Sources of Creative Power

Lecture XIV (S-I) 1-15-54

If we want to check on the two world-shaking events of Lao-tze and the Buddha and best understand what it has meant for the development of Asia itself, then we better have a look ~~have a look~~ at what those events did for the development of art in Asia. If there is any knowledge of man in modern times as especially developed, and I mean now knowledge of man not knowledge of things. We have a great scientific age but another thing has happened in modern times especially since Cezanne started painting and the modern style came about--namely, our historical knowledge of the works of art of all countries and in all fields and in all times, our visual knowledge has increased to a degree that has never been given to men before. This experience of self-expression of man in all his situations that he had to take in given situations towards the world, himself, his own life, divinity, nature, the changing movie of those conceptions of man is best illustrated in the changing movies of passing, moving and vanishing new art forms. There we can almost look it up like in a catalogue. I do not claim this to be a science, but it is certainly immediate knowledge of the self-expression of man. This knowledge, this insight, we never had to such a degree as in our time. Since it happens that the secret, the thing, so to speak, that makes the modern style tick, is a form element that permanently changes now constantly time and space concepts. This style and the artists who work in this style have become extremely sensible to the smallest distinctions in basic art concepts of man--and they mostly relate to time-space relations, and they have used them--especially Picasso. There is perhaps not a single style which we historically unearthed, discovered, analyzed and enjoyed in the last 30, 40, 60 years which has not once been used by Picasso, and transformed into forms that can express the experience of modern man. Those artists have helped us to distinguish old forms of art better and our knowledge of the connection, the development of art, style and forms with the thoughts of different periods has increased accordingly. In this sense I use a short sketch

of what Lao-tze's and Buddha's teaching meant for art in China and India in order to show that those now forgotten events which we for ~~the first time~~ can again re-realize by comparing what those kinds of thoughts must have meant to people who had for thousands of years ~~had~~ been raised in a certain iron tradition. As to India, we do not have much Hindu art--Hindu, not Buddhistic-- before the teaching of the Buddha. That is partly explained because they build in wood, but there is still the astonishing fact that with the beginning of the teaching of the Buddha, the Hindu style developed in art. This has nothing to do ~~with~~ with Buddhism. It is an indirect event. The remobilization of the Brahmins' teachings against Buddha's teachings meant a new flowering of Hindu culture and from then on this culture has developed itself to our times. The great witnesses of art in Hindu culture ~~are~~ all start around the same time the DBuddha started teaching. Then about 200 years after his death, 300 years--in the third century B. C.-- Asoka, a great king who had made himself a king, a soldier who in the tradition of Alexander ~~had~~ conquored a great deal India, tried to make Buddhism, for the first time a real religion and to make it a state religion. With that Buddhistic art starts. Now we have the development of Buddhistic art. We know all the great styles of Buddhistic art--the Greek Buddhistic art, the gandhara style, the Cambodian style, the ~~Vend~~ Kmer (?) style in China, the ? Indonesia For hundreds and hundred of years the development of Buddhistic art all over ~~Aisa starts.~~ Asia spreads. To distinguish those ~~have~~ how become hard because as well as the Hindus took certain positions of the later Buddhists into their teaching, and later Buddhism fell prey to mythological ~~proposition~~ propositions of, all the Hindus and Brahmins teachings and the Upanishads again, and they fertilized each other, so it is in art. Nevertheless, there is one sign of absolute distinction running through both styles, the Buddhistic Asiastic, or let's say the Buddhistic Indian styles, first because here it is the hardest to distinguish, and the Hindu style, and that hangs together with

the change in the social atmosphere. What Buddha did and what also Lao-tze did was to dynamite out of a stony body of a society with absolute set castes, classes, relations and so on a kind of a transcendent society. Lao-tze did that apparently very secretly, but the tradition of secret societies—that means free societies, societies of friends who come together, join, live together because they have the same view of the world and the same will in the world—That was an absolutely new thing. So the tradition of those secret societies, always very small societies, in China has not stopped since Lao-tze. They were mostly societies of scholars who were employed by the mandarins, nevertheless revolutionists, as I told you in the Lao-tze session--as soon as he was employed by the state he was officially a Confucian and secretly a Lao-tzian. In India it was different. The breakdown of the great Indian mythological empires in Buddha's time and already two hundred years before Buddha's time had caused such a chaos of fighting little kingdoms all over Asia. We have rediscovered now original manuscripts of ~~Ve later~~ Veda writing about the science of politics, such cold-blooded texts are not in the West paralled even by Michiavelli. It must have been a terrible time in which they lived, and all that, breaking up into small kingdoms, But as soon as a new small kingdom and a new tyrant was established, within that kingdom the same old iron-clad society was there. What Buddha did was creating monk orders. That India had not seen before. They had seen certain societies of saints, they had seen hermits. the order — We always ~~think that if~~ we look at that in the Catholic sense. This order of the early Buddhists was something absolutely different. He did a terrible thing to India--he took out of this society young men and later young women who were not entitled to get out of this society. In Veda tradtion only a man who had fulfilled all his duties to ~~Brahm~~ Kharma and the world and to Dharma, had gone all through his duties and had become sixty, then he was entitled to get out into the woods

