

THE MĀDHYAMIKA DIMENSION OF YINSHUN

**A RESTATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL OF NĀGĀRJUNA
IN 20TH CENTURY CHINESE BUDDHISM**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of PhD**

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ABSTRACT

Yinshun (1906-2005) is regarded as one of the eminent monks representative of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism. He has been valued for his large corpus of writings and scholarly achievement, as well as for his contribution to the change and development of Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth century and his influence on the formation of the future Chinese Buddhist community.

Yinshun undertook the mission of re-commenting on and re-promoting the study of the Mādhyamika scriptures. His efforts provoked a revival of interest towards the Mādhyamika School among contemporary Chinese Buddhist and, a re-assessment of the writings of Nāgārjuna within Chinese Buddhism.

This research reveals the Mādhyamika patterns in Yinshun's works and practice and argues that the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun should be interpreted within the context of the religious, intellectual and national restoration that twentieth-century China was subject to. At that time Chinese Buddhists came to create a new theoretical framework on which to base the new Buddhism, and adopted the latter as a symbol of the new Chinese identity. Yinshun articulated his own mission to restoring Chinese Buddhism, and the first part of his plan was the establishment of new standards of authority and a modern orientation towards tradition. For this purpose, he theorised a “negotiation strategy” that combined the figure and teachings of Nāgārjuna with the mainstream Chinese San-lun doctrine.

This work aims to present a still unexplored level of analysis of Yinshun, as well as an unprecedented reconstruction of the modern history and exegesis of the Mādhyamika/San-lun in China. Finally, with the argument that Yinshun's negotiation between traditions was intended for a Buddhist recovery of the nation, this dissertation can also locate itself in the discipline of historical studies of China.

The Mādhyamika Dimension of Yinshun

A Restatement of the School of Nāgārjuna in 20th Century Chinese Buddhism

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INTRODUCTION

Closely related to the idea of modernity was the transformation of the basic orientations to tradition and authority. The authority of the past as the major symbolic regulator of social, political and cultural change and innovation gave way to the acceptance of innovation as a cultural orientation and a possible component of the legitimation of authority.¹

This dissertation aims to question and explore the modernist ‘orientations to tradition and authority’ that Chinese Buddhism experienced in the twentieth-century. The research takes the monk Yinshun 印順 (1906-2005) as a case-study and focuses on the Mādhyamika pattern in Yinshun’s thought as the field within which the monk defined his own new ‘orientations to tradition and authority.’ Yinshun being an exponent of Chinese Buddhism as well as a Chinese living in (modern) Buddhist China, this study also investigates the tension between the two identities of ‘Chinese Buddhism’ and ‘Buddhist China’.

Yinshun’s lifetime, which included the entire twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, is the time frame considered in my work. This is a peculiar historical moment where nationalism and identity were critical concepts, and because of its length and political circumstances it includes a plurality of generational paradigms and historical patterns that the section below will explain. The thesis analyses the monastic community, religious circles and Buddhist intellectuals, and covers China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Distinguishing between these three regions evokes a discourse of identity, especially the creation of the construct of Taiwanese identity firstly as continuation of but then as opposition to the essence of ‘Chineseness’. The research thus attempts to map the multi-patterned dimensions of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism through the lens of modernity, having first questioned the role that modernity actually played in reforming this religion.

I argue that the tension between traditionalism (or better conservatism?) and innovation (or better modernity?) found a solution through the concurrence of competing doctrinal voices. Therefore my work comes firstly to question and finally to assess the resolution proposed by Yinshun as a representative figure of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

¹ He Ping (2002), *China’s Search of Modernity*, p.7

Chinese Buddhists in the planning of a 'new' Chinese (Mahāyāna) Buddhism: proposing resolutions

The premise of this dissertation is that Chinese Buddhists (monastic and lay, traditionalist and reformers) all shared the same mission: planning a 'new' Chinese Buddhism that could fit the new historical, political and religious milieu of China. The analysis of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism reveals three main factors underlying the structure of the religious and intellectual atmosphere of its time.

First of all, there was the China's response to 'the other'. The impact of Westernisation and modernity provoked the reinvention of 'Chinese Buddhism', which was intended not only as a revitalization of a specific religious tradition but also as a mark of identity for the 'new' China.² The process of reinvention of Chinese Buddhism involved the rethinking of 'tradition' in the light of new ideological frameworks. Buddhists' enterprise is better understood if framed in the general atmosphere of the region. The end of the nineteenth century witnessed an East Asian inner debate in response to Western (and Christian) new challenges. Thus we have Meiji Japan coining new terms, such as 'religion' and 'philosophy', 'science' and 'education', in order to translate the cultural paradigms of 'the other', as well as the East Asian attempt to identify and translate their own culture through those Western terminology and concepts, and start analysing those traditions through the historical and critical methodologies adopted from the West. In early twentieth century China saw the end of the Empire and the foundation of a Republican government, as well as an intellectual debate on what was *religion*, and whether and how the own traditions could be defined as such.³ Speaking specifically of Chinese Buddhism, the

² See Taixu's speech on Buddhism as 'saviour' of China in Yanpei 演培 (1989), *Yige fanyu seng de zibai* 一個凡愚的自白, pp.133-134.

³ Frank Millican commented on the reformist monk Taixu's intervention in such debate: 'In a lecture delivered in Ningpo [...], Tai Hsu spent some time in an endeavor to refute the claims of some that Buddhism is not a religion but only a philosophy. He admitted that it might not be classed as a religion according to the western content of that term but asserted that it was a Tsong-chiao (宗教) in the Chinese understanding of these two terms. The distinction between religion and philosophy as understood in the west is not native to the Chinese. They speak rather in terms of a school of thought or a type of teaching. Tsong-chiao is a new term, probably coined in Japan, to represent the foreign term "religion." Tai Hsu, probably, is not interested in religion in the objective use of the term but he is an exponent of what he considers to be the highest and purest philosophy of life.' (Millican, Frank, 'Tai Hsü and Modern Buddhism', *The Chinese Recorder*, 54:6 (1923), pp. 326-334.) Other important exponents of this 'new' Chinese Buddhism discussed a definition of Buddhism in the light of the newly coined term 'religion': 'In reference to the modern religion, the most learned modern Buddhist scholar, Eu-yan Chin-wu [Ouyang Jingwu] of Nanking Buddhist Seminary once said that Buddhism is not a religion. While practically all religions proclaim one God or gods, canonize some copies of holy scripture, confess certain unchangeable creeds and require definite religious faith, Buddhism has none of these elements. [...] Instead of emotional

discussion resulted eventually in a reinterpretation of the traditional values of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which became regarded as the defining feature of Chinese Buddhism, and the attack to funerary services and other similar practices that the Buddhist Sangha was used to perform because classified as 'superstition', which was synonymous of weakness and in contradiction with the newly arrived 'modernity'. I argue that these resolutions on Chinese Buddhism were based on a common set of criteria, such as the reassessment of constructs of Chinese tradition, a reinvention of 'tradition', and a reconfiguration of institutional elements.

Secondly, there were the post-1949 realities of the Chinese 'diaspora' and the 'free China'. Buddhists had to demonstrate the importance of Buddhism not only to the West but also to China, and to promote it as essential in the reformulation of 'Chineseness.' Moreover, the mid-twentieth century was a time when monastics moved from mainland China through Hong Kong to Taiwan, with the general plan of 'restoring' Chinese Buddhism, using 'free China' as a base. Documentary evidence, such as the diary of the Buddhist cleric Daoan 道安, offers grounds for such a project, proving the role that at least part of the Chinese Buddhist community sought to attribute to Yinshun.⁴ Also important during this historical phase was Japan, which, similarly to the West, was simultaneously considered as an antagonist and a model to emulate.

Thirdly, there was the succession and overlapping of historical patterns. The twentieth century saw the reformer and modernist monk Taixu 太虛 (1890-1947) and the scholar-monk Yinshun emerge as figures representative of two patterns, both engaged in attempts to balance and combine competing voices. Taixu and Yinshun aimed at the same objective, but their different socio-historical contexts led them to dissimilar plans and conclusions. As my dissertation will show, Taixu attempted to

faith in something outside, it teaches intelligent self-confidence. Thus Buddhism is thought to be more than a religion. The same scholar declared that neither is Buddhism a philosophy. All philosophies seek to find an ultimate reality, either in the self as Descartes did, or in the phenomena as Russell, and knowledge is their only means, while Buddhism regards taking something to be the ultimate reality as sheer superstition, and teaches the subtler way of self-realization than more knowledge of facts. Thus, Buddhism is thought to be different from what is meant by philosophy.' (Tai, Ping-heng, 'Modern Chinese Buddhism', *The Chinese Recorder*, 56:2 (1925), pp. 89-95.)

⁴ Daoan 道安 (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji* 道安法師遺集, v.6, p.635 [27 June 1951]: 'Taiwanese Buddhists really hope that Yinshun will move to Taiwan, in order to discuss the reorganization of Chinese Buddhism [*zhengli zhongguo fojiao zhi daye* 整理中國佛教之大業].' Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, p.1023 [17 January 1953]: a correspondence between Daoan, as spokesman of a group of Chinese monastics, and Yinshun remarked the motto 'The restoration of Buddhism must start from the free China' [*fojiao fuxing yao cong ziyou zhongguo zuoqi* 佛教復興要從自由中國作起].

realise a compromise between China and the West, reinventing tradition and rethinking the value of 'secularisation' in the light of the philosophy of Enlightenment, while Yinshun proposed a resolution within Buddhist parameters through a negotiation between the Indian and Chinese traditions of the religion.

Title, Argument and Chapterisation

'To choose Buddhism in the search for religious identity meant that one was choosing to be Chinese. It was an expression of cultural loyalism, a denial that things Chinese were inferior.'⁵

The relevance of Buddhism in the definition of Chineseness in the first half of twentieth century, which Holmes Welch also witnessed, provides an initial assumption of my dissertation. My work is thus meant to read this historical period and the tension between Buddhism and Chineseness by means of Yinshun case-study, and on a different level to read his teachings and role in the history of Chinese Buddhism through the time wherein he was active.

Yinshun has been valued for his large corpus of writings and scholarly achievements, as well as for his contribution to the development of contemporary Chinese Buddhism and his influence on the formation of the future Chinese Buddhist community. Yinshun especially undertook the mission of commenting on and promoting the study of the Mādhyamika scriptures.⁶ His efforts provoked a revival of interest towards the Mādhyamika School among contemporary Chinese Buddhists, a re-assessment of the writings of Nāgārjuna,⁷ and a re-evaluation of the role of Kumarajiva⁸ and Jizang 吉藏⁹ in introducing and systematising Nāgārjuna's teachings within Chinese Buddhism.

⁵ Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, p.261.

⁶ Mādhyamika, otherwise called the School of the Middle or the School of Emptiness, was founded by Nāgārjuna around the second century. Teachings of this school underlined the unsubstantial nature of the reality, focusing on the doctrine of dependent origination and no-self.

⁷ Even if a large number of scriptures have been attributed to Nāgārjuna, as index of the authority held by this Buddhist figures, scholars of the field agreed on his authorship of the only *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*.

⁸ Kumarajiva was a Kuchean Buddhist monk who lived between 344 and 413 CE. Settled in Chang'an, he became an important scholar and famous especially for his translation of Mahāyāna scriptures from Sanskrit into Chinese.

⁹ Jizang (549-623) was the founder and main teacher of the San-lun school in China, which is the Chinese version of the Mādhyamika school. Jizang's commentaries to Mādhyamika scriptures still are the main references for Chinese in the study of the school, and surely formed the background education of Yinshun as well.

This research maps the Mādhyamika patterns in Yinshun's works and practice and argues that the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun should be interpreted within the context of the religious, intellectual and national restoration that twentieth-century China was subject to, as part of the reconstruction of tradition that could fit the demands of the new era.

Hence, this work aims to present an as yet unexplored level of analysis of the figure and philosophy of Yinshun. From a different angle, the research provides the field of Chinese Buddhism with an unprecedented reconstruction of the modern history and exegesis of the Mādhyamika/San-lun in China as well.¹⁰

A few words on the title shall further the understanding of the aims and arguments of my work.

Previous scholarship in the field adopted terms such as 'revival' and 'revitalisation' (Welch), or 'awakening' (Xue Yu) to address the state of Chinese Buddhism in the process of modernisation and globalisation that was taking place in China.¹¹ As Welch reasons, 'it is treibly misleading to speak of "the Buddhist revival in China." First, most of what occurred was not a restoration of the past, but a series of innovations; not a religious revival, but a redirection from the religious to the secular. Second, it never affected the Chinese population as a whole. [...] Third, I believe, it concealed certain trends which, if they had continued, would have meant not a growing vitality for Buddhism but its eventual demise as a living religion.'¹² And he continues: 'Strictly speaking, the term "revival" should mean that what has

¹⁰ In this dissertation I will use the words "Mādhyamika" and "Yogācāra", "San-lun School" and "Wei-shi School", "Mādhyamika/San-lun" and "Yogācāra/Wei-shi" in accordance with the *Chinese quality* or *Indian quality* of each specific context. Mādhyamika and Yogācāra were the two schools of Indian Mahāyāna, the former founded by Nāgārjuna around the second century, and the latter by Asanga and Vasubandhu in the fourth century. The San-lun School represents the Chinese domestication of Mādhyamika. San-lun, as the name says, is based on the study of three treatises: the Middle Treatise (*Zhonglun* 中論), the Treatise of the Twelve Gates (*Shi'er men lun* 十二門論), which were the Chinese translation of scriptures by Nāgārjuna, and the Treatise of Hundred Verses (*Bai lun* 百論), which is the Chinese translation of a scripture attributed to Āryadeva, a disciple of Nāgārjuna. The San-lun school reached its peak with the commentaries written by Jizang 吉藏 (549-623) and declined thereafter, with its teachings being absorbed by the local Chan and Tiantai schools. The Wei-shi School, which means the 'School of the only-consciousness', was also called the *faxiang* 法相 school (school of the dharma characteristics) represents the Chinese domestication of Yogācāra, and has the Chinese Kuiji 窺基 (632-682) as the first patriarch. Chapter Five will include a detailed comment of the terminology that Yinshun adopted in his study of the School of Emptiness.

¹¹ Holmes Welch entitled his book *The Buddhist Revival in China*, and problematized the adoption of the term 'revival' in pp. 254-270. The debate on the term 'revival' has been tackled later on by Xue Yu in the preface of his *Buddhism, Nationalism and War* (2005), who proposed the choice of 'awakening' instead.

¹² Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, p.264

declined or expired is restored to the form it originally had [...] But in this sense nothing in history has never been revived [...] rebirth has always to some extent been a new birth.’¹³ Xue Yu preferred the word ‘awakening’ to define the ‘Buddhist developments in conjunction with the contemporary social, political, and intellectual movement of national awakening (*minzu juexing* 民族覺醒) in an effort for self-strengthening in China that started after the Opium War in 1842,’¹⁴ and continued through the May Fourth movement.

This research prefers to assess Yinshun’s contribution to Mādhyamika scholarship in modern China in terms of ‘restatement’, meaning a renewed interpretation of the doctrinal contents in the name of the reinvention of Mahāyāna and Chinese Buddhism in that peculiar historical moment. Yinshun’s restatement involved also an exploitation of Mādhyamika features. The figure of Nāgārjuna, the role of a selection of scriptures and the historical significance of the Mādhyamika School (which coincided with the beginning of Mahāyāna, and not a later stage of it) were all reassessed in accordance with the target of Yinshun’s strategy of thought. In other words, Yinshun’s ‘restatement’ accredited teachings that Chinese Mahāyāna traditionally had defined as competing voices, opening up a number of contentious issues which my research attempts to analyse.

The formula ‘School of Nāgārjuna’ also deserves clarification. The idea of ‘school’, which is usually rendered in Chinese with *pai* 派 or *zong* 宗, involves the notions of affiliation, transmission and thereafter the concept of sectarianism, which in the history of modern Chinese Buddhism assumed a negative connotation and became linked also to the idea of corruption.¹⁵ Hereby with ‘School of Nāgārjuna’ I mean to refer to the Chinese *Longshu zhi famen* 龍樹之法門, which Yinshun adopted to signify a corpus of figures, teachings and scriptures belonging to different historical phases of the Indo-Tibetan-Chinese Mādhyamika. Yinshun’s selection of such a corpus of texts defined his ideal for the doctrinal framework for the new Buddhism.

The term ‘twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism’ not only provides a precise research time line but also, and especially, to avoid the more general and often misleading formula ‘modern Chinese Buddhism.’ The general terms ‘modern’,

¹³ Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, p.262

¹⁴ Xue Yu (2005) *Buddhism, War, and Nationalism*, p.16

¹⁵ See Chapter Three and Chapter Six for more details on what the terms ‘sect’ and ‘school’ implied in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, and why affiliation and transmission could be seen as negative and were associated to corruption.

'modernity' and 'modernisation' often provide fixed labels which my research wants to avoid. Even if He Ping's work on the Chinese reception and adaptation of modernity in the late twentieth century and Donald S. Lopez's definition of Buddhist modernity are adopted as part of the analytical framework of this research, my work is also meant to analyse further data for a better definition of modernity as a Buddhist discourse and as a result of a sinification process.¹⁶ Lopez, for instance, did not include Yinshun among his list of modern Buddhist figures, while the 'pre-Yinshun' Taixu and the 'post-Yinshun' Zhengyan 證嚴 were mentioned in the group, a fact that may lead to a discussion on the questionable lineage that has been established recently, also by Taiwanese scholars.

The dissertation is divided into three parts and nine chapters, with each chapter examining the contributions which Yinshun made to the field of Mādhyamika scholarship, and assessing how these were determinants in his broad project of constructing a renewed authoritative tradition for a new Chinese Buddhism.

The first part, named 'The state of Mādhyamika scholarship in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism', explores the religious environment and the scholarly atmosphere in which Yinshun developed his understanding of Mādhyamika thought, and therefore aims to contextualise Yinshun within his time. The three chapters follow a diachronic order, passing from a 'Pre-Yinshun Era' through the 'Yinshun Era' to the 'Post-Yinshun Era.' **CHAPTER ONE** is a 'Mādhyamika biography' of Yinshun. It explores why and how Yinshun firstly encountered and learned Nāgārjuna's teachings and then developed his own hermeneutics of them. The typologies of sources and affiliation of the teachers that Yinshun relied on show aspects of the Buddhist intellectuals in the first half of the twentieth century, the role of Japanese scholarship in the field and the identity of the so-called 'School of Nāgārjuna' in that time. The chapter ends with a brief overview of Yinshun's publications on Mādhyamika/San-lun. **CHAPTER TWO** investigates other 'Mādhyamika/San-lun' voices in modern China besides Yinshun's who were active as Yinshun was developing his thought and articulating his argument, in order to highlight common patterns and distinct features. The digression into the publishing market, and the non-Buddhist (Confucian) hermeneutics of Nāgārjuna's doctrine

¹⁶ Among the others, see: He Ping (2002) *China's Search of Modernity*; Donald S. Lopez, ed. (2002) *Modern Buddhism: readings for the unenlightened*.

authored by Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909-1995) aims to place the new San-lun within the twentieth-century Chinese intellectuals, and delineate the identity of this teachings in the context of the new China. **CHAPTER THREE** analyses the doctrinal and historical phenomenon which I have named ‘Yinshunian Mādhyamika’ and that I regard as a new interpretation of ‘tradition’ and ‘authority’. The second part of the chapter assesses the Mādhyamika pattern of the ‘Post-Yinshun’ era, with emphasis on the generational paradigms of authority as turning points in the discourse.

The second part, entitled ‘Mādhyamika teachings in Yinshun’s works’, analyses the resolutions which Yinshun theorised and followed throughout his Buddhist career. This part is divided into three chapters. **CHAPTER FOUR** and **CHAPTER FIVE** assess, respectively, the revised Buddhist (fundamental) dictionary and the new Buddhist (Mādhyamika) encyclopedia arising from Yinshun’s thought. The tension between Pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna doctrinal patterns as understood in traditional Chinese Buddhism and according to Yinshun’s (modern) resolution, his coming to terms with the recently discovered Tibetan tradition of Mādhyamika, the process of enshrinement of Nāgārjuna as the *new* authority and the reassessment of the position of the San-lun master Jizang in the history of Chinese Buddhism are all examined. These two chapters provide the conceptual domain that Yinshun used as a base for the theoretical structure of his *renjian fojiao*, so characteristic of the ‘Post-Yinshun Era’ and that **CHAPTER SIX** analyses and problematises by arguing for a Mādhyamika framework in its theology.

The third part, ‘Yinshun’s study of the Mādhyamika Scriptures’, analyses the selection and use of canonical, and traditionally authoritative, San-lun scriptures as a basis for the new Mādhyamika and therefore of new Chinese Buddhism. **CHAPTER SEVEN** focuses on *Zhong lun* 中論 [T30 n1564], **CHAPTER EIGHT** on *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 [T25 n1509] and **CHAPTER NINE** on *Shi zhu piposha lun* 十住毗婆沙論 [T26 n1521]. In the study and commentary of those scriptures Yinshun challenged traditional Chinese Buddhism and traditional Chinese views on Mādhyamika, but also demonstrated his legacy to traditional Chinese Buddhist thought. Yinshun based his plan to restore Chinese Buddhism on the reassessment of the traditional Chinese concept of *tongjiao* 通教 (‘all-embracing teaching’), which therefore became itself a source of authority. Yinshun’s *tongjiao* framed the new

identity of Nāgārjuna, and presented a new interpretation of *Zhong lun*, the most important scripture of the Chinese (San-lun) Mādhyamika, as restatement of the teachings contained in the *Āgamas* rather than direct reflection of the Prajñāpāramitā doctrine. Yinshun's position takes distance from the Chinese (Mahāyāna) common view, according to which *Zhong lun* was 'directly' linked to the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures and only through the Prajñāpāramitā corpus, i.e. 'indirectly', linked to the *Āgamas*. Yinshun's exegesis of *Zhong lun* is thus a dialectical encounter with the scripture, a tradition which the scripture represented and embodied, and its adaptation to circumstantial factors such as the definition of early twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism and Buddhist China. Yinshun's adoption of the *tongjiao* expedient received negative reactions from 'traditional' Chinese Buddhists in Taiwan, and inspired the more traditional monk Cihang 慈航 (1895-1954) to compile the essay 'Jiaru mei you dacheng' 假如沒有大乘 (1953) in an attack on Yinshun's theology.¹⁷ At the same time, a careful reading of Yinshun's commentary on *Zhong lun* reveals a doctrinal rejection but textual adoption of the San-lun master Jizang. Then, the mastery of *Da zhidu lun*, as well as his essay *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi* 大智度論之作者及其翻譯 (1991) written in explicit opposition to Lamotte and the Japanese scholarship, is further evidence of the legacy of Yinshun's theology to the Chinese Mahāyāna tradition, just as the process of amending the scripture (culminating in its new edition) denotes Yinshun's reinvention of the 'classical' tradition. Finally, Yinshun's intervention to the hermeneutics of Pure Land practice should be read along the series of 'adjustments' that the Pure Land doctrine was subject to in the twentieth century in adaptation to the 'modern' world. What distinguishes Yinshun's action is the adoption of Mādhyamika teachings and reliance on Nāgārjuna in the critical reading of *Shi zhu piposha lun*.

Reassessment of theoretical constructs and institutional elements

'[All] historians, whatever else their objectives, are engaged in this process inasmuch as they contribute, consciously or not, to the creation, dismantling and restructuring of images of the past.'¹⁸

¹⁷ Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, pp.1280-1284 [24 December 1953]

¹⁸ Hobsbawm, Eric, ed. (1983) *The Invention of Tradition*, p.13. With 'this process' he meant the process of invention of tradition.

Through a study of Yinshun's exegesis and promotion of Mādhyamika the present research is meant to address *why* and *how* Buddhist China in the twentieth century advanced a reconstruction of the theoretical concepts behind 'tradition', 'authority', 'modernity', 'history' and 'identity'. Figures and facts taken in account found themselves dealing with 'tradition', contesting and negotiating 'authority', and as a result rewriting 'history', a process which also includes the construction of national and religious 'identities'. These constructs also lead to the discourses of 'orthodoxy', 'heterodoxy' and 'orthopraxy', which must be contextualised within the particular frame of 'Chineseness'.

In *Historicizing "Tradition" in the Study of Religion*, editors Steven Engler and Gregory P. Grieve propose to analyse 'tradition' in terms of 'cultural production', in its 'pratico-social functions', and in consideration of the discourses of belief and history.¹⁹ In line with the argument of this work, I consider tradition as a static reality as well as a dynamic phenomenon, thus assuming significance within the interaction of (local) historical and intellectual milieux. I argue that the different hermeneutics of the static and dynamic aspects of 'tradition' was one of the main factors that provoked debates and schisms among the competing voices of modern Buddhist China.

In its dynamic aspect, 'tradition' can be subject to different interventions, and, according to the historical and hermeneutic dimensions, undergoes a process of either 'invention' or 'reinvention', 'modernisation' or 'creative recovery.'²⁰ From a further perspective, the tension between 'traditionalism' and 'conservatism' may lead to a misunderstanding of the value embodied by 'tradition'.²¹ With specific reference to twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, 'tradition' was adapted to respond to the process of Westernisation in East Asia, and this therefore realises a theoretical domain that was meant to be the background for a formulation of new valid authorities and new absolute values. My dissertation addresses all those topics, its third part is particularly devoted to the reassessment, restatement and reconstruction of the (Chinese) Mādhyamika textual tradition.

As Waida reasons, 'Authority is a constant and pervasive phenomenon in the

¹⁹ Engler, Steven and Gregory P. Grieve, eds. (2005) *Historicizing "Tradition" in the Study of Religions*, pp.1-15.

²⁰ Eric Hobsbawm addressed the issue of 'invention of tradition'. For the concept of 'creative recovery of tradition', see 'Don Pittman (2001) *Towards a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*, pp.196-254.

²¹ Xue Yu (2005) *Buddhism, War and Nationalism*, p.219.

history of religion',²² and among the 'sources of authority' we can count charismatic figures, scriptures and doctrinal traditions.²³ Yinshun and his restatement of Mādhyamika as the 'new' Buddhist identity for the 'new' China is a valid case-study for the analysis of the formation of authority in all its three facets. The pattern of the construing 'authorities' underlines the shift from Yinshun as establishing authority to Yinshun as an established authority. Yinshun's peers and disciples can be taken as a case-study, having begun the process of enshrining Yinshun, and interpreted Yinshun's hermeneutics of Mādhyamaka and Mahāyāna as the new Chinese Buddhist authority. As the table above shows, the generational transition involved the exchange from a restoration of a Mādhyamika/San-lun system to an Yinshun-centred doctrinal framework. In detail, Yinshun's enshrining of Nāgārjuna as the authoritative figure has been replaced by the Post-Yinshun generation with the rise of Yinshun himself as the leading authority. In the same way Yinshun's literature came to substitute the Mādhyamika/San-lun texts that Yinshun promoted as scriptural authority of his Mādhyamika and, therefore, of the correct Dharma. And finally, the theology of *renjian* Buddhism was promoted instead of Yinshun's system of doctrinal classification (*panjiao*). A comparison between these two patterns reveals common features in the process of authority creation, but also indicates differences dictated by distinct historical phases and therefore discrepant instances of nationalism. This includes the emergence of Taiwanese Buddhism as separate from Chinese Buddhism.

| Yinshun's construction of authority | Yinshun enshrined as authority |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. authority [figure] = Nagarjuna | a. authority [figure] = Yinshun |
| b. authority [texts] = <i>Zhong lun, Da zhidu lun</i> | b. authority [texts] = Yinshun's scholarship, his edition of <i>Da zhidu lun</i> |
| c. authority [tradition] = 'all-embracing teaching' [<i>tongjiao</i> 通教] | c. authority [tradition] = 'Buddhism for the Human Realm' [<i>renjian fojiao</i> 人間佛教] |

Table 1 – Restoration, formation and legitimation of authority

This study analyses the discourse of modernity within twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism. A careful reading of the Chinese literature shows that the

²² Waida Manabu, 'Authority', in Mircea Eliade ed. (1987) *Encyclopedia or Religion*, second edition, pp. 692.

²³ Waida Manabu, 'Authority', in Mircea Eliade ed. (1987) *Encyclopedia or Religion*, second edition, pp. 692-697.

discourse of modernity entailed 'restoration' (*fixing* 復興), 'modification' (*gaizao* 改造), 'remodeling' (*zhuanxing* 轉型) of Chinese Buddhism in response to local changes of political and social nature, and the shift from 'traditional Buddhism' (*chuantong fojiao* 傳統佛教) to a 'contemporary (modern) Buddhism' (*jin xiandai fojiao* 近現代佛教). Most Chinese scholarship concludes that 'Buddhism for the Human Realm' (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教) is the emblem of 'modern Buddhism,' however as my dissertation will argue, this umbrella-term cannot grasp the phenomenon of modernity in Buddhism in its entirety. This is why there is no mention of 'modern' or 'modernity' in the title of my work, in order to avoid misleading interpretations of conceptual or temporal boundaries. Besides assessing the dynamic interaction between 'modern', 'new' and 'past', Xue Yu advances a distinction between 'tradition' and 'conservatism':

We should differentiate "conservatism" from "traditionalism". The latter indicates the sentiment of attaching to the old ways as they were or fear of new and innovation while the former, although maintaining the old ways of thinking, consciously places them in a new environment and positively responding to the changes although in its conservative ways against progressive movements.²⁴

The contesting of tradition and establishment of new authorities produces a new narrative of history, where history is used (or abused) in order to legitimate the new cultural standardization and a new 'Chineseness.' Yinshun has been considered not only as 'the father of *renjian fojiao*' (a claim that, as my dissertation will argue, is disputable) but also as a historian, to be more precise, as a Chinese and Buddhist historian of Buddhism. Yinshun's critical assessment and methodological adoption of historicism is correctly understood if read within the context of the Chinese conception of historiography and historical judgement.²⁵ Yinshun initiated a 'de-historicization' of doctrinal Buddhism and wrote history as a means not to seek a pre-determined truth but to 'codify truth' (a concept that in Chinese is expressed as *dian shi* 典實) in order to establish and control the new identity of Buddhist China.²⁶

²⁴ Xue Yu (2005) *Buddhism, War and Nationalism*, p.219.

²⁵ For a detailed argumentation about Chinese historiography, see: Schmidt-Glintzer, Helwig, Achim Mittag and Jörn Rüsen eds. (2005) *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism and Ideology. Chinese Historiography and Historical Culture from a New Comparative Perspective*.

²⁶ Vogelsang, Kai, 'Some notions of historical judgment in China and the West'. In Schmidt-

As my dissertation will argue, Yinshun's contribution to historicism is evinced in the mission to reconstruct a new Chinese (Mahāyāna) Buddhism, with historical judgement being used to contest historical objectivity, and the production of history being exploited to claim and codify *the* Truth.

Any discourse of identity includes synchronic and diachronic contexts of activity: negotiation and formation, distinct patterns and overlapping.²⁷ The analysis of Yinshun's restatement of Nāgārjuna's teachings within twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism also opens discussion of the construct of identity, in its various forms and mutual engagements. As the chapters will demonstrate, the twentieth century witnessed the formation of a new Chineseness, which also include a new *Chinese* identity of Buddhism as well as a new *Buddhist* identity of China. Within this process of creating a new *Chineseness*, Yinshun adopted a resolution providing a new identity to the Mādhyamika teaching through the amendment of previous doctrinal identities of the same tradition. Yinshun's moves from Mainland China through Hong Kong to Taiwan, and the evolution of his Buddhology during his stay in Taiwan should be read in parallel to the history and development of the 'modern Chineseness' of Buddhism, which developed from the recreation of a *Chinese* Buddhism to the formation of a *Taiwanese* Buddhism. The overlapping of these two identities created the framework for today's Buddhist intellectual and religious landscape in the area. Daoan's personal diary mentions China, Hong Kong and Taiwan as separate entities already in the early 1950s,²⁸ and lists the distinction between 'Chinese Buddhism' (*Zhongguo fojiao* 中國佛教), 'Taiwanese Buddhism' (*Taiwan fojiao* 台灣佛教) and 'Mainland Buddhism' (*Dalu fojiao* 大陸佛教) in the early 1960s.²⁹ Yinshun experienced the forming of identity in himself. The invention of the expression *Yinshun xue* 印順學 ('Yinshun study') and *Hou Yinshun shidai* 後印順時代 ('Post Yinshun Era') were meant to historicise and crystallise Yinshun as a distinct and clearly defined entity.

Glintzer, Helwig, Achim Mittag and Jörn Rüsen eds. (2005) *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism and Ideology. Chinese Historiography and Historical Culture from a New Comparative Perspective*, pp.161-162.

²⁷ Hall, Stuart and Paul du Guy, eds. (1996) *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

²⁸ Hong Kong is usually addressed as 'Free Hong Kong' (*ziyou zhi xianggang* 自由之香港), and Taiwan as 'Free China' (*ziyou zhongguo* 自由中國)

²⁹ Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.9, p.2556 [14 November 1964.]

The state of the field: a survey of the literature

This dissertation is the first work to be attempted on the specific topic of Mādhyamika in Yinshun's life and works. Known primary sources aside, such as Yinshun's writings and scriptures from the Chinese Buddhist Canon,³⁰ I will rely on previous research on Yinshun and Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth century, which provide useful information, methodological parameters and challenging arguments.

The biographies of Yinshun, all in Chinese and written by Taiwanese scholars, offer a general discussion of the monk, focusing especially on the impact of Yinshun as a Buddhist scholar-monk on the Buddhist circles and on the society of contemporary Taiwan.³¹ This material is limited in two respects. First of all, the writings seem to have been compiled for propagandist purposes, as eulogies of the master. Moreover, wherever the discussion touches the corpus of teachings promoted by Yinshun, the ideas of the master are not presented within an argumentative discussion, but merely reported, most of the time simply quoting from Yinshun's writings without arranging any critical organisation of the discourse. These shortcomings find a reasonable explanation in both the purpose of compilation and in the audience that they address. The book of Qiu Minjie is a perfect example, and has been heavily criticised for the above shortcomings. My work does not want to be considered as a biographical monograph, and indeed articulates an account on the Mādhyamika pattern in Yinshun's life.

On the other hand, the focus on the social impact of Yinshun's "Buddhism for the Human Realm" (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教), and the large amount of details available on the relationship between Yinshun and his teachers, and subsequently between Yinshun and his disciples, provide important information on the life of this figure, as well as about the contexts of the so-called "Pre-Yinshun Era" and "Post-Yinshun Era". The recent book by Pan Xuan belongs to this list. My dissertation does not avoid a discussion on the relationship between Yinshun and the 'pre' and 'post', and included a chapter on *renjian fojiao*, but even here the research is framed within Yinshun's recovery of Mādhyamika tradition.

The group of monographs may be regarded as complementary to the biographies, since the monographic studies on Yinshun form surveys of Yinshun's

³⁰ For this research I will consult the Taishō Tripitaka (*dazheng xinxiu da zang jing* 大正新修大藏經) and the Longzang Canon (*long zang* 龍藏), that are the editions used by Yinshun himself.

³¹ Representative titles of this genre are: Pan Xuan 潘宣 (2002) *Kanjian fotuo zai renjian. Yinshun daoshi zhuan* 看見佛陀在人間。印順導師傳; Qiu Minjie 邱敏捷 (2000) *Yinshun daoshi de fojiao sixiang* 印順導師的佛教思想.

teachings more than of his life. Monographs on Yinshun can be divided into two groups: those by lay (and not necessarily Buddhist) authors,³² and monographs authored by clerics. Nevertheless, these works lack any critical investigation of Yinshun's viewpoint of Mādhyamika. In this respect, my own research will integrate these writings and offer new approaches to the figure and the philosophy of Yinshun.

Quite a few published and un-published postgraduate dissertations³³ and the translation of some passages from Yinshun's writings³⁴ constitute the Western scholarship on Yinshun. Divergent in focus and approach, the postgraduate dissertations compiled in Western academia have one common advantage: their structure and approach demonstrate the application of Western theories and systems of thought to the study of contemporary Chinese Buddhism. Methodologically, this genre of literature offers an important contribution to the development of Western research on the East Asian hermeneutics of Buddhism. Tien Po-yao's (descriptive more than argumentative) survey of Yinshun's literary production is integrated into Marcus Bingenheimer's detailed biographical study on Yinshun. Yinshun's hermeneutics and reconstruction of Buddhist doctrine is better provided in Zhiru's work, addressing the background and significance of Yinshun's reassessment of the history of Indian Buddhism, William Chu's research, which contextualised Yinshun's theology within the movement of Critical Buddhism, and finally Scott Hurley's

³² The most remarkable books of this genre are: Guo Peng 郭朋 (1992) *Yinshun foxue sixiang yanjiu* 印順佛學思想研究, Taipei: Zhengwen; Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 (2001) *Dangdai taiwan renjian fojiao sixiangjia: yi yinshun daoshi wei zhongxin de xinhuo xiang chuan yanjiu lunwen ji* 當代台灣人間佛教思想家：以印順導師為中心的薪火相傳研究論文集, Taipei: Xinwenfeng. These works are similar in structure, but distant in date of composition and focus: the former is a general overview of Yinshun's writings and the fundamental teachings presented therein, while the latter focus on Yinshun as a charismatic promoter of the "Buddhism for the Human Realm", of which the principles are reported and explained in detail, through quotations of Yinshun's words and the author's arguments as well.

³³ They are: Zhiru (1993) *Chinese Master Yinshun's Study of Indian Buddhism. Significance of Historical (Re)construction for a Contemporary Buddhist Thinker*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, M.A. dissertation; Tien Po-yao (1995) *A Modern Buddhist Monk-Reformer in China: The Life and Thought of Yin-shun*. San Francisco, California Institute of Integral Studies, Ph.D. dissertation; Hurley, Scott C. (2001) *A Study of Master Yinshun's Hermeneutics: An Interpretation of the Tathagatagarbha Doctrine*. University of Arizona, Ph.D. dissertation; Bingenheimer, Marcus (2003) *Leben und Werk des Gelehrtenmönchs Yinshun (*1906) – Seine Bedeutung für Entwicklung des Chinesischen Buddhismus*. Würzburg, Würzburg University, Ph.D. Dissertation (published as book in 2004); Chu, William P. (2006) *A Buddha-shaped hole: Yinshun's (1906-2005) critical Buddhology and the theological crisis in modern Chinese Buddhism*, UCLA, Ph.D. dissertation.

³⁴ So far, only the volume *Cheng fo zhi dao* 成佛之道 has been completely translated by Wing H. Yeung and published in 1998 under the title *The Way to Buddhahood* (Boston: Wisdom Publication). Some passages from *Miaoyun ji* 妙雲集 have been translated and published by Hwa Tsang Monastery Inc., Australia, in the following anthologies: *Selected Translations of Miao Yun Part I* (1995), *Selected Translations of Miao Yun Part II* (1996), *Selected Translations of Miao Yun Part III* (1998), *Selected Translations of Miao Yun Part IV* (1999).

dissertation, which assesses Yinshun's revision of the Chinese traditional Tathagatagarbha doctrine. Hurley concluded his investigation stating that Yinshun's emphasis on emptiness was "unique among Buddhist reformers of the period. Many like Ouyang Jingwu and even Taixu turned to Yogacara teachings for inspiration," and concluding asking: "does Yinshun see himself as advocating innovative interpretations of Buddhist doctrine or does he see himself as simply re-asserting Buddhist tradition?"³⁵ This question, not investigated in Hurley's nor in other postgraduate theses, thus became the starting point of my own study.

