with a new coinage, 'Tao-nature', *tao-hsing*, which first appears in the late sixth or early seventh century.[28]

But, of course, the Tao-nature is in everything, and so even in inanimate objects. The explicit assertion that it is in "tiles and shards", in "trees and stones", is made by the Taoist Meng An-p'ai in his *Tao-chiao i-shu*.[29] We do not know exactly when this text was written, but one thing that is patently obvious is that although it only quotes Taoist sources,[30] it is organized in such a way as to mark a strong debt to T'ien-t'ai Buddhism.[31] As for Meng, he is described as a "Taoist of the Blue Brook "—and just by chance a literary anthology has preserved a record by Ch'en Tzu-ang (661–702), a well-known poet, of Meng's success in securing imperial support for the renovation of a Taoist foundation in Ching-chou in 699.[32] So Meng's *Tao-chiao i-shu* is a late seventh or early eighth century product of the Blue Brook religious environment—an environment which, incidentally, seems to have continued to attract admirers of the Master of Devil's Valley well into the ninth century.[33]

What is most striking is that Meng's assertion of the religious potential of inanimate objects must antedate by several decades the first explicit statement that trees and stones possess the Buddha-nature—and that that statement may be found in the writings of Chan-jan (711–782), next to Chih-i the most famous

[27] See the remarks in K. Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, Princeton, 1964, 474, for some occasional lapses in this process; Kamata's study of Buddhism and Taoism, cited above, note 11, provides ample examples of borrowing, too.
[28] According to Kamata, 53ff.
[29] Kamata, 67–74.
[30] See Ishii and Ōfuchi, 150–160, for a complete listing of its copious citations of Taoist texts.
[31] See the analysis in Kamata, 185–198.
[32] Li Fang et al., comp. (987), *Wen-yüan ying-hua*, Beijing, 1966, 822.1a-2b. For Ch'en, see (pending the appearance of a SOAS publication on his work) the discussion in Stephen Owen, The Poetry of the Early T'ang, Yale U.P., 1977, 157–183: the *Wen-yüan ying-hua* 848.5a-b, 734.8a-b, provides ample testimony to his interest in Taoism. Meng, like Shen-hsiu (see McRae's remarks cited below, note 39), seems to have taken advantage of the Empress Wu's family connections with the Ching-chou area.
[33] See the poem by Li She in P'eng Ting-ch'iu et al., comp., *Ch'üan T'ang shih* 477, Peking, 1960, 5423–4; Li styled himself 'Master of the Clear Brook', apparently in imitation of the Master of Devil's Valley.

thinker in the T'ien-t'ai tradition.[34] Now it must be conceded that any link between Meng and Chan-jan can only have been indirect: Chan-jan is most unlikely to have ever visited Ching-chou, and represents a strand within the T'ien-t'ai tradition apparently unconnected with the Jade Spring Monastery.[35] By the time that Meng was active, moreover, there is some evidence of Taoist familiarity with T'ien-t'ai thought which may be traced not to Ching-chou but to a Taoist presence on the T'ien-t'ai mountains themselves.[36]

It must also be admitted that there is also a considerable consensus amongst students of Chinese Buddhism that Buddhahood for the nonsentient was already on the agenda during the seventh century. No one seems to have felt obliged to make explicit claims in the way that Chan-jan later did, but such thinkers as Chi-tsang (549–623) and Fa-tsang (643–712), it has been argued, already concede the possibility in their discussions of the Buddha-nature.[37]

Some evidence has also been adduced which would make the Northern Ch'an leader Shen-hsiu (606?–706) a very clear (if tacit) supporter of the religious prospects of the non-sentient.[38] This is of particular interest, since Shen-hsiu was

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[34] See note 31 above. It will have become obvious that this essay owes a very great deal to the remarkable pioneering research of Kamata Shigeo, which was, however, carried out prior to the realization by Japanese scholarship of the true date of Meng An-p'ai. The source listed in note 32 invalidates Kamata's belief that Meng was influenced by Chan-jan, and raises the strong possibility that the direction of the influence was the other way round; it does not invalidate Kamata's research into the similarities between Meng and Chiao-jan. Chan-jan's writings have long served as the *locus classicus* for the notion that vegetation too has a spiritual destiny: they are even treated briefly in English in Fung Yu-lan's well-known *History of Chinese Philosophy*.