and care for his so-called self--that means to escape this iron-clad society. When he was an old man. Buddha when he had to fulfill his duty in this mythological set-up, Buddha escaped from this society and his kingdom and kingship as a very young man, as a youngster, and after having gotten enlightenment created this new kind of a free society that people who also wanted not to continue this given way of life but to create a new way of life for man in community and he took them out of this body of society. The influence of those first orders—and Buddha was very much concerned about his orders not because he was an organizer who wanted anything very big in the world, but he knew that if such an order breaks up, gets disunited, then the last chance would be gone to hold up in India at least little islands of refuge for people who wanted to think and to live independently. So he watched the orders and he was most unhappy when they disunited--as orders always do--and he cared much for their sticking together. With this society that spread all over India of small monk orders he got for them from better kings and better ruled kingdoms places where they could assemble. They went all over India teaching. They helped to mediate the endless struggles between the princes; they helped to mediate the endless struggles between the casts and the peasants in the villages; they did a great social work all over India. Then they started, becoming richer, to erect temples. The temples now are the first expression of this new thing in the world--namely, human beings meeting freely together, coming together for a certain definite ultimate purpose, and for nothing else. Those Buddhist temples very small in the beginning have first ~~just~~ one thing that is not against social, not artistic, not architectural--there are no priests in them, and that is so, till to today. A Hindu temple is always watched by a Brahmin priest, this is a village priest--he lives in this temple and by this temple, by the income that this temple brings. In a Buddhist temple nothing is required; one brings no gifts; there is no priest who could recive the gifts; one just comes there in order to meditate, either alone or together with others, to

meditate the way for deliverance--Buddha's way, the new way of life for Asia, the free way of life, the way of life that man seeks, finds and creates himself, and that has not been given to him by cosmic laws or cosmic social laws. According to this ~~rule~~ (?) in architecture, because it is so practical, we see always the expression and the form nearest together. They are open temples first because everyone can come in, everybpdy is admitted. To the ~~little~~ Hindu temples certain casts are not admitted, certain persons are admitted to the inner chambers, others not; in a Buddhist temple everybody is admitted who wants to come. So the temple starts to be built open. Now we cannot say that those temples did not owe up to today much to the Hindu style, and great Buddhist architecture except with a few great Pagodas in Siam and so-- we do not see--we see only good Buddhist architecture. Where Buddhism did most in art was in sculpture and later in painting. But the difference between those Buddhist temples and especially pagodas and the Hindu temples--that hits the eye and that ~~is~~ can be seen best if we look first into the interior of those temples. In a Hindu temple you get exactly the same feeling as you get when you go into an Egyptian death chamber crypt here in the Metropolitan Museum. You are in the earth; you are entirely so contained and closed in as you are in the world of the Hindus in this great cosmical concept where everything is settled, where ~~everything~~ everything has its universal laws --you included and you are only a function--and here in those rooms we are those functions. That might be the Egyptian style ~~as~~ or the ~~in~~ Hindu style--in that sense they are the same. The Egyptian style is freer; the Hindu style builds temples most direct into the rocks and uses the rocks for it. The heaviness of those temples and the absolute closedness of those temples is tremendous. The sculptural work that flows all over them inside and outside-- Hindu temples are crowded with relief work and statues that are attached to the building, ~~giving~~ give the impression that we really have in this work of art before us this whole infinite world of worlds that the Indians conceived where everything

changes permanently into everything else--but according to iron-clad laws. The unity, the absolute unity, has never been expressed--in architecture at leaste--to such a degree as in Hindu architecture. Of the sculptural work nothing comes out of the stone; it remains in the stone as it does in Egyptian art--but it enlivens the stone. We lose any kind of distinction between so-called architectural background--walls, columns, and so ~~a~~ on - architectural elements, and this overflowing pictorial, sculptural, movement that is going on all round --no distinction between them and if we look long enough it seems as if this is really with the stone in everything, the whole world and it lives, it has come to life, it breathes. That is great style and great art. ~~So~~ the Buddhists needing this kind of an art, the Buddhist architects, could never entirely get away from the overwhelming impression of this style. They tried to keep up with it, as well as vice versa, on the other side the Brahmans and Hindues tried to keep up with Buddhist thinking. It was competition. They were for a long long time not very successful in their competition--at least not until Chinese art had exerted its influence on Buddhistic art and had become Buddistic. From then on a lighter, sometimes almost Rococco style of Buddhistic architecture arises in ~~the~~ Siam, Cambodia, Indochina, ~~, in China,~~ China itself, and creeps into India, loosening up the temples in India itself, getting them away from this heavy, stone style that the ~~In~~ Hindues in their best time had used and ~~needed~~. created -