Some Chinese works (Taiwanese authorship) can also be included in the group of postgraduate dissertations.³⁶ Rich in detail, these works show an evident appreciation for the *Master*, without questioning the contents of Yinshun's works.

The literature on the history of Buddhism in twentieth-century China and Taiwan discusses the historical framework wherein Yinshun developed his theology. Charles B. Jones, a historian of Buddhism, contributes a comprehensive survey of the atmosphere (in terms of both time and space) to which Yinshun belonged, and thus helps to contextualise Yinshun's teachings and position. On the other hand, in regards to his argument on Yinshun, Jones places too much emphasis on the concepts of modernity and modernism that he regarded as the main features of this figure, neglecting Yinshun's concern for the traditional Chineseness of Buddhism.³⁷ Jones's work is complementary to the quite large amount of Chinese literature on the history of Buddhism in Taiwan and contemporary Taiwanese Buddhism. Besides offering a possible definition of "Taiwanese Buddhism", i.e. the *Taiwanese*ness of the Buddhist religion on the island, this historical literature dedicates some sections to the analysis of Yinshun's life and works and the contribution that he made to the development of Buddhism in Taiwan and to the improvement of Buddhist scholarship. Similarly to Jones's work, these writings help contextualising Yinshun's works in an historical and geographical context. On the other hand, in contrast to Jones, the Taiwanese

³⁵ Hurley, Scott C. (2001) *A Study of Master Yinshun's Hermeneutics: An Interpretation of the Tathagatagarbha Doctrine*. University of Arizona, Ph.D. Dissertation, pp.196-197.

³⁶ Two recent dissertations are: Fayan 法嚴 (2000) *Yinshun fashi zai taiwan: Yi huodong shiji yu sixiang yingxiang wei kaocha zhongxin* 印順法師在台灣 - 以活動事跡與思想影響為考查中心, Taipei, Yuanguang Buddhist Institute, M.A. dissertation; Zhu Wenguang 朱文光 (1996) *Fojiao lishi quanshi de xiandai zongji: Yi yinshun panjiao sixiang wei duibi kaocha zhi xiansuo* 佛教歷史詮釋的現代蹤跡—以印順判教思想為對比考察之線索, Taipei, Zhongxing University, M.A. dissertation. We should add the book by Qingde 清德 entitled *Yinshun daoshi de lixue sixiang* 印順導師的律學思想 (Taipei: Yunlong, 2001) to the list, since this is the revised version of her M.A. dissertation submitted to the Zhonghua Institute of Buddhist Studies in 1992.

³⁷ Jones, Charles B. (1999) *Buddhism in Taiwan – Religion and the State 1660-1990*, Honolulu: Hawaii University Press.

authors approach the discourse from a Chinese/Taiwanese perspective, using other registers and, moreover, applying an apologetic perspective to the study of the subject.³⁸

Another valid source of material on Yinshun is the annual conference held on the occasion of his birthday, focused on his life and work.³⁹ The papers presented analyse a large range of topics. Nevertheless, most of the contributions are hagiographic in nature. Only a few papers have dealt with Yinshun's interpretation of *Mādhyamika*. Even so, they have merely offered a summary of the main points of Yinshun's agenda without further questioning.

Furthermore, there is a literature that may be classified under both the genres of biographical and monographical studies, but that I prefer to isolate because of the particular authorship, namely the writings produced by the "senior" members of the monastic community who are linked to Yinshun through different legacies. These compilations may lack objectivity in the exposition and evaluation of Yinshun's teachings but they are quite profound and detailed in the treatment of doctrinal tenets. This is a literature developed especially in the last two decades, all in Chinese and published in Taiwan. Unfortunately for our purposes, these works do not deal with Yinshun's interpretation of *Mādhyamika*.⁴⁰

Criticism directed at Yinshun may form a further genre of sources. The main exponents of this group are the Modern Chan Society (better known in Chinese as *Xiandai chan she* 現代禪社), of which Wen Jinke 溫金柯 is the prominent voice,⁴¹

³⁸ The most representative titles are: Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 (1990) *Xiandai zhongguo fojiao sixiang lunji (1)* 現代中國佛教思想論集 (一), Taipei: Xin wenfeng; Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 (1992) *Taiwan fojiao yu xiandai shehui* 台灣佛教與現代社會, Taipei: Dongda; Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 (1996) *Taiwan fojiao bainianshi zhi yanjiu: 1895-1995* 台灣佛教百年史之研究 1895-1995, Taipei: Nantian chubanshe; Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 (1997) *Taiwan dangdai fojiao* 台灣當代佛教, Taipei: Nantian; Lan Jifu 藍吉富 (1991) *Ershi shiji de zhongri fojiao* 二十世紀的中日佛教, Taipei: Xinwenfeng; Yang Huinan 楊惠南 (1991) *Dangdai Fojiao sixiang zhanwang* 當代佛教思想展望, Taipei: Dongda.

³⁹ The first of these conferences was held in 2000, on the 95th birthday of Yinshun. The organising committee included monks, nuns as well as scholars. Zhaohui 昭慧 and Xingguang 性廣, from the Hongshi Buddhist Institute, were in charge of the committee.

⁴⁰ See especially: Zhaohui 昭慧 (1995) *Renjian fojiao de bozhongzhe* 人間佛教的播種者, Taipei: Dongda; Zhaohui 昭慧 (2001) *Miaoyun ji daolun* 妙雲集導論, Tainan: Fojiao wenxuan jijinhui; Yanpei 演培 (1991) *Yinshun daoshi sixiang de dangdai yiyi* 印順導師思想的當代意義, Taipei: Fotuo jiaoyu jijinhui; Hongyin 宏印 (1994) *Zenyang du miaoyun ji* 怎樣讀妙雲集, Taipei: Zhengwen; Chuandao 傳道 (2001) *Yinshun daoshi yu renjian fojiao* 印順導師與人間佛教, Tainan: Fojiao wenxuan jijinhui.

⁴¹ Wen Jinke 溫金柯 (2001) *Jicheng yu pipan Yinshun fashi renjian fojiao sixiang* 繼承與批判印順法師人間佛教思想, Taipei: Modern Chan Society.

and the monk Rushi 如石.⁴² Both Rushi and Wen Jinke criticise Yinshun's hermeneutics of Mādhyamika. The Modern Chan Society touches on the issue of the role of Mādhyamika in Yinshun's teachings, recognising (and praising) Yinshun's contribution to a re-evaluation of the Mādhyamika doctrine, but also accusing Yinshun of placing an excessive emphasis on the Indian Mādhyamika school, at the expense of the tradition of Chinese Buddhism. Rushi is worth mentioning for his opposition to Yinshun's characterisation of the *Zhong lun* as re-statement of the contents of the *Āgamas*, rather than directly linked to the Prajñāpāramitā Scriptures and Yinshun's criticism of Tibetan Buddhism.

Jiang Canteng 江燦騰, Yang Huinan 楊惠南 and Lan Jifu 藍吉富 are scholars of the field native of Taiwan that deserve to be mentioned. Jiang Canteng is well-known for his detailed study of the comparison between Yinshun and Taixu 太虛, while Lan Jifu's special contribution is his unique parallel between Yinshun and Lü Cheng 呂澂. Finally, Yang Huinan is the only who has analysed even Yinshun's connection with the Mādhyamika school, quoting often from the master's works in his *Longshu yu Zhongguan zhexue* 龍樹與中觀哲學 (Taipei: Dongda, 1988).

With the death of Yinshun in 2005 a series of new publications was added to the existent scholarship on Yinshun. While most of the works were apologetic and commemorative, and could only provide descriptive details of Yinshun's life and mission, an overall consideration of the nature of these publications helps define the role that Yinshun was assigned by the international community.

To conclude, criticised and praised, Yinshun has been widely discussed, especially in his relationship with Taixu and Taixu's teachings, and within the context of *renjian fojiao*. Still, 'Yinshun study' is a recent field, and as such we can count a number of issues that have not been discussed yet. For instance, so far there has been no monograph on Yinshun's strategy of problematising and reinventing tradition by focusing on the deconstruction and reconstruction of Nāgārjuna's person and teachings in order to restore successfully Buddhism in China. Here is the contribution of this dissertation, result of engagement with the existing field and aimed to propose new directions for the development of the latter as well as new research questions for future investigations.

⁴² Rushi 如石 (2001) *Xiandai dacheng qi xin lun – rushi fashi lunwen ji* 現代大乘起信論—如石法師論文集, Nantou: Nanlin.

Theory and Method: Reassessing the analytical framework and fieldwork methodology in the study of modern Chinese Buddhism.

Most of my dissertation focuses on the analysis of scriptures, with consideration of the process through which a 'text' turns into a sacred scripture, and of the construction of authorities *of*, and *through*, texts. My work is then surely indebted to Derrida's theory of language, deconstruction of words and meanings, as well as to Foucault's definition of 'discourse' as a regulated system of producing knowledge through language.⁴³ My work on what is *behind*, *in* and *in front of* the text follows the analytical framework theorized by Paul Ricoeur and Roland Barthes.⁴⁴

Since my research is a study on the transition which the tradition of Chinese Buddhism underwent in the twentieth century, and therefore entails a diachronic view of the construction of authorities and their process of legitimisation, then a historical perspective is adopted throughout the writing in order to reveal and distinguish the various historical patterns and epistemologies of identity.

This is also a study based on extensive fieldwork, which I have conducted before and during the PhD programme. In 2001 and 2002 I had the opportunity to meet Yinshun's students and direct disciples, interview Yinshun himself, as well as doing archive research in the monasteries associated to Yinshun and academic research institutions. This pre-PhD fieldwork experience helped me to frame specific research questions, realise the importance of the school of Nāgārjuna within Yinshun's teachings and how this topic had been neglected by local and international scholarship of the field. Once back in Taiwan in 2005, I could visit Yinshun's monasteries, collect unpublished materials and interview the most famous as well as the less known students of the monk, witness the mythmaking process that Yinshun was subject to in the final years of his life and after his death, while my affiliation to Academia Sinica and the National Central Library helped the finding of important documents on the historical and religious background of early twentieth-century China.

As a result of my firm conviction of the value of the local cultural (linguistic and religious) identities, I have integrated the historical approach with consideration of the value of regionalism. Because of the consideration of East Asian region, and

⁴³ Among the others, see: Derrida, Jacques, 'Faith and Knowledge: the two sources of "religion" at the limits of reason alone', in Derrida and Vattimo, eds. (1998) *Religion*; Foucault, Michel, A.M Smith trans. (1972) *The archaeology of knowledge*.

⁴⁴ Among the others, see: Ricoeur, Paul, John B. Thompson trans. (1981) *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*; Barthes, Roland (1994) *The semiotic challenge*.

especially of Chinese civilization, this dissertation also belongs to the field of Chinese studies.

Related to the concept of regionalism, the theory of 'minimalist sociology' of the French anthropologist Albert Piette was also inspiring, and led me to define the overall picture of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism by giving space to silent voices, like the less known disciples and students of Yinshun, and neglected phenomena, like the transformation of Yinshun's image through motion pictures.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Among the others, see: Piette, Albert (1996) *Ethnographie de l'action. L'observation des détails*

PART ONE

THE STATE OF MĀDHYAMIKA SCHOLARSHIP

IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHINESE BUDDHISM

My dissertation argues that Yinshun enshrined *a* Mādhyamika as the authority and tradition basis of the new Chinese Buddhism. This section analyses what was the (Chinese Buddhist) conception and understanding of Mādhyamika in the twentieth century; what were its religious, Buddhist and intellectual values. Yinshun emphasised particularly the figure of Nāgārjuna, but why did he choose the figure of Nāgārjuna? Therefore, who was Nāgārjuna, and what did he represent in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism?

The process of restoration of the 'school of Nāgārjuna', as well as the nature of this restoration, can be interpreted through the investigation of a number of issues. There is the Buddhist and non-Buddhist reception and adoption of Mādhyamika, which shows the relevance of this school and its teachings in a wider cultural and intellectual environment. The analysis of the selected introduction and fruition of international scholarship in the field provides a portrayal of the forces affecting the doctrinal bases of the school. The survey of the national market of Buddhist publications can tell us about the fruition of the school in China. Chapters One and Two develop these issues in detail.

All these research questions are articulated through a synchronic and diachronic analysis, from the so-called Pre-Yinshun period (end of the nineteenth-century to the 1930s) to the Post-Yinshun era (starting in the late 1980s). The generational shift and the consequent earlier basis and later transformation of Yinshun's paradigms are examined herein.

CHAPTER ONE

YINSHUN: LIFE, WORKS AND MĀDHYAMIKA^{*}

Someone said I belong to the San-lun School, to the School of Emptiness, but they do not know that I am just a disciple of Buddha and I do not belong to any school.¹

This chapter outlines a biography of the monk Yinshun 印順 (1906-2005),² focusing on what I named 'the Mādhyamika dimension' of the monk's career.³ I provide herein a critical analysis of the religious background, Buddhist education and first Dharma preaching of this contemporary Chinese master.⁴ My investigation into the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun is based on historical sources as well as on biographical and autobiographical accounts.⁵

The arguments proposed and the issues debated in this chapter offer insights on the ongoing debate on whether Yinshun may be considered as a *scholar-monk* or as a *monastic-scholar*, as a *religious leader* or as Buddhist *intellectual*, as well as shedding light on the value of Dharma *practice* in twentieth-century Buddhist China.

^{*} I have adopted the pinyin system of transliteration for the Chinese characters. Title of Chinese sources (volumes, articles, etc.) present pinyin and Chinese characters at the first occurrence, afterwards the only pinyin is reported. Name of Chinese concepts and persons present pinyin and Chinese characters at the first occurrence, afterwards the only pinyin is reported. The adoption of the English translation instead of the Chinese pinyin is sometimes adopted for reason of clarity. The translations from Chinese (Yinshun's writings and otherwise) are all mine, if not otherwise stated.

¹ Yinshun (1894) 'Youxin fahai liushi nian', in *Huayu ji*, vol. 5, p. 50.

² Yinshun, whose lay name was Zhang Luqin 張麴芹, was born in 1906 at Haining 海寧 (Zhejiang province). He received the tonsure in 1930 under Master Qingnian 清念 at Fuquan monastery 福泉庵, and was fully ordained in 1931 at Tiantong monastery 天童寺 (Ningbo 寧波). After studying at the Buddhist institutes found by the reformer monk Taixu 太虛, he moved from Mainland China through Hong Kong to Taiwan (1952), where he finally settled. Yinshun died on the 4th of June 2005 at Hualian, in the Tzu Chi Hospital established by his disciple the nun Zhengyan 證嚴 (b.1937).

³ In this chapter I will use the words "Mādhyamika" and "Yogācāra", "San-lun School" and "Wei-shi School", "Mādhyamika/San-lun" and "Yogācāra/Wei-shi" in accordance with the *Chinese quality* or *Indian quality* of each specific context.

⁴ Being a critical investigation of the education of Yinshun, this chapter focuses mainly on the period of his permanence in Mainland China and Hong Kong.

⁵ We can list six Yinshun's 'official' autobiographical sources: (1994): *Pingfan de yisheng* 平凡的一生; (1985): *Youxin fahai liushinian* 游心法海六十年; (1972): 'Wo zenyang xuanzele fojiao 我怎樣選擇了佛教', in *Wo zhi zongjiao guan* 我之宗教觀, 301-306; (1973): 'Wo huainian dashi 我懷念大師', in *Huayu xiangyun* 華雨香雲, 299-308; (1973): 'Anguan yaoqi 庵關遙寄', in *Huayu xiangyun*, 395-396; the introduction of (1968): *Shuo yiqie youbu wei zhu de lunshu yu lunshi zhi yanjiu* 說一切有部爲主的論書與論師之研究.

Secondly, the adoption of the School of the Middle Way as key thread of Yinshun's biography makes this research a Mādhyamika discourse on modern/contemporary Buddhism in China and Taiwan.

Finally, the information offered by historical sources confirm Yinshun's voice, and at the same time resolves, or at least reveals, contradictions among the competing voices of twentieth-century (Buddhist) China.

The table below is meant to summarise the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun's life and career, and introduces the structure of the entire chapter. My study proposes a division of Yinshun's education and exposition in four periods. I take into consideration the sources that Yinshun read and the teachers whom he relied on in his learning of Buddhism. The achievements that Yinshun completed in each phase and the main research activities that characterise any single period are also reported. The survey of the sources which framed Yinshun's study of Buddhism reveals Yinshun's legacy of traditional Chinese Buddhist thought as well as the distance he took from that doctrinal and ideological pattern. A detail that the scheme does not include, but is important to take account of, is Yinshun's location during each of the four periods, and the shift in his theology with his moving to Taiwan.

The different scholarly and religious milieu that China in the first half of twentieth century and Taiwan in the second half of it offered will be revealed in the following sections of the chapter. A second element that characterises Yinshun's stay in China and in Taiwan is the pattern of authority, with the shift of Yinshun from *a* monk under the umbrella of the reformer of Chinese Buddhism Taixu to *the* authoritative leader of a new generation of Buddhist practitioners and intellectuals.

| Time | Phase | Contents | Referees | Sources | Results |
|-----------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1925-1930 | Early phase MĀDHYAMIKA STUDY | Purchase of the first Buddhist texts. (1) <i>Curiosity</i> for Buddhism (2) <i>Interest</i> in Buddhism (3) <i>Engagement</i> in Buddhism (monkhood) | Self-study | <i>Cheng weishilun xueji</i> 成唯識論學記 <i>Xiang zong gangyao</i> 相宗綱要 <i>Sanlun zong gangyao</i> 三論宗綱要 Zhong lun 中論 Sanlun xuanyi 三論玄義 | Yinshun first learning of Dharma; Mādhyamika and Yogācāra in Chinese tradition → San-lun School → We-shi School |

| | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | <i>Sanlun shu</i> 三論疏 | |
| 1931-1950 | Middle phase – I MĀDHYAMIKA STUDY | a. Education at: Minnan Buddhist Institute Wuchang Buddhist Institute Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute | Taixu 太虛 Daxing 大醒 Fazun 法尊 | a. <i>Sanlun xuanyi</i> 三論玄義 <i>Dacheng apidamo zajilun</i> 大乘阿毗達磨雜集論 <i>Jushe lun</i> 俱舍論 <i>Sanlun zong de zhangshu</i> 三論宗的章疏 | Mastering of San-lun and Wei-shi Works by Jizang 吉藏 <i>in primis</i> First encounter with <i>Abhidharma</i> |
| | | b. Reading of the Chinese Buddhist Canon | | b. <i>Longzang</i> 龍藏 | (1) From the <i>sūtras</i> to the <i>śāstras</i> (2) Discovery of <i>Āgamas</i> |
| 1934-1950 | Middle phase - II MĀDHYAMIKA WRITING | The first oral and written exposition of his understanding of San-lun School. | Taixu (as supervisor) | | 'Sanlun zong zhuancheng kao' 三論宗傳承考 'Qingbian yu hufa' 清辯與護法 'Zhonglun shi zhi yanjiu' 中論史之研究 'Sanlun zong shi lue' 三論宗史略 'Sanlun zong feng jianshuo' 三論宗風簡說 <i>Zhongguan lun song jiangji</i> 中觀論頌講記 <i>Xingkong xue tanyuan</i> 性空學探源 <i>Zhongguan jin lun</i> 中觀今論 |
| 1950-1992 | Late phase MĀDHYAMIKA WRITING | Re-vision and re-statement of previous position and conceptions | (1) Independent position (2) Feedback/ Cooperation from disciples and students (Post-Yinshun Era) | | <i>Kong zhi tanjin</i> 空之探究 <i>Da zhi du lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi</i> 大智度論之作者及其翻譯 |

Table 2 – Yinshun: Life, Works and Mādhyamika

I.1 The first approach to Buddhism through Chinese Mādhyamika and Yogācāra texts

For the belief in the Dharma, and the search for the Truth, I decided to become a monk, and to move elsewhere for studying the Buddhist doctrines. Afterwards, having completed the study, I planned to start preaching the Correct Dharma. At that time, what I meant by Correct Dharma was the San-lun and Wei-shi traditions.⁶

The first Buddhist books that Yinshun bought were about Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi, just as the first lectures that he delivered and his first written works were on Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi. Therefore, Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi should be considered the protagonists of the lifelong Buddhist mission undertaken by this monk, besides being the protagonists of the Buddhist publishing market at that time.

Yinshun identified (early) Mādhyamika and (early) Yogācāra teachings as the “Correct Dharma” (or “Pure Dharma”) at the beginning of his Buddhist career, and later on he conceived the concepts of *sūnyatā* and *praṭītya samutpāda* (as expressed in the scriptures of Nāgārjuna) as foundational principles of his *renjian fojiao* 人間佛教 (Buddhism for the Human Realm).⁷

According to Yinshun's autobiographies, in 1925, before becoming a monk and starting any serious engagement in Buddhist studies and practice, Yinshun bought the following Buddhist texts: *Cheng weishi lun xueji* 成唯識論學記,⁸ *Xiang zong gangyao* 相宗綱要,⁹ *Sanlun zong gangyao* 三論宗綱要,¹⁰ *Zhong lun* 中論,¹¹ *Sanlun xuanyi* 三論玄義,¹² *Sanlun shu* 三論疏.¹³ These are all texts related to Mādhyamika and Yogācāra

⁶ Yinshun (1984) ‘You xin fa hai liushinian’, in (1993) *Huayu ji*, vol.5, p. 6.

⁷ See Chapter Six for the reason behind his combining *sūnyata* and *renjian fojiao*.

⁸ X50 n818

⁹ Authored by Mei Guangxi 梅光羲, published by the Shanghai Commercial Press in 1921.

¹⁰ Authored by the Japanese Maeda Eun 前田慧云. The Chinese translation by Zhu Yuanshan 朱元善 was published by the commercial press in 1897.

¹¹ T30 n1624

¹² T45 n1852

¹³ Here Yinshun probably referred to Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* 中觀論疏, T42 n1824

schools, or better, to the Chinese tradition of Mādhyamika, that is the San-lun School (*sanlun zong* 三論宗), and of Yogācāra, that is the Wei-shi School (*weishi zong* 唯識宗). This list witnesses the presence of scriptures by Jizang 吉藏 and the Middle Treatise (*Zhong lun*):¹⁴ Jizang and the Middle Treatise were a constant in Yinshun's Buddhist education and played an important role in framing his literary production.

Yinshun's purchase of those texts unveils details on nature and quality of the Buddhism-related publication market in China at that time.¹⁵ And besides the fact that the only books that Yinshun seemed to find were on Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi, the first Buddhist education that he received at the Taixu's Buddhist Institutes also focused on Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi; his teachers, in fact, who were among the most eminent monks in China at that time (Taixu, Daxing and Fazun), were experts in these two Mahāyāna schools.¹⁶ This is an index of a general situation of Buddhist studies in Modern China, with the a prevailing interest on the schools of emptiness and only-mind being a reflection of the influence of the late nineteenth-century Western Buddhology.¹⁷

A few questions arise at this stage: which role had Mādhyamika/San-lun doctrine played in the early formation of Yinshun's Buddhist thought? Which area/areas did Yinshun identify with Mādhyamika and with San-lun? Did he conceive any distinction between the terms "San lun" and "Mādhyamika"? This is a question that can also be reworded as: did twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism conceive any distinction between San-lun and Mādhyamika? The analysis of Yinshun's education at the Buddhist Institutes under the supervision of the most prominent monks at that time will provide a reply to the first inquiry, while the section on Yinshun's first lectures and writings will answer the other two questions.

¹⁴ Yinshun read the canonical commentary attributed to Qingmu 青目.

¹⁵ According to what Yinshun reported, those Buddhist books were published by the Commercial Press of Shanghai. We have record of religious publications by the Commercial Press in the early 1930s. See Tsu (1936) 'Humanism in China', pp. 399-400.

¹⁶ For the role that Daxing played in Yinshun's life, see the biography of Yinshun provided in the Introduction.

¹⁷ For the state of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra scholarship in the Twentieth century China, see Chapter Two.

I. 2 Taixu 太虛 and Fazun 法尊: from the Chinese San-lun to the Indo-Tibetan Mādhyamika

After becoming a monk, the one who most influenced my Buddhist learning and understanding, besides Master Taixu (in writings), was the Dharma teacher Fazun (in discussion). Fazun was the special condition [*zhusheng yinyuan* 殊勝因緣] in my Dharma study and cultivation!¹⁸

At the end of the first five years (1925-1930) of self-study, a period that Yinshun describes as “groping in the dark”, Yinshun enshrined the Chinese San-lun School and Wei-shi as the 'pure and correct Dharma' (純正佛法). According to his autobiographies, reading Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wai-shi texts increased his interest in Buddhism and made him decide not only to become a Buddhist but also to enter monasticism. Furthermore, it was in order to get a comprehensive understanding of those Mādhyamika and Yogācāra texts that Yinshun enrolled in Buddhist Institutes, and the second phase of his “Mādhyamika life” started, in the form of learning the Dharma under the guidance of scholar (or better, ‘scholarised’) monks.

The issue of Yinshun's relations with his teachers and/or masters involves the issue of the lineage of Yinshun, in terms of the lineage which he may belong to, the lineage which he might have started, and the line linking these two spheres. Yinshun firmly claimed not to belong to any school; this affirmation may also imply the lack of any particularly close relationship with any teacher. Nevertheless, Yinshun's claim is in contradiction with his literary production, which shows his disposition towards one school instead of another, as well as his explicit or implicit adherence to the ideals of some remarkable Buddhist figures. The affiliation to the Chinese tradition of Buddhism in his early career has been replaced with a strong support for the early Indian firstly and then late Indian tradition of Buddhism, a shift that was influenced by, and also has been affecting, the several mentors in his career.

As the table below summarises, the second phase of the Mādhyamika discourse of Yinshun (1931 to 1939) is divided into four stages, each of them identified with specific mentors and sites of learning. Two facts are worthy of attention: Yinshun's gradual passage from the Chinese domestication of Buddhism to the Indian original tradition,

¹⁸ Yinshun (1994) *Pinfang de yi sheng*, pp. 24-25.

and the (religious as well as intellectual) experience of reading through the Chinese Buddhist Canon.

| Time | Location | Teacher | Achievements |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1931 | Putuo shan Minnan Buddhist Institute | Daxing Taixu | Yinshun's first essays on Yogācāra/ We-shi School |
| 1932-1934 | Foding shan Yuezang lou (Huiji si) | Chinese Buddhist Canon | Reading of the <i>Prajñāpāramitā</i> and <i>Āgama</i> scriptures. Study of Discipline |
| 1934 | Wuchang Buddhist Institute | Taixu | Mastering the San-lun School; First lecture on the San-lun School |
| 1935-1936 | Foding shan Yuezang lou (Huiji si) | Chinese Buddhist Canon | Going beyond the Chinese San-lun and Wei-shi; first knowledge of the Early Buddhism (<i>Āgama</i> , <i>Abhidharma</i> , etc.) |
| 1938-1939 | Jinyun shan – Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute | Fazun | Learning Indian-Tibetan Mādhyamika |

Table 3 - Yinshun and his Buddhist Education 1931-1939

I. 2. 1 Education under Taixu: Hermeneutics of Yogācāra and Tathagata garbha

The relationship between Taixu (1890-1947)¹⁹ and Yinshun is still under debate within contemporary Taiwanese and international scholarship.²⁰ Yinshun's role of biographer of Taixu and editor of Taixu's works, the connection between *rensheng fojiao* 人生佛教 (Taixu's philosophy) and *renjian fojiao* 人間佛教 (Yinshun's doctrine) were some of the elements that drove public opinion and Buddhist scholarship

¹⁹ Taixu, whose lay name was Lü Gansen 呂滄森, was born in 1890 at Chongde 崇德, Zhejiang province. His tonsure ceremony took place in 1905, and the full monastic ordination in 1907 at Tiantongsi 天童寺 (Ningbo) under the monk Jichan 寄禪. Taixu became well-known for his plans of reform of Chinese Buddhism (including the threefold reform of the Buddhist Order, teachings and monastic property. In line with his reforms, Taixu founded Buddhist journals such as *Haichao yin* 海潮音, *Fohua bao* 佛化報, *Fohua xin qingnian* 佛化新青年, and Buddhist institutes such as the *Minnan foxueyuan* 閩南佛學院 (Minnan Buddhist Institute) in 1918, *Wuchang foxueyuan* 武昌佛學院 (Wuchang Buddhist Institute) in 1922, the *Hanzang jiaoliyuan* (漢藏教理院) in 1931. Important Buddhist monks at that time such as Yinshun, Fazun and Fazang 法舫 were all active in those institutes. Taixu's works have been published post-mortem in a 32-volume collection edited by Yinshun.

²⁰ All the sources listed in Introduction, survey of literature, deal with the Taixu-Yinshun relationship. This has always been an unavoidable topic, being Yinshun one of the main student of Taixu, and the latter the reformist monk whom Taiwanese Buddhism tries to be rooted into.

to argue the presence of a lineage, more than a legacy, bridging the two monks.²¹ However, I argue that even if Yinshun has usually been defined as *the* disciple of Taixu, there is no official and unquestionable evidence of this kind of link between the two figures.

This section focuses on the period of Yinshun's education, analysing how Taixu and Yinshun met, with the aim of discovering whether (and eventually in which respect) Yinshun was influenced by Taixu. The combined study of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra in the *early* Yinshun is a key focus of such a discussion.²²

Taixu was the first mentor of Yinshun, and as it usually happens that the first teacher influences a blank mind, this probably occurred to the *early* Yinshun as well. However, as Yinshun was highly inspired by Taixu's *rensheng fojiao* 人生佛教, which is unquestionably the basis of Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* 人間佛教 (though *renjian fojiao* became eventually a theology quite distinct from *rensheng fojiao*), in the same terms Taixu shaped Yinshun's mind by promoting the joint doctrine of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra. However, later Yinshun articulated his own Dharma ideas and ideals that were distant from Taixu's teachings; for instance, Taixu gave priority and a higher position to Yogācāra than to Mādhyamika in the system of classification of teachings, while Yinshun ended up emphasising Mādhyamika more than Yogācāra. In line with this, Mādhyamika (or better San-lun) and Yogācāra (or better Wei-shi) were, jointly or alternatively, the leading schools which he was taught about, and they were consequently the subject of his first works as well.

In line with this, Yinshun is definitely (and explicitly) indebted to Taixu for the theory of the Mahāyāna Threefold System (*dacheng san xi* 大乘三系), in opposition to the Mahāyāna Twofold System (*dacheng er xi* 大乘二系) that Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 and the Metaphysical Institute (*Zhina nei xueyuan* 支那內學院) were promoting.²³

²¹ Among the others, see: Guo Peng (1992) *Yinshun foxue sixiang yanjin*; Jiang Canteng (2001) *Dangdai taiwan renjian fojiao sixiangjia*; Yang Huinan (1991) *Dangdai Fojiao sixiang zhanwang*; Zhaohui (1995) *Renjian fojiao de bozhongzhe*; Chuandao (2001) *Yinshun daoshi yu renjian fojiao*. The annual conferences on Yinshun deal mostly with this topic as well. It is interesting that this issue was the most discussed by the Taiwanese media when Yinshun died.

²² Chapter Two includes a comprehensive survey of Taixu's hermeneutics of Nāgārjuna's teachings, history of Mādhyamika and San-lun doctrine.

²³ Ouyang Jingwu (1871-1943) was a student of Yang Wenhui, from whom he inherited the management of the Jinling Scriptural Press. Ouyang Jingwu established the *Zhongguo fojiao hui* 中國佛教會 (Chinese Buddhist Association) in 1912, which was ratified by Sun Yat-sen, but never managed to preside on all the Buddhist monasteries in the country. Successful was his running of the Jinling Scriptural Press and the

The *tathāgata garbha* doctrine was the main part of Taixu's agenda, and later became an important (even if not foundational) element of Yinshun's philosophy.

We may observe that Yinshun's *initial stage* of development of thought is based on Taixu's *conclusive stage* of teachings, while Yinshun's *conclusive stage* of thought departs from the latter in many contexts, first of all for his new acquaintance with the Chinese Buddhist Canon and a mastery of a wider corpus of scriptures.

Taixu focused on the San-lun and Wei-shi, since he rooted his theory in the Chinese tradition (and version) of Buddhism, while Yinshun, once he had discovered Indian Buddhism, ended up attempting a reconstruction of Indian Buddhism, and Indian Mādhyamika as well. The extremely 'Chinese' quality of Taixu is listed by Yinshun as the first discrepancy between his mentor and him,²⁴ and one of the core differences between *rensheng fojiao* and *renjian fojiao*.²⁵ Therefore, on the one hand, Taixu read the development of Mahāyāna in accordance with Yogācāra (Chinese Wei-shi School). On the other hand, Yinshun made the School of Emptiness as conceived by Nāgārjuna (Indian original Buddhism) to the basis and essence of his Buddhism.

Yinshun's conception of the Mahāyāna Threefold System includes the evolution showed in the table below. Taixu theorised the development from the the doctrine of emptiness (*konghui*) and dharma-nature (*faxing*) to the doctrine of only-consciousness (*weishi*) and dharma-characteristic (*faxiang*), and the final stage of the perfection (*yuanjue*) of the dharma-dhatu (*fajie*). Yinshun drew the same path, even if he adopted a different names for the three steps: the system of the only name (*weiming*) and emptiness of nature (*xingkong*), the system of the only consciousness (*weishi*) and vacuous delusion (*xuwang*), and the system of only mind (*weixin*) and tathatā (*zhenchang*). The main difference between these apparently similar argumentations is

foundation of the *Zhina neixueyuan* (Chinese Metaphysical Institute) in 1919. Teachers and students of the institutes were mainly lay Buddhists, and the curricula centered on the Wei-shi philosophy and Confucian classics. He was similar to Taixu in his opposing the deification of Buddhism and the emphasis on the Wei-shi, but opposed to the reformer monk in his strong criticism to the Sangha and the system of classification of Mahāyāna which, according to Ouyang Jingwu, was constituted by the doctrine of *faxing* 法性 (dharma-nature) and *faxiang* 法相 (dharma-characteristic). See Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.117-120; Müller, Gotelind (1993) *Buddhismus und Moderne*, pp.27-30, 100-111; Liu Mengxi, ed. (1996) *Yang Wenhui, Ouyang Zhe, Lü Cheng juan*, pp.271-472.

²⁴ The second difference is in the "obsession" for reform that animated Taixu. Yinshun never joined in any political engagement in the way Taixu had done, nor did he aim to reform the teachings. According to Yinshun, the corruption of the Dharma could not be solved by the reform of Buddhist teachings, but with their better understanding.

²⁵ Nevertheless, as the following chapters, especially Chapter Seven, explain, the Chinese quality of Yinshun is also evident, perhaps more evident than Yinshun wanted and claimed.

that Taixu saw the evolution as process of evolution, while Yinshun conceived it as a process of devolution. On the other hand, Yinshun initial conclusions that argue a development from *weishi*, which is also defined as theory of the impermanence (*wuchang*), to *xingkong* and finally to *zhenchang* did underline a process of evolution.

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Taixu | MATURE CONCLUSIONS | <i>faxing konghui zong</i> → <i>faxiang weishi zong</i> → <i>fajie yuanjue zong</i> 法性空慧宗 → 法相唯識宗 → 法界圓覺宗 |
| Yinshun | INITIAL CONCLUSIONS²⁶ | <i>wuchang lun [weishi]</i> → <i>xingkong lun [xingkong]</i> → <i>zhenchang lun [zhenchang]</i> 無常論『唯識』 → 性空論『性空』 → 真常論『真常』 |
| | FINAL CONCLUSIONS | <i>xingkong weiming</i> → <i>xuwang weishi</i> → <i>zhenchang weixin</i> 性空唯名 → 虛妄唯識 → 真常唯心 |

Table 4 - Mahāyāna Threefold System in Taixu and Yinshun

As we can see from the scheme above, Taixu and Yinshun elaborated a final position that seems to be quite similar. Moreover, in his last writings, Yinshun affirmed that his own conclusions on the development of Mahāyāna were similar to Taixu's formulation, without indicating the core difference between the two systems.²⁷ Nevertheless, the Yogācāra/Wei-shi core of Taixu's ideas and his emphasis on the *tathāgata garbha* as the supreme teaching do not find any correspondence in the philosophy of the mature Yinshun, who considered only the first phase of his system as representative of the pure and correct Dharma, while any later development was conceived as steps towards the corruption of Dharma.

Yinshun focused alternatively on Mādhyamika/San-lun and on Yogācāra/Wei-shi: his positions and transitional phases are all related to the figure of Taixu, the evolution of their relationship and the historical shift in Yinshun's education.²⁸

Finally, but not less important, the ideological distance that Yinshun claimed from Taixu might have a political and historical reason: the reformer Taixu arrived at a

²⁶ For more details, see: Yinshun (1941) 'Fahai tan zhen' 法海探珍, in (1993) *Huayu ji* 華雨集, vol. 4, pp. 71-112.

²⁷ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao' 契理契機之人間佛教, in *Huayu ji* (1993) vol. 5, p. 16.

²⁸ In the introduction to *Zhongguan jin lun*, Yinshun mentioned his temporary and brief inclination to the Wei-Shi school.

Nationalist tendency after a Marxist affiliation, which was not safe to be expressed in the Taiwan, and it was in Taiwan that Yinshun proposed his mature thought.²⁹

I. 2. 2 In-depth knowledge of the Chinese Buddhist Canon

To tell the truth, the time that I spent on the Foding Mountain was the happiest period of my life.³⁰

This critical analysis of Yinshun's study of the Chinese Buddhist Canon is structured around the circumstances of *why*, *when*, *where*, *how* he read the Canon, *what* he read and *what* he gained from the reading.

The issue of *why* implies the investigation of the reasons that led Yinshun to read the Tripitaka:

I made the commitment to be a monk and to seek the Dharma. Then, after less than four months' course as student, I have been assigned as Dharma teacher. [...] If I continue on this way, I will be unlikely to accomplish my aspiration of search for the Dharma.³¹

Besides the need of enlarging his knowledge of Buddha's teachings, and leaving the Minnan Buddhist Institute and retreating elsewhere, in other words, besides the intellectual and religious motivations, there is the ritualistic significance of the act of reciting the complete collection of canonised texts.³²

The question of *when* he read the Canon involves two issues. First of all, Yinshun's Buddhist knowledge and cultural background at the time of the reading decided what he could understand and misunderstand from the scriptures. Secondly, the specific historical period he was living, which affected the environmental conditions of his study and the edition of the Canon he had access to, is worthy of consideration.