[35] Hibi Senshō, *Tōdai Tendaigaku josetsu*, Tokyo, 1966, gives a full account of the historical background to Chan-jan's writings, including a detailed study of his travels, which took him nowhere near Ching-chou.

[36] This is the view taken by Livia Köhn; see her Seven Steps to the Tao, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XX, Nettetal, 1987, 27, 67, though the matter is somewhat more complex than this study allows, as is shown by the research of Meng Wen-t'ung, e.g. as republished in *Chung-kuo che-hsüeh* 4, 1980, 318.

[37] For some discussion in English, see La Fleur, 95, and also T. Unnō, "The Buddhatā theory of Fa-tsang ", *Transactions of the International Conference of Orientalists in Japan* 8, 1963, 34–41. Japanese scholarship continues to interest itself in the part played by the writings of these two men in the emergence of the doctrine of Buddhahood for the non-sentient; the most recent study that I have been able to consult has been Akao Eikei, "Hōzō ni mieru sōmoku jōbutsu ni tsuite ", *IBK*, 32.2, March, 1984, 404–411. All the work done in this vein tends to view the process of development as taking place solely within the Chinese Buddhist tradition itself: there is, of course, much to be said for this, but Kamata's work has (to my mind) shown that Taoism cannot simply be left out of the picture. For one Japanese survey that does adopt a broader perspective, see the following note.

[38] Kamata, 203–4. Fukunaga Mitsuji, "Issai shujō to sōmoku doseki ", *Bukkyō shigaku*, 23.2, March, 1981, 103–118, gives a masterly diachronic survey of the religious prospects of non-sentient objects in China, including some reference to Neo-Confucianism: note the problems raised for example by Wang Yang-ming (1472–1529) in Julia Ching, To *Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming*, Columbia U.P., 1976, 127, 142. Fukunaga does not, however, indulge in any excursions into local history like the present essay.

a resident of the Jade Spring Monastery at the very time we know that Meng An-p'ai was active in Ching-chou.[39] The interrelationship between the later T'ien-t'ai leader Chan-jan and the various Ch'an factions of the eighth century is a complex topic, and one which may well have a bearing on Chan-jan's open advocacy of the potential Buddhahood of plants and trees.[40]

But the very fact that eighth-century discussion of their issue in Buddhist circles uses phrases such as "tiles and shards", and even "molecrickets and ants" suggests that, whatever their internal disagreements, these Buddhists were conscious of the Taoist background to the question. And not simply the ultimate source of such phrases in Chuang-tzu: the *Pao-tsang lun*, which mentioned molecrickets and ants as well as vegetation, demonstrates quite irrefutably a familiarity with Taoist doctrinal writings similar to Meng's *Tao-chiao i-shu*.[41]

I set out at the start of this trip to seek a Buddhist Teilhard, but that search must be abandoned in the face of the evidence presented above suggesting not the flash of insight of one solitary thinker but the slow emergence of an idea within a protracted process of interaction encompassing two rival religions and several rival schools. But at least it seems possible to identify the type of milieu, and maybe even the very locality, where a Chinese view of the cosmos finally fused with an Indian conception of spiritual development so as to produce in time an important theme in Japanese literature.[42] That process surely could not have taken place without the existence of communities of religious scholars such as those on Blue Brook Mountain who looked back to the Master of Devil's Valley—what better title for the principal of a mediaeval college!—as their founder, and who exchanged ideas (and no doubt traded insults) with other centres such as the Jade Spring Monastery in a wider world of learning. And if I am right, this raises a shocking possibility, one undreamed of even in Chuang-tzu's scatological imagination: that the profound truth of the Way may be found even in so vile a place as the Devil's

[39] See John McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, Honolulu, 1986, 50–51, and *cf.* 265–6.

[40] One attempt to sort out these interrelationships may be found in Yagi Nobuyoshi, "Tai-Zen ryōshū no kōshō ni tsuite ", *IBK*, 18.2, March, 1970, 611–12, though both he and the other scholars who have touched upon this area would appear to have been faced with problems in Chan-jan's biography requiring careful historical research.

[41] On this, see yet again Kamata, *op. cit.*, 204–5 and 237–242.