The so-called riddle of, ~~Alexander's influence after the so-called~~ the influence after Alexander's conqueroring of Asia, the influence of the Greek style on Buddhist style, the Gkondkora style, has also a deeper meaning in it which we can catch only if we compare the role if the statue--namely, the unattached statue, the free-standing statue in Greek art and Egyptian art on one side and on the other side, in Buddhist art and Hindu art. As well as in Egypt no statue ever gets ever to be really free from the block it is attached to, as well as it has always its center in the ~~cetner~~ center of the earth because of its weight and its composition,

the center of gravity is the center of the earth and not the center of the statue--so it is not the center of the human being either--or of the represented thing, may it be gods or human beings. They have their center too in the universe, not in themselves. The free-standing Greek statue of which we talked already is a masterpiece of emancipation of man symbolically speaking in the world--this statue standing almost on one foot, the other one freely playing, has a center of gravity in itself. Its harmony is created out of a center and related to ~~It~~ a center that is, with their ~~in~~ the statue itself. One cannot say that Buddhism achieved the same thing--, namely, the free standing statue--but it certainly achieved the free-sitting statue. All those statues of the Buddha we look at, let's first see the social implication of it--that means, how ~~it~~ they stood in reality, what they were there for. The famous Buddha in Kamakura in Japan, one of the most famous statues of Buddha , a gigantic statue, ~~this~~ the sitting Buddha, if we study the relation of this statue to the small Buddhist temples that surround it--it is situated almost on a hill--then we see that it is ~~almost~~ really the middle of this whole architectural composition, the middle of it is a statue, the statue of the free-sitting Buddha. Now this Buddha has always the same pose, as we know—. It has a center of gravity also in itself, this statue, but since it is a sitting statue, and perhaps the perfect sitting statue (there are only some statues in Egyptian art of scribes or so that are so perfect that we could almost say that this is the sitting of a man--but certainly Buddhist statues are that, the Buddha statues--this perfect ease of sitting and then sitting up, rounding the ~~up,~~ rounding it so up by the lotus flower down there, there that you get a circular movement which is very often overdone in bad Buddhistic art--and we have to study bad statues too in order to find what we have not seen in the great masters because they do it so decently; ~~but~~ we see it in the dilettantes.— ~~They~~ they overdo it and do it badly then we can sharpen our eyes to see what is

in the great statues too and what is really the gist of that thinking. We have bad Japanese Buddhas, third-rate, fourth-rate Buddhas, and Chinese, where the smile of the Buddha is in an overdone way repeated in the naked belly in circles. Now those circles are not done by the great masters because they do not over-ornament a statue. The ornament is there, but the ornament is within the statue, soaked up, has become a unity. If we look with those sharp eyes at the great masters, then we see that this circular movement is in the clothes, in the flesh, in the smile, in the in-drawn eyes, in the hair, and that there is a center of gravity in the navel of this statue--and that pertains → to all of them. This center of gravity within this statue that is now considered a statue as the concept of the human person we have in Lao-tze and in Buddha and later in the Greeks--the first concepts coming out of this break with myth of the free human person--so we have here the absolute self-contained human person as a symbol in those statues of the Buddha--absolute self-containment. The navel of the human person is the navel of the world, I want almost to say. This idea of the navel of the world--namely, this center where the mass movement of the world stops, has to stop because the center itself is immovable, was one of the main ideas of salvation in all Hindu thinking. Buddha, who took this circular movement of the cosmos as the curse of man, who never could never get free if he doesn't get out of this circular movement, took the idea of the middle of the Center, the navel--just this same idea of the Hindus, and made it out of a transcendental reality ← into a personal reality--namely, the discovery of "the Self" (with a capital "S") in the human being. Every human being is a "Self", is a person, has an inner center that is immovable, an inner center that establishes the absolute value of this being because this being is of not of any value whatsoever like other beings in the world; it does not have value, it is value because it is an evaluator. The value of the human being is transcendent value, and this idea that this immovable, unbreakable center is in everybody, this

establishes in the abstract very much greater than Lao-tze's thinking and much sharper and to the point, for the first time the basic idea of the human personality of everybody. This "everybody" is a main feature in all original teachings of the Buddha. It has been said that Buddha was an aristocrat and ~~could~~ wanted to only receive an elite--yes, he could only recieve an elite, but not an elite from an elite of society, but those people who wanted to listen--that is no aristocratic teaching--everybody who wants to listen, as Buddha says, to the teaching of the Enlightened One, ~~of~~ on enlightenment itself. He manifests by that that he wants to listen and has become critical for the first time, because Lao-tze and Buddha are the start of critical human thinking--that he has become critical of all the envolvements in the cosmos and in society he has been told about, and he has been ~~helped~~ read to--and, having ~~by~~ by become critical he has become aware, without knowing it yet, ~~that~~ but he has become aware of the fact that he also has a navel, that he also himself has an inner center. As soon as he has made the slightest discovery by becoming ~~having become~~ merely aware of this, let's call it dignity of man because here is the dignity of man rooted if there is any root in the fact that ~~here~~ there is such a transcendental being that has its center in itself. As soon as anyone has become aware of that and is ready to listen, he is received into Buddha's order and into Buddha's society--whoever he is--if he is a prostitute or if ~~he is a ____, that means~~ an outcast ~~of India~~, or a king--he is received. This is the condition, the condition for joining the little free societies of ~~Shatamanna~~ Gautama was only a personal decision, but not a personal decision as we think personal decisions run today--namely, to think I want to do that; no, a personal decision in the deepest sense of the word--namely, a personal decision for his own person, having becomd aware that he is a person--excuse me, I use my term and the modern term for that--Buddha would have said "the Self". This being a "Self" that never can grant the right to anybody, any society, any