As for the issue of *where* he read the Canon in 1932, Yinshun moved to Putuo Mountain 普陀山, retreated on the highest place of the mountain, called *Foding shan* 佛

²⁹ Yinshun in *Jingtu yu Chan* (p. 12): Yinshun affirmed that the Buddhist Pure Land is comparable with the Marxist classless society, and also stated to have inherited this vision by Taixu. For this and other instances Yinshun was asked to revise his writings in order to keep teaching and preaching in Taiwan.

³⁰ Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yi sheng*, p. 12.

³¹ Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yi sheng*, p. 11.

³² Wei-huan (1939) 'Buddhism in Modern China', *T'ien hsia monthly*, v.9, n.2.

頂山 or *Pusa ding* 菩薩頂, at the Huiji Temple (*Huiji si* 慧濟寺), in the Tripitaka Hall (*Yuezang lou* 閱藏樓).

How he mastered the Chinese Buddhist Canon involves three considerations. First of all, when he started reading the Canon Yinshun was well acquainted with the Chinese tradition of San-lun School and Wei-shi School. Therefore, we may hypothesise a Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi perspective in the reading of the canonical scriptures, and a Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi interpretation of the Canon. According to his autobiographical account, he arrived at Putuo with an in-depth knowledge of the San-lun and Wei-shi (as explained by Taixu) and left Putuo only once in order to listen to the lectures that Taixu gave on the San-lun doctrine, and to give himself talks on *Shi'er men lun* 十二門論. He spent the day time reading through the Canonical scriptures, but dedicated evening and night of each day to the review of San-lun and Wei-shi.³³ Secondly, Yinshun read the Canon during a “solitary retreat” (*biguan* 閉關), and did not rely on any guidance in his study. Finally, the order he followed in reading the scriptures is an important factor that affected his hermeneutics of the teachings of Buddha. He firstly read the 750 vols. *Prajñāpāramitā* scriptures (*Da banruo jing* 大般若經) in four months' time, then he directed his attention to the *Āgamas* (*Ahan jing* 阿含經) and in the end to the *Vinaya* (*Lü zang* 律藏).

The concern for *what* he read implies a digression on the different editions of the Chinese Buddhist Canon available at that time in the South of China. Yinshun read the *Long zang* 龍藏 edition,³⁴ even if later he often referred to the Japanese Taishō. According to what Yinshun affirmed in an essay dated 1988, only his first articles, and probably most of the first lectures on Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi were based on *Long zang*:

³³ Yinshun (1984) ‘Youxin fahai liushi nian’, in *Huayu ji*, vol. 5, pp. 8

³⁴ Printed during the Qing dynasty (1735-1738), the *Long zang* is formed by 718 sets, 7168 fascicles, 1660 texts. Holmes Welch provides important details on the availability of the *Long zang* in the first half of the Twentieth century China. Referring to data collected from different sources, Welch listed the purchase of the *Long zang* by several monasteries in the South of China. Referring to Boerschmann (1911), he includes the case of Foding on Putuo Mountain, as a monastery that received a copy of the *Long zang* in 1908. This probably was the Canon that Yinshun read. See: Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp. 228, 345.

Fifty years ago, when I was on Putuo Mountain, at Jingsi Temple, and I read the Canon, the edition that I used was the *Long zang*. Anyhow, in the last forty years, I have always used the Japanese Taishō new edition of the Canon of Buddhist scriptures.³⁵

Finally, but not less important, is the issue of *what* he actually achieved from a thorough reading of the Canon. The large amount of scriptures that Yinshun read everyday affected the quality of this reading and therefore the results he achieved. Yinshun himself admitted that this first reading of the Canon gave him a new prospect of the Buddhist teachings, but not the complete and comprehensive understanding of the scriptures:

Every day I read seven or eight volumes of scriptures (with each volume including an average of 9,000 characters). This was a quick reading, without any possibility to think over the contents. My ability of memorising was never excellent, and so whatever I read got lost in the dark just afterwards. Nevertheless, this reading gave some results.³⁶

The fast reading that Yinshun made reflects a quite common situation in China at that time. Quoting the monk Wei-huan 惟幻:

It [the Tripitaka] was kept in libraries and sunned once a year. Sometimes, but not very often, the monk in charge of the library might have a fancy to “look” through the whole Tripitaka (看藏經) from the beginning to the very end, spending three years, without trying to understand the scriptures thoroughly.³⁷

We can draw two conclusions here. Firstly, Yinshun's scholarly activities witness a relevant change in methodology for Buddhist research: a larger amount of Buddhist scriptures led him to develop a historical consciousness and to discover the historical development of Buddhism in terms of Buddhist schools and Buddhist teachings. Secondly, Yinshun's understanding of Buddhist doctrines was subject to a considerable re-assessment. The most important achievement (especially for his theory of Emptiness)

³⁵ Yinshun (1989) ‘Du *Da zang jing* za ji’, in *Huayu ji*, vol. 3, p. 222.

³⁶ Yinshun (1984) ‘Youxin fahai liushi nian’, in *Huayu ji*, vol. 5, pp. 8-9.

³⁷ Wei-huan (1939) ‘Buddhism in Modern China’, *T'ien hsia monthly*, v.9, n.2, p. 141.

which he attained through reading the Canon was the discovery of the *Āgama* teachings. Reading through the Canon he got a clearer - even if questionable- idea of the historical development of the Buddhist teachings, their cross-connections and the developing process. Also, reading the Chinese Buddhist Canon was fundamental for the evolution of Yinshun's understanding and interpretation of the Wei-shi School. The issue of the "Early translation" (*jiu yi* 舊譯), identified with the work of Paramartha (*Zhendi* 真諦) and Bodhiruci (*Putiliuzhi* 菩提流支), and the "Late translation" (*xin yi* 新譯), identified with the work of Xuanzang 玄奘, was taken into account by Yinshun after he entered the moonhood. As a monk, and student of the Minnan Buddhist Institute, Yinshun supported the *xin yi* and the translations by Xuanzang, while, after the three year retreat and reading through the Chinese Buddhist Canon, Yinshun demonstrated a preference for the *jiu yi*, and thus Paramartha's and Bodhiruci's translations.³⁸ The Chinese Buddhist Canon was not only a source of Buddhist knowledge and thus the cause of a considerable change in Yinshun's doctrinal understanding and exposition, but it also became an object of critical enquiry and a theme of his writing. Reading what he wrote on the history and systematisation of the Chinese Buddhist Canon helps to decipher the role that the Canon played in Yinshun's life and what understanding of the Canon Yinshun had.

Yinshun's writings include six essays on the subject of the Chinese Buddhist Canon:

1. 'Ping *Jingke da zang jing yuanqi*' 評〈精刻大藏經緣起〉. Compiled in 1941, this essay was later included in the volume *Wu zheng zhi bian* 無諍之辯, published in Taiwan in 1972.
2. 'Fo shu bianmu yi' 佛書編目義. Compiled in 1953, this is one of the first works of Yinshun once in Taiwan. This piece was later included in the volume *Jiaozhi jiaodian yu jiaoxue* 教制教典與教學, published in 1972. It was also selected for publication in the volume *Fojiao mulu xueshu yao* 佛教目錄學術要, vol. 40 of the collection *Xiandai fojiao xueshu congkan* 現代佛教學術叢刊 edited by Zhang Mantao 張曼濤 and published in 1988.

³⁸ See Zhaohui (2001c) *Chuji weishi sixiang. Yuqie xingpai xingcheng zhi mailuo*, pp. 112-118.

3. 'Bian xiu zang jing de xianjue wenti' 編修藏經的先決問題. Compiled in 1956 in Taiwan, was then included in the volume *Jiaozhi jiaodian yu jiaoxue* (1972).
4. 'Fojing de bianji' 佛經的編集. Compiled in 1957 in Taiwan, was later included in the volume *Qingnian de fojiao* 青年的佛教, published in 1973.
5. 'Zhonghua da zang jing xu' 中華大藏經序. Compiled in 1963, was later included in the volume *Hua yu xiang yun* 華雨香雲, published in 1973.
6. 'Du Da zang jing zaji' 讀「大藏經」雜記. Compiled in 1989, was later included in the vol. 3 of the collection *Hua yu ji* 華雨集, published in 1993.

The table below shows Yinshun's concern for history and structure of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, and his questioning possibilities and modalities of interventions on the corpus of sacred scriptures:

| Date | Study on the Canon: title | Study of the Canon: contents |
|------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1941 | 'Ping Jingke da zang jing yuanyi' 評〈精刻大藏經緣起〉 | Critique to Ouyang Jingwu's essay on the Buddhist Canon |
| 1953 | 'Fo shu bianmu' 佛書編目義 | Detailed analysis of the structure of the Canon, based on various systems of classification, in order to propose an ideal catalogue |
| 1956 | 'Bianxiu zang jing de xianjue wenti' 編修藏經的先決問題 | Yinshun discussed the issue of a potential revision of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, analysing issues such as <i>why</i> , <i>how</i> and <i>what</i> to revise. He commented the several positions expressed by contemporary monks, including Taixu. |
| 1957 | 'Fo jing de bianji' 佛經的編集 | Brief definition of what the Buddhist Canon is, focusing on the three baskets. |
| 1963 | 'Zhonghua da zang jing xu' 中華大藏經序 | List of the three groups of canonical scriptures (Pali, Tibetan and Chinese). Description of the structure and history of the <i>Zhonghua dazang jing</i> . |
| 1989 | 'Du Da zang jing zaji' 讀「大藏經」雜記 | Structure and history (historical development, change and evolution in structure and contents) of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, rich in details and comparisons among the different editions. Index of an already achieved in-depth knowledge of the Canon. |

Table 5 - Yinshun and the Chinese Buddhist Canon

I. 2. 3 Influence by the International Scholarship

The recent Japanese scholarship had a significant influence on me. While in the Minnan Buddhist Institute I read Liang Qichao's *Analysis on the Awakening of Faith*, a text that I really appreciated and that adopted 'the result of the studies of Japanese scholars.' In 1937, while in the Wuchang Buddhist Institute, I read *History of Indian Religion and Philosophy*, co-edited by Takakusu Junjiro and Kimura Taiken (in translation, published by Commercial Press).³⁹

With the end of the war, I went to Taiwan through Hong Kong, and in the later writings I have been even more influenced by the Japanese scholarship. In 1950, while in Hong Kong, I requested a copy of the Taisho Tripitaka. [...] In 1952, I visited Japan from Taiwan, and I bought books such as Ui Hakuju's *Study of Indian Philosophy* and Miyamoto Shoson's *Mahayana and Hinayana*, and I ordered a copy of the Japanese translation of the Pali Tripitaka. [...] After 1960, I requested the books of other Japanese scholars as references for other works I had to write.⁴⁰

Yinshun was well acquainted with the recent achievements made by international scholarship, with 'international' entailing Japanese and Western Buddhist secondary literature.

Some preliminary considerations are herein necessary. Firstly, Yinshun's language skill was limited only to Chinese, and even the Japanese books were read based on the knowledge of the only Chinese characters.⁴¹ Secondly, the *Japanese* literature included books with Japanese authorship, and Japanese translations of works on Indian history, Indian Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism. As for Western literature, Yinshun relied on the Japanese translations of those that were available in China at that time.

Yinshun's criteria for the selection from the scholarship available at that time of just certain texts is worth questioning. Yinshun had access to that literature during his stay at the Wuchang Buddhist Institute and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute. Taixu or, at least, Taixu's entourage, influenced the choice of those specific volumes by

³⁹ Yinshun, 'Wei ziji shuo jijuhua', in (2004) *Yongguang ji*, p.241.

⁴⁰ Yinshun, 'Wei ziji shuo jijuhua', in (2004) *Yongguang ji*, pp.242-243.

⁴¹ Yinshun, 'Wei ziji shuo jijuhua', in (2004) *Yongguang ji*, pp.242

making them available, a fact which also reflects the quality of the book-market at that time.

The arrival of Japanese scholarship in China is linked to the Buddhist Chinese monk Mochan 墨禪 and the role he played in bridging the two regions at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁴² Mochan brought Japanese translations of Western works that were circulating in Japan and Japanese Buddhist writings that he collected during his study stay in Japan, and made this literature available in China. Mochan thus became an eminent figure who played a significant role in the Dharma and Sangha exchange (and dialogue) between China and Japan during the Colonial Period.

The figure of Mochan can also be associated with the scholar and translator Fazun, his mission in Japan resembling Fazun's work in Tibet. For instance, as with Fazun, Mochan was especially concerned with the study of Indian Buddhism. On the other hand, differently from Fazun, Mochan himself did not play any role in Yinshun's Buddhist education besides the concrete act of importing Japanese scholarship and a few translations.

A second important issue relates to the Japanese scholars that Yinshun read primarily, Teramoto Enga 寺本婉雅 and Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎, who played an important role in the Buddhist formation of Yinshun.

As for Takakusu Junjirō, we can question whether the classification of Buddhist schools that he elaborated might have influenced Yinshun's system of classification of Buddhist teachings (*panjiao* 判教), or at least Yinshun's conception of Mādhyamika.⁴³

⁴² Native of Zhejiang, after entering the monkhood he studied at the Wuchang Buddhist Institute. In 1931 he moved to Japan and enrolled the Taishō University. Mochan translated the book of Yabuki Keiki 矢吹慶輝 entitled *Sankaikyo no kenkyu* 三級教の研究 (Tokyo: Iwanamishoten, 1927) into Chinese (publication in *Haichao yin* during 1935). In 1935, Mochan, in cooperation with other monks such as Shi Tanxuan 釋談玄, participated in the planning and establishment of the Sino-Japanese Buddhist Association (*Zhongri fojiao xuehui* 中日佛教學會). This initiative was strongly opposed by the Metaphysical Institute of Ouyang Jingwu. Among the replies to this opposition, that seems a further diatribe between Taixu and Ouyang Jingwu, there is Mochan's article 'Jie zhina neixueyuan' 誠支那內學院. For details, see: Dongchu (1974) *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi*, vol. II, pp. 990-991. In *Taixu dashi nianpu*, Yinshun reported Mochan as a new student at the Wuchang Buddhist Institute (31 August 1924), and following Taixu in Shanghai (April 1929). Mochan is also quoted as engaged in the scholarship relations between Japan and China (May 1934). Finally, the process of establishment of the Sino-Japanese Buddhist Association, as well as the polemics with Metaphysical Institute are reported and dated 1935.

⁴³ Takakusu, Junjirō (1975) *The essential of Buddhist philosophy*, pp.9-12. Yinshun denied to have been inspired by Takakusu's scholarship, since he claimed to have consulted Takakusu's work after his theories had been well defined and published, and because of discrepancies between Takakusu's and his arguments. See Yinshun, 'Wei ziji shuo jijuhua', in *Yongguang ji*, pp.240-242.

The presence of Teramoto Enga in Yinshun's personal bibliography and cited references is quite considerable. Teramoto Enga is quoted as a translator of Tibetan books, as well as author of works concerning the Mādhyamika school with a focus on the figure of Nāgārjuna. Reading through Yinshun's literary production, Teramoto Enga is mentioned for the following three works:

1. Translation of *History of Buddhism in India*, originally composed by Tāranātha. Teramoto's translation, entitled *Tāranāta Indo Bukkyōshi*, was published in 1928 (Tokyo: Heigo Shuppansha);⁴⁴
2. Work entitled *Shin Ryūjū den no kenkyū* 新龍樹傳の研究 [On the Historicity of Nāgārjuna II] (Kyoto: Chugai Shuppan, 1926)⁴⁵
3. Translation of the Tibetan *Akutobhayā*. Teramoto's translation (including a critical comment and an in-depth debate on some key issues relative to the scripture) was published in 1937 under the title *Ryūjū zō. Chūron muisho* 龍樹造・中論畏疏 (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha). Yinshun referred quite often to the *Akutobhayā* in his study of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. Although he never stated that he had relied on the Teramoto's translation, an investigation within the Chinese scholarship of the field reveals that no Chinese translation of the Tibetan text was (nor is nowadays) available, while two Japanese versions of the text (one by Teramoto, one by Ikeda) are usually read by the Chinese. In addition, according to the monk Houguan 厚觀, the disciple of Yinshun, he used to rely on Teramoto's work.⁴⁶

Even if Yinshun reported in his autobiographies that these were the first Japanese works he encountered, we cannot forget some translations that monks such as Mochan made from the late Twenties and published in *Haichao yin* 海潮音 and which Yinshun was surely aware of during his stay at Minnan and Wuchang.

⁴⁴ Explicit and direct quotation from this text are present in the following volumes: *Yindu zhi fojiao* 印度之佛教 (1943), *Yindu fojiao sixiang zhi* 印度佛教思想史 (1988), *Yuanshi fojiao shengdian zhi jicheng* 原始佛教聖典之集成 (1971), *Shuo yiqie youbu weizhu de lun shu yu lun shi zhi yanjiu* 說一切有部爲主的論書與論師之研究 (1968), *Chuqi dacheng fojiao zhi qi yuan yu kaizhan* 初期大乘佛教之起源與開展 (1981), *Kong zhi tanjiu* 空之探究 (1985), *Rulai zang zhi yanjiu* 如來藏之研究 (1981), *Zhongguo chanzong shi* 中國禪宗史 (1971).

⁴⁵ This text was included into the bibliography of the volume *Rulai zang zhi yanjiu* 如來藏之研究 (1981).

⁴⁶ Private conversation dated 15 February 2004.

Finally, Yinshun made no mention of Lü Cheng's 呂澂 works on Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, even though Lü Cheng had already published these in the early 1930s, and referred to this scholar only when he was editing the *Āgamas*.⁴⁷

The reconstruction of the main international literature consulted by Yinshun is reported below, with date and place of consultation, is reported below. It is worth noting that all the international scholarship read before leaving Mainland China was circulating in Taixu's institutes:

| Time | Location | Author | Title |
|------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1937 | Wuchang Buddhist Institute | Kimura Taiken 木村泰賢 | <i>Genshi Bukkyō shisōron</i> 原始佛教思想論 |
| | | Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎, Kimura Taiken 木村泰賢 (eds.) | <i>Indo tetsugaku shūkyō shi</i> 印度哲学宗教史 |
| 1937 | Wuchang Buddhist Institute | Tāranātha | <i>History of Buddhism in India</i> (Japanese translation by Teramoto Enga 寺本婉雅) |
| 1938 | Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute | Lama Tsongkhapa | <i>Sngags rim chen mo</i> (Chinese translation by Shi Fazun 釋法尊) |
| 1941 | Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute | ? ⁴⁸ | <i>Ancient India</i> |
| 1950 | Hong Kong | | Taishō Tripitaka |
| 1952 | | Ui Hakuju 宇井伯壽 | <i>Indo tetsugaku kenkyū</i> 印度哲学研究 |
| | | | <i>Daijō to Shiso</i> 大乘と小乘 |
| | | Miyamoto Shōson 宮本正尊 | Japanese Translation of the Pali Tripitaka |
| 1960 | Taiwan | | Japanese scholarship |

Table 6 - Yinshun and International Scholarship

⁴⁷ Lü Cheng started writing on Buddhism in 1924, so long before Yinshun wrote his first article. Even if Lü Cheng is quoted in most of Yinshun's books, Yinshun never mentioned that he relied on Lü Cheng at this stage and for this area of research. One possible explanation is the affiliation of Lü Cheng: he was linked to the Metaphysical Institute, which was well-known for being in opposition to the Taixu's institutes.

⁴⁸ These data are missing in Yinshun's accounts, that list only the title *Ancient India*. So far, I have not found any potential author.

I. 2. 4 Fazun: the discovery of Tibetan Buddhism

While in Sichuan, because of the presence of Fazun, I gained some knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism, especially of the Middle and Late Mādhyamika transmitted in Tibet.⁴⁹

Strong in memory and intellect, Fazun is the senior from whom I was benefited most in my life. On the other hand, his Buddhist ideas had already been *Tibetanised*, and so were quite different from my own ideas.⁵⁰

The encounter between Yinshun and Fazun (1902-1980)⁵¹ can be dated to 1938. During his stay at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute, Yinshun had the opportunity to spend two years (1938-1939) with Fazun, but because of the historical and political turmoil in China in the following decades, these two figures did not keep in touch afterwards.

The quotations reported above summarise the Fazun that Yinshun knew, outline the main contributions that Fazun made to the Buddhist education of Yinshun, mention the Mādhyamika relation that links those two Buddhist scholar monks, and stress the main difference between them.

Through recurrent open discussions and his own translations, Fazun affected Yinshun's theory of the historical development of the school of Nāgārjuna, from India

⁴⁹ Yinshun (1980) 'Zhongguo fojiao de youxing dao ai jiqi weilai de zhanwang' in *Huayu ji*, vol. 5, p. 160.

⁵⁰ Yinshun (1984) 'You xin fa hai liushinian' in *Huayu ji*, vol. 5, p. 12. Italics are mine.

⁵¹ Yinshun (1964) *Huayu ji*, vol.1, p 173: 'Fazun, native of Hebei 河北, became a monk in his early youth. In the Autumn 1922, went to the Wuchang Buddhist Institute for his education, and studied the Dharma under the supervision of Taixu. In the Summer 1925, followed Dayong 大勇 (disciple of Taixu) and moved to the Western region for continuing his education; he first went to Xikang (*xikang* 西康), and then moved to Tibet, and studied at Lhasa. Taixu established the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute on the Jinyun Mountain (*jinyunshan* 縉雲山) Sichuan province, and requested Fazun to come back with urgency. In the Summer 1934, Fazun returned to Sichuan and began to run the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute. Fazun translated numerous treatises and Lama Tsong khapa's works from Tibetan into Chinese. Therefore, he deserves to be held in the highest esteem within the Buddhist translation world of the nation!' For Fazun's autobiography, see: Fazun (2002) *Fazun fashi lunwen ji*, pp. 459-464. Only Françoise Wang-Toutain mentioned the connection between Yinshun and Fazun, but again based on the only autobiographical accounts of Yinshun. See: Wang-Toutain, Françoise (2000) 'Quand les maîtres chinois s'éveillent au bouddhisme tibétain. Fazun: le Xuanzang des temps modernes', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 87 : 2, pp. 707-727

through China to Tibet. Yinshun's emphasis on the original Buddhism, especially on the *Āgamas*, that he discovered through the reading of the Chinese Buddhist Canon (and so before the meeting with Fazun), led him to formulate the idea of a process from purity to corruption, and to identify the forms of Tibetan Buddhism as the most corrupted. The experience of the situation of Buddhism in contemporary China contributed to his idea of a corrupted Buddhism in opposition to a pure Buddhism, with a purity that found its ground only in the scriptures of early Buddhism.

Fazun's translation which Yinshun mentioned as his first journey into the world of Tibetan Buddhism is *Mizong dao cidì guang lun*.⁵² This book is listed among the literature of the International scholarship which Yinshun stressed most. In addition, Yinshun relied on the contents of this book for writing Chapter 17 of *Yindu zhi fojiao* 印度之佛教, entitled 'Mijiao zhi xing yu fojiao zhi mie' 密教之興與佛教之滅 ('The rise of Esoteric teachings and the fall of Buddhism')

Here is the list of the texts that Fazun translated into Chinese, and that Yinshun read or mentioned in his works. The dates of Fazun's translations indicate when the manuscripts started being available, and consequently which work of Yinshun they have influenced.⁵³

⁵² Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yi sheng*, pp. 27-28: 'In the Autumn 1938 (when I was 33), I went to the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute, on the Jinyun Mountain, Sichuan. The term was started already, and so I resided in the Shuangpo Vihāra (residence for the teachers), and I dedicate myself only to self cultivation. *The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra* is one of the last translations from Tibetan accomplished by Fazun. Taixu asked me to review this book. The author of the book is Lama Tsong khapa, form the Gelup school of Tibetan Buddhism. It provides the account of the path of the Four Tantra (kriya, carya, yoga, anuttara yoga) of the Esoteric Vehicle. As I read this book, I understood the strong theistic essence of the Esoteric Vehicle. [...] I could not understand various technical terms, so I asked Fazun for help. I was able to understand only a few technical terms, such as vajra, lotus, etc. since the Esoteric section of the Chinese Buddhist Canon that I had read.'

⁵³ Yinshun's *Taixu dashi nianpu* is an important source of details on the relationship between Taixu and Fazun.

| Tibetan Original – Title | Chinese Translation - Title | Date |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Lam rim chen mo</i> [The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment] | <i>Puti dao cidì guang lun</i> 菩提道次第廣論 | 1930-1934 |
| <i>Chos dang chos nyid rnam par 'byed pa</i> [Differentiation of Phenomena and Nature of Phenomena] | <i>Bianfa faxing lun</i> ⁵⁴ 辨法法性論 | 1936 |
| <i>Sngags rim chen mo</i> [Great Exposition of Secret Mantra] | <i>Mizong dao cidì guang lun</i> 密宗道次第廣論 | 1936 |
| <i>Mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan</i> [Ornament for Clear Realisation]. | <i>Xian guan zhuangyan lun lueshi</i> ⁵⁵ 現觀莊嚴論略釋 | 1937 |
| <i>Stong nyid bdun cu pa</i> [Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness] | <i>Qishi kongxing lun</i> 七十空性論 | 1940 |
| <i>Dbu ma la 'Jug Pa' i bshad pa</i> [Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) Middle Treatise] | <i>Ru zhonglun</i> 入中論 | 1941 |
| <i>Drang nges legs bshad snying po</i> [Essence of eloquence] | <i>Bian liao yi bu liao yi lun</i> 辨了義不了義論 | 1936 |
| <i>Tshad ma rnam 'grel</i> [Commentary on (Dignaga's) Compendium of Valid Cognition] | <i>Shi liang lun</i> 釋量論 | 1980 |

Table 7 - Fazun in Yinshun's works⁵⁶

During their cooperation, Fazun provided Yinshun with the Chinese version of the Tibetan Buddhist texts, and revised the first part of Yinshun's first volume on Wei-shi.⁵⁷ Yinshun served as reviewer of Fazun's works.⁵⁸ According to Yinshun, it was on Yinshun's request that Fazun translated the *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* from Tibetan into Chinese, a translation that Yinshun commented and revised afterwards, while it was on Taixu's request that Yinshun made a stylistic revision of the *Mizong dao cidì guang*

⁵⁴ Later, once in Taiwan, Yinshun composed a commentary on this translation of Fazun. First under the format of series of lectures given in the Spring 1964 at the Huiji lecture hall (*huiji jiangtang* 慧日講堂), this work was recorded on tape and transcribed by Hongguan 宏觀 (Yinshun's disciple). Today, Yinshun's 'Bian fa faxing lun jiangji 辨法法性論講記', is part of the vol. 1 of *Huayu ji*, pp. 171-254.

⁵⁵ In November 1937, Taixu wrote a preface to this book.

⁵⁶ Yinshun also mentioned the translation that Fazun made from the Chinese version of the *Mahāvībhāsā śāstra* (*Da piposha lun* 大毗婆沙論 [The Great Detailed Exposition]) into the Tibetan *Bye brag bshad mdzod chen mo*. The translation was completed in 1949. Yinshun mentioned this work as still incomplete in 1945, without giving account to the completion of the work.

⁵⁷ Yinshun's *Weishi xue tan yao* was finally published in 1940.

⁵⁸ Fazun acknowledged at the end of *Mizong dao cidì guanglun*. See for instance p.500 of the edition dated 2000 and published by Minzu Press, Beijing.

lun.⁵⁹ In his *Dacheng qi xin lun jiangji* 大乘起信論講記, Yinshun remembered some discussion he had with Fazun on the meaning of characters and the structure of argument.⁶⁰

I. 2. 5 The first exposition of Mādhyamika

Yinshun's first exposition of Mādhyamika coincides with his first engagement with Buddhist teachings, in both terms of doctrines and textual analysis.

A few considerations on the nature and formation of Yinshun's publications are herein necessary. Most of Yinshun's writings are essay-collections, or better, "speech-collections", being those collections of talks which Yinshun delivered in monasteries and which later a number of close disciples or followers, affiliated to those monasteries, transcribed. Since there is no certain evidence that he supervised the general editing of the final manuscripts, we may question Yinshun's authorship. How much of Yinshun's volumes are Yinshun's words and how much are merely interpretations of Yinshun's words made by Yinshun's disciples? The passage from oral speech to written publication always took a few years, a fact which might have affected Yinshun's authorship as well.⁶¹

I classify Yinshun's works into three main groups:⁶²

1. works written by Yinshun – classical book-length works;
2. essay/speech collection: authorship potentially shared by Yinshun and his disciples;

⁵⁹ Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yi sheng*, p. 27: 'My stylistic review involved the merely correction of some characters, but I did not change anything of the contents of the book'.

⁶⁰ Yinshun (1950), *Dacheng qixin lun jiangji*, p.142.

⁶¹ The transcription relies on the understanding and interpretation of the transcriber. Matters such as slight differences between the dialect spoken by Yinshun and the dialect spoken by the transcriber, and the competence of the transcriber must all be taken into account. As for the difference in dialect, this issue became particularly important after Yinshun moved to Taiwan, where his speeches needed a transcriber and a translator (who were not the same person sometimes) as well. The distance between what he said and what the audience heard must be stressed. According to the pictures that Rulin 如琳 provided show her master, Xuanshen 玄深, translating the speeches into Taiwanese dialect, in order to make it understood by the local people of Xinzhu 新竹 in Taiwan. The nun Xuanshen took notes from the speech of Yinshun, who, however, was speaking without any handout, so as the audience was not provided any guidelines written on sheet for the speech.

⁶² The nun Zhaohui wrote her own classification of the volumes from the collection *Miaoyun ji*. See: Shi Zhaohui (2001a) *Miaoyun ji daolun*, Tainan: Fojiao wenxuan jijinhui.

3. works compiled by Yinshun as re-statements of previous works;

The first writings of Yinshun were planned as reference papers for lectures and only at a later time published as articles, with the publications based on transcriptions completed by Buddhist monks.⁶³

We can list five articles on Mādhyamika/San-lun which were all compiled and presented at the Wuchang Buddhist Institute and meant to reflect the result of Yinshun's early study of the San-lun School:

1. the three articles written in 1934: 'Sanlun zong zhuancheng kao' 三論宗傳承考;⁶⁴ 'Zhonglun shi zhi yanjiu' 中論史之研究; 'Qingbian yu hufa' 清辯與護法;
2. the two articles written in 1937: 'Sanlun zong shi lue' 三論宗史略; 'Sanlun zong feng jian shuo' 三論宗風簡說.

Nowadays, the 'Zhonglun shi zhi yanjiu' remains missing, while the other four pieces are still available. Moreover, 'Sanlun zong shi lue' and 'Sanlun zong zhuancheng kao' have all been included in one of the volumes edited by Zhang Mantao in the 1980s, as representative of San-lun scholarship.⁶⁵ 'Sanlun zong feng jian shuo' was later included in Yinshun's volume *Fofa shi jiu shi zhi guang* 佛法是救世之光, published in 1973.

The division that I have advanced follows the chronological order of compilation, and therefore it reflects Yinshun's course of learning, differences in the sources' availability, and his approach to the topic. The works dated 1934 were written while at Wuchang, in between the two retreats at Huiji temple. This is a period that I would define as transitional, since Yinshun's level of knowledge of the scriptures was restricted to the Canon (the *Long zang*). Three other points are worth listing. Firstly, these works reflect the Buddhist education that he had received at Wuchang, which focused on (or perhaps was limited to) the San-lun School and Wei-shi school. Then, the reason why Yinshun left Huiji temple to return to Wuchang was a lecture series on San-lun that

⁶³ The transcriber for these articles signed as Yueyao 月耀.

⁶⁴ Yinshun signed this article with the pen name Yayan 啞言. According to Xingying 性滢, the Buddhist nun who is in charge of the Zhengwen Publ., Yinshun did not dare to put his name in public since he did not trust his own Buddhist knowledge at that time. For the same reason he used a second pen name, Liyan 力嚴, for a later work. The change of the pen name, according to Xingying, was due to a better confidence that Yinshun had on his mastery of Buddhism (interview to Xingying, Taizhong, 9 October 2005)

⁶⁵ Zhang Mantao, ed. (1979) *Sanlunzong zhi fazhan jiqi sixiang* 三論宗之發展及其思想, pp. 5-18, 91-108.

Taixu delivered. Finally, even while reading through different canonical scriptures, Yinshun dedicated the evenings in his retreat at Huiji to mastering the San-lun and Wei-shi doctrines.

Both the 1934 and 1937 works were compiled before having access to International scholarship (obtained through Japanese translations) and before the meeting with Fazun; in other words, before learning about Tibetan Buddhism and the development of Mādhyamika in Tibet.

Joint research into Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi characterised the first Buddhist education of Yinshun, and reached its perfect expression in the first exposition of Buddhist teachings which Yinshun was author of, in both the oral (lectures) and written (articles) format. His first written works (short essays) are dated 1931 and focus on the Yogācāra teachings. On the other hand, Yinshun's first experience as lecturer is dated 1932, and his talks were a comment on the contents of *Shi'er men lun* 十二門論, which is one of the four fundamental texts of the Chinese San-lun School. The combination and interaction of Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi in Yinshun's early works is the outcome of the Chinese quality of his understanding of Buddhism. As we will see later, the terminology that Yinshun adopted for these first works was ambiguous.⁶⁶ We may question whether we are facing a process of Sinicisation of the original Indian Buddhist schools and tenets (in terms of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra) or whether Yinshun is developing (and contributing to) the Indianisation of Buddhist schools that are traditionally Chinese (San-lun School and Wei-shi School).

These works (especially 'Sanlun zong zhuancheng kao') focus on the historical development and doctrinal evolution of the Chinese San-lun School. Even if Yinshun dedicates some paragraphs to the Indian and Japanese traditions of the San-lun School, he showed himself to be well acquainted only with the Chinese school.⁶⁷ His adoption of the term 'San-lun' is quite ambiguous. For instance, in his first essay Yinshun named even the Indian and Tibetan Mādhyamika as 'San-lun', and thus we find expressions such as "Indian San-lun" (*yindu de sanlun* 印度的三論), or "Tibetan San-lun" (*xizang de*

⁶⁶ See Chapter Five for a detailed analysis of Yinshun's Mādhyamika terminology.

⁶⁷ Yinshun dedicated only a few sentences to the situation of Japanese Sanron, while he did not mention at all the Tibetan tradition of this school. Yinshun compiled these works before his encounter with the International scholarship and Fazun.

sanlun 西藏的三論). On the other hand, he never used expressions such as *zhongguo de zhongguan* 中國的中觀, “Chinese Mādhyamika”. Later, in the rest of his early works, Yinshun seemed to conceive a clear distinction between *zhongguan* 中觀 and *sanlun* 三論:

1. *Zhongguan* is used to identify either the whole tradition (including India, China, Japan and Tibet), or only the Indian (original) tradition, that is usually defined as “Early Mādhyamika” (*chuqi zhongguan* 初期中觀), or the Tibetan (late) tradition, that is usually defined as “Late Mādhyamika” (*houqi zhongguan* 後期中觀).
2. *Sanlun* names the Chinese School of the Three Treatises, the Chinese Mahāyāna school that Yinshun considered as the Chinese school *closer* (but not identical) to the Indian Mādhyamika.

Yinshun followed a cyclical vision of the history of Buddhism, where the purity of doctrine and practice is in the starting page, and corruption of teachings belongs to the final phase.⁶⁸ This view of a historical evolution and decline is applied to the macro-context of Mādhyamika (Mādhyamika intended as the whole school), and also to its micro-contexts (inside any single area: India, China, Japan and Tibet). As for China, which is the main protagonist in Yinshun’s first papers, the ‘purity’ of Kumarajiva’s works is followed by the ‘maturity’ of Jizang and then the ‘corruption’ of Tiantai and Chan schools. Yinshun’s claimed attempt of re-construction of the Indian Mādhyamika and the close connection with Jizang were to remain a constant in his understanding and preaching of Mādhyamika/Sanlun.⁶⁹

Yinshun’s conception of Chinese San-lun, especially his knowledge and interpretation of Jizang reflect Taixu’s arguments published slightly later in the essay ‘Faxing konghui xue gailun’ 法性空慧學概論 (1942).⁷⁰ On the other hand, Yinshun took distance from Taixu in defining Tiantai school as representative of a corrupted Buddhism, while Taixu had stressed a more linear vision of Buddhist history, and conceived Tiantai as a later and thus more complete and ‘perfect’ Buddhist doctrine.

⁶⁸ See Yinshun’s *panjiao*.

⁶⁹ See his commentary to the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* as pertinent instance. For a critical analysis of this topic, see Chapter Four.

⁷⁰ Taixu, *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp.763-843.

I. 3 Yinshun's Early Works on Mādhyamika

In contrast to the the first articles, the other writings on Mādhyamika/San-lun were all included in Yinshun's volumes or published as books. The three works under examination here were all included in *Miaoyun ji* 妙雲集.⁷¹

Among the five works that I have selected as Yinshun's main writings on the topic, only *Zhongguan jin lun* and *Kong zhi tan jiu* include an introduction written by Yinshun himself. Yinshun's introduction to *Zhongguan jin lun* can be considered as a comprehensive overview of Yinshun's Mādhyamika/San-lun education and thought, as well as, in my opinion, a valid autobiographical source for his encounter with Buddhism, and specifically with Mādhyamika/San-lun, with the joint learning and following of Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogācāra/Wei-shi mentioned as well. The overall theme of all his early works on Mādhyamika/San-lun, and the process that led to their compilation is also explained in every detail. For this reason I translate part of it herein:

I have been considered among my colleagues as a scholar of the San-lun School or School of Emptiness.⁷² In the essay 'Wei xingkongzhe bian'⁷³ I have affirmed that I cannot belong to any faction of the School of Emptiness. Nevertheless, I certainly have a deep affinity for the foundational doctrine of the School of Emptiness! I can say I have always had a predisposition towards the School of Emptiness, which is composed of the treatises of the Holy Nāgārjuna. Early in 1927, as I began to read the Buddhist Scriptures, the first book [that I read] was the *Zhong lun*. I did not understand anything from the contents of the *Zhong lun*, but a confused and inexplicable interest made me inclined to the study of the Dharma, and finally I entered the monkhood.⁷⁴ After becoming a monk, at a certain point I paid some attention to the Wei-shi School, but after not a long time I returned my focus to the School of Emptiness – the San-lun School of Jizang.⁷⁵ As the war started, I moved to the West, to Sichuan,

⁷¹ Twenty four from the volumes of Yinshun have been included in a collection entitled *Miaoyun ji*.

⁷² Ch: *kong zong* 空宗.

⁷³ Ch: 'Wei xingkongzhe bian' 爲性空之辨.

⁷⁴ Here is evidence that *Zhong lun* was one of the first Buddhist books he read. In addition, there is mention of the Mādhyamika school in connection with his decision to master Buddhism and, at last, to become a monk.