[42] This is not to deny that in Japan purely Japanese attitudes towards nature further played an important part in the acceptance of the theme in literature, as is noted, for example, by the contributors to *Tendai Bukkyō* to *Kirisuto-kyō* (see note 3 above), 191, 193.

Valley of academic debate; that the road to Omega Point may even pass through precincts of modern universities.

The Postscript

The preceding pages reproduce almost without alteration a paper presented to the Buddhist Forum in March, 1989; this paper, however, represented a reworking of unpublished materials first drafted ten years earlier as a result of my discovery of the source concerning the Taoist Meng An-p'ai given in n. 32 above. These materials were laid aside as the result of the almost simultaneous publication in English of a lengthy footnote discussing the same source by Ōfuchi Ninji,[43] and only taken up again because subsequent discussion in English of the Buddhahood of plants and trees had not taken Meng An-p'ai's writings, used much earlier by Japanese scholars, into account. During the intervening period, however, my own concerns had shifted away from the debate over the Buddhahood of plants and trees as such towards an interest in the institutional environment in which contacts with Taoist thought were possible. As a result rewriting produced a certain imbalance between text and notes.

Professor Seyfort Ruegg, who attended the Forum when the paper was presented, quite rightly drew attention to its consequent tendency to minimize internal development within the Buddhist tradition as an important cause for the eventual prominence of the notion of Buddhahood for the non-sentient. Indeed, to the studies mentioned in n. 36 above it would be possible to add at least one further article in English exploring this theme in the thought of Chi-tsang from a purely Buddhist perspective.[44] Of particular interest was Professor Seyfort Ruegg's suggestion that even the most undeveloped Buddhist materials show a markedly positive attitude to vegetable life. Certainly the Chinese did notice some of these materials, at least by the tenth century, when they were excerpted in the Buddhist encyclopedia *I-ch'u liu-t'ieh*:[45] earlier encyclopedias may do the same, but a rapid check has not turned up any exactly parallel examples.[46] But these particular materials simply suggest that all the vegetable kingdom, as well as the animal kingdom, is provided with tutelary deities; there is nothing here that resonates with Chinese ideas of spiritual progress, so it is unlikely that they played a part in

[43] See note 5, 225–6 of Ninji Ofuchi, "The Formation of the Taoist Canon", in H. Welch and A. Seidel, eds., *Facets of Taoism*, New Haven & London, 1979, 253–267.

[44] Namely, Aaron K. Koseki, "Prajñāpāramitā and the Buddhahood of the Non-sentient World: The San-lun assimilation of Buddha-nature and Middle Path Doctrine", *JIABS*, 3, 1, 1980, 16–33.

[45] See Makita Tairyō, ed., *I-ch'u, Giso Rokujō/I-ch'u liu-t'ieh*, Kyoto, 1979, 16.34a, page 364. I-ch'u completed this work in A.D. 954.

[46] Pao-ch'ang, ed., *Ching-lü i-hsiang* 46, page 240b in T, vol. 53, notes that trees over seven foot tall and a foot in girth harbour spirits, but this would seem to indicate an acceptance of hamadryads in decent size trees only (hardly a startling notion), not the sanctity of all vegetation suggested by I-ch'u's citation.

nurturing Chinese speculation on Buddhahood for the non-sentient. Buddhist attitudes towards the natural environment, however, do still deserve to be explored in yet more depth than hitherto.

But so, too, does the institutional environment which promoted Buddho-Taoist contacts in seventh-century China, and which in my view must at least have added a further stimulus to Buddhist thinking. Most accounts of these contacts have concentrated on events at court;[47] indeed, our knowledge of T'ang intellectual life as a whole is largely dominated by the perspective afforded by central government.[48] But not all higher learning was in the hands of, nor at the service of, the state: many mountains other than the Blue Brook Mountain attracted individuals and communities of different religious affiliations to pursue contemplation and study in what must have amounted virtually to a 'university' setting. Some research on this aspect of T'ang intellectual life has already been undertaken in East Asia,[49] but in Western languages only accounts of individual study, such as the poet Po Chü-i's retreat to Lu-shan, have been published.[50]