assembly of Gods to having his own will ever broken as long as this will is sincere and consistent. That is what Buddha is proclaiming for mankind and for man by this his theory of the navel, the middle of man. This is expressed perfectly in Buddhistic art, ink the art of the Buddha statues themselves. From then on the flowering of Buddhist relief goes on over the centuries, Chinese -> art comes in, and Chinese art having developed another personal trend which was made possible by Lao-tze. Lao-tze's societies he created, were the secret societies--and in his tradition secret societies followed, of men who could not act as openly as the Buddhists did. Lao-tze himself had no plans and could possibly have no plans in view of his society to to create a larger society within a society, a free society within a bound society, as Buddha tried. His discovery of human freedom, of one of the roots of productive, creative human freedom, was not that he discovered such an exact abstract theory of the middle in man, the center, but he discovered one other element, the element of spontaneity, this goodness or benevolence that we can give freely to the world, that is not in the world, that can only come out of ourselves, that essential thing that we can add to the world, becoming free by it, proving that we are transcendental beings who bring into the world something that we do not know where it comes from, where we do only know that it can come out of ourselves--another source we do not know. As soon as we discover this source and use this central virtue, as Lao-tze looked at it, we are on the way of the Tao, we are directed torwards the Tao: that means, we are in life. This is for Lao-tze such a great discovery that he is not concerned with the political status of his country very much any more. You see in all those sayings of Lao-tze (and that is where he has been called an anarchist in our times), "Oh, forget about all those things, don't busy yourself so much, don't try to make human beings better, don't create great states, don't preach ideologies"--and he overdoes it once--he says, as an advice to a village, "If your villages are so near

together that you can hear the cock cry and the dog bark, continue your life, live it, do your best, grow old, and die--but never unite~~-~~ever united with another village, even Do not create artificial social bodies because they will lead you only into new slavery. That was all he was thinking about politics because he thought he had one thing that would settle everything--of course this one root of freedom does by no means settle everything and it is very doubtful if we have discovered in the end of this course all the essential roots of human freedom, creative ~~human~~ freedom as we are after them, and as the great thinkers we have ~~in~~ at hand developed them, then it will ~~is~~ very doubtful if we could say then, and "This would do." This might not do; we might have to go on to discover more roots for ourselves. Lao-tze felt fairly sure that this one great root he discovered--namely, the possibility of human beings to be spontaneous, spontaneity, that something good can come out of a person itself. But this was quite enough and if only everybody would listen, to it, would develop it in himself, then the world could become perfect,— a garden of life instead of a cemetery and a forest of pain. This theory and his discovery makes, let's say, the person of which we talk and for which we search here more private than Buddha's concept of the person would make the person. In privacy only with friends and beloved ones together, with family and nearest friends we can give meaning to the world. That was Lao-tze's thinking. Buddha's thinking was only with a society created as a free society that transcends this bound society, within that society, we can possibly prevail and, finally lead everybody ~~down~~ on the path of salvation,—or better deliverence because Buddha was not a savior; he was a deliverer; he was not Christ. He is not out for redeeming mankind or the world, neither is Lao-tze; he is not out for salvation; he is out for deliverence. He wants that the human being should check all artificial conditions that condition him and come into the clear consciousness of himself as being a conditioner. Then by this light, re-establish conditions--not to accept conditions one is