⁷⁵ Here Yinshun summarised the four stages of his Dharma education: (1) San-lun; (2) San-lun/Wei-shi; (3) Wei-shi; (4) San-lun. Moreover, he stressed his focusing to Jizang's works. This is one of the details that made me think of the Chinese quality of Yinshun's Mādhyamika, and of Yinshun in terms of Jizang's legacy, or maybe belonging to Jizang's lineage.

and thus came in contact with the Tibetan School of Emptiness.⁷⁶ At that time, a significant change occurred in my understanding of Buddhism. I was not satisfied any more with just obscure talking, but I looked into the early scriptures, and therefore I reached and tasted the essence of Dharma. As result of this shift in my thinking, I gained a new conception of the School of Emptiness, which actually reinforced my appreciation for the School of Emptiness. In 1942-1943, I gave a series of lectures on *Zhong lun*, lectures that Yanpei⁷⁷ transcribed, adjusted and made it into the first draft of the *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*.⁷⁸ I made an extensive investigation on the conception of emptiness as expressed in the early scriptures –*Āgamas* and *Abhidharma*. In the Autumn 1944, I gave some lectures on this topic for the monks Miaoqin, Xuming, etc., lectures that Miaoqin transcribed.⁷⁹ The written outcome was titled *Xingkong xue tanyuan*, and meant to be of the same nature as another work named *Weishi xue tanyuan*. Through this investigation, I improved my understanding of the concept of the emptiness of nature, and finally I conceived the emptiness of nature as the original tenet of the Dharma. In Spring 1946 I gave lectures at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute on the overall theme ‘An Introduction to the Emptiness of the Nature’.⁸⁰ At first, I planned to compile three essays, titled ‘A Brief History of the Development of the Emptiness of the Nature’, ‘A Methodology of the Emptiness of the Nature’ and ‘Practicing the Emptiness of the Nature’.⁸¹ Nevertheless, since I have moved back to the East, all these essays, with the exception only of ‘A Brief History of the Development of the Emptiness of the Nature’, have remained incomplete, what a pity! In Winter 1947, while I was staying at the Xuedou Temple editing *Taixu dashi quanshu*, I read a notice for contributors in *Haichao yin*, and I decided to dedicate my next speeches and writings to the theme ‘A Modern Restatement of Mādhyamika’.⁸² Those who were able to understand were only Xuming and Xinglin. Originally, I thought to write (or talk) on ‘A History of the Doctrine of the Emptiness of Nature’,⁸³ with a first part about Emptiness according to the *Āgamas*, and Emptiness according to *Abhidharma*; a second part about Emptiness according to the Mahāyāna sūtras, and on the Emptiness of Nature and Emptiness according to the Mādhyamika treatises; a third part about Emptiness according to the Real and Eternal, Emptiness according to Wei-shi and

⁷⁶ Here he refers to his stay at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute, and the relationship with Fazun.

⁷⁷ Yanpei 演培. The volume was published in 1952.

⁷⁸ Yinshun’s authorship for his volumes is in doubt in the case of collections of essays result of transcription. The arranging and adjusting (*zhengli* 整理) made by his disciples involves the possibility of some misunderstanding or interpolation.

⁷⁹ Miaoqin 妙欽, Xuming 續明.

⁸⁰ Ch: ‘Xingkong daolun’ 性空導論.

⁸¹ In Chinese, respectively: ‘Xingkong de fazhan shi lue’ 性空的發展史略; ‘Xingkong de fangfa lun’ 性空的方法論; ‘Xingkong de shijian’ 性空的實踐.

⁸² Ch: ‘Zhongguan jin lun’ 中觀今論.

⁸³ Ch: ‘Xingkong sixiang shi’ 性空思想史.

Emptiness according to Mādhyamika⁸⁴ – in total seven chapters. *Xingkong xue tanyuan* was estimated to have 10,000 characters for the first part. Then, the final five chapters were supposed to be less than 50-60,000 characters. In that time of social turmoil, people often suggested to me that I should explain briefly the right meaning of Mādhyamika, so I developed the theme of Emptiness according to *Zhong lun*, and made that into the volume *Zhongguan jin lun*. The final result was quite different from, and much simpler than, the original plan! That [*Zhongguan jin lun*] is not representative of any particular faction of the School of Emptiness, but, based on Nāgārjuna's *Zhong lun*, and complemented by the *Da zhi du lun*, involves any factions and includes them into only one system. This volume has been completed in these days, which is a period of changes for society. I recall the cause and conditions that linked *Zhong lun* and me, and gave me more than twenty years of Dharma joy, what an extraordinary happiness!⁸⁵

The table below testifies the time distance between speech and written publication of each work and the role of Hong Kong in publishing the early works of Yinshun:

| Title | Lecture data | Written publication data |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Zhongguan lun song jiangji</i> 中觀論頌講記 | 1942 Sichuan 四川: Fawang Institute 法王學院 | 1952 Hong Kong |
| <i>Xingkong xue tanyuan</i> 性空學探源 | 1944 Sichuan: Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute | 1950 Hong Kong |
| <i>Zhongguan jin lun</i> 中觀今論 | 1947 Siming 四明: Xuetou Temple 雪竇寺 | 1950 Hong Kong |
| <i>Kong zhi tanjiu</i> 空之探究 | | 1985 Taiwan |
| <i>Da zhi du lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi</i> 大智度論之作者及其翻譯 | 1990 Xinzhu 新竹: Fuyan Vihāra 福嚴精舍 | 1991: Paper presentation 1993: Book publication, Taiwan 1993: Japanese publication ⁸⁶ |

Table 8 - Yinshun and his volumes on Mādhyamika

⁸⁴ Here is the Mahāyāna Threefold System (*dasheng san xi*), even if listed in the opposite sequence.

⁸⁵ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, introduction pp.1-3. The introduction was compiled on 2 May 1949, at the Putuo Temple 普陀寺.

⁸⁶ The Japanese translation, entitled *Daishidoron' no sakusha to sono honyaku* 大智度論の作者とその翻譯, was made by Iwaki Hidenori 岩城英規, and published from Sankibo Publ. (Tokyo).

I. 3. 1 *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* 中觀論頌講記 : Commentary on the *Mūlamadhyamaka kārikā*:

Originally a series of lectures given in 1942 on request of the monk Yanpei, and then transcribed by Yanpei himself, this volume was compiled (and published) in the early Fifties, in Hong Kong.

As his first volume on Mādhyamika, Yinshun compiled a commentary to the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. His work may be added to (or perhaps aims to be an alternative to) the commentary of Qingmu 青目.

The methodology adopted by Yinshun in organising his commentary, how he divided the verses into sections, and which schools and figures he quoted in order to explain the contents of the text, are all good tools to understand the early conception of Mādhyamika thought of Yinshun. His clear reference to Jizang supports my theory of Yinshun's inheritance of Chinese traditional Buddhism and to the Chinese quality of Yinshun's interpretation and explanation of Mādhyamika, and his potential inclusion in the legacy (or lineage?) of Jizang.⁸⁷

This is also the first work of Yinshun which has plenty of quotations from the Chinese Buddhist Canon. Cabezón drew a distinction between “traditional theologian” and “contemporary theologian” as in regards to the scholars' method of referencing texts. Thinking of the criteria that Yinshun adopted in citing from Buddhist scriptures, we can also define him here as a “traditional theologian.”⁸⁸

The Tiantai school is quoted in this volume quite often, but mostly in opposition to the ‘pure’ and ‘original’ Mādhyamika (*zhongguan*) or San-lun School. Yinshun also

⁸⁷ Chapter Four is dedicated to the textual and critical analysis of this volume, and includes a detailed account of the similarities and the differences between Yinshun's work and the other commentaries, with special attention to Jizang's scripture.

⁸⁸ Cabezón, José Ignacio (2000) ‘Buddhist Theology in the Academia’, in Jackson Roger R. and John J. Makransky (2000), p. 47: ‘Traditional theologians often cite scriptural material from memory, and this at times leads to errors. These errors are sometimes corrected by editors, but not always. Even when such material is cited accurately, there is no custom of making full reference to the source of the citation. In part, this can be explained by noting that many traditional theologians had, as it were, mental access to the sources, in so far as they had memorized the more important texts. But for the contemporary theologian, for whom the accuracy of the citation and its context vis à vis other portions of the text are pivotal, and who, more often than not, does not have the advantage of mental access, this less rigorous tradition of citation represents a limitation in traditional theological work.’

refers to the classical distinction between *gudai sanlun zong* 古代三論宗 and *xin sanlun zong* 新三論宗.

As for the structure of this volume, Yinshun wrote an extensive and detailed introduction on the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, the Chinese tradition of *Zhonglun*, the role of the volume in the development of Chinese Buddhism, and the system he adopted for the classification of the contents.⁸⁹

I. 3. 2 *Xingkong xue tan yuan* 性空學探源: First Treatise on Emptiness

This volume is the collection of lectures that Yinshun gave in 1944. Among the audience there were Miaoqin 妙欽 and Xuming 續明, who particularly requested Yinshun to give these talks. The written manuscript was based on the transcription provided by Miaoqin.

Xingkong xue tanyuan is closely connected with a previous work on Yogācāra/Wei-shi entitled *Weishi xue tanyuan* 唯識學探源.⁹⁰ First, the combination between Mādhyamika/San-lun and Yogacara/Wei-shi occurs again. The lectures that then formed *Xingkong xue tanyuan* are dated only four years after the speeches that were then published in *Weishi xue tanyuan*. Secondly, *Xingkong xue tanyuan* was meant to be complementary to *Weishi xue tanyuan*.⁹¹

Moreover, this manuscript is linked to the “Mahāyāna threefold system” (*da cheng san xi*), and planned as part of a project that actually included three publications, one on Mādhyamika, one on Yogacara and one on Tathāgata garbha:

⁸⁹The monk *Hongyin* 宏印 wrote a short treatise about Yinshun’s *Miaoyun ji*, providing some comments on each book of the collection, and some suggestion on how to read Yinshun’s volumes. As for the *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, he wrote: ‘*Zhongguan lun song jiangji* explained the *Prajñāpāramitā* teachings of the School of Emptiness according to Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva. *Zhong lun* is a fundamental reading for those who aim to study the meaning of the Buddhist Emptiness in-depth. The system of classification that this volume applied to *Zhong lun* is unprecedented. He [Yinshun] proposed the theory that *Zhong lun* brings the teachings of *Āgamas* into full play, and this is an unprecedented theory. In any event, the master was able to show clearly that each chapter of *Zhong lun* expounds a corresponding doctrine of the *Āgamas*.’ See Hongyin (1994) *Zenyang du miaoyun ji*, p. 16.

⁹⁰ Yinshun decided to write on Wei-shi after reading the Japanese work of Yūki Reimon 結成令聞 which Mochan was translating into Chinese. Taixu wrote the preface to this volume of Yinshun, who, because of Taixu’s suggestion and the forthcoming translation of Yūki Reimon by Mochan, ended writing only the first section of the research project on Wei-shi that he had actually planned to realise.

⁹¹ See the introduction from *Zhongguan jin lun* quoted above.

| Mahāyāna Threefold System | Yinshun's works – title | Yinshun's works - date |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Xing kong wei ming lun</i> 性空唯名論 | <i>Xing kong xue tan yuan</i> 性空學探源 | 1944 (lect.) – 1950 (publ.) |
| <i>Xu wang wei shi lun</i> 虛妄唯識論 | <i>Wei shi xue tan yuan</i> 唯識學探源 | 1940 (lect.) – 1944 (publ.) |
| <i>Zhen chang wei xin lun</i> 真常唯心論 | <i>Rulai zang xue tan yuan</i> 如來藏學探源 | --- |

Table 9 - Mahāyāna Threefold system and Yinshun's literary trilogy

Yinshun planned and aimed to complete this trilogy during the war. However, only two volumes were finally accomplished. The project of a book on the *tathāgata garbha* doctrine was postponed and finally completed only in 1981, under the different title *Rulai zang zhi yanjiu* 如來藏之研究, and published in Taiwan by the Zhengwen Publ. House.⁹²

I. 3. 3 *Zhongguan jin lun* 中觀今論: Modern Restatement of the Mādhyamika Doctrine

Because of the topic and the structure of contents, this work might be included among the later writings, but I prefer to list it among the early writings because of the date of compilation and its genre (a series of lectures later turned into written publications).

The first part of this book was translated into English by Fayen S. K. Koo, and published in *Haichao yin* in 1964.⁹³ Unfortunately, the translation work was interrupted after the completion of the first four chapters of *Zhongguan jin lun*. Despite the note of the editor to the last issue, the whole translation of this book was never accomplished

⁹²In comment to *Xinkong xue tanyuan*, Hongyin stated: '*Xingkong xue tanyuan* explores the origins of the doctrine of Emptiness of Nature from the perspective of the history of India in-depth.' See Hongyin (1994), *Zen'yang du miaoyun ji*, p. 16.

⁹³The translator annotated at the beginning (from *Haichao yin*, 46: 1-2, p. 35): 'The author, Venerable Yin Shun, is the greatest authority on Madhyamika philosophy in Free China today. This book, published in early 1950, is his most celebrated work, but since it is not circulated in other than the Chinese language, it is little known to western scholars who are more familiar with professor T. R. V. Murti's Central Philosophy of Buddhism Published in 1955 in England. The present translation is an attempt to introduce this work to the west. Although every care has been exercised to make this rendition as true to the original as possible, it is realized that errors are inevitable. Suggestions and criticism are therefore sincerely solicited from the readers.'

and thus is still incomplete.⁹⁴ As for the Western translation of Yinshun's literary production, until now only the volume *Cheng fo zhi dao* 成佛之道 has been entirely translated and published.⁹⁵ Early in the Sixties there was an attempt to make Yinshun's philosophy available to the Western readership, and the selected writing was one of his works on Mādhyamika is an index of the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun, besides providing evidence of Yinshun's influence on Taiwanese Buddhology, and of a possible revival of Mādhyamika in the twentieth century.

Because of this volume Yinshun was listed as standing side by side with the Buddha and Nāgārjuna in a manuscript published on *Zhongguo fojiao* 中國佛教.⁹⁶

On the other hand, Shoupei criticised the book in the essay 'Zhongdao de fangfa lun' 中道的方法論, and this probably contributed to making Yinshun's text better known.⁹⁷ Yinshun defended his position, affirming that Shoupei's theory was an index of the Chinese (i.e., corrupted) quality of his culture, while he himself based his own view on the (pure) *Āgamas*.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Note from the editor (from *Haichao yin*, v.46, n.9-10, p. 47): 'The Hai Ch'ao Yin has decided to discontinue the serial publication of the translation of the Venerable Yin Shun's "Madhyamika Doctrine" as from the next issue. The nine remaining chapters of the work will be translated and published in book form, perhaps, at a later date, separately'. Reasons of the interruption of translation are unknown. The translation was never completed but the same journal published the English translation of other passages of Yinshun.

⁹⁵ Yin-shun, tr. Yeung Wing H. (1998) *The Way to Buddhahood: Instructions from a Modern Chinese Master*, Boston: Wisdom Publ.

⁹⁶ These data is reported in Yinshun (1993) 'Da yang minxiong jushi', in *Huayu ji*, vol. 1, pp. 271-272. No detail is given about the date of publication of this article, neither the author.

⁹⁷ The essay compiled by Shoupei is entitled 'Ping yinshun fashi de "Zhongdao fangfa lun"' 評印順法師的『中道方法論』, and is available from Yinshun, ed. (1987) *Fa hai weipo*, pp. 17-26.

⁹⁸ Hongyin defined this volume as significant not only in the field of Buddhist studies, but also in the field of Western philosophy: 'This volume dealt with a number of issues that Chinese philosophy and Western philosophy were both unable to handle successfully. This volume addressed satisfactory views for all the questions that the field of philosophy face. Therefore, many academics, such as Li Hengyue and Xu Weiwen, once read *Zhongguan jin lun*, felt a heartfelt admiration for the master, and took refuge in him.' See Hongyin (1994), *Wo zenyang du miaoyun ji*, p. 16. Li Hengyue and Xu Weiwen contributed two articles to the essay collection edited by Lan Jifu and entitled *Yinshun daoshi de sixiang yu xuewen*. The article by Li Hengyue, named 'Wo cong daoshi suo xuedao de *Zhongguan*' 我從導師所學到的「中觀」 (pp. 139-152), and the work by Xu Weiwen, titled '*Zhongguan jin lun du hou zan*' 『中觀今論』讀後讚 (pp. 301-310), are, anyway, pure and clear eulogies of Yinshun's writings on Mādhyamika, without any critical insights on his potential contribution to the field of Mādhyamika scholarship.

I. 3. 4 Concluding remarks

The analysis of Yinshun's first works raise the question of how he circulated his first writings on Mādhyamika/San-lun, and who published them. With Yinshun's works as case studies we can here question how, in the first half of the twentieth century, Buddhist treatises and, specifically, Mādhyamika/San-lun philosophy, were spread in China. Since his affiliation to the Minnan and Wuchang Buddhist Institutes, which were the most outstanding and modern institutions at that time, his works found publication quite easily on the periodical *Haichao yin* that had been founded by Taixu. Originally, these five articles were all lectures that Yinshun gave and some students transcribed. There is no information about the use of any sort of handout by Yinshun.

While the later works of Mādhyamika were compiled in Taiwan, and published by the Zhengwen Publ. House (Taipei), the previous works are dated (and published) before Yinshun's arrival in Taiwan. Moreover, were an article or a lecture might find publication quite easily in some Buddhist periodical, the publication of books is a separate matter, and more difficult to accomplish.

The publication of *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* is linked to Mingde 明德, a monk from Penang (Malaysia) whom Yinshun met in the early Fifties during a journey to Malaysia.⁹⁹ The publication and circulation of the volume was then provided by a Hong Kong local press. Yinshun affirmed he had read through and checked the manuscript again before sending it to printing, while Xuming and other monks (whose identities are not provided) were responsible for the proofreading. This can indicate a developing process from the spoken lectures to the written book-length works.

The volume *Xingkong xue tanyuan* was published in Hong Kong by a local publishing house, of which no further details are provided.

⁹⁹ In a letter written and sent in November 1951, but arrived in Hong Kong only in 1952, and that Xuming handed to Yinshun, Deming wrote to be willing to collect funds for the publication of the manuscript *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*. There are no data on how did Mingde came to know about the manuscript. Moreover, Mingde did not share Yinshun's Dharma ideas and ideals. The fund raising was so successful to support the publication of the volume *Shengman jing jiangji* 勝鬘經講記 too.

The publication of *Zhongguan jin lun* took place in Hong Kong as well, and sponsored by the local Xianghai lianshe 香海蓮社, which also supported the circulation of the work.¹⁰⁰

Yinshun's first writings witness to the vitality of the local publishing market for Buddhist books.¹⁰¹ Since his personal experience in Hong Kong, Yinshun especially stressed the efforts of the local Buddhists in publishing (and circulating) books on Buddhism, and their engagement in spreading Buddhist scriptures.¹⁰²

In conclusion, the attention to Yinshun's lectures was followed by a large readership of these early works, and signed an important step for the revival of Mādhyamika scholarship in China and Taiwan.¹⁰³

I. 4 Yinshun's Later Works on Mādhyamika

I. 4. 1 *Kong zhi tanjiu* 空之探究: Revised Treatise on Emptiness

In terms of *re-statement*, I agree with Hongyin, that this volume re-proposed the theory of the doctrine of *Zhong lun* as rooted in the *Āgamas*, but providing new details and further evidences from sūtras. What Yinshun stated in the introduction is reflected perfectly on the contents of the book. There are four main chapters, followed by a Chinese and Sanskrit-Pali index, which is a rarity within Yinshun's literary production and, possibly, compiled by Yinshun's disciples, since Yinshun had access neither to Sanskrit nor to Pali.

Besides a clearer articulation of the doctrinal contents, we also notice more accuracy in quoting from scriptures and providing bibliographical references.

¹⁰⁰ The autobiographies of Yinshun provide important details on the situation of Buddhist publication in the first half of the Twentieth century and, even more important, in the Twentieth century China. For a detailed analysis of this matter, please refer to Chapter Two.

¹⁰¹ See especially the three volumes by Holmes Welch.

¹⁰² Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yisheng*, p. 175.

¹⁰³ Among the others, Yang Huinan 楊惠南 said to be inspired by Yinshun's works in the introduction of his *Longshu yu zhongguan zhexue*. Chapter Two and Chapter Seven will deal with the issue of the "Mādhyamika revival" in the Twentieth century China and Taiwan.

I. 4. 2 *Da zhi du lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi* 大智度論之作者及其翻譯: Within the Debate on the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sāstra*

This short book comes from a different process of compilation and a different publisher. The work was planned as a report on the view of some International scholarship on the authorship of *Da zhi du lun* 大智度論 that one disciple of his, Houguan 厚觀, provided. It was written by the nun Zhaohui 昭慧 from dictation. Therefore this publication involves two main issues: Yinshun's engagement with international Buddhist scholarship (and his debate with the discordant opinions of Lamotte and Japanese scholars like Junshō Katō, Akira Hirakawa and Ryūsho Hikata),¹⁰⁴ and the theme of the master-disciple relationship, since the cooperation between Yinshun (i.e., the master), and Houguan and Zhaohui (i.e., the disciples) actually produced plan, compilation and publication of the volume. This is the first book by Yinshun to be translated completely into a foreign language.¹⁰⁵

I. 4. 3 Concluding Remarks

A comparison between the introduction to *Zhongguan jin lun* and the introduction to *Kong zhi tanjiu* reveals a shift in Yinshun's study of Mādhyamika, which is index of Yinshun's different knowledge of Buddhist doctrines and thus different conclusive arguments. Yinshun passed from studying Chinese San-lun to gaining awareness of Indian and Tibetan Buddhist teachings, and moved from a historical analysis of San-lun to a doctrinal hermeneutics of Nāgārjuna's works. In addition, a considerable difference in terms of time is in evidence between the two groups of writings, with the last works compiled in Taiwan, within a different environment from the Communist Mainland.

We may adopt the expression of an 'early Yinshun' vis-à-vis a 'late Yinshun': the latter based his work on a more critical approach to the sources and on a wider group of canonical scriptures. Probably, the works he compiled (or better, the research into the Buddhist Canon and the history of Buddhism that he carried out) in the thirty years between the earlier and the later works were determinant for justifying the shifts in contents, methodologies and writing styles between the two groups of publications. As

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter Eight for a detailed analysis of Lamotte's and Japanese scholars' analysis of *Da zhidu lun*.

¹⁰⁵ The Japanese translation of *Zhongguo chan zong shi* 中國禪宗史 took another few years, while only in 1998 *Cheng fo zhi dao* was translated into English and, so far, it is the only volume by Yinshun to have been entirely translated into English and available to the Western readers.

for Yinshun's style, we notice he is particularly concerned with details more than with structure and cohesion, with the result that his works are rich in details but poor in coherence. The repetitions that characterised the first works (outcome of an original speech-format) are replaced with a list of details and digressions that quite often do not follow a logical order.

In conclusion, through the circulation of new scholarship (which challenged the contemporary Chinese knowledge of Buddhist doctrine, Buddhist history and research methodologies), the attendance of modernised institutes of education for the Sangha (founded by the reformist Taixu), the publishing support in Hong Kong and the cooperation of peers and disciples, Yinshun focused his attention on Nāgārjuna's works, and through a number of stages articulated his own interpretation of Mādhyamika school and scriptures, and enshrined those as the 'Correct Buddhism' in the second half of twentieth century.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MĀDHYAMIKA SCHOOL IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHINA

The analysis of the history of the Mādhyamika scholarship in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism provides the background within which Yinshun developed his hermeneutics, reveals the role that Yinshun has played in the renaissance of the School of Nāgārjuna in Chinese Buddhism, his effort in defining the identity of this 'new' Chinese Mādhyamika/San-lun school, and his position in it. Modern Mādhyamika scholarship listed practitioners and lay scholars, Buddhist and non-Buddhist voices, a number of figures that this chapter examines, separately and comparatively.

So far the study of modern Chinese Buddhism never produced a systematic investigation on the history of the Mādhyamika/San-lun. This chapter aims to fill in the gap and document this missing piece in the field by providing a bibliographical database organized diachronically and synchronically.

The diffusion and popularity of a specific school is determined by the contemporary publication market: the role that the Jinling Publ. Press played in the diffusion of San-lun commentaries is herein a further issue worthy of assessment.

This chapter explores a plurality of historical and cultural patterns, generational paradigms, professional affiliations and doctrinal entourages, each of them entailing a specific contribution to scriptural exegesis and hermeneutical theories in Buddhism. Therefore, any study based merely on either historical criteria or doctrinal association does not reflect correctly the reality of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

The chart below aims to clarify the relations between those Mādhyamika figures, their doctrinal affiliation and generational pattern. In this regard, I distinguish four main generations of scholars, the first including Taixu, Ouyang

Jingwu and Cihang, who can then be classified as the 'patriarchs' of thought. Yinshun, Daoan and Lü Cheng all belong to a second generation, but their affiliation to different teachers made them developing different scholarship. Xuming and Yanpei appear as students of both Taixu and Yinshun and, as I will discuss later, as well as both peers and students of the latter; for this reason their works are analysed in this chapter and not in the following that deals specifically with the post-Yinshun entourage. Zhang Chengji are representative of a fourth stage of formation of Mādhyamika scholarship, which showed doctrinal inheritance from the previous figures but a new theoretical approach to the subject.

Finally, some of the figures examined below engage with Western research methodology that was imported mostly through Japan, some remained loyal to the classical Chinese (religious) textual studies, others combined the twos. For this reason this chapter also articulates a discussion on the history and modalities of religious intellectuality, which is conceived, and placed, as preliminary to the exam of the various exponents of Mādhyamika studies.

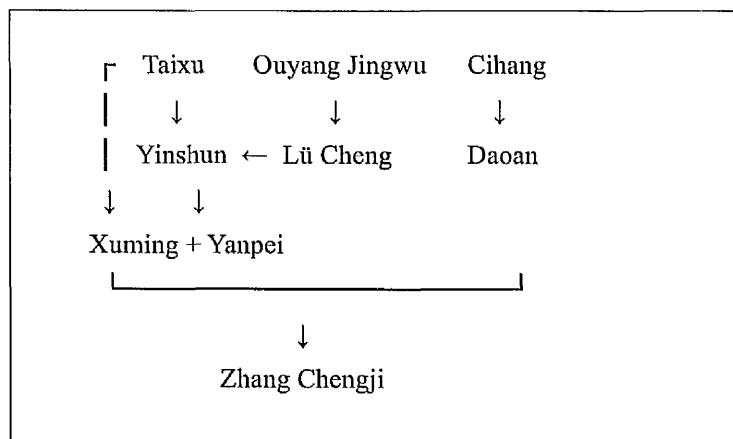


Table 10 – Formation Chart

II. 1 The Mādhyamika and San-lun Schools in China

A few essays that had been published on the Buddhist journal *Haichao yin*

海潮音 from 1920 to 1929 were later gathered in the 26-volume collection entitled *Haichao yin wenku* 海潮音文庫.¹ This collection grouped the articles by subject, and dedicated volume n.9 to the school of dharma-nature (*faxing zong* 法性宗).² The sixteen articles collected in the volume showed the central role that Prajñāpāramitā literature and *Zhong lun* played in the scriptural definition of the tradition, the essential value of doctrinal exegesis as research method and objective, the emerging presence of lay scholarship of the field. This portrait has to be conceived as the initial pattern of the twentieth-century identity of this Chinese tradition, whose historical development was made of various stages and results of influences coming from Buddhist and non-Buddhist spheres.

II. 1. 1 The Publication Market: the contribution of the Jinling Scriptural Press 金陵刻經處

Yang Wenhui went to Japan among diplomatic envoys' retinue, and his devotion to Buddhism made him travelling with figures like Nanjo Bunyo. He established the scriptural press in Nanjing, and his efforts then resulted in the circulation of Buddhist scriptures, and in the rise of Buddhist studies since the Republic!³

Four factors influenced and led to the renaissance of the San-lun scholarship:
(1) the establishment of the Jinling Scriptural Press in 1866;⁴ (2) the bridge between

¹ The collection was originally published by the Beijing chongfu wenhua fazhan zhongxin 北京崇福文化发展中心 in 1931. A recent reprinting was produced by the Xinwenfeng chubanshe, Taiwan.

² This was another way to name the Chinese version of Mādhyamika, vis-à-vis the school of dharma-characteristic (*faxiang zong* 法相宗), which was another denomination of the Chinese version of Yogācāra.

³ Yinshun (1950) *Taixu dashi nianpu*, p.38.

⁴ Main sources on the subject are: Chan, Sin-wai, *Buddhism in Late Ch'ing Political Thought*, pp.20-21; Chen Bing and Deng Zimei (2002) *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao*, pp.103-107; Chen Jidong (2004) *Sei mo bukkyo no kenkyu*, pp. 77-94, 119-203, 551-584; Goldfuss, Gabrielle (1996) 'Binding Sutras and Modernities: The Life and Times of the Chinese Layman Yang Wenhui (1837-1911)', in *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions*, v.9, pp.54-74; Goldfuss, Gabrielle (2001) *Vers un*

China and Japan, and the *return* of Chinese Buddhism into China from Japan; (3) the reform of the curricula in Buddhist education; (4) the arrival of the Western methods of textual analysis and doctrinal investigation. There were also essential elements in the programme of re-constructing, re-forming and modernising Chinese Buddhism in order to re-construct, re-form and modernise the image of China.

Yang Wenhui contributed to the renewal of Buddhism in China with the reprinting and editing of Buddhist scriptures, as well as via innovation of the Buddhist educational curricula. These two missions were carried on by Yang Wenhui's students, such as the monk Taixu and the lay Ouyang Jingwu. Therefore, in the reconstruction of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, we find Yang Wenhui as 'root leader', then Taixu and Ouyang Jingwu as main representative of the second generation, and finally Yinshun and Lü Cheng as belonging to the third generation. Common threats and aims keep the unity of this Buddhist genealogy, although the dissimilar doctrinal interpretations and research approaches entailed a multifaceted reality.

Chinese and Western scholarship acknowledged the role that the lay Yang Wenhui 楊文會 (1837-1910) played in the renewal of Buddhism in China, and documented his thre-fold mission of 'research' (*yanjiu* 研究), 'lecturing' (*jiangxue* 講學) and 'scriptural printing' (*ke jing* 刻經).⁵ This section does not aim to examine the figure of Yang Wenhui in making the modern China, instead it attempts to underline Yang Wenhui's contribution to the revival of the San-lun from the end of the nineteenth century, a contribution which was only marginal within Yang

Buddhisme du XXe siècle. Yang Wenhui (1837-1911), réformateur, laïque et imprimeur; Pittman, Don (2001) *Towards a Modern Chinese Buddhism*, pp.41-50; Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.2-10, 98-100;

⁵ Yi Juan 乙涓 (1997) 'Jinling ke jingchu chuang 130 zhounian xueshu yantaohui juxing' 金陵刻經處創130周年學術研討會舉行, in *Foxue yanjiu* 佛學研究, pp.291-295.

Wenhui's work, and therefore neglected by the scholarship,⁶ but fundamental in addressing the attention of Chinese Buddhists on Nāgārjuna's teachings.

The establishment of the Jinling Scriptural Press, which was the first Buddhist cultural organism founded by the laity in the Modern China, dates 1866. In the years 1878-1886 Yang Wenhui travelled to England, where he had the opportunity to see Chinese old scriptures, learn some 'new' Western methods of textual analysis and meet the Japanese Nanjo Bunyo. It was thanks to Nanjo Bunyo that afterwards he obtained the return into China of important scriptures dated Sui and Tang dynasties, a total of about 280 scriptures, more than 1000 fascicles.⁷

Among the scriptures returned from Japan and reprinted in China there are Jizang's commentaries on the San-lun texts: *Zhongguan lun shu* 中觀論疏 [T42 n1824], *Bai lun shu* 百論疏 [T42 n1827] and *Shi'er men lun shu* 十二門論疏 [T42 n1825]. These are only three out of the 64 works requested by Yang Wenhui to Nanjo Bunyo in September 1891.

Jizang's works had not been included in the previous editions of the Chinese Buddhist Canon,⁸ and before the 'canonisation' of these texts in the Japanese Taishō, Yang Wenhui made them available to the Chinese readership already in the end of the nineteenth century. And Yinshun, infact, was able to get a copy of Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* in the early 1920s, while the first copies of the Taishō Tripitaka reached China only in the early 1930s.

Yang Wenhui's publishing activity and educational reform were led by four ideals: (1) return of the ancient (*fu gu* 復古); (2) reform and renewal (*gexin* 革新);

⁶ In 1997 there was a conference in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Jinling. The Chinese scholar Dong Qun 董群 presented a paper on Yang Wenhui's contribution to the renaissance of the San-lun entitled 'Yang Wenhui de sanlun zong fuxing zhi meng' 楊文會的三論宗復興之夢.

⁷ Chen Jidong (2004) *Sei mo bukkyo no kenkyu*, pp. 77-94, 119-203, 551-584.

⁸ Zhang Mantao, ed. (1977) *Dazangjing yanjiu kebian* 大藏經研究彙編, 2 vols, collected articles on the history and features of the various edition of the Chinese Tripitaka.

(3) return to the 'origins' (*gui yuan* 歸源); (4) external search (*wai qiu* 外求).⁹ If we think about the Jinling Press, we see that the re-printing of scriptures that had disappeared in China was following these guidelines, and thus the return of the texts was accompanied by a series of interventions, such as analytical examination, and classification of contents, which provided those scriptures with a renewed interpretation and study. To return to the instance of the *Zhongguan lun shu*, the copy that is now published by the Xinwenfeng Press in Taiwan is actually the reprint of the Jinling edition, so as the sign at the end of the book says. The volume consists of the scripture with a classification of the contents (dated 1914) in appendix.¹⁰ It is likely that this was the edition used by Yinshun. The similarities between the Jinling scheme and Yinshun's own charts demonstrate the modalities of textual analysis at that time.¹¹

II. 1. 2 Non-Buddhist Voices on Mādhyamika: The Case of Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909-1995)

Chinese culture is centred on Confucianism, the main tendency and form of this cultural life are defined by Confucianism, in the following a few thousand years, Daoism could not hold this responsibility, and nor could Buddhism that had come from India. Even if it is said that Chinese accepted, absorbed and domesticated Buddhism, and that Buddhism influenced Chinese culture, nevertheless Buddhism cannot be the main stream.¹²

⁹ Yi Juan 乙涓 (1997) 'Jinling ke jingchu chuang 130 zhounian xueshu yantaohui juxing' 金陵刻經處創130周年學術研討會舉行, in *Foxue yanjiu* 佛學研究, pp.291-295.

¹⁰ This edition has been recently reprinted and made available by the Xinwenfeng chubanshe, Taiwan.

¹¹ See Chapter Seven.

¹² Mou Zongsan (1995), *Shidai yu ganshou*, p.328.

Yinshun received the appellation of scholar-monk from both the local and international scholarship. While I will provide a definition of what the label ‘scholarship’ meant at that time in the next section concerning theories and methods in the study of Mādhyamika, this segment aims to contextualise Yinshun in the general field of the intellectuals (not necessarily Buddhist, but Chinese), in order to unveil what the label of ‘intellectual’ would imply, question the intellectual quality of religious practitioners and religious practice, and assess whether we are allowed to define Yinshun an intellectual Buddhist (or Buddhist intellectual).

For this purpose we have to put twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism in engagement with (and contextualised within) the wider twentieth-century Chinese thought. We can also question the role that Buddhism played in the formation of the new intellectuality, and define the contribution of intellectuals to the genesis of the new Buddhism.¹³

In Yinshun’s books we find names of Chinese, mostly Confucian, thinkers whom he debated with. Among the others, Yinshun commented and criticised Hu Shi 胡適,¹⁴ Xiong Shili 熊十力,¹⁵ Liang Shuming 梁漱溟,¹⁶ Zhang Dongsun 張東孫,¹⁷ Feng Youlan 馮友蘭,¹⁸ Fang Dongmei 方東美,¹⁹ Tang Junyi 唐君毅.²⁰ Specifically on Mādhyamika, in the late 1960s Yinshun engaged in a debate with the Confucian

¹³ Two volumes that provide the frame of the intellectual atmosphere in twentieth-century China are: Y.C. Wang (1966) *Chinese Intellectuals and the West 1872-1949*; D.W.Y Kwok (1965) *Scientism in Chinese Thought 1900-1950*.

¹⁴ The main argument of discordance between Yinshun and Hu Shi concerned Chan Buddhism. See: Yinshun (1972) *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.58-100.

¹⁵ Yinshun and Xiong Shili proposed discordant discourses on Wei-shi school of Buddhism. See: Yinshun (1972) *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.1-57.

¹⁶ Yinshun mentioned Liang Shuming in reference to the work on Wei-shi and Indian philosophy of the latter. See especially Yinshun (1950) *Taixu dashi nianpu*.

¹⁷ Yinshun mentioned Zhang Dongsun in reference to Taixu's speech on Idealism and Wei-shi, Buddhism and science. See Yinshun (1950) *Taixu dashi nianpu*, pp.188-190.

¹⁸ Yinshun (1950a) *Taixu dashi nianpu*, p.494.

¹⁹ Yinshun wrote a preface to Fang Dongmei's *Huayan jing jiao yu zhexue yanjiu* 華嚴經教與哲學研究. See: Yinshun (1993) *Huayu ji*, vol.1, pp.209-213]

²⁰ Tang Junyi is mentioned in association with Xiong Shili, see Yinshun (1972) *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.1-57.

Mou Zongsan.

This section focuses on the New-Confucianist Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909-1995)²¹, and his book *Foxing yu Boruo* 佛性與般若 [Buddha-Nature and Prajñā] as case-study of intellectual Chinese interpretation of Nāgārjuna's teachings for two main reasons. The author is contemporary to Yinshun, and thus lived in the same historical and cultural environment. Secondly, Mou Zongsan criticised Yinshun in his *Foxing yu Boruo*, remarks to which Yinshun replied in turn.²² I argue the the debate between Mou Zongsan and Yinshun is not merely part of the Confucian-Buddhist contest, but an instance of intellectual debate in the modern China.

A close analysis of these two figures reveals a number of similarities as well as differences. Yinshun and Mou Zongsan are active in the same historical period and cultural contexts, and thus subject to the atmosphere provoked by the Fourth May Movement (1919). They both were introduced to the study of Buddhism by scholars of Wei-shi, who were the Confucian Xiong Shili for Mou Zongsan and the Buddhist monk Taixu for Yinshun. Nevertheless, neither Yinshun nor Mou Zongsan ended focusing their works on Wei-shi. They both accepted and inherited Western modules of textual analysis, which implied the adoption of historicism, and contested the traditional approach to religious texts, and claimed to be engaged in 'scientific study' and 'objective research,' two important concepts which I will analyse later.

²¹ For more details on Mou Zongsan, see the following: Tang Refeng 'Mou Zongsan on Intellectual Intuition', in *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*, pp. 327-346; Kantor, Hans-Rudolf (1999) *Die Heilslehre im Tiantai-Denken des Zhiyi (538-597) und der philosophische Begriff des 'Unendlichen' bei Mou Zongsan (1909-1995). Die Verknüpfung von Heilslehre und Ontologie in der chinesischen Tiantai*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag; Kantor, Hans-Rudolf (2006) 'Ontological indeterminacy and its soteriological relevance: an assessment of Mou Zongsan's (1909-1995) interpretation of Zhiyi's (538-597) Tiantai Buddhism', in *Philosophy East & West*, 56:1, pp.16-68; Li Qingyu 李慶餘 (2003) *Dasheng Foxue de fazhan yu yuanman. Mou Zongsan xiansheng dui fajia sixiang de quanshi* 大乘佛學的發展與圓滿 – 牟宗三先生對佛家思想的詮釋, Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng; Liu Shuxian 'Mou Zongsan (Mou Tsung-san)' in Cua, Antonio (2002) *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy*, pp.480-486.

²² Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p.7; (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.107-126; (1994) *Pingfan de yisheng*, p.165.

On the other hand, Mou Zongsan worked within the Confucian sphere and developed a Confucian discourse, whereas Yinshun was a Buddhist monk who produced literature on Buddhist doctrines as preparatory and auxiliary to his Dharma practice. The different approach and background brought different results to their doctrinal investigation and textual study. As his *Foxing yu banruo* reveals, Mou Zongsan did not always provide textual references to his arguments. While discussing the Mādhyamika literature, for instance, he did not include cross-references to other scriptures, focusing on the only *Zhong lun*, opening a discussion on the only key term *yuanyi* 緣起 (dependent arising), and neglecting a wider doctrinal and scriptural context. Differently than Mou Zongsan, Yinshun used to construct (and impose) a doctrinal and scriptural context, and then to work on the scripture therein. The only argumentative discourse that Mou Zongsan articulated are with Tiantai, Huayan, and the Tathāgata garbha doctrine, in other words, with mainstream Chinese Buddhism, while Yinshun used to extend the context of investigation to Indian Buddhism, and indeed to focus on the Indian (original) tradition of Buddhist doctrines.

I argue that the distance between Yinshun and Mou Zongsan cannot be explained by the mere fact that Yinshun is representative of the contemporary *new* Buddhism, and therefore his theology stands on the Dharma viewpoint, while Mou Zongsan is representative of the contemporary New Confucianism, and thus his argumentation holds a Confucian perspective. I rather argue that we face a debate between a Chinese position (Mou Zongsan) and a pretending Indian (Early) Buddhist position (Yinshun). According to Yinshun, Indian Buddhism *is* the ‘pure’ Buddhism and therefore the best Buddhism. On the contrary, Mou Zongsan argued that Indian Buddhism represents only the beginning of Buddhism, and thus is not the most ‘complete’ and ‘perfect’ Buddhism, which Chinese Buddhism embodies instead.

This position led the two thinkers to a different interpretation of the Māhāyana threefold system (*dacheng san xi* 大乘三系), the tension between the school of emptiness (*kong zong* 空宗) and the school of existence (*you zong* 有宗), and a different definition of the relationship between the ‘three vehicles’ (*san cheng* 三乘) and the ‘only vehicle’ (*yicheng* 一乘). Moreover, they drew an unlike analysis of the relationship between the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures and the Tathāgatagarbha doctrine. For instance, Yinshun argued that *boruo* 般若 (Prajñāpāramitā) and *foxing* 佛性 (Buddha-nature, which symbolises the doctrine that finally prevailed on China, or indeed became the most ‘Chinese’) are only two out of many equally important doctrinal systems in Buddhism, while I understand Mou Zongsan proposing them as the two leading doctrinal systems in Buddhism.²³ Then, Yinshun in his corpus of literature argued the ‘superiority’ of *boruo* 般若 on *foxing* 佛性 (with ‘superiority’ intended as being ‘the closest’ to the original Buddhist teachings), while Mou Zongsan claimed the superiority of *foxing* on *boruo* (with ‘superiority’ intended as being ‘the most complete’ for representing the final development of the religion).²⁴

Yinshun’s and Mou Zongsan’s assessment of Tiantai can also be explained in these terms. According to the very Chinese Mou Zongsan, Tiantai doctrine represents the utmost level of development of Buddhism, with the conclusion that Tiantai scholarship is the most ‘objective’. On the other hand, Yinshun argued that Tiantai system is not the ideal representative of an ideal research. Their debate on Tiantai implied an unlike appraisal for the system of doctrinal classification (*panjiao* 判教) which became of crucial importance in Tiantai.²⁵ Yinshun focused on the ‘all-embracing teaching’ (*tongjiao* 通教) and criticised the ‘perfect teaching’ (*yuanjiao*

²³ See especially Yinshun (1981) ‘Lun sandi sanzhi yu laiye tong zhenwang’ 論三諦三智與賴耶通真妄, in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.107-126.

²⁴ I would notice that Mou Zongsan’s book is entitled *Foxing yu banruo* and not vice versa, giving emphasis on *foxing* more than on *banruo*.

²⁵ Liu, Ming-wood (1988) ‘The Advent of the Practice of *P’an-Chiao* in Chinese Buddhism’. In *Journal of Oriental Studies*, v.26, n.1, pp. 1-27.

圓教), while Mou Zongsan, in line with the Tiantai thought, proposed a linear (and not circular) evolution of the Dharma with the last definition (embodied by the *yuanjiao*) as the most complete and 'best' teaching.²⁶

As I will explain below, the Chinese and the Indian patterns of the two figures emerge also in the assessment of the doctrine of the Threefold Truth (*san di* 三諦) and of the Two Truths (*er di* 二諦).²⁷

The debate between Mou Zongsan and Yinshun focuses on five main issues, with the first two regarding Mādhyamika teachings and the Chinese Tiantai perspective on those.²⁸ Above I summarise the arguments that the two figures proposed on the topics, outlining the common framework, and the issues that they both did not take in consideration.

The first issue concerns the Threefold Truth (*san di*), with the question whether they are applying to, or defying, the *Zhong lun*'s teachings. According to Yinshun, Nāgārjuna mentioned a twofold truth [*er di*] in *Zhong lun* and *Da zhidu lun*, therefore the statement that the threefold truth is rooted in Nāgārjuna's doctrine defies the meaning of the text as well as the meaning of v.18 in Ch.24 of *Zhong lun*.²⁹ According to Mou Zongsan, Tiantai based the doctrine of the threefold truth on *Zhong lun*, Ch.24, v.18. And the teaching of the threefold truth, although not in agreement with the original meaning of the verse, does agree with Buddha's teachings and even with Nāgārjuna's doctrine. Therefore it cannot be stated that the threefold truth defies the meaning of the text.³⁰ Yinshun's final response was that Mou Zongsan's statement 'although not in agreement with the original meaning of

²⁶ See Chapter Seven for Yinshun's adoption of *tongjiao* concept.

²⁷ On the *er di* and *san di*, see: Swanson, Paul (1989) *Foundations of T'ien-t'ai philosophy*.

²⁸ Yinshun (1981) 'Lun sandi sanzhi yu laiye tong zhenwang' 論三諦三智與賴耶通真妄, in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.107-126; Mou Zongsan (1993) *Foxing yu banruo*, v.1.

²⁹ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp. 469-475; (1946) *She dashenghun jiangji*, pp. 89-92.

³⁰ Mou Zongsan (1993) *Foxing yu banruo*, v.1, pp.26-29, pp.94-101.

the verse' is not different from his argument 'defies the original meaning'. Quoting from Yinshun: 'When I talk about *Zhong lun*, I refer the original meaning of *Zhong lun*. Different arguments could be articulated if the scripture is read from the standpoint of the Tiantai'.³¹

The second issue regards 'the realisation of the three wisdoms in the only mind' (*san zhi yi xin zhong de* 三智一心中得), and centres on the enquiry whether those are Nāgārjuna's teachings or Tiantai's doctrine. According to Yinshun,³² the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures and the Mādhyamika *Da zhidu lun* propose a twofold wisdom for Buddhas (*Fo zhi* 佛智),³³ and a twofold wisdom for Bodhisattvas (*Pusa zhi* 菩薩智).³⁴ According to Mou Zongsan, the teaching '*san zhi yi xin zhong de*' is rooted into Nāgārjuna's scriptures, so as the Prajñāpāramitā literature and *Da zhidu lun* demonstrate.³⁵ Yinshun's final response argues that the Tiantai school had added the 'realisation into one mind' which is mentioned in *Da zhidu lun* to the three wisdoms which are mentioned in the 'Three Wisdom Chapter' [*san hui pin* 三慧品] of the Prajñāpāramitā sutras, bridging thus different teachings, a fact that, according to Yinshun, is not unusual within Tiantai.³⁶

In both the issues we can see how the different conclusions are result of divergent standpoints: Yinshun's textual approach, which attempted to reconstruct the hermeneutics of the original (Indian) Nāgārjuna is challenged by another Buddhist, not merely Confucian but common to mainstream Chinese Buddhism, viewpoint. The different approach remind us of the discrepancy between classical Tiantai's and

³¹ Quoting from Yinshun: 'this is how the ancient (*Zhong lun*) is exploited by the present time (Tiantai school)'. See: Yinshun (1981) 'Lun sandi sanzhi yu laiye tong zhenwang', in *Huayu ji*, v.5, p.109.

³² Yinshun, *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.466; *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.234-237; *Yi fofa yanjiu fofa*, pp.10-12; *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.211-212.

³³ Constituted by *yiqie zhi* 一切智 and *yiqie zhong zhi* 一切種智.

³⁴ Constituted by *dao zhi* 道智 and *dao zhong zhi* 道種智

³⁵ Mou Zongsan (1993) *Foxing yu banruo*, v.1, pp.18-37

³⁶ Yinshun (1981) 'Lun sandi sanzhi yu laiye tong zhenwang', in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.110-114.

Yinshun's *panjiaos*.³⁷ In other words, Mou Zongsan's argument does not reflect Confucian theories but the classical Chinese Buddhist understanding of the text, while Yinshun embodies the new 'modern' Buddhist doctrinal interpretation, influenced by the nineteenth Western Buddhology, according to which the original Indian Buddhism *is* the correct Dharma.

The debate between Yinshun and Mou Zongsan on Tiantai and Mādhyamika also addresses the discourse on the significance of 'objectivity', 'scholarship' and 'intellectuals' in twentieth-century China.

Mou Zongsan claimed to be objective because he was not a Buddhist practitioner, but professed to show an empathy for the Tiantai doctrine, which he summarises through the Tiantai *panjiao* and Zhiyi's writings. That he showed high esteem for the Tiantai school should not be seen as a school position but as resultant of an initial critical and objective position. In other words, his inclination for Tiantai is not index of a school affiliation, while it would have been so if his initial perspective had been (Buddhist) Tiantai. Mou Zongsan defined Tiantai's interpretation and classification of Buddhist doctrines as 'objective' (*keguan* 客觀).

Mou Zongsan made his being 'objective' as synonym of being 'outsider' of the religious community. However, Mou Zongsan's reasoning failed as he could be 'outsider' of the Buddhist entourage but could not be 'outsider' of his Chineseness. On the other hand, Yinshun made his being 'objective' (in Buddhist research) as being in line with the Buddhist scripture and thus holding a Buddhist perspective. Even Yinshun's argument showed weakness, for making 'knowledge' auxiliary to 'practice'.

The term 'objective' recurs pretty often in Mou Zongsan's work, and it is

³⁷ See Travagnin, Stefania (2001) 'Il nuovo Buddhismo per l'Umanita' *renjian fojiao* a Taiwan. Una nota sulla classificazione degli insegnamenti (*panjiao*) secondo il Maestro Yinshun', *Cina*, 29, pp.65-102.

considered as equivalent of ‘rationality’ and ‘impartiality’, so as the quote below demonstrates:

I am not Buddhist. Then, since I discuss the history of Chinese philosophy from a scholarly perspective, I cannot but be objective [*keguan* 客觀].³⁸

On the other hand, Yinshun intended objectivity as reflection of textual evidence.

Quoting Yinshun:

In terms of objective research [*keguan yanjiu* 客觀研究], Zhiyi’s teachings are definitely not its ideal representation. *Zhong lun* explained ‘All the Buddhas rely on the twofold truth [*er di*]’, and he based on *Zhong lun* for proposing the threefold truth [*san di*]. *Da zhidu lun* explained the two wisdom realised in one mind [*er zhi yi xin zhong de* 二智一心中得], and he exposed the three wisdom realised in one mind [*san zhi yi xin zhong de* 三智一心中得].³⁹

Although not a Buddhist, Mou Zongsan showed a classical Chinese sympathy for the Chinese Tiantai, as he himself argued:

I speak from the standpoint of the history of Chinese philosophy, I cannot have bias for any particular sect. I am not a follower of Buddhism, therefore fundamentally I do not have bias for any sect. But as my learning was maturing, I came to believe that the Tiantai school was good, and I slowly came to appreciate it particularly.⁴⁰

Yinshun’s response shows criticism to the achievement of the Tiantai

³⁸ Mou Zongsan (1993) *Foxing yu banruo*, v.1, p.v.

³⁹ Yinshun (1972) *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.211-212

⁴⁰ Mou Zongsan (1993) *Foxing yu banruo*, v.1, p.vii

school, criticism that he developed fully in his *panjiao*:

From ‘the standpoint [of the history] of Chinese philosophy’, ‘[I, i.e. Mou Zoungsan] show the links within the development of its [Buddhist] teachings, and make the period that includes the Southern-Northern dynasties, Sui and Tang as principal topic in the history of Buddhist philosophy’. Speaking from a deeper understanding of Buddhist studies, this is a scholarly methodology that I do not agree with, and for which at the same time I cannot but express my heartfelt admiration!⁴¹

This Yinshun-Mou Zongsan debate was not an isolated case, but reflects the general state of contemporary Chinese intellectuals and Buddhist scholasticism. The Meiji creation of the new terms *religion* and *philosophy*, the attack on religion in China in early twentieth-century, and the Chinese reception and reinvention of the Western modality of *scientism* provoked new horizons and standards for the modernisation of Chinese thought. As a result, we count, among the others, Liang Qichao (1873-1929) and his theories of a modernised political philosophy, Hu Shi (1891-1962) and his conception of *science as knowledge* and *rationality*, Liang Shuming (1893-1988) and his argument of a difference between *intuition* (*zhijue* 直覺) and *intellect* (*lizhi* 理智), and Xiong Shili (1885-1968) and his revision of metaphysics.⁴²

As for Yinshun and Mou Zongsan, they both claimed to be ‘modern’ and ‘scientific’ in their approach, but even here a common theory provoked two dissimilar applications on the practical level. Mou Zongsan made a cross-cultural link between Mādhyamika, Tiantai and Kant, and read the Chinese Tiantai through

⁴¹ Yinshun (1981) ‘Lun sandi sanzhi yu laiye tong zhenwang’, in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.107-108.

⁴² See especially: Kwok, D.W.Y. (1965) *Scientism in Chinese Thought 1900-1950*; Wang, Y.C. (1966) *Chinese Intellectuals and the West 1872-1949*; Cheng, Chung-ying and Bunnin, Nicholas, eds. (2002) *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*.

the Western Kantian ontology. On the other hand, Yinshun argued that Kant, the Western or Indian logic are not the correct methodology for the right understanding of Nāgārjuna's teachings.⁴³ Even the way they dealt with the discipline of 'history' is different: Mou Zongsan in *Foxing yu boruo* clearly focused on 'doctrine' (*jiaoyi* 教義) and not on 'history' (*lishi* 歷史), drawing thus a strict separation of the two fields, whereas Yinshun adopted 'history' as the key approach, and developed his theology as 'doctrinal history'.⁴⁴

This dialogue between Mou Zongsan and Yinshun creates the premises of the following section, which analyses the history and modalities of research methods in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, with the focus on the definition of 'scholarship' and the assessment of the recourse to 'history', and using the figures in exam in this chapter as case-studies.

II. 1. 3 Issues of Research Methodology

Modern scholars have been doing research from the Sanskrit, Tibetan,.... editions of *Zhong lun*, they did obtain considerable achievements, but they assessed that Nāgārjuna's doctrine is like this or like that by relying on the methodology of the secular science – logic, dialectics. They do not consider that Nāgārjuna's doctrine is exactly the exposition of the principle of dependent arising that the Buddha taught, the inheritance of the conceptualisation of dependent arising as proposed in the *Agamas*, which is the doctrine of non-sameness and non-difference, non-permanence and non-impermanence, non-coming and non-going, non-arising and non-ceasing.⁴⁵

The tradition of Nāgārjuna, Aryadeva, Buddhapalita, Candrakīrti..., have been adopted a method very close to

⁴³ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.43-52.

⁴⁴ Yinshun (1981) 'Lun sandi sanzhi yu laiye tong zhenwang', in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.115-117

⁴⁵ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.226.

the modern Western dialectic for destroying the attachments and showing the law. Because the kind of argumentation proposed by Nāgārjuna etc. does not fit the system of Nyaya, and because the aim was to explain and prove the real mark of emptiness of all the dharmas, they all adopted the method of dialectics. [...] The thorough dialectic adopted by the School of Emptiness is more advanced than the Western system of dialectics.⁴⁶

Yinshun addressed the issue of *how* studying Nāgārjuna's doctrine extensively in *Zhongguan jin lun* and only briefly later in *Kong zhi tanjiu*.⁴⁷ Yinshun held a Buddhist perspective according to which Nāgārjuna should have been analysed and assessed within a Buddhist doctrinal context. Consequently, any other hermeneutical module results to be not appropriate to the scope. Firstly, Yinshun argued the inapplicability of the Western systems of logic and the Indian Nyāya system to the correct understanding of Nāgārjuna's teachings. Secondly, he proposed the 'Mādhyamika dialectic' (*zhong lun*) as the 'science of reasoning' (*lilun xue* 理論學) for a wider secular context.⁴⁸ In other words, Yinshun did not deny that Mādhyamika argumentation follows a system of logic, indeed he aimed to underline the 'uniqueness' of Mādhyamika logic as based on the doctrine of dependent arising. And the teaching of dependent arising is, according to Yinshun, the 'root' teaching of Buddhism. On this argument Yinshun based his confutation of the validity of the Nyāya school in Indian philosophy, the Hetuvidya employed by Vijñānavādins and the Western formal logic as hermeneutical schemes for the understanding of the 'Truth' (*zhenli* 真理) and the 'absolute emptiness' (*bijing kong* 畢竟空).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Taixu (1937) 'Hanzang jiaoli ronghui tan' 漢藏教理融會談, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.425-426

⁴⁷ Yinshun (1973) 'Yanjiu fofa de lichang yu fangfa' 研究佛法的立場與方法, in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.61-80; (1972) *Yi fofa yanjiu fofa*; (1967) 'Tan ru shi yu foxue' 談入世與佛學, in *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp. 175-251.

⁴⁸ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.43-57.

⁴⁹ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.44.

Yinshun's hermeneutical approach to Mādhyamika, his appeal of 'Using Mādhyamika to study Mādhyamika' is part of the overall framework of 'Yinshun's Buddhology', which is based on the principle 'Using the Dharma to study the Dharma' and articulated in his book *Yi fofa yanjiu fofa*.

The theory of researching Buddhism from a Buddhist perspective and through Buddhist tools was not Yinshun's invention, but represents the traditional Chinese Buddhist methodology. However, the focus on Indian Buddhism, the conviction that the earliest texts embodied the 'Truth', were among the guiding principle of the East Asian Buddhist scholarship from the end of the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century, which, again, was an effect of the growing Western Buddhology and the focus of the latter on early Indian Buddhism.

Yinshun's hermeneutical framework is based on four main points: (1) the adoption of Buddhadharma to study the Buddhadharma;⁵⁰ (2) a return to Indian sources to study the development of doctrinal concepts, with the result of a reconstruction of Indian Buddhism; (3) the use of the doctrine of expedient means; (4) the adoption of two 'classical' hermeneutical schemes in Buddhism: the Indian four *siddhāntas* and the Chinese system of doctrinal classification (*panjiao*).⁵¹

Yinshun's hermeneutics represented only one voice of the contemporary Buddhist scholarship in China, and only one position within the debate on Buddhism in the modern era. Again, we should remind that the end of nineteenth century and the first decades of twentieth century, hosted the debate on whether Buddhism should have been classified as either 'religion' (*zongjiao* 宗教) or 'philosophy' (*zhexue*

⁵⁰ As for the idea of 'using the Buddhadharma to study the Buddhadharma', Yinshun explained that he based this method on the 'Three Dharma Seals', which are: (1) All things are impermanent, (2) All things lack inherent existence, (3) Nirvana is perfect quiescence. See Yinshun (1972) *Yi fofa yanjiu fofa*, pp.13-14.

⁵¹ For a detailed analysis of Yinshun's *panjiao*, see: Travagnin, Stefania (2001) 'Il nuovo Buddhismo per l'Umanità *renjian Fojiao* a Taiwan. Una nota sulla classificazione degli insegnamenti (*panjiao*) secondo il Maestro Yinshun', *Cina*, v. 29, 65-102.

哲學) or 'science' (*kexue* 科學).⁵² This contesting and questioning identity and quality of Buddhism provoked a second debate in East Asia on how to study Buddhism, which methodology (*fangfalun* 方法論) and hermeneutical tools were more appropriate to research Buddhist texts and doctrines. The necessity of relying on 'methodology' became the main concern of that time. Even here we had different positions, ranging from more traditional, transitional to innovative. The crucial questions were: Do we need to be 'Western' for being 'modern'? Do we need to be 'modern' for being 'scholars'? Do we need to be 'scholars' for being 'Buddhists'?

The Buddhist monk Yinshun adopted a clearly Buddhist and religionist perspective. Nevertheless, his Buddhist viewpoint did not imply the whole rejection of non-Buddhist and/or Western theoretical frameworks. The acknowledgment and appreciation of some Western achievements in Buddhology, the appeal for a 'scientific nature' of investigation and the claim of 'pure objectivity' occurred in Yinshun's works as well. This made Yinshun worthy of the appellative of innovative scholar-monk, and put him in opposition to more traditional Chinese Buddhist figures. In other words, the criticism to some adoption of the Western research methodology balanced with a considerable adoption of Western academia made Yinshun more innovative than Taixu who, for instance, was the reformer of Chinese Buddhism in many respect, but still very traditional in his approach to texts and doctrines. The discrepancy between Taixu and Yinshun is evident in the quotes reported above. On the other hand, the attempted balance between scientific research and religious practice maintained Yinshun in a still transitional position.

The post-Meiji Buddhist Academia was elected as *the* model of innovation. The tension between Japanese Buddhology and the Chinese Buddhist community

⁵² See Kwok, D.W.Y. (1968) *Scientism in Chinese Thought 1900-1950*, which analyses the impact of (Western) scientism on Chinese culture; Chen Bing and Deng Zimei (2002) *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao*, pp.473-498, which analyses the different positions in the debate.

was also analysed by Yinshun in his 'Tan ru shi yu foxue' 談入世與佛學.⁵³ This article does not only reveal further details on the Taixu's legacy in Yinshun and in the 'Modern' Chinese Buddhism, but also addresses more general questions, such as the new hierarchical relationship between China and Japan, and proposed a reconstruction of the development of Buddhist scholarship along the history of Chinese Buddhism.

In 'Tan ru shi yu foxue' Yinshun based his argument on a contest between Zhang Mantao 張曼濤 (1933-1981)⁵⁴ and Taixu. Zhang Mantao was a Chinese supporter of the modern (or better, modernised) Japanese methodology in Buddhist studies and modern Japanese Buddhist scholarship. On the other hand, Taixu was a Chinese supporter of the traditional Chinese methodology in Buddhist studies and traditional Chinese Buddhist scholarship. Yinshun took the side of the innovative Zhang Mantao but with the due reservations.

In reference to Taixu's argument, that in contemporary Japan there was no true Buddhist scholar (*zhenzheng foxuezhe* 真正佛學者), Zhang Mantao responded that it could be said that Japan lacked true Buddhist practitioners (*zhenzheng xuefozhe* 真正學佛者), but it could not be said there were not true Buddhist scholars, since, as Zhang Mantao reasons, Buddhist scholarship in Japan was based on the ground of pure erudition (*chun xue* 純學) and objective scholarship (*keguan zhi xueshu* 客觀之學術). According to Zhang Mantao, Taixu often did not make a clear definition of the three concepts 'thought' (*sixiang* 思想), 'belief'/'faith' (*xinyang* 信仰) and 'erudition'/'science' (*xueshu* 學術). Taixu, as Zhang Mantao reasons,

⁵³ Yinshun (1967) 'Tan ru shi yu foxue' 談入世與佛學, in *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp. 175-251.

⁵⁴ After studying in Buddhist institutes in Mainland China and Hong Kong, Zhang Mantao in the early 1960s went to Kyoto and enrolled the Otani University, where he obtained a doctorate degree. In 1969 he returned to Taiwan and started a career in teaching and journal editing. In 1973 he went back to Japan for further study. Once back in Taiwan, he founded the Mahāyāna Culture Publ. House (大乘文化出版社), which published the well-known 100 vols. *Xiandai fojiao xueshu congkan* 現代佛教學術叢刊 (Contemporary Buddhism Collection). In 1981 he returned to Japan where he died shortly afterwards.

confused Dharma practice with Dharma research and neglected the ‘objective scholarship’. Therefore, Taixu may be considered a true Dharma practitioner (*zhenzheng xuefozhe* 真正學佛者) but not a true scholar of Buddhism (*foxuezhe* 佛學者). Yinshun intervened in the debate taking a middle position, and made the discussion focusing on what was meant for ‘science’, ‘thought’ and ‘belief’, basing his argument on the interpretation of the character *xue* 學, which indicated both ‘practice’ and ‘erudition’, and dealing with the issue of insider/outsider.

Yinshun argued that if ‘science’ were a recent achievement and symbol of the modern time, and if Buddhist scholarship were just based on scientific erudition, therefore there had not been Buddhist scholarship in the past (including the traditions from the Indian Abhidharma to the Chinese Huayan and Tiantai), and only today, in the post-Meiji Japanese Buddhist academia, the birth of Buddhist (scientific) scholarship had took place.

Yinshun contested the strict separation of ‘true religious practice’ and ‘learning’ in the Buddhist context, and denied the ‘modern’ origin of the correct learning of Dharma. In any time, as Yinshun argued, the study of Buddhism was meant to be the ‘learning’ of Dharma, whereas the label ‘scientific learning’ might have been merely a modern denomination of a non-modern reality. In Yinshun’s opinion, the character *xue* for ‘study’ did not indicate a science peculiar to Buddhism, but was a term applicable to any field. Therefore, making ‘xue’ only a product of the modern era and import from the West (via Japan) would result in denying the existence of any sort of ‘erudition’ in the past. The final, and ‘very Buddhist’, remark that Yinshun made was questioning the necessity to have a Buddhist study based on the ‘mere and objective scientific ground’, and not combined with ‘belief’ and ‘thought’.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Yinshun (1967) ‘Tan rushi yu foxue’, in *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.201-251.

Yinshun's argument is clearly in opposition to the 'extremist' scientific position (that had the voice of figures like Zhang Mantao and Ouyang Jingwu) and at the same time takes an apologetic tone as dealing with Taixu's position, which is the 'extremist' on the opposite side, but that Yinshun just defined as 'Chinese traditional scholar.' Yinshun reported that Taixu had criticised the scientific method (consisting in analytical investigation, critical approach and textual examination) and the stress on historicism (which is making 'history' as model of objectivity and irrefutable science). Taixu's writings reveal that Taixu actually did make a distinction between the curricula of 'monastic education' and the study of Buddhism, confusing the distinction between (or perhaps fusing the concepts of) 'xue fo' and 'fo xue', and defining 'Buddhism' in terms of 'science', 'religion' and 'philosophy'.⁵⁶ Yinshun made his 'using the Dharma to study the Dharma' based also on four *siddhāntas*,⁵⁷ whereas Taixu made his 'traditional Chinese Buddhist research methods' grounded on the four refuges.⁵⁸

In his reconstruction of the history of 'Buddhist scholarship', Yinshun made up a threefold classification that did not reflect a diachronic structure: (1) the

⁵⁶ Taixu explored his 'Buddhist hermeneutics' in 'Fo zhi xiuxue fa' 佛之修學法 (1927), 'Shenme shi foxue' 甚麼是佛學 (1929), 'Yanjiu foxue zhi mudi ji fangfa' 研究佛學之目的及方法 (1929), 'Foxue zhi zongzhi he mudi' 佛學之宗旨和目的 (1930), 'Hanzang jiaoli ronghui tan' 漢藏教理融會談 (1937), 'Xuefo yu foxue' 學佛與佛學 (1939).

⁵⁷ Yinshun drew a parallel between the 'four periods' into which he divided the history of Indian Buddhism in his *panjiao* and Nāgārjuna's four *siddhāntas*. The first period, 'Buddhadharma' (*Fofa* 佛法) represents the *siddhānta* of the highest achievement (*diyī yī xitan* 第一義悉檀), the original Buddha's teachings from which all the Dharma traditions originated. The second period, 'Buddhadharma of Early Mahāyāna' (*chuqi da cheng fofa* 初期大乘佛法), according to Yinshun corresponds to the corrective *siddhānta* (*duizhi xitan* 對治悉檀), since the teaching of emptiness should be seen as a 'cure' for the suffering of all the living beings. The third period, 'Buddhadharma of Late Mahāyāna' (*houqi dacheng fofa* 後期大乘佛法), is seen as the *siddhānta* for each individual (*gege weiren xitan* 各各為人悉檀), since the various doctrine which are seen as distinct 'cures' for living beings, in accordance with their abilities. Finally, the 'Buddhadharma of Esoteric Mahāyāna' (*mimi dacheng fofa* 秘密大乘佛法) would correspond to the secular *siddhānta* (*shijie xitan* 世界悉檀), for the theistic aspects of the doctrine that adopts what Yinshun defines secular and ordinary tools.

⁵⁸ Taixu adopted the 'four refuges' as rules proposed in the *Nirvana sutra*. The 'four refuges' are: (1) rely on the Dharma (*fa* 法) and not on the preachers (*ren* 人); (2) rely on the meaning (*yi* 義) and not on the words (*yu* 語); (3) rely on the (*liaoyi* 了義) and not on the (*bu liaoyi* 不了義); (4) rely on wisdom (*zhi* 智) and not on knowledge (*shi* 識).

‘scholarship of knowledge’ (*zhishi de xuewen* 智識的學問);⁵⁹ (2) the ‘scholarship of experience’ (*jingyan de xuewen* 經驗的學問);⁶⁰ (3) the ‘scholarship result of the integration of knowledge and experience’ (知識與經驗相結合的學問).⁶¹ This threefold division is based on the dichotomy between ‘teaching’ (*jiaofa* 教法), which means understanding of what the Buddha said, and ‘experience’ (*zhengfa* 證法), which means cultivation of the Buddhist path. According to Yinshun, following a diachronic criterion, the early Buddhism embodied the combination of teaching and experience, while its later development produced a duality with some sects emphasising ‘knowledge’, some others emphasising ‘experience.’

Yinshun thus adopted a ‘middle position’, which does not accept the firm distinction and mutual exclusion between ‘experience’/‘cultivation’ and ‘erudition’/‘knowledge’, and concluded his essay arguing the core essence of his ‘middle position’:

Nevertheless, objectivity-oriented Buddhology (*keguan xianxiang de foxue* 客觀傾向的佛學) must respect Buddhism as religion (*zongjiao* 宗教); research based on historical approach must be careful of the historical meaning of rise and decline of the Buddhadharma. I believe that this kind of Buddhist studies (*foxue* 佛學) is without any doubt Buddhist cultivation (*xuefo* 學佛), and Buddhist cultivation does not harm in pursuing Buddhist studies.⁶²

Besides Taixu, Zhang Mantao and Yinshun, Ouyang Jingwu and Lü Cheng also participated in the debate. Ouyang Jingwu was receptive to the ‘modern’ Western framework imported mostly from Japan, and expressed lack of confidence in the fact that scholar-monks might have also been able to produce Buddhist scholarship. This

⁵⁹ Some from the Abhidharma tradition belongs to this group. Scholarship based only on knowledge is not present in China.

⁶⁰ The Indian Mahasanghika and the Chinese Chan belong to this group.

⁶¹ The Chinese San-lun, Huayan and Tiantai belong to this group.

⁶² Yinshun (1967) ‘Tan rushi yu foxue’, in *Wuzheng zhi bian*, pp.250-251.

statement is in line with Ouyang Jingwu's well-known personal disappointment with the monastic community.⁶³ Lü Cheng was actually the real pioneer of 'modern Buddhology' in Buddhist China. He made a step beyond Ouyang Jingwu by applying Western/Japanese methods and producing the Chinese example of what they all were calling 'modern scholarship.'⁶⁴

Taixu's, Ouyang Jingwu's and Lu Cheng's works date from the 1920s, while Zhang Mantao and Yinshun proposed their arguments a few decades afterwards. The different emphasis and theoretical positions should therefore be read as reflection of also different historical (and so cultural) patterns. The shift from the complete adoption (Lü Cheng) or rejection (Taixu) of the 'modern' theoretical frameworks to the conciliatory positions (Yinshun, Daoan) may so find a potentially historical reason, since the second group were active a few decades later, and so in a different stage of digestion of 'modernity'.

In conclusion, rather than contesting the validity of Yinshun's hermeneutical tools, I would better question why the Chinese Buddhist community appraised Yinshun's 'using the Dharma for studying the Dharma' as it was not a new expedient in the history of Chinese (and otherwise) Buddhist scholarship. Moreover, with his focus on textual study and historical perspective, was Yinshun merely doing a study of the Dharma by using the Dharma?

With the very traditional standpoint (taken, for instance, by Taixu) and the very innovative (and so provoking) viewpoint (proposed by Zhang Mantao), Yinshun's position might have been appeared as a perfect combination of the two and thus representing a new starting point in the history of Chinese Buddhist scholarship.

Zhang Mantao dedicated one volume of his 100-volume *Xiandai fojiao xueshu*

⁶³ Ouyang Jingwu (1923) *Jinri zhi fofa yanjiu* 今日之佛法研究.

⁶⁴ Lü Cheng (1926) *Foxue yanjiu fa* 佛學研究法.

congkan to the issue of research methodology in Buddhism, and another one to the debate on the religious, philosophical and scientific identity of Buddhism.⁶⁵ Most of the essays included in the first of these volumes made the equivalence between adopting a ‘modern methodology’ and following a ‘historical perspective’ (*lishiguan* 歷史觀). The concern for *history* and the appeal for the *historical approach* deserve our attention. First of all, what does ‘history’ mean and imply in Buddhism and within a Buddhist scholarship? In the section below I attempt to assess how the authors taken in exam define ‘history’, if, and eventually how, they use (or abuse), follow (or create) ‘history’ in proposing their Mādhyamika discourse.

II. 2 Mādhyamika Scholarship as advanced by Chinese monks during the twentieth century.⁶⁶

The historical period examined here extends from the end of Ming dynasty to most of the twentieth century. In the end of the Ming, the monk Aiyi 謁益 (Lingfeng 靈峰), who lived between 1599 and 1655, attempted a thorough study of the San-lun before focusing on the Tiantai.

The lay scholars Li Duanfu 黎端甫 (Li Yangzheng 黎養正), from Jiangxi, and Zhang Ertian from Jiangtang represented the Qing lay scholarship on the field, the former researching San-lun scriptures, the latter publishing the periodical *Ba bu shi men yi shi* 八不十門義釋.⁶⁷

According to Dongchu, in the first decades of the twentieth century monks like Shanyin 善因 (1889-1947)⁶⁸ and Zhuanfeng 轉逢 (1879-1952)⁶⁹ engaged in the

⁶⁵ Zhang Mantao, ed. (1978) *Foxue yanjiu fangfa* 佛學研究方法; Zhang Mantao, ed. (1979) *Fojiao yu kexue, zhexue* 佛教與科學·哲學.

⁶⁶ The chapter does not provide a section specifically on Fazun, while his contribution is mentioned and discussed in the segment on Yanpei. Details on Fazun’s translation efforts and his association to Taixu’s and Yinshun’s entourage have been already explored in Chapter One.

⁶⁷ Liu Guozong 劉果宗 (2001) *Zhongguo fojiao gezong shi lue* 中國佛教各宗史略, p.310-311, Dongchu (1974) *Zhongguo fojiao jindaishi*.

⁶⁸ Dongchu (1974) *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi*, vol.2, pp.830-834. Article ‘On the only-nature’

study and promotion of the Mādhyamika teaching. Liu Guozong listed the lay Li Duanpu, Zhang Ertian, and the monks Shanyin, Taixu, Yinshun, Yanpei and Cihang as representative of the field of 'Modern San-lun'.⁷⁰ Daoan in his 'Movement of Resurgence of San-lun,' mentioned Li Duanpu, Zhang Ertian, Shanyin, Taixu and Yinshun as key figures in the revival of the San-lun school in China, and concluded the essay with the following scheme, which lists these figures in historical order on a diagonal line, from the earliest Zhang Ertian to the latest Yinshun:⁷¹

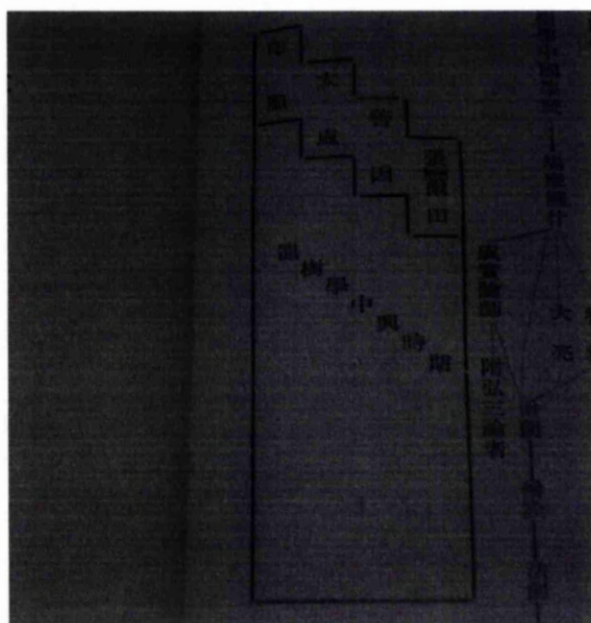


Table 11 - Daoan's reconstruction of the renaissance of Nāgārjuna's school

This section includes brief monographic analyses of the Buddhist monks and lay figures who formed the frame within which Yinshun formulated his theories, functioning as background as well as interlocutors of Yinshun. Here is the context that helps us to better understand, contextualize and contest Yinshun's contribution to

(*Weixing lun* 唯性論), in 海潮音文庫, vol.9, pp.32-73.

⁶⁹ Dongchu (1974) *Zhongguo fojiao jindai shi*, vol.2, pp.811-813.

⁷⁰ Liu Guozong (2001) *Zhongguo fojiao gezong shi lue*, p.310-311.

⁷¹ Daoan 'Sanlunzong shi lue' 三論宗史略, in Zhang Mantao, ed. (1978) *Sanlunzong zhi fazhan jiqi sixiang* 三論宗之發展及其思想, p.75

the Mādhyamika/San-lun. All the figures are listed as case-studies, representative of a series of streams of Mādhyamika scholarship, a variety of patterns image of the multifaceted quality of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

II. 2. 1 Taixu 太虛 (1890-1947): The traditional reformist scholar-monk

It is evident that the *Ru zhong lun* embodies the doctrine of what the Tiantai and Huayan schools defined as the perfect teaching [*yuanjiao* 圓教].⁷²

Taixu received many appellatives, such as *dashi* 大師 [Great Master], theoriser of the 'Buddhism for the Human Life' [*rensheng fojiao*], reformer of the modern Chinese Buddhism and scholar-monk expert of the Wei-shi School. However, both the local and the international scholarship overlooked Taixu's study and interpretation of Mādhyamika/San-lun, with the consequence that his contribution to the Mādhyamika scholarship has been so far neglected.