What is intriguing about the Blue Brook is its rise to major prominence in the seventh century, followed by a subsequent almost total eclipse: most other centres, like Lu-shan or T'ien-t'ai, remains important into much later times, even into the twentieth century. As suggested above, the start of the story of the Blue Brook cannot be pushed back any further than the fifth century, though in subsequent reading I have come across a tale, perhaps ultimately of that period, alleging a Buddhist presence by the Blue Brook in the last quarter of the fourth century A.D.[51] This concerns a young Buddhist monk who dreams that the "Lady of the Blue Brook Temple" appears to him and demands that he should take over as the god of her shrine: he tells his companions as a result that he must be fated to die to take up this charge, and asks them to visit him when he assumes his new

[47] Such is the emphasis of standard accounts like Kubota Ryōon, Shina Ju-Dō-Butsu kōshōshi, Tokyo, 1943, and Lo Hsiang-lin, " T'ang-tai san-chiao chiang-lun k'ao", *Tung-fang wen-hua*, 1,1, 1954, 85-97, following the emphasis in their main sources.

[48] This is the standpoint taken, for example, in D.L. McMullen's excellent *State and Scholars in T'ang China*, Cambridge, 1988.

[49] The classic study in this vein is Yen Keng-wang, " T'ang-jen tu-shu shan-lin ssu-yüan chih feng-shang", *Chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan Li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu-so chi-k'an*, 30.2, 1959, 689–728, which does not, however, collect materials on Blue Brook Mountain. Earlier works on the eremitic tradition in Chinese history, such as Chiang Hsing-yü, *Chung-kuo yin-shih yü Chung-kuo wen-hua*, Shanghai, 1947, also make clear the role of mountain centres in higher edcuation.

[50] See Arthur Waley, *The life and times of Po Chü-i*, London, 1949, 120.

[51] See Wang Shao-ying, ed., *Sou-shen hou-chi*, 5, Beijing, 1981), 31–2: this text, attributed to the poet T'ao Ch'ien (365-427), is already cited under his name in the early sixth century, as noted by Yü Chia-hsi, who is quoted on page 147 of Wang's edition. The passage on the 'Lady of the Blue Brook' is cited in a seventh-century Buddhist encyclopedia, Tao-shih, ed., *Fa-yüan chu-lin* 90, page 953a in T, vol. 53.

role. When, after his subsequent sudden death, they do visit the temple, his voice converses with them, requesting them to sing psalms and regretting his separation from their company. This tale is clearly to do with a problem of 'previous spiritual occupancy', a topic to which I revert in the next paper, though it provides an unusual twist when compared with better known accounts of pioneer monks vanquishing chthonic deities, often in ophidian form.[52] One may presume that it dates to a time when the Buddhists were relatively insecure newcomers, but it is difficult to pin down the period of composition precisely, and a late T'ang reworking of the story (moralizing ponderously over the young monk's fate as the karmic result of earlier persistent gross immorality) sets it in the fifth century, under the Liu-Sung dynasty.[53]

During the mid-sixth century the Blue Brook Mountain became (though apparently not for long) the scene of a genuine historical episode almost as bizarre, when it was chosen as a base by the remarkable Lu Fa-ho, a charismatic leader who combined the roles of warlord and magus, and who reconciled a declared commitment to Buddhism with a penchant for Taoist thaumaturgy.[54] Lu's regime, one presumes, must have featured in the monograph on Blue Brook Mountain said to have been compiled by Fa-lin: unfortunately, not a single word of this survives, so far as I am aware.[55] Fa-lin, however, very probably did not live long enough to include in his work any account of the Blue Brook's most illustrious Buddhist alumnus, the monk Tao-lin, who succeeded in the mid-seventh century in reaching India by the sea route and studying at the famous Buddhist university of Nālandā, where he is said to have much impressed the great Buddhist logician Dignāga.[56]

Tao-lin's biography reveals that he was also associated in his early days with the Jade Spring Monastery; one of the advantages of the Blue Brook Mountain seems to have been its ease of communication with Chiang-ling, administrative centre of Ching-chou, nearer to which the Jade Spring Monastery lay. The biography of the late sixth century monk Fa-hsing implies that he frequently made the journey from mountain to town, passing the future site of the Jade Spring Monastery on the way.[57] Chiang-ling itself was at this point no mean city; it had briefly been capital of the Liang dynasty, and then became the chief city of the Later Liang dynasty—