involved in and relations, but, to re-establish those relations and conditions as a conditioner in mutual agreement, with the others ~~with agreement~~ in a free kind of society that makes sense--which the old mythological society did not make to him any more--that is his way: that means his political design, so to speak, is a much greater one than the political design ~~than the one~~ of Lao-tze--but that is due to circumstances in India and it showed finally that he was even more handicapped than Lao-tze because Buddhism did not prevail in India; it has finally been thrown out of India and India fell back into the Hindu set-up though very much reformed in our time and Buddha could not carry through his will. All he did for Asia was that those Monk orders who today still are not priests--there are no Buddhist priests--that those Monk orders nourished by the people still do good work, in good social work sometimes, but they have degenerated too. Contemplation has replaced meditation: there we have a new distinction which is hard to swallow. Contemplation means not acting at all, thinking that "theoria" as the Greeks will later say (later in Aristotle) that the highest talent of the human being, is his highest life performance is to sit still and to contemplate the universe--that is what theory originally means. This getting free from everything, including every obligation, which is, then the western and an age-old Indian, and Asiastic, intellectual ideal was not the ideal of the Buddha. Neither Lao-tze nor the Buddha were intellectuals ~~in the real~~ in this sense of the ~~world~~ world - namely ~~that~~ that the intellectual wants to be somebody who is an exception to other human beings. The teaching of the Buddha constantly meant, as well as Lao-tze's teaching, doing good and right things in the world--but measuredly so, not overdone, not coming and wanting to save the soul of the other fellow and finally ending up by burning the body of the other fellow in order to save his soul -- but to try again and again to convince him; persuasion was the only weapon that Lao-tze thought was right for the philosopher--so did Buddha. Who does not want to listen, shall not listen-because if he does not want

to listen, it means that he has not become aware that he has a navel in this sense, that he has a center, that he is a coming conditioner. He has not yet in himself discovered the dignity of man and he is not yet ready to do something for this his main dignity and value and if he has not, then teaching will not help him. Tao cannot be taught ~~with~~ say Lao-tze. Buddha will say the task cannot be taught. The task can ~~xx~~ only be shown, but it can be shown and it can only be shown, to somebody who had already made his first step in this task, though it might be a stumbling step--namely, somebody who wants to listen. The meaning of this "who wants to listen" which in the legend Brahma says to Buddha, then after his meditation under the bow tree--and meditation means then also mediation because after having ~~xxxxxx~~ meditated you mediate--that is what the ~~xxxxx~~ meaning of this legend is. Buddha has meditated and now he decides this cannot be ~~xxxxx~~ taught." So I will not teach; I will not open my mouth; I will not talk to others." Brahma, the God, coming to him saying, "You must teach, because otherwise everybody, the whole world, including us Gods--we will never know." Only human beings can know, only persons can know--we Gods are no persons"--that is what the legend means. He teaches them one great lesson that Buddha had to take, namely, the lesson that if he does not speak--and Brahma says to him, "There will always be some who want to listen, to those you have to speak of your experience because if they want to listen they show that they are ready to receive, so if you do not do that," so to speak, Brahma says to him, "then you meditation would not have been meditation: it would have been contemplation, and you will forever sit under the bow tree on top of the world enjoying yourself so much that you have found the "Self" (with a Capital 'S'--and what will become of you: a self with a small letter, an individual that keeps everything for himself and you will rot away. Meditation means mediation"--and then the Buddha takes the task upon himself, and goes and passes the word about the path along--but he only passes this along. He only speaks to people [redacted]

who want to listen. There is no enforcement even today in Buddhism--much as this has become a religion. All the Chinese demons, plus the Indian Gods in many symbolic forms have crept into Buddhism and are taught there today in the monastaries; nevertheless, those monks are no priests and one thing they never did: they never made a Buddhist mission; they don't want to reform people; they only give a chance and if the other does not agree, then they say, "Well , you have to go your way; everyone has to work out his own way of deliverance." The tolerance of this religion, as far as it has become a religion--which was not the intention of the Buddha--there is still left in it that is next to Islam and much more than Islam--the most tolerant religion that has ever been created. Now the flowing together of this little private element that was in Lao-tze's discovery of the person, namely, sit in your garden, look at nature, be a gardener, because the gardener is the spontaneous human being; and be a gardener with men too, handle all human beings as you would handle children when you are seventy--that is what Lao-tze says; try to behave to all human beings because we are all erring beings as you would behave to children and you are seventy with the utter mildness and sponteneity of free-giving. A man of seventy knows that to children he only still has to give, that his role is now only to give, not to receive anything any more. Lao-tze, whose name is supposed to mean the "old-child," already his name is significative for that, wanted us to in early age this basic wisdom that we can be givers and to concentrate only on this free giving quality which he compared to the life-giving force of water in the world, to become nourishing water. The circle of this experience, let's say the social circle, of such a kind of experience is a small circle. So we find in Chinese Buddhistic art, and the great period of Chinese landscape painting, Japanese painting are all Buddhist painting mixed with Taoist feelings.