The *Taixu dashi quanshu* 太虛大師全書 includes several essays that focus on the teachings of the School of the Middle Way, ranging from the Indian to the Chinese and Tibetan traditions, and combining doctrinal discussion with historical outlines.⁷³

This section assesses Taixu's works on Mādhyamika under three main

⁷² Taixu (1943) 'Yue *Ru zhong lun* ji' 闕入中論記, in Vol.16, pp.72.

⁷³ Taixu (1923) 'Fofa yiwei lun zhi shi zong pianmian guan' 佛法一味論之十宗片面觀, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.1, pp.342-344; (1941) 'Zhufa you wu zixing wenti' 諸法有無自性問題, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.1, pp. 394-412; (1944) 'Lun Zhongguo fojiao shi' 論中國佛教史, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.1, pp.875-881; (1934) 'Zai lun dacheng san zong' 再論大乘三宗, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.4, pp.841-844; (1923) 'Shi'er men lun jiang lu' 十二門論講錄, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp. 581-763; (1942) 'Faxing konghui xue gailun' 法性空慧學概論, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp.763-843; (1942) 'Er wuwo lun' 二無我論, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp.843-848; (1933) 'Dacheng zhi geming' 大乘之革命, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp.878-882; (1943) 'Yue *Ru zhong lun* ji' 闕入中論記, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.16, pp.69-88; (1943) 'Yue wei xingkongzhe bian' 闕為性空者辨, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.16, pp.122-127.

headings: (1) contribution to the field in terms of literature and doctrinal exegesis; (2) definition of 'historicism'; (3) hermeneutical approach and research methods.

I argue that Taixu held a strictly Chinese standpoint, which made the history of Mahāyāna as sino-centric. This standpoint implied a consequent misunderstanding of the Indian tradition and the arising of Tiantai as sole authority. The consistency in making his teachings based on Chinese Buddhism influenced his understanding and proposition of Mādhyamika (San-lun) teachings as well. At the time when most of the Buddhist scholarship showed sympathy for early Buddhism, looking for the 'purity' and the 'Truth' of Buddhism into the very early scriptures, Taixu's emphasis on Chinese Buddhism rather than on Indian Buddhism was part of his programme of re-evaluation of Chinese Buddhism in the context of re-evaluation of China. The analysis of the three issues listed above will provide evidences in support of my argument.

Any study concerning Taixu should be conducted with the awareness of the origins of the *Taixu dashi quanshu*. Taixu's works were edited, classified and collected by Yinshun after the passing of the author, therefore the edition of Taixu's words might have involved an intervention to the text by the editor. Some from Taixu's speeches were published before the compilation of the *Taixu dashi quanshu*, but the transcription was made by a second hand in that case too. The conclusion is that reading Taixu's works might help us to knowing his theology, but with the caveat that a possible external intervention had occurred. For instance, a comparative exam of Taixu's and Yinshun's textual scholarship reveals similarities in the criteria adopted for classification of contents and this may question whether we are facing a Taixu's or a Yinshun's approach to the scripture.

1.a. Taixu and the scripture: textual analysis

Taixu's writings includes a commentary on the San-lun *Shi'er men lun* as well

as one essay on the Candrakīrti's *Ru zhong lun*.⁷⁴ Finally, Taixu concluded his *Faxing konghui xue gailun* (1942) with a doctrinal analysis of the contents of *Zhong lun*. As for *Zhong lun*, Yinshun structured the 27 chapters of this scripture within the frame of the Four Noble Truths, whereas Taixu classified the contents through the division into the first 25 chapters and the final 2 chapters. Taixu was proposing the traditionally Chinese scheme and thus summarising the previous Chinese theories of classification, going from Kumarajiva to Jizang, whereas Yinshun advanced a chapterisation that showed a reading of the scripture from a (not traditionally Chinese) pre-Mahāyāna perspective.

Taixu's brief annotations on *Ru Zhong lun* becomes interesting when, differently than Fazun's very early work, and Yinshun's and Yanpei's slightly later commentaries, he read and underlined that sections of Candrakīrti's verses were actually arguing the principles of the Chinese Tiantai, Huayan and Chan schools, showing, again, a predominant emphasis on the Chinese tradition of Buddhism.

1.b Taixu and doctrinal exegesis: emphasis on the Chineseness of Buddhism in China

Taixu's doctrinal exegesis also reflects his emphasis on the Chinese Buddhist tradition. For instance, Taixu presented the 'Mahāyāna threefold system' as based on Chinese Buddhism while Yinshun (and Yinshun's entourage) defined it as portray of the development of Mahāyāna in India.⁷⁵

2. Taixu, Buddhist history and history of Buddhism: history and historifying

The claim that Candrakīrti proposed the 'perfect teaching' (*yuan jiao* 圓教) of the Chinese Tiantai and Huayan tradition is clearly meant to argue the presence of the

⁷⁴ The former was a speech given in the Buddhist institute: lecturing on the *Shi'er men lun*, rather than on the more popular and important *Zhong lun*, in the Buddhist institutes was a constant in the first half of twentieth-century China, for the text being 'preliminary' to the understanding of the more difficult *Zhong lun*. See the next section on Cihang and Daoan.

⁷⁵ Taixu (1942) 'Faxing konghui xue gailun' 法性空慧學概論, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp.763-843.

Chinese mainstream of Buddhism in the Mādhyamika Candrakīrti. On the other hand, I see an attempt to root the Chinese tradition into the ‘early’ Indian Buddhism. This twofold position is in line with the reasons why Yinshun claimed that the *Zhong lun* doctrine was rooted into the early *Āgamas*: Indian Buddhism, in the mind of Chinese Buddhists, was anyway the best authority.

This is one ‘use’ of history by the general Chinese Buddhist scholarship, Taixu and Yinshun included: using history for claiming legitimacy, and making an undefined ‘purity’ as its leading criterion. History as doctrinal evolution (then, ‘doctrinal history’), is subject of quite a few essays authored by Taixu, writings that discussed the history of Chinese Buddhism as well as the history of Indian Buddhism. Taixu interpreted ‘history’ as evolution of the doctrine, and this evolution takes two directions: on the one hand it goes back to the beginning, i.e., to the authoritative Indian tradition, on the other hand it goes ahead to the ‘perfect teaching’ of the Chinese Tiantai. Both the tendencies are present in Taixu, for his being traditional Chinese but also traditional Buddhist.⁷⁶

3. Taixu and method of analysis: hermeneutics, science and conservatism

Even if the approach to the text might depend on the audience of the speech, we should notice that the in-depth study of the doctrinal issues present in *Shi'er men lun* does not include a contextualisation of the text within Nāgārjuna’s writings or even within the San-lun tradition. Mentions of other Buddhist texts are also few and only if they are cited in the scripture. As I argued, Taixu appeared (to Yinshun and Zhang Mantao) as proposing and applying a traditional research on scriptures. On the other hand, Taixu was defined as the reformist monk for his attempt to ‘modernise’ Chinese Buddhism, and ‘modernisation’ at that time also implied ‘westernisation’.

⁷⁶ Barrett, T. (2005) ‘History’, in Donald S. Lopez, ed. (2005) *Critical Terms for the study of Buddhism*, pp.124-142.

The addition of subjects like English or psychology in the curricula of the Buddhist institutes, and the travels to Europe demonstrates Taixu's 'reformist' intention.⁷⁷ In 'Hanzang jiaoli ronghui tan' 漢藏教理融會談 (1937) Taixu distinguished between 'old scholarship' (*gu xue* 古學) and 'contemporary scholarship' (*jin xue* 今學), with the latter being the application of the scientific theories to Buddhology, a trend that, as Taixu reasons, China imported from Japan. Taixu continued arguing that Yogacara based on 'scientific logic' (*kexue luoji* 科學邏輯), Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika adopted dialectic (*bianzhengfa* 辯證法), Mādhyamika Svatantrika resorted to formal logic (*xingshi luoji* 形式邏輯), Chinese San-lun (from Kumarajiva to Jizang) adopted the method of dialectic (*bianzhengfa*).

Nevertheless, the 'modern' Taixu never applied the modern tools to the textual or doctrinal study of Buddhist scriptures, maintaining thus the dichotomy between theoretical acceptance and practical application of the modern system.

II. 2. 2 Yanpei 演培 (1917-1996):⁷⁸ The Chinese reception of the Candrakīrti and Prasangika traditions.

⁷⁷ See Chapter Three for the innovations in the Chinese educational system. See also Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.103-121; Chen Bing and Deng Zimei (2002) *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao*, pp.499-534.

⁷⁸ Biographical sources on Yanpei: Yu Lingpo 于凌波 (1998) 'Xinjiapo Fuhui jiangtang Shi Yanpei zhuan (1917-1996)' 新加坡福慧講堂釋演培傳 (1917-1996), in *Minguo gaosengzhuan - xubian* 民國高僧傳 - 續編, pp.153-163; Yu Lingpo (1997) 'Dangdai fojiao xuezhe Yanpei laofashi (1917-1996)' 當代佛教學者演培老法師 (1917-1996), in *Haiwai hong fa renwu zhi* 海外弘法人物誌, pp.110-122; Zheng Lixin, 'Mianhuai Yanpei fashi', in Yu Lingpo, ed. (1989) *Fomen renwu*, pp.27-28; Kan Zhengzong 關正宗 (1999) *Taiwan fojiao yibai nian* 台灣佛教一百年, pp.74, 166, 178, 194, 198, 204. In addition, Yanpei also left an autobiography, entitled *Yige fanyu seng de zibai* 一個凡愚僧的自白, published in 1989 by the Zhengwen Publ. House. This autobiography does not only provide essential material on Yanpei's life and works, including his relationship with Yinshun, but can also be regarded as a fundamental source for discovering the history of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, including central data on the life and works of eminent Buddhist figures at that time (such as Taixu, Yinshun, Fazun, Cihang), as well as information on Buddhist institutes and institutions, rules and customs. Yanpei's corpus of writings was collected into two sets: *Diguan quanji* 諦觀全集 (*Complete Collection of Diguan*), 28 vols., and *Diguan xuji* (*Successive Collection of Diguan*), 12 vols.

If I could really know Candrakīrti's teachings, I would easily obtain the Correct View [*zheng jian* 正見]. This is because Candrakīrti holds a remarkable position within the Mādhyamika school!⁷⁹

Yanpei enrolled Taixu's Minnan Buddhist Institute in 1935, then the Juejin Buddhist Institute (*Juejin foxueyuan* 覺津佛學院) in 1937, and finally the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute in 1939. In these years Yanpei met those whom he considered as main teachers and fellows (Taixu, Daxing, Fazun, Fafang, Yinshun and Miaoqin). Yanpei followed Yinshun to Hong Kong and finally to Taiwan, where he was appointed to the teaching and the running of Buddhist institutes established by Yinshun. In this way, Yanpei and his writings rather than functioning as background of Yinshun's works, they shared the same background of Yinshun and served as interlocutors for the latter, since the exchange between Yanpei and Yinshun redefined Yinshun's teachings of Mādhyamika. As such, Yanpei is analysed here and not in the following chapter on the post-Yinshun's generation.

Two of Yanpei's volumes focus on Mādhyamika: (1) *Ru Zhonglun song jiangji* 入中論頌講記 (Commentary on the stanzas of the *Madhyamakavatara*), released in 1970 and republished later in 1989 as vol.16 of the collection *Diguan quanji*; (2) *Fojiao de yuanqi guan* 佛教的緣起觀 (Dependent Arising in Buddhism), which is a collection of 18 essays, issued in 1972 by Huiji Lecture Hall and later included in *Diguan quanji*, vol.22.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Yanpei (1989) *Ru zhong lun jiangji*, p.19.

⁸⁰ The volume includes the following essays: 'Fojiao de yuanqi guan' 佛教的緣起觀, 'Genben fojiao ji bupai fojiao yuanqi guan suo kaizhan de qiji' 根本佛教及部派佛教緣起觀所開展的契機, 'Xingkong ji weishi fojiao yuanqi guan suo kaizhan de qiji' 性空及唯識佛教緣起觀所開展的契機, 'Zhenchang fojiao yuanqi guan suo kaizhan de qiji' 真常佛教緣起觀所開展的契機, 'Kong yi de kaizhan' 空義的開展, 'Fojiao de genben tezhi shi shenme' 佛教的根本特質是什麼, 'Kong you er zong de you wu zixing guan' 空有二宗的有無自性觀, 'Wo fa er kong guan' 我法二空觀, 'Fohu yu qingbian duiyu lunli fa yunyong de lunzheng' 佛護與清辨對於論理法運用的論爭, 'Fojiao de

Yanpei's most important contribution to the Mādhyamika scholarship is his study of Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakavatara*. The years 1940-1970 saw the Chinese reception of Candrakīrti. The first Chinese translation of Candrakīrti's works, from the Tibetan version of Lama Tsongkhapa, not from the original Sanskrit, is dated back to 1941 and authored by Fazun (1902-1980).⁸¹ Buddhist monks such as Fazun, Yinshun himself, Taixu are usually mentioned as important figures for creating the conditions (Taixu) of the translation work and its doctrinal and literary refinement (Yinshun). Nevertheless, Yanpei's work was the first considerable commentary to the verses of the *Ru Zhong lun* after the very first translation and short analysis provided by Fazun in the early 1940s, and no other remarkable and comprehensive work on the topic was made after Yanpei.

The evident appreciation for Candrakīrti that Yanpei expressed also signed a Chinese silent support to Prasangika, and therefore the potential beginning of a Chinese tradition of Prasangika, which however never flourished afterwards.⁸² Here is also Yanpei's departure from Yinshun, who maintained the focus on the early Mādhyamika texts and made them rooted into the early Buddhist scriptures, even if he also showed sympathy to Candrakīrti (and therefore for the Prasangika) rather than to Bhavaviveka (Svatantrika).

Yanpei's work does not merely provide how Yanpei understands Candrakīrti's argumentation but also reveals Yinshun's interpretation of the Post-Nāgārjuna Mādhyamika. In fact, Yanpei's book is based on the lectures that he himself gave at

liuzhuan haimie guan'佛教的流轉還滅觀, 'Fotu de zhong jing zhong lun guan'佛徒的重經重論觀, 'Sancheng yicheng jiuqing lun'三乘一乘究竟論, 'Cong xiaocheng san pai shuo dao dacheng sanxi'從小乘三派說到大乘三系, 'Fofa de yinguo lun'佛法的因果論, 'San di san guan de laiyan yu fazhan'三諦三觀的來源與發展, 'Tiantai weixin shuo de tansuo'天台唯心說的探索, 'Da xiao cheng de duiguan'大小乘的對觀, 'Fo jiao de shi kong guan'佛教的時空觀, 'Zhonglun xiang guan xing de lunli'中論相關性的論理.

⁸¹ For more details about the Chinese reception of the Late (Indian-Tibetan) Mādhyamika, see Chapter Four, for Fazun see Chapter One.

⁸² The Tibetan tradition of Buddhism present in China and Taiwan showed the due attention to Candrakīrti because of Lama Tsongkhapa's study and transmission of the Prasangika school.

Fuyan Vihara in 1961-1962, lectures that, as Yanpei acknowledged, were based on the notes that he took listening to Yinshun's lectures on *Ru Zhonglun* (Fuyan 1955-1956). Yanpei deserves mention for his own study on Mādhyamika, and also for the central role that he played in support of Yinshun's own research on the school, being Yanpei the transcriber of some of Yinshun's speeches on Mādhyamika, and thus he contributed to the publication of *Xinkong xue taoyuan* and *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*. Besides the transcription of speeches, Yanpei and Xuming had been also in charge of the publication of *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*.

This section examines Yanpei's works on Mādhyamika under the three headings used for the analysis of Taixu, and with comparative references to Yinshun's writings.

A reading of Yanpei's commentary to *Ru Zhonglun* leads us to two preliminary parallels, the one between Yanpei and Fazun, and the one between Yanpei and Yinshun. The structure of Yanpei's commentary follows Fazun's translation and explanation of the text.⁸³ Yanpei based his work on Yinshun's lecture series, which also demonstrates the direct link between Yinshun and Fazun.⁸⁴ On the other hand, there is an evident shift from Fazun to Yanpei, being they representative of two historical patterns and two scholarly and monastic generations. First of all, Fazun's brief work aimed to provide a general explanation of the concepts mentioned in the verses, whereas Yanpei provided the full paraphrases of the stanzas and a lengthy doctrinal exegesis. Fazun in his works did not mention the Five Vehicles, which appears in Yanpei's book instead.⁸⁵ More importantly, Fazun, in the section on the 6th bhumi, does not provide the detailed argument on Mādhyamika-Prasangika and

⁸³ Fazun, tr. (1986) *Ru zhonglun jiangji* 入中論講記. The book is actually based on the notes of the nun Longlian 隆蓮.

⁸⁴ Chapter Four assesses Yinshun's understanding of Candrakīrti and of the Tibetan tradition of Mādhyamika.

⁸⁵ The doctrine of the Five Vehicles was introduced by Taixu, see (1930) 'Fofa gailun' 佛法概論, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.1-70.

Yogacara that Yanpei, on the other hand, reported with particulars. Therefore Yanpei's work seems to be closer to Lama Tsongkhapa's *Ru zhong lun shan xianmi yi shu* 入中論善顯密意疏, whose Chinese translation is also authored by Fazun.⁸⁶ Lama Tsongkhapa also adopted a division of the contents into specific sections that resembles the scheme that Yanpei adopted in his book. The similitude between the Tibetan traditions of Lama Tsongkhapa and Yanpei's interpretation of the text lead us to conclude a silent appropriation of the Tibetan Mādhyamika argumentation by the Chinese Mādhyamika scholarship of that time. Moreover, being Lama Tsongkhapa remarkably influential on Fazun, who guided Yinshun through the Candrakīrti's text, we can conclude an influence from Tsongkhapa to Fazun and from Fazun to Yinshun, and finally from Yinshun to Yanpei. Such a chain reveals the impact that Tsongkhapa's teachings had on Yinshun, and sheds new light on Yinshun's critical acceptance of the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism.⁸⁷

On the level of textual analysis Yanpei outdistanced Yinshun. Yanpei neither acknowledged Fazun's previous (and only) work on *Ru Zhonglun*, nor attempted any interaction with Fazun's work. On the other hand, Yinshun's textual approach to *Zhong lun* involved consideration for the previous commentaries of the scripture in a comparative prospect.⁸⁸ Secondly, Yanpei did not make many references to the Mādhyamika texts, and thus did not contextualize *Ru Zhonglun* within the history of Mādhyamika literature.

These data can tell about Yanpei's research methodology, especially about the nature of his critical approach to Buddhist texts, whereas the analysis of *Fojiao de yuanqi guan* helps us inferring Yanpei's adoption of history and his role of historian of Buddhism. Differently than Taixu, and similarly to Yinshun, Yanpei stressed the

⁸⁶ Translation dated back to 1942.

⁸⁷ See Chapters Four and Five.

⁸⁸ See Yinshun's *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, and Chapter Seven of this dissertation.

history of doctrines starting from the early Indian Buddhism. For instance, the essay ‘Wo fa er kong guan’ 我法二空觀 (1953), discussed the concepts of *wokong* 我空 (emptiness of the self) and *fakong* 法空 (emptiness of dharma) as interpreted in pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna. As for the development of Mādhyamika from the perspective of scriptural history, Yanpei examined both Nāgārjuna’s *Zhonglun* and Candrakīrti’s *Ru Zhonglun*, underlining differences and similitudes. ‘Fohu yu qingbian duiyu lunli fa yunyong de lunzheng’ 佛護與清辨對於論理法運用的論爭 analysed the Post-Nāgārjuna: Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka and Candrakīrti. The structure itself of the book *Fojiao de yuanqi guan* follows the development of Buddhist doctrine in India. Particularly interesting is the essay entitled ‘Kong yi de kaizhan’ 空義的開展 (1956), which analysed the shift of the significance of *kong* from *Āgama* through Abhidharma to the Mahāyāna Prajñāpāramitā and Nāgārjuna’s school. This short and early work seems to be the summary of the argument that Yinshun articulated much later in *Kong zhi tanjiu* (1985). Even if we do not count evidence of Yinshun’s adoption of the results of Yanpei’s researches, it is worth mentioning that the core argument that Yinshun articulated in *Kong zhi tanjiu* had appeared thirty years earlier in one of Yanpei’s writings.

Finally, as remarked above, Yanpei played a fundamental role in enthroning Yinshun as the twentieth-century authority of Chinese Mādhyamika/San-lun. For instance, Yanpei used to quote from Yinshun in order to provide legitimacy to his own theories. In this way Yanpei, besides providing Yinshun with the title ‘guiding master’ (*daoshi* 導師), which became Yinshun’s most popular appellative, made Yinshun’s theology as the authority of the modern Mādhyamika scholarship. Yanpei referred to Yinshun’s *Zhongguan jin lun*, *Fofa gailun* and *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji* for the analysis of *yuanqi* in the first and preliminary essay entitled ‘Fojiao de yuanqi

guan’ 佛教的緣起觀。⁸⁹ Afterwards, he referred to Yinshun’s writings for his own analysis of the development of *yuanqi* in early sectarian Buddhism (in ‘Genben fojiao ji bupai fojiao yuanqi guan suo kaizhan de qiji’ 根本佛教及部派佛教緣起觀所開展的契機), in the two main schools of Mahāyāna (in ‘Xingkong ji weishi fojiao yuanqi guan suo kaizhan de qiji’ 性空及唯識佛教緣起觀所開展的契機) and in the Tathāgata garbha doctrine (in ‘Zhenchang fojiao yuanqi guan suo kaizhan de qiji’ 真常佛教緣起觀所開展的契機), which Yanpei also defined as originated in India but arrived at the full maturity and distinct designation only in Chinese Buddhism. Finally, Yanpei also took part in the debate opened by Taixu and Yinshun on the Mahāyāna threefold system, and sided Yinshun's rather than Taixu's viewpoint.⁹⁰

These elements demonstrate an interaction between Yinshun and Yanpei, as well as a clear Yinshun’s legacy in Yanpei’s thought. Nevertheless, Yanpei took also some distance from his mentor and developed distinct arguments. Particularly interesting are the essays ‘Sancheng yicheng jiujiing lun’ 三乘一乘究竟論 and ‘Cong xiaocheng san pai shuo dao dacheng sanxi’ 從小乘三派說到大乘三系, where Yanpei linked Mahāyāna’s conceptual frameworks (like the ‘three vehicle’ and the ‘one vehicle’, or the ‘threefold system’) to pre-Mahāyāna doctrines, and thus provided the ‘early roots’ of fundamental Mahāyāna concepts, a discussion that is missing in Yinshun’s literature.⁹¹

II. 2. 3 Xuming 續明 (1918-1966):⁹² Making Yinshun into an authoritative

⁸⁹ Included in *Fojiao de yuanqi guan*, pp.1-30.

⁹⁰ See *Fojiao de yuanqi guan*, pp.31-44, 45-54, 55-64.

⁹¹ See *Fojiao de yuanqi guan*, pp.166-177, 178-187.

⁹² For a detailed biography, see: Kan Zhengzong (1996), *Taiwan gaoseng*, pp. 168-189. Besides assisting Yinshun in editing the collection of Taixu's works (for which he also wrote the preface), and proofreading the whole set before the publication while in Hong Kong (1949), Xuming was the one who transcribed Yinshun's lectures on Mādhyamika (1947) that, after a final revision and approval by Yinshun, turn into the well-known book *Zhongguan jin lun*. Xuming's own writings have been

Mādhyamika voice.

In the Winter 1947, when I was at the Xuedou Temple working on the editing of the *Taixu dashi quanshu*, I decided to dedicate my next speeches and writings to the theme 'A Modern Restatement of Mādhyamika' in reply to a call from *Haichao yin*.⁹³ Among those who attended my lectures, the only Xuming and Xingsen⁹⁴ were able to understand and follow my argumentations.⁹⁵

Xuming met Taixu in 1940 and Yinshun in 1944. Xuming studied at the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute (1940-1944), and on Taixu's request he moved to Kham in the end of 1944 to study the Esoteric school in Tibet for a year. Afterwards (1946) Xuming became part of Yinshun's retinue, and followed the latter in Mainland China (Kaifeng 開封, Jiangnan 江南, Zhejiang 浙江, Shanghai 上海), then from Mainland China to Hong Kong (1949), and finally joined Yinshun also in Taiwan.

Similarly to Yanpei, Xuming belonged to Taixu's and Yinshun's school, on the level of both his first Buddhist education and following scholarly career, and as such, similarly to Yanpei, he deserves space in this chapter rather than in the post-Yinshun period analysed in Chapter Three. Specifically on his study of Mādhyamika, Xuming's first in-depth investigation of Nāgārjuna's teachings took place at the Sino-Tibetan Institute, where Yinshun was lecturing.⁹⁶ Xuming was particularly interested in the Pre-Mahāyāna conception of emptiness, and in the history of

collected into two main sets: (1) *Xuming fashi xuanji* 續明法師選集 (Selected works of Xuming), in 2 vols., published by the Zhengwen Publ. House in 1998; (2) *Xuming fashi yizhu* 續明法師遺著 (Writings of Xuming), published by Huiji Lecture Hall in 1966. Among the essays included in the latter there are reviews of Yinshun's *Fofa gailun* and *Qingnian de fojiao* 青年的佛教: 'Du Yinshun fashi de Fofa gai lun' 讀印順法師的佛法概論, pp. 1291-1293; 'Qingnian fojiao yu fojiao qingnian' 青年佛教與佛教青年, pp. 1294-1298.

⁹³ Ch: 'Zhongguan jin lun' 中觀今論.

⁹⁴ Xingsen 星森.

⁹⁵ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.ii-iii.

⁹⁶ Yinshun himself gave the series of lectures that later were transcribed by Miaoqin 妙欽 and finally took the shape of the book *Xingkong xue tan yuan* for invitation of Xuming himself and Miaoqin.

Buddhism in India, which he studied with Yinshun's *Yindu zhi fojiao*,⁹⁷ and the Mahāyāna threefold system (*dasheng san xi*) that Yinshun had theorised.

Xuming's oeuvre counts five works specifically on Mādhyamika: 'Yiqie fa shi jiaming you' 一切法是假名有 (All the dharmas exist as conventional designation);⁹⁸ 'Yiqie fa jie kong' 一切法皆空 (All the dharmas are empty);⁹⁹ 'Zixing kong yu jiaming you' 自性空與假名有 (Emptiness of the self-nature and Existence of Conventional Designation);¹⁰⁰ 'Yuanqi, xingkong – zhongdao' 緣起、性空—中道 (Dependent Arising, Emptiness of nature – Middle Path);¹⁰¹ 'Zhen – su – kong – you' 真 · 俗 · 空 · 有 (Reality – Secularity – Emptiness - Existence).¹⁰²

Reading Xuming under the three headings (contribution to the field of scholarship, hermeneutical scheme and definition of 'historicism') we can easily unveil his position within the modern San-lun scholarship. Differently than his contemporary and fellow Yanpei, who provided an original contribution to the field with his commentary on *Ru zhong lun*, Xuming did not produce any new theory or any remarkable scholarly book on doctrine, but still holds a fundamental role for his effort in making Yinshun's Mādhyamika literature available to the public. Xuming may be defined as the silent and back fellow who was engaged in the transcription and publication of Yinshun's principal lectures on Mādhyamika. His 'devotion' to the mentors Taixu and Yinshun is also revealed in his treatises on Mādhyamika doctrinal tenets, where he quoted from Yinshun in order to legitimate his doctrinal discussion through what he wanted to define as authoritative scriptural evidences.

⁹⁷ Kai Zhengzong (1996) *Taiwan gaoseng*, p.176.

⁹⁸ Originally published in *Wujin deng* 無盡燈, 1951, v.1, n.1. Later included in *Xuming fashi yizhu*, v.1, pp.549-554.

⁹⁹ Originally published in *Wujin deng*, 1952, v.1, n.3. Later included in *Xuming fashi yizhu*, v.1, pp.555-561

¹⁰⁰ Originally published in *Wujin deng*, 1952, v.1, n.4. Later included in *Xuming fashi yizhu*, v.1, pp.562-566.

¹⁰¹ Originally published in *Wujin deng*, 1953, v.2, n.3. Later included in *Xuming fashi yizhu*, v.1, pp.567-575.

¹⁰² Originally published in *Haichao yin*, 1957, v.8, n.7. Later included in *Xuming fashi yizhu*, v.1, pp.576-584.

His way of quoting Yinshun in the same way of Sengzhao 僧肇 or Kumarajiva demonstrates what position Yinshun held at that time in the field and how he could obtain it.

The historical perspective that Xuming adopted in defining the doctrine of Middle Path, Dependent Arising and Emptiness, and his attention to the threefold Mahāyāna system also reveal Yinshun's legacy in Xuming's interpretation of Mādhyamika issues:

Concerning the differences among the Mahāyāna stream, according to Taixu Mahāyāna Buddhism is divided into three [teachings]: 1) the teachings of emptiness and dharma-nature [*faxing konghui xue* 法性空慧學], 2) the teachings of only-consciousness and dharma-characteristic [*faxiang weishi xue* 法相唯識學], 3) the teachings of perfect realisation and dharma-dhatu [*fajie yuanjue xue* 法界圓覺學]. Whereas Yinshun listed [three systems]: 1) the system of only-name and emptiness of nature [*xingkong weiming xi* 性空唯名系], 2) the system of only-consciousness and vacuous delusion [*xuwang weishi xi* 虛妄唯識系], 3) the system of only-mind and tathata [*zhenchang weixin xi* 真常唯心系]. Regardless of the different designation of threefold system or threefold study, these two divisions were both theorised in relation to the concept of emptiness.¹⁰³

This passage also tells us how Xuming approached the Mādhyamika/San-lun texts and doctrine and his use and definition of 'history'/'historicism'. He was very 'traditional Chinese' in not going beyond the Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika, and at the same time he was very 'modern Chinese' in making Taixu and Yinshun as the authorities of the field. His making Taixu-Yinshun and Xuanzang on the same level as historians of, respectively, Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna is further evidence in support

¹⁰³ Xuming (1952) 'Yiqie fa jie kong', in (1966) *Xuming fashi yizhu*, v.1, p.561.

of this argument. The hermeneutical dichotomy (and synthesis) between ‘traditional Chinese’ and ‘modern Chinese’ is reflected in his use of the category of ‘history’ as well, since he structured the doctrinal evolution within the ‘classical’ historical/doctrinal division between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, and within the ‘modern’ framework of the Taixu’s and Yinshun’s threefold system.¹⁰⁴

II. 2. 4 Cihang 慈航 (1895-1954):¹⁰⁵ Lecturing on *Shi’er men lun*

In accordance with Taixu, the Eight Schools [*bazong* 八宗] are equal, and all remarkably important, the Eight Schools all expound necessary teachings. For this reason I accept all the holy doctrines, this is the attitude that we disciples of Buddha all should maintain! Therefore, besides the doctrine of the Only-Consciousness [*weishi* 唯識], I also give explanations of the teachings of the ‘Three-Treatises’ [*sanlun* 三論].¹⁰⁶

The meeting between Cihang and Taixu dated the end of the 1920s. In 1927, Cihang enrolled the Minnan Buddhist Institute, and two years later he became student at the Wuchang Buddhist Institute. At that time Cihang made an in-depth investigation of the Chinese adaptation of the Yogācāra philosophy (*weishi* 唯識), and started supporting the reform plans promoted by Taixu. In 1948 Cihang moved to Taiwan, invited by Miaoguo 妙果, and founded the *Taiwan foxueyuan* 台灣佛學院 (Tawanese Institute of Buddhist Studies) at Yuanguang Temple (*yuanguang si*

¹⁰⁴ The threefold division of Mahāyāna was actually schematised in the Pre-Modern Chinese Buddhism by, for instance, Zongmi. Nevertheless, in the eyes of modern Buddhists, the division is authored by Taixu and Yinshun. Another annotation: the threefold system is, according to Taixu, mirror of the historical development of Chinese Buddhism; according to Yinshun, it is based on the history of Indian Buddhism; according to Xuming, it is based on the relationship between the doctrine/school of emptiness (*kong zong* 空宗) and the doctrine of existence (*you zong* 有宗).

¹⁰⁵ For further biographical details, see: Kan Zhengzong 關正宗 (1996) *Taiwan gaoseng*, pp. 47-91; Jones (1999) *Buddhism in Taiwan*, pp.102-111. Cihang’s works have been collected in *Cihang fashi quanji* 慈航法師全集 (*Complete Works of Cihang*), 12 vols., a set published in 1981. Although his writings include teachings on the different Buddhist schools, Cihang became well-known especially for his interpretation of the Pure Land School, in particular the Maitreya Pure Land, and his study of Yogacara.

¹⁰⁶ Cihang (1981) *Cihang fashi quanji*, vol.1, p.92

圓光寺) in Zhongli 中壩. Founder of Buddhist institutes, organiser of Buddhist Seminars and Dharma teacher, promoter and reformer of Buddhist educational programmes for monastic and lay disciples (especially lay women and nuns), Cihang eventually became one of the eminent monks on the island.

According to Daoan, in China *Zhonglun* was the most studied among the Sanlun scriptures, while *Bailun* was the most neglected one. Finally, *Shi'er men lun* was considered mostly as a text-book preliminary for the understanding of the concept of emptiness and preparatory to the study of *Zhonglun*.¹⁰⁷ In actual fact, the lectures on *Shi'er men lun* (the most of them recorded and still available in written form) are several in quantity and for the number of authors.

Taixu and Yinshun both gave lectures on *Shi'er men lun*. And Cihang also gave a lecture on the text in 1952, May 7 at the Maitreya Inner Hall. The lecture was then transcribed and published under the title *Shi'er men lun jianghua* 十二門論講話 (Commentary on the *Twelve gate treatise*).¹⁰⁸

Unfortunately, Yinshun's speech is lost; therefore his interpretation on the text may be inferred from the references he made to it in some from his writings. Fortunately, Taixu's lecture was recorded and transcribed.¹⁰⁹ A comparative analysis of the works of these three figures helps to assess Cihang's distinct contribution to the field. Cihang divided the scripture in segments and added the paraphrases of the passages afterwards as only commentary to them. A very preliminary doctrinal explanation of the contents of the different pieces is included as well. On the other hand, any analysis of Nāgārjuna's teachings in general is missing, nor a general discussion on Mādhyamika is supplied. The main difference between Cihang's

¹⁰⁷ Daoan 'Sanlunzong shi lue', in Zhang Mantao, ed. (1978) *Sanlunzong zhi fazhan jiqi sixiang*, pp.53-76.

¹⁰⁸ Now included in *Cihang fashi quanji*, vol.1, pp.1-92.

¹⁰⁹ Taixu (1923) 'Shi'er men lun jiang lu' 十二門論講錄, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, vol.5, pp. 581-763.

commentary and Yinshun's or Taixu's works is the absence of any classification of contents: Cihang simply re-worded the scripture following the verse order, whereas Taixu in his analysis of the scripture articulated the 'twelve gates' and the inner text into a detailed and argued subdivision. Then, Cihang did not make any textual reference nor did he relate this distinct scripture to any other from Nāgārjuna's texts, with the consequence to fail the contextualisation of the text in a wider framework.

A few notes deserve our attention at this point. First of all, we should consider the audience (and therefore readership) of Cihang's work, since the contents of any commentary depends on the identity of the audience. Secondly, *Shi'er men lun* is the only Mādhyamika text that Cihang analysed. This specific selection recalls what Daoan wrote in his article, and the role that this scripture had played within the San-lun scholarship.

Finally, Cihang's conclusion reveals important information on the landscape of Mahāyāna scholarship in the Modern China, in terms of the attention to Yogacara/Wei-shi vis-à-vis the study of Mādhyamika/San-lun, and of Taixu's leadership and reformist attempt, so as the quotation at the beginning of this section explains. As such, Cihang also represents another voice of the early twentieth-century Mādhyamika studies in China, and even if his works do not find direct connection to Yinshun's scholarship of the field, his being active in the same historical (and Buddhist) atmosphere made him worthy of exam in this section. Secondly, as I will discuss later, Cihang is one of the senior monks who accused Yinshun to betray (Chinese) Mahāyāna for his interpretation of *Zhong lun*, a fact that indeed created a link between the two figures.¹¹⁰

II. 2. 5 Daoan 道安 (1907-1977):¹¹¹ A philosophical theory on emptiness

¹¹⁰ See Chapter Seven.

¹¹¹ For a detailed biography, see: Kan Zhengzong (1996) *Taiwan gaoseng*, pp.141-168.

Philosophy is many-sided. It is bewildering and profound, and often difficult to understand. The theory of the Void in Buddhist philosophy is so complex and variegated that its implications can best be approached from the literary, philosophical and scientific angles. For the purpose of making it understandable popular, this seems necessary.¹¹²

Besides an extensive diary, which provides precious data on the history of twentieth-century China and Chinese Buddhism, and the works on the contemporary edition of the Chinese Tripitaka, Daoan's literature covered the field of Mādhyamika scholarship as well. Four writings, which are all dated 1950s, are important: 'Sanlun zong shi lue' 三論宗史略 (History of the San-lun school); 'Kong de zheli' 空的哲理 (Philosophical Theory of the Void);¹¹³ *Zhongguan shi lun jiqi zhexue* 中觀史論及其哲學 (History and Philosophy of Mādhyamika);¹¹⁴ *Sanlun zong shi jiqi zhexue* 三論宗史及其哲學 (History and Philosophy of the San-lun school).¹¹⁵

His most famous work on the subject remained the essay 'Kong de zheli', which was also translated into English in the early 1960s.¹¹⁶ This short essay unveils Daoan's acquaintance of Western philosophy. Besides referring to Confucius and Zhuangzi, Daoan mentioned Hegel, Comte and James. Here is the attempt to locate Buddhism within the wider context of 'philosophy' [*zhexue* 哲學], more than an effort to contextualize the doctrine of emptiness [*kong* 空] within a Māhāyana or generally Buddhist frame. Daoan's analysis assessed Nāgārjuna's thought in terms of the Western dialectic and logic, through reference to Hegel and Marx, reference that

¹¹² Shih Tao-ann (K.W. Pao tr.), 'Philosophical Theory of the Void', in *Shizi kong*, 1963, n. 2, p.81

¹¹³ Daoan, *Daoan fashi yiji*, vol.3, pp.14-41.

¹¹⁴ So far I have found only the mention of this book, which seems to be not available anymore.

¹¹⁵ So far I have found only the mention of this book, which seems to be not available anymore.

The book is said to have been published in 1956.

¹¹⁶ Shih Tao-an (K.W. Pao tr.), 'Philosophical Theory of the Void', in *Shizi kong*, 1963, n. 2, pp.64-81.

reveals Daoan's training in Western philosophy and critical approach, and also an intellectual pattern of which he was only one out of many voices.¹¹⁷

Daoan affirmed to be an historian, and he actually dealt with the subject from the historical perspective, working on both history of the doctrine and history of the school. In 'Sanlun zong shi lue' Daoan provided the history of Nāgārjuna's school in India, the transmission into China and the origination of the San-lun sect. Daoan indicated two phases in the development of the Chinese San-lun, the first starting with Kumarajiva and the second starting with Jizang. The part on the modern period include a significant chart that shows Yinshun in the position of top leader of the field, and that has been quoted above. I would read the chart as not representative of the opinion of the only Daoan, but rather revelatory of a general view of the time.