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[52] For a classic example of such an account, see pages 94–6 of Hisayuki Miyakawa, "Local cults around Mount Lu at the time of Sun En's rebellion", in Welch and Seidel, *Facets of Taoism*, pp. 83–101, concerning the second century A.D. Buddhist missionary An Shih-kao.
[53] See Huai-hsin, *Shih-men tzu-ching lu* 1, 808a in T, vol. 51.
[54] The chief account of Lu's extraordinary career may be found in Li Pai-yao, Pei-Ch'i shu, 32, Beijing, 1972, 427–431; Lu is said to have started his active military career from Blue Brook Mountain at the time of the rebellion of Hou Ching (548–552) on page 427.
[55] See the preface to Fa-lin, *Po-hsieh lun*, 475a, in T, vol. 52.
[56] See I-ching, *Ta-T'ang Hsi-yü ch'iu-fa kao-seng chuan*, 2, 6c–7a in T, vol. 51.
[57] Tao-hsüan, *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 25, 658a.

not one of the period's most powerful political units, admittedly, but one which continued to maintain its nominal independence for about a generation, from 555 to 588.[58] But from the seventh century onwards the region quite manifestly declined in importance and lost population—probably to the south bank and to the delta of the Yangtse—and it also suffered increasing administrative fragmentation into the tenth century, as it came within the orbit of several more successful centres.[59] This may explain the paucity of later references to Blue Brook Mountain: a medical text by the 'Master of the Clear Brook' which is said to have circulated in the T'ang must presumably be attributed to the ninth-century poet mentioned in n. 33 above,[60] but it is difficult to find any eminent Buddhists associated with the site in later times.[61] The connection with the Master of Devil's Valley—remarked on already in the preface to one of Fa-lin's works[62]—was reaffirmed constantly in Taoist hagiography,[63] but the area does not seem to have supported any later Taoist communities of note, either. Thus while monographs on other mountains like Lu-shan and T'ien-t'ai were compiled and recompiled as the communities on them continued to flourish, Fa-lin's work on the Blue Brook was lost, and its role as an ancient seat of ecumenical learning became obscured.

In sum, then, I would stress not simply the need to see the development of Buddhist ideas within their full Chinese intellectual context. What is also necessary is some appreciation of the institutional arrangements which made interaction between different religious traditions possible, and here a study of local history can be of value also: if one can find one's way through Devil's Valley, the road to Omega Point becomes far clearer.

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[58] See Hurvitz, *Chih-i*, 105, 107 note 2, etc., for some of this political background as it affected Buddhism.

[59] See Wang Gungwu, " The Middle Yangtse in T'ang politics", 203 (and page 199 for the tenth-century outcome), in A.F. Wright and D.C. Twitchett, eds., *Perspectives on the T'ang*, New Haven and London, 1973, 193–235.

[60] See Lo Shih-lin, ch'en Li, Liu Wen-chi and Liu Yü-sung, comps., *T'ang-shu ching-chi i-went ho-chih*, New Haven & London, 1973, 193–235.

[61] The tenth-century Ch'an monk Hung-chin may have resided on our Clear Brook Mountain, though it is described as lying in the territory of Hsiang-yang, further north, rather than Ching-chou: see Tao-yüan, *Ching-te ch'uan-teng lu*, 24, 400a in Taishō Canon vol. 51. An inscription, apparently describing events dated in the late eleventh century, preserved in Wang, *Yü-ti chi-sheng*, 73-8a, records that a 'Dharma-master of the Severed Arm' had connections with both the Jade Spring and the Clear Brook. I suspect that the date is a mistake for 617: the author of the inscription, Li Chou, would appear to be the same man who in the late eighth century wrote a biography of the Sixth Patriarch of Ch'an: see Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki Zenshu shisho no kenkyū*, Tokyo, 1967, 99, note 16, for the significance of this lost biography.

[62] In the preface to his *Po-hsieh lun*, 475a.

[63] The standard form for the Master's biography from the early tenth century onward, which reconciles his sojourn at the Blue Brook with his residency of Devil's Valley, appears on page 9 of Tu Kuang-t'ing, *Hsien-chuan shih-i*, in Yen I-p'ing, ed., *Tao-chiao yen-chiu tzu-liao*, vol. 1, Taipei, 1974.