In China this Buddhistic art takes Taoistic elements in it. It sticks to two things: this idylic picture of nature, so to speak, which is a pure relation to nature as a phenomenon like the gardener would have who really lives in nature, the modds of this landscape painting--all that developed out of this basic feeling; on the other hand, this extreme concentration on small things of private human life that we find in Chinese painting, in Japanese painting as soon as it is figure painting; this delicate feeling of the significance of the smallest acts of a human being's daily life--the combing of the hair of a woman, the dressing of a woman, the minor sports we do, the minor things like just walking or wrestling or sitting together and drinking tea are endlessly repeated in Eastern art, ~~the~~ in Chinese and Japanese art, but they have an inner feeling of the dignity of this smallest kind of a human life. They elevate it so high that this makes the girls, the flower of their art \ And so flowers, flowers become the very symbol of this Buddhistic-Taoistic art. The painting of flowers goes so far that everybody, so to speak, who is educated in China and Japan has to a certain degree to be a painter. Now everybody cannot be a painter, though we try hard in America to make everybody a painter andit looks that way, but in China and Japan the Buddhistic tradition together with the Taoistic tradition, they discovered an art of painting that everybody who has the love for it and the respect for it and wants to learn it for five or six very disciplined years, that little thing, can learn it -- and that is flower arrangement. In Japan flower arrangement is taught like archery is taught in a six to eight year course with then Buddhistic theories. It is supposed to be and is a training of the mind and a training of the soul--and it is. One makes one masters' degree after another in archery and flower arrangement. Let's talk about flower arrangement. The flower is that most private, smallest private thing in nature with which the gardener is concerned, where spontaneity and ~~with~~ the goodness, benevolence that Lao-tze gave and the possibility of meditation about a flower, looking into a flower

that Buddha gave, a symbol of the lotus flower where he can discover the whole wheel of suffering of the world which you have to overcome down to the middle by ~~in~~ contemplating and meditating the lotus flower. In Tibet buddhism in the monastaries they have the most beautiful ornaments of lotus flowers. They are abstract ornaments; every line in it is a symbol. The whole ~~later~~ later metaphysical theory that has been built up on the Buddha--for Buddha was not a metaphysician--the most complicated, ontological, logical, almost mathematical symbolic language has been drawn into this one picture of the lotus flower and the monks start to teach their pupils by explaining the lotus flower to them, to contemplation of flowers--and then the Taoistic contemplation of flowers, namely, this loving, looking and identification with ~~this~~ the life force and the force of beauty in the flower led to this kind of gardening and to this art of flower arrangement which is an art for everybody. Here everybody can become an artist because here is required only the passive thing--being an artistic person; it is not required that you have been given by the gods hands that can paint. Those are the Raphaels that paint without hands,--those human beings who learn the flower arrangement according to those rules. There is a Japanese anecdote where this last trend of Buddhism, the most refined--namely, the knowledge that nothing really matters because the infinity of time that the Buddha broke is ruled out by two things: by the eternity that is in the middle of every human person, that he has a real feeling of something absolutely different, he can get out of this flow of time, ~~can~~ be as infinite as it wants, ~~it~~ doesn't count any more--and by the flower--and the most fragile flower, the flower that only blooms for a minute. They concentrate on that as gardeners. An old emperor of Japan once heard that a philosopher who lived in the other end of the country was supposed to have a more beautiful garden than the emperor. So he wrote a letter to this philosopher that he would come to visit and look over his garden. When he arrived he

saw a desert, the garden was completely ruined. There was not a single flower in the garden left, everything was abolished. He went through that into the house, the house was completely empty except for an altar at the end of the house and there was standing in a vase one flower. The emperor looked at it and went back to the philosopher and said, "Yes, you have a better garden than mine is." This looking for the quintessence of things, though they might be temporarily speaking show only in three seconds, and evaluating them higher than anything that in time endures--that is the final flower of Zen-Buddhism in Japan and it still has something of the original teaching of the Buddha in it. It still respects life itself in the person and only there. Though the whole of Asiastic art, as we look at it today, is brought about by the common Buddhistic and Taoistic trends in it-- Taoistic trends flow down into India too--If we would study the development of the relief in India, first only enlivening the stone, then becoming more and more fragile, more and more tender, more and more flower symbols come in and this whole development of Hindu art up to our century, or let's say ~~because~~ at least until around 1800 there was still great Hindu painting in India, very great painting, great miniature painting at least, original creation, and it all smelled the flowers of Buddhism and Taoism though it is Hindu art. So the unity of Asiastic art has been finally brought about by the development together of Taoism and Buddhism and in it we see it most clearly. Now we have to come once more back to this question of the Self. This stroke of genius of both those philosophers, Lao-tze and Buddha, as far as their theory is concerned, the expression of their discoveries, the stroke of genius they had is very much the same. It reminds me always of an old Talmudistic saying. In the Talmud there are talking one place about the coming of the Messiah and one theory after another develops how ~~they~~ we would realize it and then there comes an old Jew and says, "We almost would not realize it because you see what the Messiah has to do that