II. 3. Mādhyamika Scholarship as advanced by Chinese laity during the twentieth century

The roots of twentieth-century Chinese Mādhyamika scholarship can all be found in Yang Wenhui, whose efforts in reforming Buddhist education and reprinting Buddhist scriptures produced a new generation of Buddhist scholarship.

This section does not include the exhaustive list of all the lay scholarship on Mādhyamika in twentieth century, whose study goes beyond the scope of this dissertation. I rather attempt herein to assess *why* and *how* important figures, whose turned the still conservative Chinese Buddhism into a 'modern' tradition, addressed and examined Nāgārjuna's doctrine and the Mādhyamika schools.

I focus on three figures: Ouyang Jingwu and Lü Cheng, who are respectively the founder and the second dean of the *Zhina neixue yuan* 支那內學院 (Chinese Metaphysical Institute), and Zhang Chengji, who was trained in Western academia,

¹¹⁷ Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, vol.4, pp.405-428.

was well acquainted in philosophy and belongs to a slightly later generation.

As to their relation to Yinshun, Ouyang Jingwu belonged to the pre-Yinshun, while Lü Cheng has been called the lay counterpart of Yinshun, and as such they are analysed in this chapter.

II. 3. 1 Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (1871-1943): Nāgārjuna as exponent of the Dharmalaksana school?

The study of Nāgārjuna's literature shows that his entire corpus of writings focused on the real mark (*shixiang* 實相), did not only discuss emptiness (*kong* 空), but assessed the real mark as the dharma mark (*faxiang* 法相). In *DZDL*, Ch.18, is written: “Bodhisattvas, since the first step of developing the [bodhi-]mind are seeking all the Wisdoms, among which the wisdom of the awareness of the real mark of all the dharmas [*zhufa shixiang hui* 諸法實相慧] coincides with the perfection of wisdom [*banruo poluomi* 般若波羅密].” [...] Therefore, what Nāgārjuna stated was exactly the real mark, and not what has been usually defined dharma-nature (*faxing* 法性) or emptiness (*kong* 空).¹¹⁸

Student of Yang Wenhui, Ouyang Jingwu firstly succeeded to his teacher at the Jinling Scriptural Press, and then in 1919 established his own research institute: the Chinese Metaphysical Institute. In 1925, his seminar opened an university programme and was named *Faxiang daxue* 法相大學 (Dharmalaksana University), a denomination that reveals the main focus of the school as well as the main interest of the scholarship of its founder.

Similarly to Taixu, Ouyang Jingwu followed Yang Wenhui and focused his

¹¹⁸ Ouyang Jingwu (1925) 'Longshu faxiang xue', in Zhang Mantao ed. (1978), *Zhongguo sixiang lunji*, p.115

emphasis on both the school of Mādhyamika and Dharmalaksana.¹¹⁹ They both concentrated more on the latter school, but did not neglect Nāgārjuna's philosophy. In his only writing on Nāgārjuna, titled 'Longshu faxiang xue' 龍樹法相學 (The Dharmalaksana study of Nāgārjuna) and dated 1925, Ouyang Jingwu confuted the thesis that Nāgārjuna had taught the doctrine of the *faxing* 法性 (dharma-nature) and claimed that Nāgārjuna did spread the doctrine of the *faxiang* 法相 (dharma-mark). He aimed to defy the exponents of the 'dharma-nature' theory, but in the end he actually proposed their same argument, an argument that Taixu and Yinshun developed a few decades later.¹²⁰ What seems to be a mere doctrinal misunderstanding is actually grounded in the different definition that the two main scholastic traditions in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism – that of the 'dharma-nature' (*faxing zong* 法性宗) and that of the 'dharma-mark' (*faxiang zong* 法相宗) – had given to the concept of 'mark' (*xiang* 相).

II. 3. 2 Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896-1986):¹²¹ really the lay counterpart of Yinshun?

Recently Taiwanese scholars made an explicit association between Lü Cheng and Yinshun. For instance in 2000 Lan Jifu 藍吉富 edited a three-volume collection entitled *Yinshun Lü Cheng foxue cidian* 印順·呂澂佛學辭典 (Yinshun & Lü Cheng Buddhist dictionary). In the introduction of this work, the monk Chuandao 傳道 defined Lü Cheng and Yinshun as 'the two structural walls of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhology' (*ershi shiji huaren zhi 'foxue shuangbi'*

¹¹⁹ See Chapter One for the differences in interpretation.

¹²⁰ For Yinshun, see Chapter Five of this dissertation. For Taixu, see 'Faxing konghui xue gailun' (1942), p.786, where he stated that 'real mark of the dharmas' (*zhu fa shixiang* 諸法實相) is an alternative denomination of 'dharma-nature' (*faxing* 法性).

¹²¹ Liu Mengxi, ed. (1996) *Yang Wenhui, Ouyang Zhe, Lü Cheng juan*, pp.473-715.

二十世紀華人之「佛學雙壁」),¹²² and Lan Jifu adopted the appellative ‘the two heroes of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhist world’ (*ershi shiji huaren foxue jie de er wei qingying fenzi* 二十世紀華人佛學界的二位菁英份子).¹²³

In fact, we can list quite a few similarities between Lü Cheng and Yinshun, which demonstrate the common scholastic pattern that they both have been part of. On the other hand, we can also find important discrepancies that reveal the unlike sphere of action of the two figures.

As for the similarities, first of all, they lived in the same historical period and were trained within the same cultural pattern and Buddhist atmosphere. Secondly, after a first phase of self-study, they both had an expert of Yogācāra as main (or, at least, first) teacher, who were Ouyang Jingwu for Lü Cheng and Taixu for Yinshun. They both work on the three Indian, Chinese and Tibetan traditions of Buddhism, focusing especially on Indian Buddhism, which they considered as the supposed ‘pure’ and ‘true’ Early Buddhism, and that *Āgamas* embodied. Lü Cheng’s work on *Āgamas* inspired (and was the starting point of) Yinshun for his own edition of the *Āgamas*. Yinshun’s work is just the completion of the work that Lü Cheng actually structured and started, and Yinshun himself acknowledged this indebtedness to Lü Cheng.¹²⁴

On the other hand, Yinshun for his age might be classified as a later scholar, and this may partly explain his indebtedness to Lü Cheng. Yinshun was trained within the Taixu entourage while Lü Cheng was educated within Ouyang Jingwu circle. Most important for our purposes is that Yinshun seemed to have focused more on Mādhyamika, while Lü Cheng mastered especially Yogacara. Yinshun could only

¹²² Lan Jifu ed. (2000) *Yinshun Lü Cheng foxue cidian*, v.1, p.vi.

¹²³ Lan Jifu ed. (2000) *Yinshun Lü Cheng foxue cidian*, v.1, p.viii.

¹²⁴ Lü Cheng, who is the pioneer of *Āgama* critical edition, argued *yanqi* as the key teaching of *Zhong lun*, but did not make any reference to *Zhong lun* as the embracing re-statement of the *Āgama*, which was Yinshun’s main argument instead. See Chapter Seven.

Chinese and therefore relied only on Chinese sources (with the only exception of the Japanese translation of some Tibetan texts and a limited Japanese scholarship of the field),¹²⁵ while Lü Cheng could work on Chinese as well as English, Japanese, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Pali sources, which made the scholarship of the latter of a higher, or at least more comprehensive, standard. There should also be a concern for the different backgrounds of these figures: Yinshun mastered only Buddhism in-depth,¹²⁶ while Lü Cheng had produced scholarship on different subjects such as fine arts before starting his research on Buddhism. Different backgrounds might have resulted in different approach to Buddhist research, as well as different theories and methods in the study of Buddhism. Differently than Lü Cheng, Yinshun was a fully ordained Buddhist: although often called 'scholar-monk', Yinshun remained a member of the Sangha, a fact that labeled the quality of his scholarship. Finally, but not less importantly, Yinshun left his home country in 1949, while Lü Cheng remained in Mainland China under the Communists and the Cultural Revolution, a fact that determined the development of their works.

In sum, we face common historical and cultural patterns, but distinct professional spheres for these two 'historians'. This reality affected their works on Mādhyamika. In fact, a comparative reading of Lü Cheng's *Yindu foxue yuanliu lue jiang* 印度佛學源流略講 (published on 1979; first draft is dated back to 1961) and *Zhongguo foxue yuanliu lue jiang* 中國佛學源流略講 (1979; first draft is dated back to 1961) and Yinshun's corpus of writings reveals consequently different standpoints and aims. Yinshun's emphasis on the practical aspects and doctrinal foundation of Mādhyamika is missing in Lü Cheng, who showed more attention in delineating and classifying the historical development of the school without any attention of the

¹²⁵ See Chapter One.

¹²⁶ Yinshun's pre-Buddhist education on Chinese medicine and on other religions (Taoism, Confucianism and Christianity) did not leave any considerable trace in Yinshun's literature. Secondly, Yinshun's writings list only one book not on Buddhism.

practical side of the teaching of emptiness.

A further difference appeared on the level of methodology, Lü Cheng's statement 'we adopt the research method of philosophical history'¹²⁷ and his total faith in the Western tools does not find correspondence in Yinshun whose Buddhist perspective led him to 'using the Dharma to study the Dharma.'

II. 3. 3 Zhang Chengji 張澄基 (1920-1988): The philosophy of emptiness is not simply Western logic

Then, when we study emptiness, how may we avoid not using conceptualisation? How may we not make emptiness in terms of 'something'? This difficulty is of course unavoidable, and the only way to solve it is to take a round-about way. In other words, even if emptiness itself is not a concept, we should anyway take emptiness in terms of concept as indicator, and consequently we would have a correct path on which to proceed. We cannot reach our target without adopting this indicator.¹²⁸

Zhang Chengji made two important contributions to the development of Mādhyamika scholarship. In his 'Kongxing zhexue' 空性哲學 ('Philosophy of Emptiness') he attempted to define *what* is emptiness, and to assess *how* to investigate emptiness.¹²⁹

The issue of research methodology and the importance of defining a theoretical pattern is clearly effect of the process of 'westernisation' that the Chinese Buddhist scholasticism had been subject to. The introduction of Zhang's book *Foxue jin quan* 佛學今詮 (1973) tells the importance for a Chinese scholar at that time to be 'modern' (*xiandai ren* 現代人), and that the main requirement for being 'modern'

¹²⁷ Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1979) *Yindu foxue yuanliu luejiang* 印度佛學源流略講, p.1907.

¹²⁸ Zhang Chengji (1973) *Foxue jin quan*, v.1, p.484.

¹²⁹ Included into (1973) *Foxue jin quan*, v.1, pp.403-485.

was having a ‘modern knowledge’ (*xiandai zhishi* 現代知識). English and Western philosophy were regarded as part of this ‘modern knowledge’. As Zhang argued, the traditional (Chinese) Buddhology had to come to terms with modernity too. This intellectual pattern also explained the reason why the book was entitled *Foxue jin quan* (‘Modern Comment on Buddhist studies’) instead of *Foxue xinquan* 佛學新詮 (‘New Comment on Buddhist Studies’).¹³⁰ In the 1950s Yinshun himself published a book on Mādhyamika entitled *Zhongguan jin lun* (‘Modern Restatement of Mādhyamika’) for the same reason.

Zhang’s work can be compared with Daoan’s essay. They both proposed the teaching of emptiness as seen through the lens of the Western philosophy and expressed with the language of the Western philosophy. In line with this, in the section entitled ‘Kongxing zhi zhongyaoxing’ 空性之重要性 (‘The importance of emptiness’), Zhang defined emptiness not only as ‘metaphysical truth’ [*xingshang xue de zhenli* 形上學的真理] but also, to use Zhang’s words, as a ‘soteriological instrument’ [*zongjiao chengjiu lun shangde gongju* 宗教拯救論上的工具].¹³¹

On the other hand, differently than Daoan, Zhang Chengji produced more than a thematic essay; he also questioned validity and limits of applying Western philosophy as *the* theoretical framework for understanding Nāgārjuna's teachings, and this is indicative of the different affiliation and educational pattern of which Zhang Chengji was part of. The quotation from his book at the beginning of the section is evidence of his argumentation.

The section ‘Kongxing yu luoji’ 空性與邏輯 (‘Emptiness and logic’) problematised the validity of relating Kant and Kantian logic, Hegel and Hegelian dialectic to Nāgārjuna and Nāgārjuna’s argumentation. I argue that this making

¹³⁰ Zhang Chengji (1973) *Foxue jinquan*, vol.1, p.ii.

¹³¹ Zhang Chengji (1973) *Foxue jinquan*, vol.1, p. 481.

distinctions between the Nāgārjunian logic and the Indian or Western logic is linked to the particular intellectual period, whose features have been delineated already above, and should also be read as a sort of ‘response’ to some Western scholarship on Mādhyamika that was arriving to Taiwan. Some of the arguments that Zhang articulated might have been a reaction to the book *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Mādhyamika System* (1955) by T.R.V. Murti, a book that had been elected as ‘emblem’ of the Western research on Mādhyamika.¹³² Already in the 1950s Yinshun’s *Zhongguan jinlun* was associated to Murti’s work, so as the preface to the partial English translation of the work stated: ‘The author, Venerable Yin Shun, is the greatest authority on Mādhyamika philosophy in Free China today. This book, published in early 1950, is his most celebrated work, but since it is not circulated in other than the Chinese language, it is little known to western scholars who are more familiar with professor T. R. V. Murti’s *Central Philosophy of Buddhism* Published in 1955 in England. The present translation is an attempt to introduce this work to the west.’¹³³ Although the translation was never completed, the intention can tell us about the position that Yinshun was holding in the mind of the Chinese, as well as how the dialogue with the Western scholarship was progressing.

The association between Kant, Hegel and Mādhyamika dialectic continued in the following decades. In the 1990s some scholarship shifted the attention from Nāgārjuna to the supposed ‘modern Chinese descendants’ such as Yinshun, making the latter as the Mādhyamika voice.¹³⁴ For instance, the Taiwanese scholar Chen Shuiyuan 陳水淵 argued that Yinshun’s theory on dependent arising was actually

¹³² In the 1980s the Taiwanese scholar Guo Zhongsheng 郭忠生 completed the Chinese translation of Murti’s book and made it available to a wider Chinese readership, see Chapter Eight.

¹³³ Yin Shun (Fayen S.K. Koo tr.) (1965a) ‘The Mādhyamika Doctrine: a Modern Restatement’, in *Haichao yin*, v. 46, n.1-2, p.31.

¹³⁴ Chapter Four examines the association between Yinshun and Nāgārjuna in detail.

indebted to and rooted in the Kantian logic.¹³⁵

Because of the historical moment he lived, and the educational pattern he belonged to, I locate Zhang Chengji in a transitional (and bridging) position between the group of figures topic of this chapter and the generation of scholarship that will be assessed in the next chapter, and as such he is the last figure to be analysed in this chapter.

II. 4 Concluding Remarks

As for the San-lun school, school belonging to the Chinese tradition [of Buddhism], Chinese scholarship of nowadays lacks masters of the school [...]. Only Yinshun's works opened a new path.¹³⁶

The religious and cultural patterns (which includes a Buddhist discourse and an intellectual discourse), the encounter of Western thought (and modernity) with Chinese traditional erudition, the process of secularisation of the (scholar) monks in parallel with the rise of lay Buddhology, these paths all emerge from Mou Zongsan to Yanpei, Zhang Chengji to Taixu. A diachronic perspective reveals the gradual passage from a conservative position to the acceptance of innovation, which results in the Chinese model of modernity. This was the background and the contemporary atmosphere to Yinshun and his hermeneutics of Mādhyamika. All these figures, some directly, some indirectly, are linked to Yinshun's interpretation of Nāgārjuna's teachings.

We have plenty of material on Mādhyamika (and San-lun) in twentieth-century

¹³⁵ Chen Shuiyuan 陳水淵 (1997) 'Yinshun de yuanqilun – cong Kangde zhishilun chufa' 印順的緣起論 - 從康德知識論出發', *Yuanguang foxue xuebao* 圓光佛學學報, n.2, pp. 91-104; Chen Shuiyuan 陳水淵 (1997) 'Shigui yinshun fashi de sixiang dayao – yi yuanqi guaitong' 試窺印順法師的思想大要--以緣起貫通, in *Faguang xuetang* 法光學壇, 1, pp.89-101.

¹³⁶ Zhang Mantao ed. (1987) *Sanlun dianji yanjiu* 三論典籍研究, p.i.

China, material that this chapter has classified from a historical perspective and through hermeneutical headings. The most important Buddhist journal in the first half of twentieth-century, *Haichao yin*, provided a prospect that Dongchu and Welch have integrated a few decades later. Following a diachronic order, another major collection of Chinese Buddhology that was prepared and issued from the late 1970s to the end of the 1980s is the *Xiandai fojiao xueshu congkan* edited by Zhang Mantao. Three out of the hundred volumes of the collection focus on Mādhyamika and San-lun and include only Chinese lay and monastic authors.¹³⁷ Later works, like those by Liu Guozong 劉果宗 (2001) and Wan Jinchuan 萬金川 (1998), confirm Zhang Mantao's argumentations.¹³⁸

Zhang Mantao's remarks at the beginning of the three volumes, as well as his selection of authors and writings, provide a prospect of Chinese Buddhology, and are valid question for the discussion on how Mādhyamika/San-lun study evolved through the mid of twentieth-century, how Nāgārjuna was conceived and what was the identity of Mādhyamika and San-lun at that time. Being later than the other works consulted for this chapter, Zhang Mantao's work underlined a distant view of what is dated to the beginning of twentieth century and enrich the portrait with new figures who occurred in a later stage of development of the tradition.

Zhang Mantao made three observations that are relevant in the discussion of this chapter. First of all, Zhang divided the history of Mādhyamika tradition in China into three phases: the first period started with Kumarajiva and ended with Jizang; the second period is dated 1930s-1940s, which is the time of the revival of the Chinese San-lun and of the very new interest in the transmission of Mādhyamika in Tibet. Key figures of this second period are Fazun, who actually translated the scriptures,

¹³⁷ Zhang Mantao, ed. (1968) *Zhongguan sixiang lun ji (Longshu yu zhongguan)* 中觀思想論集 (龍樹與中觀); Zhang Mantao, ed. (1968) *Sanlun zong zhi fazhan jiqi sixiang* 三論宗之發展及其思想; Zhang Mantao, ed. (1968) *Sanlun dianji yanjiu*.

¹³⁸ Wan Jinchuan (1998) *Zhongguan sixiang jianglu*.

and Taixu, who created the conditions for this new age of Mādhyamika scholarship. Finally, a third rise is signed by Yinshun, who is defined as the only ‘scholar’ who mastered the Nāgārjuna’s doctrine in-depth.¹³⁹ Such a view frames Daoan’s scheme of the modern development of Mādhyamika Buddhology.

Secondly, Zhang notices that the modern Chinese scholarship on Mādhyamika is more or less only one third of the works that focus on Wei-shi, and this is a fact that, in Zhang’s opinion, showed the deficiency of the recent research on Mādhyamika.¹⁴⁰

Finally, Zhang argued that the understanding of Mādhyamika that twentieth-century Chinese San-lun scholarship showed was getting close to the ‘pure Mādhyamika study’ (*chun zhongguan zhi xuefeng* 純中觀之學風, which is, as Zhang reasons, the Indian tradition preserved in the Sanskrit texts.¹⁴¹ This statement can be the starting point of an analysis on *how* twentieth-century Chinese scholarship defined Mādhyamika.

The literature examined in this chapter adopted terms such as *zhongguan xue* 中觀學 (Study of Mādhyamika – contemplation of the middle), *faxing xue* 法性學 (Study of the school of dharma-nature), *longshu xue* 龍樹學 (Study of Nāgārjuna) and *kongzong xue* 空宗學 (Study of the School of Emptiness). I argue that the term ‘Mādhyamika’ is not appropriate to define the textual research done at that time. Even the term *san lun xue* 三論學 (‘Study of the three treatises’) is not suitable for identifying the scriptural research, being the only *Zhong lun* and *Shi’er men lun* object of investigation, especially the former. Therefore, we may talk about a *Zhong lun xue* 中論學 (‘Study of *Zhonglun*’) or *Er lun xue* 二論學 (‘Study of the two treatises’). Later on, through the works of scholar-monks such as Fazun and Yanpei,

¹³⁹ Zhang Mantao ed. (1978) *Sanlun zong zhi fazhan jiqi sixiang*, pp.i-ii

¹⁴⁰ Zhang Mantao ed. (1978) *Zhongguan sixiang lunji*, p.ii.

¹⁴¹ Zhang Mantao, ed. (1978) *Zhongguan sixiang lunji*, p.ii.

China came to know the post-Āryadeva Mādhyamika. The Chinese made a distinction between ‘Early Mādhyamika’ (*chūqi zhongguan* 初期中觀), which arrived to Aryadeva, and ‘Late Mādhyamika’ (*hòuqi zhongguan* 後期中觀), which include all the other figures afterwards, like Candrakīrti. If the definition of Candrakīrti as ‘Late Mādhyamika’ may perplex the Western scholarship, I would point out that ‘early’ and ‘late’ indicate here different generations inside one lineage but also the sequence of when Chinese Buddhism became aware of the doctrine. As we have seen with the case of Ouyang Jingwu, even the dichotomy between *faxing* 法性 and *faxiang* 法相 was not that clear. The identity of ‘Nāgārjuna’s doctrine’ should also be questioned. The Pre-Mahāyāna legacy in Nāgārjuna’s teachings and its being commentary of the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures opened a debate on the real essence of the school, and made non-strictly-Nagarjunian texts and doctrines as part of it.

Daoan and then Zhang Mantao sketched a diachronic evolution of the Mādhyamika scholarship in twentieth-century China. Nevertheless, with consideration of the date of publication (and of oral presentation) of the works examined here, it is evident that there was not any lineage, in the Chinese traditional sense of the term. We can speak in terms of a common historical and cultural pattern from which some voices arose. Yinshun was acclaimed as *the* Mādhyamika scholar by figures such as Zhang Mantao or Daoan for the wide literature that he produced on the topic and for which he became the provoker of the renaissance of some doctrine. According to Zhang Mantao, Yinshun's viewpoint is already not part of the San-lun stream, but does belong to the study on *Zhong lun* based on the conception of emptiness that Chinese Buddhology inherited from the Tibetan tradition of Mādhyamika since Fazun's translation.¹⁴² This consideration and classification of

¹⁴² Zhang Mantao ed. (1978) *Zhongguan sixiang lunji*, p.i.

Yinshun's teachings as close to a non-Chinese traditional standpoint will occur and be discussed in other sections of this dissertation, with the purpose to define a doctrinal and hermeneutical identity of twentieth-century Chinese Mādhyamika Buddhology, as well as what is the Yinshun's dimension of Mādhyamika and the Mādhyamika's dimension of Yinshun.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HERITAGE OF YINSHUN'S MĀDHYAMIKA

IN CONTEMPORARY TAIWAN

As for the exegesis of Mādhyamika, the publication of his works *Zhongguan lun songjiangji* and *Zhongguan jin lun* could solve the mazes such as the reading of *Zhong lun*. The Mādhyamika teachings thus became the exoteric tradition [*xianxue* 顯學] of Taiwanese Buddhology. I am afraid that, without the numberless explanations provided by Yinshun, the study of Mādhyamika could have hardly improved.¹

Yinshun's followers (as well as opponents) engaged in a process of conceptualisation of the figure of Yinshun through direct interventions. For instance, the end of twentieth century witnessed the creation of the terms 'Post-Yinshun Era' (*Hou Yinshun shidai* 後印順時代) and 'Yinshun study' (*Yinshun xue* 印順學), which were meant to historicise Yinshun as a distinct and defined entity, and the reality of *Yinshun-ness* thus took shape.

Both expressions indicate that Yinshun was not only conceived as acting on an already established tradition but had become a tradition in himself. The *Yinshun-ness* (otherwise called "Yinshun tradition") underwent a shift from the state of 'dynamic tradition' to the state of 'static tradition', with the former entailing the period when Yinshun was developing his thought and producing literature, and the latter indicating the end of his writing and thus the final systematisation of his theology.

The contextualisation of Yinshun within the domain of Buddhism through a parallel with eminent Buddhist figures such as Nāgārjuna, Xuanzang, Maitreya

¹ Lan Jifu (2002) 'Taiwan fojiao sixiang shi shangde hou Yinshun shidai' 台灣佛教思想史上的後印順時代, paper presented at the 3rd Conference on Yinshun Studies, Taipei, 2002.

Buddha and, after his death, Sakyamuni Buddha was another attempt to formalise the figure of Yinshun.²

A third intervention was the canonisation of Yinshun after his death. Among the numerous post-mortem commemorations of Yinshun's life and mission, Huayu Vihāra published the recitation of the verses from Yinshun's *Cheng fo zhi dao* 成佛知道 [*The Way to Buddhahood*] on the occasion of the first anniversary of his passing away. *Cheng fo zhi dao* is probably Yinshun's best-known volume, already a textbook in many Buddhist Institutes in Taiwan and the only book among his literary production to have been translated and made available to the Western readership. *Cheng fo zhi dao* is also the book that Yinshun wrote under the inspiration of Lama Tsongkhapa's *Lam Rim Chenmo*.

The canonicity of Yinshun's words is signalled by the frame of the recitation, being Yinshun's verses anticipated by the 'incense hymn' (*luxiang zan* 爐香讚), the three-time 'invocation of Sakyamuni Buddha', and, very interestingly, introduced by the gathas of opening to the sūtra (*kaijing jie* 開經偈), then followed, in order, by the *Heart Sūtra* (*xin jing* 心經), the gathas in praise of the Buddha (*zan fo jie* 讚佛偈), the three refuges (*san gui yi* 三皈依) and the gathas for the transfer of merits (*huixiang jie* 迴向偈). The accompaniment is the same as in any Buddhist liturgy. Such a recitation endows Yinshun's verses with the status of *jing* 經, with the ritual legitimating the canonisation of the teachings of the monk and the authoritative status of the latter. With the caveat that 'Canonicity is defined in functional terms'³, Yinshun's entourage proceeded in the construal of Yinshun's authority as a canonical authority. The liturgical process of legitimation is an innovation in the landscape of Chinese Buddhism.

² The allusions to these Buddhas were made in documentaries and animated cartoons about Yinshun. See Chapter Six.

³ Buswell, Robert E., ed. (2003), *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, p.112.

These three interventions occurred in three historical moments, which are, respectively, the end of his scholarly production, the final years of his life and his post-mortem. In other words, the construction of *Yinshunness* developed through a few steps.

The adoption of the terminology 'Post-Yinshun Era' and 'Yinshun study' provoked different reactions within Buddhist circles, and opened discussion on the suitability of the terms, their temporal boundaries and socio-religious implications. Historicising also implied deciding the end of Yinshun's time and the beginning of a post and not-Yinshun time, in other words, a limitation to the sphere of influence of Yinshun.

For some, the domain of 'Yinshun study' came to coincide with the theology of *renjian* Buddhism, which identifies the latter as a discipline and regards Yinshun as founder, or at least as the representative figure of the field.⁴

The debate on the *post* Yinshun era is dated back to the end of twentieth century, and has the historian of Chinese Buddhism Lan Jifu as its main promoter.⁵ The discussion on the *post* signified the 'historical' identity and meaning of Yinshun and his theology, as well as the 'historical' hermeneutics of the reception of the latter. The concept of *post* indicates temporal shift (passage from one era to another), cultural paradigms and distinct domains (religious and/or scholar context). Following Lan Jifu's argument, the more than forty years when Yinshun was structuring and proposing his teachings through writing are identified as the 'Yinshun's Era' (*Yinshun*

⁴ Zhaohui (2006), "'Yinshun xue" yi zai cheng xing' "印順學" 已在成形, in Houguan, ed. (2006) *Yinshun daoshi yonghuaiji*, pp.134-137.

⁵ The main contributions to the debate are the following: Lan Jifu (2001) 'Taiwan fojiao sixiang shi shangde hou yinshun shidai' 台灣佛教思想史上的後印順時代, available from: <http://www.awker.com/hongshi/special/arts/art16.htm> (date of access: 31 July 2008); Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 (2001) 'Guanyu "Hou Yinshun xue shidai" de piping wenti 關於「後印順學時代」的批評問題, available from: <http://www.awker.com/hongshi/mag/53/53-7.htm> (date of access: 31 July 2008); Xuan Fang 宣方 (2002) '人間正道是滄桑 - 台灣後印順時代的人間佛教', available from: <http://www.zennow.org.tw/garden/ten6-1/ten6-1-17/ten6-1-17-01.htm> (date of access: 31 July 2008); Xuan Fang (2005) 'Zuwei fangfa de Yinshun' 作為方法的印順, in *Dangdai* 當代, n.125, pp.12-27.

shidai 印順時代), while criticism and acceptance of Yinshun's teachings, as well as the discussion of his arguments identifies the 'Post-Yinshun Era'.⁶ That Buddhism in post-war Taiwan could fall entirely under the sole umbrella of Yinshun, and the existence of a *post* Yinshun already with Yinshun still alive were two of the main criticisms to the creation of these concepts. On the other hand, in the circle which can be identified as Yinshun's entourage, Buddhists define themselves as belonging to a 'post' generation (*houxuemen* 後學門), with then the duty to preserve and transmit Yinshun's spirit.⁷

This chapter intends to complete the first part of my dissertation on the Buddhist religious and intellectual milieu within which Yinshun's thought took shape through a discussion on the 'Post-Yinshun' concept. I develop the discourse on two levels: (1) how Yinshun shaped his own lineage (or legacy) and therefore proposed his conception of lineage, and questioning whether this legacy/lineage has a Mādhyamika dimension, (2) how Yinshun's entourage revisited those issues through the construction of an 'Yinshun identity' during Yinshun's lifetime and posthumously.⁸

The chapter thus assesses the significance and implications of the concepts of *lineage*, *school* and *legacy* within the frame of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, also taking Yinshun as a case-study.

The discourse on the formation of an Yinshun *identity* opens a discussion on monastic education as well, education being a way of shaping a new generation embodying that identity. The second part of this chapter then investigates the

⁶ Lan Jifu (2002) 'Taiwan fojiao sixiang shi shangde hou Yinshun shidai', paper presented at the 3rd Conference on Yinshun Studies, Taipei, 2002.

⁷ Yin Hai (2003) 'Fuyan jingshe chengli wushi zhounian jinian shugan', in Houguan, ed. (2003) *Fuyan jingshe wushi zhounian jinian tekan* 福嚴精舍五十週年紀念特刊, p.28

⁸ For the construction of Yinshun's lineage after Yinshun's passing, see Chapter 6. Further discussion on 'lineage' and 'legacy' in Yinshun's context also in chapter 6, but from a different perspective: not how he 'created' his lineage, but how outsiders 'construe' his lineage after his death.

Mādhyamika dimension of the monastic education as settled by Yinshun.

As a result, the chapter aims to analyse how Yinshun shaped his legacy through his educational programmes, and also assesses the reception of Mādhyamika (and Yinshun's Mādhyamika) by Yinshun's disciples. The aim of the chapter is to highlight how the 'new' conception of lineage and the reforms for a 'new' education were part of the project of creating a 'new' Buddhism as flag for the 'new' China. The analysis as for which terms the 'new' can be considered 'modern' helps to re-frame the discourse of modernity in Chinese Buddhism.

III. 1 Defining Yinshun's entourage

I do not belong to any sect [*xuepai* 學派] of the school of emptiness [*kong zong* 空宗].⁹

Why are there sects? In order to fit the native inclinations of the living beings, Buddha organised sets of teachings, and thus the differences among the many traditions appeared. [...] ¹⁰Overcoming the distinction into schools and return to the roots of Buddhadharma, that is what the disciples of each school should aim at!¹¹

Yinshun denied to belong to any *zongpai* 宗派 (school/sect) and to perform any *chuan fa* 傳法 (transmission of the Dharma, and therefore maintenance of a lineage), which are important features of the Buddhist tradition and fundamental in Chinese Buddhism. Why was important for Yinshun to take distance from the tradition? What were significance and implications of those two concepts in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism and what were the new (modern?) alternatives

⁹Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, p.i.

¹⁰Yinshun (1973) *Huayu xiangyuan*, p.318

¹¹Yinshun (1973) *Huayu xiangyuan*, p.318

to them? If *zongpai* and *chuan fa* were refused by Yinshun, how did he define his entourage and justified the preservation of a legacy?

As Wang Junzhong clearly pointed out, the term *zongpai* is comprehensive of the earlier dichotomy into *xuepai* 學派 and *jiaopai* 教派.¹² This section of the chapter argues that Yinshun did belong to a *zongpai* as he realised a legacy, analyses the modalities of creation and patterns of identity of his entourage, and finally questioned the Mādhyamika dimension of this (modern) “lineage.”

III. 1. 1 Reconstructing a lineage from the Fuhui pagoda 福慧塔院

‘The development of the Pagoda in China gradually removed it from its original intimate connections with the first Buddhist monasteries. From a Buddhist relic shrine it has become a geomantic factor and is today connected more with Geomancy than with Buddhism.’¹³

I would argue that the history of Yinshun’s entourage, and of his ‘lineage’, is well reflected in the establishment and historical development of the Merit and Wisdom Pagoda (*Fuhui tayuan* 福慧塔院), which has been defined as the Patriarch Hall (*zushi tang* 租師堂) but not as the usual remains’ pagoda (*guhui ta* 骨灰塔) of a lineage.¹⁴

The history of Fuhui Pagoda falls into three phases. The first installment is dated back to 1958, and was built to host the relics of Yinshun’s own tonsure master Qingnian.¹⁵ After the passing of fellow cleric Xuming (1966), Yinshun commissioned

¹² Wang Junzhong 王俊中 (1995) 'Zhongguo fojiao zaoqi "zongpai" wenti yanjiu de xiangguan tantao-yi jizang jiqi sanlun jiao xue wei zhongxin' 中國佛教早起宗派問題研究的相關探討 - 以吉藏及其三論教學中心, in *Diguan* 諦觀, n.81, pp107-129

¹³ Prip-Moller (1937) *Chinese Buddhist monasteries*, p.195.

¹⁴ Wuyin 悟因, ed. (1994) *Fuyan foxueyuan zhi* 福嚴佛學院志, p.51.

¹⁵ This is a clear attempt of Yinshun to document his “lineage” and claim the link to the Chinese tradition of Buddhism. See also Chapter Six for the Yinshunian dimension of lineage.

the building of a larger pagoda, which was planned to keep the relics of monks affiliated to Fuyan.¹⁶ The final step, dated right after Yinshun's passing and commissioned by the Fuyan Vihara, involved the renewal and enlargement of the existing pagoda.¹⁷ Between the second and third stage, the relics of a number of other few Buddhist figures linked to Fuyan were positioned in the pagoda.

A study on the pagoda reveals a net of discourses and patterns: the discourse of 'lineage' and 'affiliation', the discourse of modernity (entailing a shift in role and significance of the pagoda within a Chinese monastery), and three generational patterns in it, which I may name as follows: (1) the pre-Yinshun group (Qingnian, Taixu and Daxing), (2) the Yinshun-time group (Yanpei, Xuming), (3) the post-Yinshun group (constituted by Yinshun's students mainly at Fuyan, such as Houji).

The idea of 'affiliation' is linked to the constructs of 'lineage' and 'legacy', with the history of the Fuhui pagoda as witness of both Yinshun's legacy in the present time and of the legacy of the past Buddhism and Buddhists in Yinshun. The recent enlargement of the pagoda, with the inclusion of Yinshun's portrait and relics, and of the relics of other monks like Changjue (1928-2006) was requested by Yinshun's entourage, a fact that shows a shift in generational hierarchy.¹⁸

Qingnian,¹⁹ Taixu and Daxing, were, together with Fazun, the three main mentors of Yinshun, while Yanpei and Xuming were fellows often mentioned in Yinshun's works, the names Huansheng 幻生, Houji 厚基, Xingfan 性梵 and Guangshan 廣善 seldom appear in Yinshun's writings and are almost unknown in the history of Chinese Buddhism. Huansheng (1929-2003) moved to Taiwan from

¹⁶ The journal *Putishu* 菩提樹 documented the passing of Xuming in India and his link to Fuyan in a special issue in June 1966.

¹⁷ Houguan 厚觀, ed. (2006) *Yinshun daoshi yonghuai ji* 印順導師永懷集, p.366.

¹⁸ Changjue met Yinshun in Hangzhou in 1948, and followed him for nearly twenty years. After five years in Hong Kong, Changjue went after Yinshun to Taiwan, and contributed to the development of the Buddhist Institute and the teaching there. Changjue was also abbot of Huiji Lecture Hall from 1960 to 1963.

¹⁹ Yinshun (1958) 'Qingnian shangren zhuan' 清念上人傳, in (1973) *Huayu xiangyun*, pp.267-268.

Maidland China in 1949 and firstly related to Cihang and his entourage, but between 1954 to 1967 he lived and taught at Fuyan, thus to become affiliated to Yinshun and Yinshunian Buddhism. Houji was a young student and then teacher in the 1960s. Xingfan (1920-1997), influenced by monks like Cihang, Daoan and Yinshun, entered the monkhood in 1962. Starting off as a student at Fuyan in 1964, Xingfan was abbot of the Huiji Lecture Hall from 1974 to 1976, and finally run Fuyan Vihara from 1977 to 1981, where he returned in old age in 1993 until his death. Guangshan (1909-1993) encountered Yinshun in the late 1950s and was later appointed to run Huiji Lecture Hall (1964-1970) and Fuyan Vihara (1981-1986).²⁰

According to a short article that the monk Houxing 厚行, who was dean of Fuyan as well as abbot of Huiji, wrote in 1974, the figures gathered in the pagoda shared the principle of having sacrificed their own body and mind in order to save the Sangha and rescue the Saha world.²¹

A comparison between the disposition of monks' portraits before and after the new enlargement of the pagoda can shed new light on the development of this lineage and its inner hierarchical order. The final disposition sees generational and hierarchical divisions, with the elders and mentors on the top, Yinshun and the two fellows whose help was fundamental for the final publication of Yinshun's literary production and for the establishment of Fuyan (considered in terms of Buddhist institute and group) in second position, and then three important teachers of Fuyan on the bottom. The two scripts on the borders are the verses that Fuyan teachers and students composed in commemoration of Yinshun. These are meant to summarise Yinshun's thought (and therefore the essence of Fuyan's identity as well) and, as my translation below shows, (Mahāyāna) Bodhisattva practice, the Mādhyamika twofold

²⁰ Documentation on the history of abbotship at Fuyan from: Kan Zhengzong, 'Fuyan jingshe wushinian 福嚴精舍五十年', in Houguan, ed. (2003) *Fuyan jingshe wushi zhounian jinian tekan*, pp.126-133.