is the hardest thing to do and the most unobstrusive--namely, if things are wrong, (and in the mythological world they are entirely wrong) then they are wrong because they have a wrong center, they are centered wrongly, the center is just a little bit out of the right place. Now you see the Messiah has nothing to do but to, (come and make such a little change, to) put the center back in the right place--more he does not have to do. Then everything starts to regroup itself around the right center and that is all he has to do." Nietzsche who did not know the Talmud after having written Zarathustra and having went through so much pain in philosophic discoveries and having talked so loudly and hysterically as he knew he had talked and had to talk because nobody would listen anymore in the 19th Century. With Nietzsche there was nobody, (who wanted) left to listen, (left) any more. Nietzsche and Kierkegard were the first philosophers where a situation came about where there was nobody left in the world who wanted to listen and when they started to cry hysterically, they knew why--they had to shout. But Nietzsche always regretted it very much that he had to shout and that he had shouted, and he regretted it bitterly, and so he once said later , "Why all this trouble ? Thoughts that come of the feet of doves, those are the thoughts that change the world." Yes, thoughts that are almost imperceptable, thoughts that are so fundamental that if we look back at them we say sometimes "So what." The teaching of Lao-tze and the Buddha is in a way primitive teaching. The Buddha rejects every kind of explanation in ~~a~~ the metaphysical way. Now India of his time, the intellegensia of ~~Him~~ India, the warriors of India, The Brahmans--it was full of metaphysical talk . . . . In Buddha's time the metaphysicians pretended to know everything-and of all description--how the ~~xxxxx~~ cosmos funs, etc., etc. Buddha on the other hand pretended to know nothing of all this and cared for none of it, and tried only to establish ~~only~~ one thing: this one thing that a human being can find and do for himself--this "Self" . . . . .

. . .almost the same. The teachings of Laotze (~~I hope you have read it~~) look primitive, but they are primitive in the classical sense ~~too~~. They are the sort that come on the feet of doves. Now they must have been tricky minds too because both of them did the same thing: they took exactly, as I have shown in Laotze, ~~a~~ the central concept of this whole world--they discovered the center of ~~this~~ the universe: namely the center of this false universe, this pretension of a universe human beings had to live according to--and this center was the concept of the Self; it was the concept of Tao in China and we have seen how he just takes the Tao where everybody is supposed to know it, and learned it already as a child--this iron Tao that Confusius went on talking about, and they still talk about the Tao. They will now talk about the Tao and say the new Stalinistic Tao, as brother Stalin has developed the Tao, and it will still be the Tao because they know again the Tao; they know again exactly every step that every human being has to make; what we have to do--they know it exactly and they knew it all the time. Mao the Tao.

Laotze took just this concept itself and said, "This is the unknown; this can never be known. You cannot know the Tao; you cannot teach the Tao; you cannot talk about the Tao--but you can direct yourself towards the Tao. You have to go on the way for truth. You can neger be <u>in</u> truth, and if you don't understand that, then you will become a fanatical tyrant of ~~some~~ man kind because you are one of those intellectuals, as Tao could have said or Buddha, who think they are something separate, who think they are a higher kind of human being. They have the key to history; they have the key to the universe and with this key in their hands, they can tell everybody exactly what to do. Buddha discovered the central concept around which all those worlds of mythological systems (and those are not only Brahmin systems, Jainism at his time was also there that comes from the old Dravidian time before

before the Aryan conquorers came in with their Brahmaism and their Vedas into India--lived on and made his own struggle and built his own kind of mythology and mythological systems--but they all had one thing in common: the Self. This Self, also with a capital S, Buddha took and took the same term, making out of it what we call now the person. The Self in Indian thinking and also in Dravidian thinking is a metaphysical proposition; this Self is really the soul; the Indians would say the world-atman. We can translate it only, if we want to translate it literally, the world-Self, the self that the world is, that the universe is, ~~this~~ the innermost secret of the universe is the Self, but when this tradition creeps into Greek philosophy with Pythagoras and much more later with Plotinus, then it will be called in gnostic thinking and in Greek thinking: the world-soul--and that is what it really means. It is the concept of a substance that is the finest substance in the world, the substance of all the other substances. All the other substances are created by this substance and contain it and they have to flow back into this world-soul. This world-soul is, so to speak, the God-Head of Indian mythology. And if we go in Indian mythology out of society with being sixty, having done, having had our yoke and now freedom will come for us, then this freedom is heavier slavery than the slavery before because now we have to dissolve into this world-self, into this higher self. This freedom is, of course, the negative freedom of salvation; it is only salvation. It is getting rid of the world and finally getting rid of one's self in order to unite with the big world-self which is God or all the Gods together and the central God Vishnue or Brahma and which is a symbol really only for this world-self. This self denies the individual absolutely; denies the right to any human person to be a person; he is exactly what a human person would be that agrees consciously to our propositions today--namely, to totalitarian propositions--to say, "I am only a function.

and nothing but a function, a part of the cosmos." The Indians were most exactly only a part and not a partner because they couldn't be persons. So this going to the Self in Indian philosophy becomes with Buddha the self-discovery of man's self, that every man is a self; there is no over-all self for the Buddha. There is not such a mystical substance; there is nothing mystical in Buddha's original teachings, as there is nothing mystical in Laotse's teachings. There is nothing that tries to take human beings into some mystical or metaphysical speculation. He only goes on straight facts of inner experience. He knows that this awareness of being such a self, or of being able to become such a self, to become ~~such~~ a persons, means also being able to get rid of my being an individual--but not in the sense of altruism or flowing over into something, ~~xxxx~~ and salvation, but in the sense of becoming more and more existentially essential, becoming more and more of a person that acts for ultimate motives and never for ulterior motives and therefore is free. This is a personality. Every human being can be a personality in that sense, but a personality could nobody become in the Indian concept or in any religioous concept! Later the Christian will try, but the Christian can only preserve the individual. This concept also cannot make a personality. The other religious concepts abolish the individual without creating the personality because they don't have the concept of the ~~Self~~ person. So here not only the individual is crushed and vanishes in Indian philosophy and Indian ascetic experience--(non-Buddhistic experience)--but man himself vanishes. This redemption or salvation is to get rid of one's self. It is exactly as the ~~Dionysus~~ daemon of Kierkegaard of our time when he tries to show what the inner ~~daemon~~ demon of our time is. He talks long and hard about the demonic and he finally gives the following definition: "Desperately not to want to be one's self or desperately to want to be one's self." Both--that means desperately to want to be an absolute individual, somebody who had nothing in common with any

other human being--like Mr. Stalin or Mr. Hitler--(that's what he means to desperatedy to be one's self and that means mean self not in a capital letter but only this overtowering individual--or desperately not to want to be one's self: namely to get rid of one's self, to want to be another person. I want to be Max So and So is successful and I think he is happey (He is also not happy) but I could change into him and by that getting rid of myself. This is called love too in all religion and in all romantic love. Giving myself up means only that I can't stand myself and somebody who cannot stand himself has a bad chance to like anybody else because we might be able to love somebody more than ourselves--that might be possible for human beings--but what certainly is not possible for human beings is to take anybody else more seriously than one's self because one lives with one's self all one's life--and that nobody can afford (not even a philosopher like Buddha). Taking one's self seriously means that more or less we always judge others with our own yardsticks. If we judge ourselves so harshly that we permanently want to get rid of ourselves, we must permanently want also to get rid of everybody else. It follows from that. Somebody who is not able to like himself--to get to be at least his second-best friend (which would be a fine position) is not able to love anybody in the world--not even to like, let alone to love anybody in the world. This is self-destruction, the destruction of this Self, the person, the destruction of the individual--getting rid of one's self. That all was done to perfection already in old India and everybody who wants that, likes for that reason Indian philosophy so much in our time. That is the reason why all those societies in California that sprung up permanently, that come together to study the Upanishad, become Yogis, do this exercise, that exercise and so on--they want to get rid of themselves and they finally got the right inkling because there is this way. Yes! This is the way--the Indians knew better how to do that than our modern charlatans

know it because they were great philosophers, though metaphysical philosophers. All that was broken by the Buddha: No ascetism, please, no extremes— no asceticism and absolute involvement in sensual things--both are bad. The middle path, the middle path of the human being in full health and full concentration for his life-time, doing things all right, thinking of the Self, sticking to this Self, wanting to become a free personality, doing one's best for everybody else--that is the middle path and this middle path we want to go. So he takes the concept of this Self (with a capital S), which is a mystical concept and a metaphysical concept, that helps man only to get rid of himself. This very poison, this wrong center of this wrong world he takes--like the Talmudist wants it of the Messiah--takes this very thing and just shifts it a little bit and another world starts to form itself around the right center. That is how basic discoveries in fundamental thoughts of humanity are made. That is why they are so hard to rediscover; they are buried already under systems of explanations and it is hard to find what ~~reality~~ originally really was done. But we with our modern knowledge of art, for instance, have been helped-- and also with our sociological insights ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ that we have gained: namely, we have now the possibility to go in knowledge ~~how it~~ what really happened, how they received the Buddha in India. And that was something. This fight against the Brahmins, the established priests, who at once wanted to ruin that new free society because they smelled what was coming out of it. They understood perfectly well what was done here--in reality as well as in thinking (because both things are the reality: the action of the Buddha, as well as this central thought of the Buddha. They both together are human reality; and this was an act of human reality--~~this xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ This complete change has been forgotten since and we have to rediscover it and rediscover it we can only by taking the other philosophers who always did the same thing--those nine people we are talking

about in another context, discovering another root of human creativeness. Having them together and comparing them, we will finally see, I hope, how important those changes in human fundamental thinking were and are still for us. If it is so, for instance with Buddha, if it is so that Kierkegaard's analysis is right, and if it is so--and it is so--that large layers of our society go back to a fake kind of mythological Indian thinking because they want to get rid of themselves. (Everybody who wants to get rid of himself in our time is a potential servant of totalitarianism--whether he knows it or not--and if that is so, then why shouldn't we on our part call the Buddha back to help us who once proved so efficient against that kind of thinking. And that is what makes the Buddha a modern thinker and that is exactly what makes everyone of those thinkers we are going to consider here most modern thinkers. So I hope that finally in the next semester--after we go through all the thinkers, related all that to most modern issues, to issues that are ours.