²¹ Houxing 厚行 (1974) 'Tayuan luohuasi wangxian' 塔院落花思往賢, in *Putishu*, n.259, p.47.

aspect of contemplation and cultivation, and the so-called *renjian* Buddhism are indicated as the key features of Yinshun:

The mind roaming in the Dharma sea,
with deep contemplation and wide practice,
promoting “Buddhism for the Human Realm”.

The body offered to this Sahā world
With marvelous wisdom and great compassion,
enshrining Bodhisattva's vows and practice.²²

The squares left empty on the shrine indicates the intention to include other figures in the group and a future for the lineage. It is also worth noting that the very first pagoda built in Fuyan for hosting Qingnian's relics remained even after the building of the new and larger pagoda, as a sign of Yinshun's very traditional devotion to his tonsure master.

| | | | | |
|--------|---------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| YANPEI | DAXING | TAIXU | QINGNIAN | YINSHUN |
| HOUJI | XINGFAN | XUMING | HUANSHENG | GUANGSHAN |

Table 12 – Fuhui Pagoda [June 2005: when Yinshun's relics were stored]

| | | | | | | |
|-------|--|---------|----------|-----------|--|-----------|
| HOUJI | | DAXING | TAIXU | QINGNIAN | | GUANGSHAN |
| | | YANPEI | YINSHUN | XUMING | | |
| | | XINGFAN | CHANGJUE | HUANSHENG | | |
| | | | | | | |

Table 13 – Fuhui Pagoda [after the final enlargement]

The identity of Yinshun's lineage takes a concrete visible form in the pagoda,

²² Ch: 遊心法海深觀廣行闡揚人間佛教，獻身娑婆妙智大悲莊嚴菩薩願行。The distinction between 'Deep contemplation' (*shen guan* 深觀) and 'wide cultivation' (*guang xing* 廣行), which is rooted in the Tibetan Mādhyamika, tradition (see Chapter Five) has been emphasised by Yinshun (and then the Yinshunian entourage) as the correct interpretation of the Mādhyamika teachings, and the correct practice of Buddhism.

but it is also shaped through the process of naming. The expression *Fuyan ren* 福嚴人 ('Fuyan people') is used to identify those whose relics are deposited in the pagoda, as well as those who have been studying at Fuyan Vihara. The term *Fuyan ren* embodies (Buddhist) doctrinal identity, historical identity and mission identity. It is not an isolate case in contemporary Taiwan, which proposes a Buddhist taxonomy of names including the epithets *Foguang ren* 佛光人 ('Foguang people'), *Fagu ren* 法鼓人 ('Dharma Drum people') and *Ciji ren* 慈濟人 ('Tzu Chi people'). In other words, even Yinshun's Fuyan follows the pattern of all the biggest Buddhist groups in Taiwan.²³ And thus students of Fuyan nowadays state:

I really feel very honoured to have met the karmic conditions for becoming a Fuyan person.²⁴

The analysis of Fuyan below provides an explanation of the significance of being 'Fuyan people', besides highlighting the Mādhyamika dimension implied in the affiliation. An important conclusion will be the demonstration that Yinshun's entourage does have the right to be called legacy for being not different from the other local Buddhist organisations in its formation, development, dynamics and distinct features.

III. 1. 2 'Modern' value and features of lineage?

On the right side of the mountain behind there is a peaceful and secluded pagoda, wherein the portraits (or the cinerary urns) of the monks Taixu, Qingnian (master of the guiding

²³ For a general perspective of the main Buddhist organisations in Taiwan, see Madsen, Richard (2007) *Democracy's Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan*; for Foguangshan, see Chandler, Stuart (2004) *Establishing a Pure Land on earth : the Foguang Buddhist perspective on modernization and globalization*; for Tzu Chi, see Laliberté, André (2004) *The politics of Buddhist organizations in Taiwan, 1989-2003 : safeguard the faith, build a pure land, help the poor*.

²⁴ See 'Fuyan foxueyuan lijie shisheng lianyi baodao' 福嚴佛學院歷屆師生聯誼會報導, from <http://www.fuyan.org.tw/schoolfellow/20031018.htm> (available on 31 July 2008)

master [Yinshun]), Xuming, and the other deceased monks from both Huiji and Fuyan are enshrined.²⁵

The taxonomy of Yinshunness confirms the existence of a lineage, whose structural traits made it as one of the many cases in contemporary Taiwan.

However, differently than the other Buddhist organisations in Taiwan, such as Foguangshan and Fagushan, there is not an explicit (and ritualised) passage of posts but the decision is in hands of an assembly. In this way Yinshun, whereas he reflects Taixu's example in the compilation of the final will, starts a new discourse of modalities of transmission that does not find any similar cases in twentieth-century Taiwan.

As we have seen above, Yinshun's lineage found his concreteness in the establishment of the pagoda, the support to its identity through the creation of the “mark” *Fuyan*, and confirmation of relevance with the label ‘Post-Yinshun Era’ (*Hou Yinshun shidai*) coined by the scholarship.

According to Yinshun, the traditional Chinese Buddhist practice of hereditary monasteries showed how Buddhism in China had distanced itself from the original spirit of Indian Buddhism, and in order to restore that original spirit he himself refused to create his own lineage or any form of *zongpai* affiliated to his figure.²⁶ However, as this section will show, his 'modern' institutions have been running similarly to any 'traditionally' hereditary monastery, with the election of an assembly of monastics in charge of running and controlling the centres.

This Sangha assembly is formed of two groups: the Blessing and Wisdom Monastic Community (*fuhui sengtuan* 福慧僧團), and the Yinshun Cultural Foundation (*Yinshun wenjiao jijinhui* 印順文教基金會), which are both founded by

²⁵ Zhaohui (2003) *Yinshun daoshi sixiang lunji* 印順導師思想論集, p.291

²⁶ Yinshun (1994) 'Yi fuyan ersan shi' 憶福嚴二三事, in (2004) *Yongguang ji*, pp.186-187.

Yinshun.

The *Fuhui sengtuan* is formed of monks who have been connected with Yinshun by either being student/teacher at Yinshun's institution or linked to Yinshun's lecturing and publication work. The history of this group is not documented in the scholarship on Yinshun, nor did Yinshun write about that. Conceived as a matter inner to the Sangha, and therefore to be not exposed to the outsider, the *Fuhui sengtuan* is very little known in its history and development. According to the limited information that I could gather during my fieldwork, *Fuhui sengtuan* was already active in the 1970s and used to meet three times a year. The number and identity of its members changed with time, with the original group called by Yinshun introducing new figures and others dying. *Fuhui sengtuan* is responsible for selecting the new abbots of Huiji Lecture Hall and Fuyan, following a procedure that is in accordance with Yinshun's will of changing the abbotship every four or five years. The objection that such appointments cannot be conceived in terms of transmission because *Fuhui sengtuan* members are not only students or disciples of Yinshun is easily disputable. In fact, the group was established by Yinshun, and all the following developments were based on the original team that Yinshun himself had formed. In other words, we are always dealing with the so-called 'Fuyan people'.

The *Yinshun wenjiao jijinhui* was founded in 1997.²⁷ This organisation is constituted by seven members, personally selected and assembled by Yinshun, namely the monks Houguan 厚觀, Fazang 法藏, Huimin 惠敏 and Zhizhong 致中, and the nuns Xingying 性滢, Huili 慧理 and Huirun 慧潤.²⁸ Houguan was appointed

²⁷ Pan Xuan (2002) *Yinshun fashi zhuan*, p. 266.

²⁸ For Houguan and Fazang, see the following segment of this chapter. Huimin was a student and now a teacher and director of the Chung-hwa Buddhist Institute established by Shengyan and the Dharma Drum Mountain. Zhizhong, in Taizhong, reprinted Yinshun's edition of *Da zhidu lun* and established the journal *Diguan* (see Chapter Eight). Huili is the abbess of the Miaoyun Vihāra (Jiayi), Xingying is in charge of the Zhengwen Publ. House. Huili and Huirun are among the first nuns that enrolled Yinshun's Buddhist institute in Xinzhu.

as Director of the foundation.

The *Yinshun wenjiao jijinhui*, which uses to meet twice a year, was established in order to promote scholarly research on Buddhism, with the purpose to benefit the society (*liyi shehui* 利益社會) and purify the human mind (*jinghua renxin* 淨化人心), so as the threefold mission says: providing scholarship, sponsoring the study abroad, publishing Yinshun's writings in a digital format. In addition, Yinshun donated NTD10,000,000 and bought a land in Zhubei 竹北 for establishing the headquarters of the Zhengwen Publishing house (*zhengwen chubanshe* 正聞出版社).²⁹

Yinshun's will can also inform of the frame of Yinshun's lineage and the structure of his descendants:

At the age of 84, with not so much time left, I leave this letter to arrange the funeral and things afterwards:

1. As for Fuyan Vihara and Huiru Lecture Hall, I wish that the election of their future abbots be in accordance with the Dharma, and that could accomplish the Buddhist joint task of inner cultivation and external spread of the teachings. As for Miaoyun Vihara, be Huili in charge of its abbotship. As for Huayu Vihara, be the communal dwelling of Benyuan, Huiruan, Huishen etc.
2. All the arrangements for Zhengwen Publishing House, the publication and circulation of *Huayu ji*, *Fahai weipoxuji*, I leave Xingying in charge of all this.³⁰
3. After my death, dispense with everything in simplicity. No need of establishing a Funerary Service Committee, but just publish an obituary signed by the abbots of Fuyan and Huiru. The Dharma fellows and disciples who are overseas may send an obituary notice for the press, but

²⁹ Details on Yinshun Cultural Foundation are from Pan Xuan 潘煊 (2002) *Yinshun fashi zhuan* 印順法師傳, and the oral interviews I conducted in Taiwan in 2005.

³⁰ Pan Xuan (2002) *Yinshun fashi zhuan*, pp. 266-268.

there is no need to deliver it. No need of offering, no need to recite Amitābha's name because I do not seek a rebirth in the other world. I ask for my remains to be cremated into three days, and the ashes deposited in the Fuhui Pagoda.

4. As for my personal clothes, besides those chosen to be preserved, the rest is to be arranged by my tonsured disciples. I ask for all the books to be maintained in the current classification. If any money remains after my cremation etc, this should be donated to the Ciji Foundation, for the health care of the poor.

Yinshun, 14 June 1989.³¹

This script demonstrates Yinshun's emphasis on Fuyan and Huiji as his main institutions, the importance of the mission of education, and it also offers reasons to revisit the link between Yinshun and the famous nun Zhengyan, founder of Tzu Chi, that media and common opinion recreated in a different and stronger modality.

The question mark in the title of this section aims to problematise the 'modernity' embodied by Yinshun's lineage, and invites to reflect on the tension between 'traditionalism' and 'modernity' in terms of negotiation and coexistence instead of mutual exclusion. Whereas Yinshun's lineage seems to be 'modern' for not entailing a personal and direct passage of roles, the figure of the assembly resembles a negotiation with the 'traditional' need of a parochial dominance of the Buddhist monastic centres. The 'post' Yinshun generations decided to oppose Yinshun's will and to create Yinshun relics, because that was important in the 'tradition' of Chinese Buddhism, and they were, first of all, Chinese monks.³² Even before Yinshun's death, Fuyan, which was planned by Yinshun not to be a space for religious services (*fahui* 法會), has been holding a 'traditional' 'Prajñāpāramitā ceremony' (*banruo fahui* 般若

³¹ Houguan ed. (2006) *Yinshun daoshi yonghuai ji*, pp.352-355.

³² Yinhai 印海 in an interview at Da Ai Channel, 12 June 2005.

法會) in celebration of the birthday of Yinshun himself.

III. 2. Mission of education and its Mādhyamika pattern

There was another difficulty; at that time patriotic feeling ran high, and many students of the Academy maintained that it was their right and duty to follow the spirit of the times. In the reading-room were laid out a number of modern periodicals and these contained things both good and evil. Several magazines were not only decidedly atheistic but also anti-religious.³³

The reform of education was a primary importance for the reconstruction of Chinese identity and Chinese civilization.³⁴ As Theodore E. Hsiao pointed out:

If China would justify her existence and retain her past glory, she is bound either to substitute her spiritual civilization for this material civilization, or modify her civilization by adopting the necessary part of Western civilization. Undoubtedly, this falls within the realm of education.³⁵

Whereas reforms of secular education were central for the reshaping of social

³³ Reichelt, Karl (1935) *The Transformed Abbot*, p.89.

³⁴ Among the others: Bailey, Paul J. (1990) *Reform the People. Changing Attitudes Towards Popular Education in Early Twentieth-Century China*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; Borthwick, Sally (1983) *Education and Social Change in China: The Beginning of the Modern Era*, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press; Cleverley, John (1991) *The Schooling of China. Tradition and modernity in Chinese education*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin; Duiker, William J. (1977) *Is'ai Yüan-p'ei. Educator of Modern China*, University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press; Adams, Don (1969) *Education and Modernization in Asia*, London: Addison-Wesley publishing company; Peterson, Glen, R. Hayhoe, Yongling Lu eds. (2001) *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press; Huang Fu-ch'ing (1982) *Chinese Students in Japan in the Late Ch'ing Period*, Tokyo: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies. *Jiaoyu shijie* 教育世界 (publication from 1902), *Jiaoyu zazhi* 教育雜誌 (publication from 1909) and *Zhonghua jiaoyujie* 中華教育界 (publication from 1913) are all important Chinese journal on the issue of education printed in the beginning of the 20th century. The volume *Jindai zhongguo jiaoyu sixiang shi* 近代中國教育思想史 by Shu Xincheng is also worthy of being listed.

³⁵ Hsiao, Theodore E. (1935) *The History of Modern Education in China*, p.19.

patterns, the religious world was also demanding and programming reforming plans that were considered necessary for making Chinese religions more acceptable to the so-called 'modern' world. The debate on *religion* in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century, the threat that the foreign (socially engaged) Christianity represented for the Chinese local beliefs, with the attacks that the latter group was being subject to from both government and common people provoked panic and disorder among the Buddhist community. The quote below refers to an emblematic episode of the time, while the citation incipit of this section describes the opposite, but still extreme, attitude of the Chinese Sangha:

Among the threatened groups was the Buddhist priesthood, whose temple holdings were to be transferred in part to the new schools. Alarm was felt both among Buddhist priests at the court and at the local level: Ma Xulun recalled seeing in 1898 two agitated nuns carrying a bodhisattva away by night to avoid the threatened confiscation. Their alarm was premature but not groundless.³⁶

The revision of the system of education for the Buddhist clergy followed a reforming programme that in China had its roots in the late nineteenth century. Besides the influence of the Meiji restoration in Japan, the process of Westernisation and the movement of Christian missionaries, I do list the entry of the neologism *jiaoyu* 教育 (literally meaning “teach and rear”) in China to define ‘education’ as the most important factor at the basis of this reform. The adoption of this new term indicated implicitly the acceptance (and following adoption) of the ‘foreign’ model of education, it gradually became the main word referring to education, replacing previous terms like *xue* 學 (literally meaning “learn”).³⁷ This implied a new way to

³⁶ Borthwick, Sally (1963) *Education and Social Change in China. The beginnings of a modern era*, p.63.

³⁷ Borthwick, Sally (1963) *Education and Social Change in China. The beginnings of a modern era*,

think about 'education' and therefore shaped the structure of the Chinese schooling. Gang Ding mapped two turning points in the evolution/revolution of China's education in the twentieth century, the first occurring between the 1920s and the 1930s, and involving the consideration of the Japanese and Western systems of schooling as a model for new Chinese institutions of high education.³⁸ The main point was to propose eventually a Chinese model, so as Guan Ding argued:

During the twentieth century Chinese educators encountered varied foreign knowledge patterns and influences and became more and more proactive in utilizing them to pioneer their own national path toward educational development.³⁹

The same patterns occurred in the religious sphere, including the Buddhist world. And thus the reconstruction of Chinese Buddhism was also partly based on reforms on its educational system for the Sangha.

Besides the very well-known volumes by Holmes Welch,⁴⁰ the essays compiled by Taixu (leading educational reformer within the monastic community) and included in the *Taixu dashi quanshu*,⁴¹ Dongchu's *Zhongguo fojiao jindaishi*,⁴² and the more recent volume authored by Chen Bing and Dong Zimei,⁴³ we can find enlightening details on the state of Buddhist monastic education in less known works, such as the biography of the monk Yanpei, Karl Reichelt's *The Transformed*

pp.38-64.

³⁸ Ding, Gang (2001) 'Nationalization and Internationalization: Two Turning Points in China's Education in the Twentieth Century'. In Peterson, Hayhoe, Lu eds. (2001) *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, pp.161-186.

³⁹ Ding, Gang (2001) 'Nationalization and Internationalization', p.161.

⁴⁰ Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.103-120.

⁴¹ Taixu (1942) 'Jinhe seng jiaoyu de jianli' 今後僧教育的建立, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.482-485; Taixu (1923) 'Seng jiaoyu' 僧教育, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.9, pp.1-575.

⁴² Dongchu (1974) *Zhongguo fojiao jindaishi*, pp.197-216, 969-975, 989-1004.

⁴³ Chen Bing, Dong Zimei eds. (2002) *Ershi shiji zhi zhongguo fojiao*, pp.99-148.

Abbot, and the diary of Daoan.⁴⁴ Articles from *Haichao yin* and other leading Buddhist (and non) journals shed light on the subject.⁴⁵

The reforms can be summarised in a few headings:

- 1- strong dependence on the Japanese model of academia, Japan being the first country in the East Asian region to have absorbed the ideal of modernity, and to have created Buddhist universities.⁴⁶
- 2- a new role played by the laity and the consequent secularisation of the sacred; for instance the reformer monk Taixu studied under the guidance of a lay teacher (Yang Wenhui), unprecedented in the history of Chinese Buddhism.
- 3- new curricula, involving non-religious subjects and innovative methodological tools; courses of mathematics, foreign languages and Western philosophy, an idealised programme of the Indian Nalanda University seemed to find its second chance in 'modern' China. The pioneer of the new Buddhist education was Yang Wenhui.
- 4- the new organisation of the educational structure, which made a monastic institution appear similar to a secular university;
- 5- the need for going 'beyond China' and 'beyond Chinese tradition', which included learning other Buddhist languages (like Tibetan) and going abroad for study and field-research (like going to Tibet).⁴⁷

⁴⁴ For instance: Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.5, pp.18-20, v.7 pp.1032-1064.

⁴⁵ The second half of vol. 5 of *Haichao yin wenku* 海潮音文庫 is dedicated to the issue of education (*jiaoyu xue* 教育學), which attests the level of debate on the topic in the first decades of the twentieth century. Other sources on the general state of Buddhist education list: Ruwu (1987) 'Cong sengqie jiaoyu de lishi huigu tan fojiao jiaoduan peiyu houji rencai de lilun yu shixian', in *Shizikong*, v.26, n.3, pp.10-13; Xiangxue (2004) 'Ershiyi shiji fojiao jiaoyu de zhanwang': tan zhongguo gojiao sengqie jiaoyu', in *Fayan*, pp.348-352; Lizheng (2004) 'Ershiyi shiji fojiao sengqie jiaoyu de zhanwang', in *Fayan*, pp.353-357;

⁴⁶ Even in the mid-twentieth century monks planned to visit Japan in order to study the Japanese model of Buddhist academia and then import it into China. See Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.5, p.231 [18 August 1949]

⁴⁷ See Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.160-194; Tuttle, Gray (2005) *Tibetan Buddhists in the making of Modern China*, pp.103-127, 193-211.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Yang Wenhui was a pioneer in proposing new structures and different curricula for learning Buddhism, and creating the bases for a Buddhist institute that could differ by the traditional monastic schools at Chinese monasteries.⁴⁸ Yang Wenhui firstly founded the Dixuan Vihara in 1908 and then the Buddhist Research Society (*foxue yanjiu hui* 佛學研究會) in 1910, with the aim of nurturing especially the Buddhist Sangha.' Yang Wenhui tried to negotiate different tendencies in his programme, encouraging first of all the coherence between monastic system and educational system, and promoting the union of intellectual erudition and Pure Land cultivation, and the integration of the study of Mādhyamika and Yogacara. And Taixu was among his students.

The new Buddhist institutes were not only depositary of Buddhist wisdom but allowed the circulation of secular knowledge, as the quotation at the beginning of this section indicated, and thus were nurturing 'reformer/reformed monks' but also hiding 'political rebels'. This was putting Buddhism in a difficult position, and made monastic leaders, Taixu first of all, worried about the reputation of the Buddhist community.⁴⁹ And even if political involvement was not planned, consideration for training monastics who were also 'socially useful' was generally spread in all the Buddhist monastic institutions. A second historical step was making Taiwan to the headquarters of Chinese Buddhism, with the plan of Buddhist refugees in Formosa to return to Mainland China and to make a 'new' Chinese Buddhism return to China, as part and proud of a 'new' Chinese nation.⁵⁰ The entanglement between social reality

⁴⁸ Karl Reichelt (1935) *The Transformed Abbot*, pp.59-63.

⁴⁹ Karl Reichelt (1935) *The Transformed Abbot*, pp.88.

⁵⁰ Hongyin 弘印 (1979) 'Tan seng jiaoyu' 談僧教育, in *Putishu*, n.315, p.32; Zhaohui (1990) 'Cong Taixu dashi dui seng jiaoyu zhi gaige, ping xiandai zhongguo seng jiaoyu zhi fazhan' 從太虛大師對僧教育之改革,評現代中國僧教育之發展, in *Shizikong* 獅子孔, v.29, n.1, pp. 23-29. Zhonghua Institute of Buddhist Studies edited a volume (titled *Taiwan foxueyuan suo jiaoyu nianlan* 台灣佛學院所教育年鑑, published in 2002) on the development of the system of Buddhist education in Taiwan from the end of nineteenth-century to nowadays, including thus also the period of Japanese occupation of the island, and a detailed account of the main Buddhist institutes established on the island. The introduction of the book lists Yinshun, together with the monks Cihang 慈航 (1895-1954), Wushang 無上 (1918-1966), Baisheng 白聖 (1904-1989), Zhixing 智性 (1884-1964) and Shengyin 聖因

and religious sphere, and thus between the Buddhist world and the 'awakening' of China will be object of the section below.

III.2 .1 A renewed Buddhist education for a 'new' Chinese nation

Nowadays that we are plenty of disasters, Buddhism in Mainland China is suffering unprecedented calamities as well. In case of a counterattack against Mainland China, you all will surely have to go back, you must go back, and propagate anew the seeds of the correct Dharma [zhengfa 正法] in that place where the Buddhist activities already decayed. Of course, if there will be the conditions for returning to Taiwan, the Vihāra will still be your dwelling.⁵¹

Reading through the treatises on education of twentieth-century Chinese monks we find the social and political pressure to create a 'new' Buddhism that could fit the demands of a 'new' China. Fafang questioned why the monastic community had lost the sense of social responsibilities and the sense of belonging to a country besides than to just a religious institution:

It cannot be said that once having renounced family life [*chu jia* 出家], monks also renounce their role in the country [*guomin de diwei* 國民的地位]. [...]The monastic community, regardless of they are scholar-monks or professional-monks, either virtuous-monks or senior-monks, they are all members of the nations, and in any country they have to solve the national social duties and only then they can enjoy the rights of their own nation. Speaking from a more general perspective, not only Buddhist Sangha has to be like that, but the followers of any religion in any country all over the world have all to follow

(1930-1996), as one of the leading figures in the development of Buddhist seminars after the Japanese colonial period.

⁵¹ Yinshun (1972) *Jiaozhi jiaodian yu jiaoxue*, p.216.

this principle, Buddhists of course cannot be an exception.⁵²

Fafang denounced the need of a renewed and active social role of Buddhist monks and argued that this had to be fulfilled through a renewal of the monastic education, that could go along with the renewal of the 'Chinese' country.⁵³ Fafang's appeal reflects the general atmosphere of the historical period of Chinese Buddhism whose reforming acts have Taixu as the most charismatic and representative symbol.

Xuming, a fellow of Yinshun, expressed the same thought and intention in Taiwan a few decades later, as evidence of the continuity of this situation:

What Buddhism hopes for you is to see you able to handle the correct teachings [*zheng jiao* 正教], transform and guide the people. And what any society needs is to improve [*gailiang* 改良] itself, and change the existing habits and customs. In order to achieve this objective, it is naturally essential to have deep insights into Buddhist studies.⁵⁴

But how did Yinshun react to these current circumstances and what was his position? Moreover, how did his educational programme reflect and filter Yinshun's intentions and his restatement of Mādhyamika? A firm point is mirrored in the quotation at the beginning of this section, and this has also to be read as a thought of a post-Taixu pattern. Whereas Taixu was reforming Buddhist education in Mainland China on the wave of the local reform of the nation, in the mid-twentieth century the political pressure in China forced the previous group of political and religious reformers to flee to a 'free China', which was Taiwan, to develop tools and nurture

⁵² Fafang 法舫 (1934) 'Xueseng jin hou zhi lu' 學僧今後之路, in Fafang (1980) *Fafang fashi wenji* 法舫法師文集, pp.218

⁵³ Fafang (1934) 'Xueseng jin hou zhi lu', pp.217-234.

⁵⁴ Xuming (1960) 'Dui Xinzhu nuzhong foxueyuan biye tongxue xunci' 對新竹女眾佛學院畢業同學訓辭, in Xuming (1986) *Xuming fashi yizhu*, p.1307.

new generations who were meant to return to the Mainland, and recreate a free China there. This Buddhist intention was in line with what was happening on the political level with the KMT in exile on the island. And in correlation with what happened in the following decades in the political situation of Taiwan, and the shift of interest from “conquering” China to distancing China and proclaiming independence from the mother nation, Chinese monks changed their objective and gradually did not consider Taiwan as a temporary exile-refuge anymore, but as the start of a *new* path.

A second observation concerns common features in both the “Taixu-pattern” and “Yinshun-pattern”. Both leaders and following institutions focused on three main issues: (1) reform of research methodology and hermeneutic tools; (2) emphasis on Indian Mahāyāna (Mādhyamika and Yogācāra, in different stress) in the curricula of the monastic institutes; (3) flourishing (in terms of frequency and quality) of journals and publications. This aspects characterised Buddhism in China in the first four decades as well as Buddhism in Taiwan just after the 1950s.

III. 2. 2 Fuyan Buddhist Institute 福嚴佛學院 and the Huiji Lecture Hall 慧日講堂

I established Fuyan Vihara and Huiji Lecture Hall from the standpoint of Buddhadharma and not for making it as my own private property.⁵⁵

Among the several complexes associated to Yinshun, Fuyan Vihāra (*fuyan jingshe* 福嚴靜舍), with the annexed Fuyan Buddhist Institute (*fuyan foxueyuan* 福嚴佛學院) in Xinzhu, and the Huiji Lecture Hall (*huiji jiangtang* 慧日講堂) in Taipei are those that Yinshun considered central for his mission, as well as complementary, being Fuyan designated to the 'inner practice' (*neixiu* 內修) and

⁵⁵Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yisheng*, p.126

Huiji to the 'outer propagation' (*waihong* 外弘).⁵⁶

Since the fundamental role that Fuyan and Huiji have played in forming and identifying Yinshun's legacy, we can question whether these are just a 'lecture hall' and a 'vihara' or more complex religious institutions.

There is not much documentation on the Huiji Lecture Hall, which is rarely mentioned in books on Taiwan Buddhist temples and whose history is better reconstructed through short announcements published in local Buddhist journals, such as *Haichao yin*, *Putishu* and *Shizikong*, documenting changes of abbots, seminar advertisements and liturgies.⁵⁷ Huiji was established in 1960, with the opening ceremony taking place in 1961. Planned with the objective of 'spreading the Dharma', and in line with his programme of Buddhist education, Yinshun organised four series of evening lectures on Buddhist scriptures per year, with the transcription of those lectures published later in written form. Being built as a 'lecture hall', only three Dharma ceremonies were held every year, but sessions of group cultivation were organised every Sunday. After Yinshun, monks like Yin Hai 印海, Zhenhua 真華, Ruxu 如虛 and Houxing 厚行 were appointed to run Huiji. Yinshun's tonsure disciple Houguan 厚觀 became abbot of Huiji in summer 2006. In commemoration (and glorification) of Yinshun, the series of lectures that had been interrupted for a few years restarted again under Houguan's direction, the lecture hall was enlarged and now has a updated website.⁵⁸ Even here we see a shift from Yinshun to post-Yinshun patterns: whereas Yinshun gave lectures on Buddhist scriptures, the present

⁵⁶ Yinshun was also abbot of Shandao Temple (*Shandaosi* 善導寺), and built Miaoyun Vihāra (*Miaoyun jingshe* 妙雲靜舍) and Huayu Vihāra (*Huayu jingshe* 華雨靜舍), which have hosted him but populated by nuns.

⁵⁷ In 1961 the journal *Putishu* dedicated the picture section of v.9, n.3, p. 4, to the 'Inauguration of Huiji Auditorium in Taipei'. See also Kan Zhengzong (1990) *Taiwan fosi daoyou (er) da taipei diqu (xia)* 台灣佛寺導遊(二)大台北地區(下), pp.36-38; Zhu Qilin, ed. (1988) *Taiwan Fojiao mingcha* 台灣佛教名刹, v.1, pp.92-95.

⁵⁸ Buddhist seminars and ceremonies held at the Huiji Lecture Hall are all listed on <http://www.lwdh.org.tw/>.

abbot included Yinshun's volumes among the texts.

Fuyan Vihara was established in 1953 as a center for the study of Buddhism.⁵⁹ The interest in the religion that the seminars opened to the local laity at Fuyan inspired the foundation of the Xinzhu Female Buddhist Institute (*Xinzhu nüzhong foxueyuan* 新竹女眾佛學院) in 1957 and Lingyin Buddhist Institute (*Lingyin foxueyuan* 靈隱佛學院) in 1958.⁶⁰ In 1960, Xuming together with a few monks graduated from the Lingyin Buddhist Institute made the 'Vihara' (*jingshe* 精舍) turning into an 'Academy' (*xueshe* 學舍). This *xueshe* opened in March 1961, being the only structure for male monastic education, with a three year programme (total of six terms).⁶¹ In 1964 the *xueshe* returned to being a *jingshe*, and from 1964 to 1969 it

⁵⁹ Zhu Qilin, ed. (1988) *Taiwan Fojiao mingcha*, v.1, pp.86-91; Wuyin (1994) *Taiwan foxueyuan zhi – Fuyan foxueyuan zhi*; Zhonghua foxueyuan, ed. (2002) 'Fuyan foxueyuan', in *Taiwan foxueyuan suo jiaoyu nianlan*, pp.377-402; Fagushan, ed. (2001) 'Fuyan foxueyuan', in *Liangban foxue jiaoyu jiaoliu zuotanhui bolanhui shilu*, pp. 82-85. The journal *Haichao yin* provides information on the Fuyan institution in a special issue in 1967, v.47, n.7. Photo gallery of Fuyan was published on *Putishu*, 1965, n.153, p.6. See also: Moru 默如 (1963) 'Cong fuyan jingshe de huanjing shuoqi: dui fuyan jingshe de tongxue jianghua' 從福嚴精舍的環境說起;對福嚴精舍的同學講話, in *Putishu*, n.129, p.19; Editorial (1987) 'Fojiao jiaoyu jigou jieshao: Fuyan foxueyuan' 佛教教育機構介紹:福嚴佛學院, in *Shizikong*, v.26, n.5, pp.42-43. Fuyan Vihara also edited a number of annual reports on the Buddhist institutes, whose publication is not made available to the general public but distributed only amongst local Buddhist circles. I could receive copies of most of them, and consult the restant, thanks to Houguan who was Dean of the institute during my fieldwork in 2005. The main volumes are: (1989) *Fuyan foxueyuan diwujie biye jinian tekan* 福嚴佛學院第五屆畢業紀念特刊; (1992) *Fuyan zhongjian luocheng jinian tekan* 福嚴重建落成紀念特刊; (1993) *Fuyan foxueyuan dilijie biye tongxue lu* 福嚴佛學院第六屆畢業同學錄; (1996) *Fuyan foxueyuan diqijie biye tongxue lu* 福嚴佛學院第七屆畢業同學錄; (2002) *Fuyan foxueyuan dijiujie biye tekan* 福嚴佛學院第九屆畢業特刊; (2005) *Fuyan lijie shisheng tongxunelu* 福嚴歷屆師生通訊錄. Important details on history and curricula of the institute are included in the volume written in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Fuyan Vihāra, entitled *Fuyan jingshe wushi zhounian jinian tekan* and published in 2005.

⁶⁰ About the Lingyin Buddhist Institute, in 1962 *Haichao yin* dedicated a special issue to the graduation, 'Lingyin foxueyuan biye teji' 靈隱佛學院畢業特記, in v.42, n.1, pp. 17-51; see especially Wushang 'Yuanzhang xunci' 院長訓辭, pp.21-22, Xuming 'Fuyuanzhang xunci' 副院長訓辭, p.22, Yin Hai 印海 'Renyuan xundao baogao' 任院訓導報告, pp.23-27, Xuming 'Lingyin foxueyuan sannian' 靈隱佛學院三年, pp.27-29 (part of this article was published also in *Putishu*, 1961, v.9, n.3, pp.27-28. About Xinzhu Female Buddhist Institute, see Miaofeng 'Xinzhu nüzhong foxueyuan sannian lai de jiaowu gaikuang', in Wuyin, ed. (1994) *Fuyan foxueyuan zhi*, pp.101-105.

⁶¹ In 1963 *Haichao yin* dedicated a special issue to the first graduation of the three-year programme of Fuyan Academy, in v.44, n.12, pp.2-14. See especially Yinshun 'Yinshun daoshi xunci' 印順導師訓辭, p.2, Xuming 'Fuyan xueshe sannian: you chengli dao jiehe' 福嚴學舍三年;由成立到結合, pp.7-10; Renjun 'Qing nimen wangji sigezi: wei fuyan xueshe diyijie biye' 請你們忘記四個字;為福嚴學舍第一屆畢業, pp.11-12. See also the editorial 'Fuyan xueshe shoujie xueseng shengyan juxing biye dianli', in *Putishu*, 1964, v.134, p.61; Liding (1962) 'Fuyan xueshe ji', in *Putishu*, n.119, pp.34-35.

was not organised as an educational structure. The Fuyan Buddhist Institute (*Fuyan foxueyuan* 福嚴佛學院) opened only in 1969 (sixteen years after Fuyan Vihara was founded), with the purpose to replace the Taixu Buddhist Institute (*Taixu foxueyuan* 太虛佛學院) that run for two years in Taipei under the supervision of Yinshun.⁶² Among the enrolled students, only five were monks, and this made the Fuyan, which was instituted as a place of education and training for male Buddhists, becoming a female institute from 1969 to 1993.⁶³ Since 1993, Fuyan has been one of the main Buddhist institutes for monks in Taiwan. The monk Zhenhua 真華, who was Dean of the Fuyan Buddhist Institute for 18 years, witness and leader of the most relevant changes to the Fuyan, is the best source for analysis of the institute.⁶⁴ After Zhenhua, the only and last significant modification was advanced and concretised by Houguan in 2002; the most considerable change was turning the three-year programme of study, which was adopted in the *jingshe*, *xueshe* and early *foxueyuan* into a double degree, including a four-year university level and a three-year graduate programme. Houguan's intention was to level Fuyan Buddhist Institute with the public system of higher education.

Fuyan was meant to nurture the 'Dharma teachers' who were then preaching at Huiji, which made the former as the headquarters of Yinshun's mission and the main object of analysis in this section of dissertation. Main research questions are: (1) Yinshun's dimension of Buddhist education, unveiled through a study of how he

⁶² Editorial 'Taixu foxueyuan chao xueseng juxing kaoshi baoming congshu' 太虛佛學院超學僧舉行考試報名叢書, in *Putishu*, 1967, v.174, p.53; Editorial 'Taixu foxueyuan ruxueshi jiu yue shiyi ri jiang shouke' 太虛佛學院入學試九月十一日將授課, in *Putishu*, 1967, v.178, p.53; Editorial 'Taibei Taixu foxueyuan juxing kaixue dianli' 台北太虛佛學院舉行開學典禮, in *Putishu*, 1968, n.184, p.6, 53. The founding of an institute named to Taixu indicates the will for the Buddhist programmes in Taiwan to maintain a link to the reformer monk and that wave of Buddhism in Mainland China. See Chapter Six for more on Yinshun's direct and indirect reference to Taixu.

⁶³ Here is another sign of Yinshun's 'traditionalism', besides the devotion to the tonsure master whose pagoda was never replaced, to the conviction that the male Sangha has a priority on the female Sangha. See Yinshun (1949) *Fofa gailun*, pp.23-24; Zhenhua (2003) 'Lueshuo wo yu daoshi ji fuyan de yinyuan' 略說我與導師及福嚴的因緣, in *Fuyan jingshe wushi zhounian jinian tekan*, pp.49-50.

⁶⁴ Zhenhua (1991) 'Fuyan foxueyuan zhi jiaoyu zongzhi jiqi tizhi', in *Shizikong*, 1991, v.30, n.10, pp.33-37.

structured Fuyan; (2) Mādhyamika's dimension of Yinshun's ideal for Buddhist education: how his attempt to propose a restatement of the school of Nāgārjuna was concretised in educational programmes.

To the question 'You value erudition and Wisdom, thus why have you named a place of cultivation as Fuyan Vihāra?', Yinshun replied 'If the conditions for merits [*fude* 福德] are not sufficient, Wisdom is difficult to be achieved! My studying of Buddhadharma and result achievements are limited, this is just because my merit conditions were non sufficient.'⁶⁵ In other interviews and writings Yinshun pointed out original features and objective of Fuyan, in its two and complementary aspects of *jingshe* and *foxueyuan*, a dwelling for cultivation and a place of study. Conceived as a close study-group, Fuyan enlarged quite soon with the arrival of other local and Mainland monks, who referred to Fuyan as *the* training place for Dharma teachers and Dharma preachers.⁶⁶

The Yinshunian dimension of Fuyan or, in other words, the value of Fuyan as basis of the formation of Yinshun's lineage became evident since the opening of the *foxueyuan* in 1969. In order to maintain a clear direction, those who were appointed to the administration and especially to the teaching were monastics who had been close to Yinshun (*qinjin Yinshun* 親近印順), or disciples of his (*qi men sheng* 其門生), or graduates from the same institute.⁶⁷ The most important issue was to take the essence of Yinshun's scholarship (*yinshun de xuesi jingshen* 印順的學思精神) as

⁶⁵ Yinshun (1984) 'You xin fahai liushi nian', in *HYJ* (1993), v.5, p.1. The 'Fuyan motto', which appears on all the pamphlets and books on the institute, recites: 'The joint practice of merits and wisdom results in the Middle Way; The mutual correspondence of wisdom and compassion can be called True Vehicle' (Ch: 福德與智慧齊修庶乎中道；嚴明共慈悲相應可謂真乘). This is complementary to the script on the main gate of Huirì, which recite: 'The light of wisdom continuously transmits the Buddha-mind like lamps on a field and plants the seeds of wisdom; the sun rises and shines innumerable lands of great brightness' (Ch: 慧日綿延永傳諸佛心燈同圓種智；日輪湧現普照恆沙國土大放光明).

⁶⁶ Yinshun, (1984) 'You xin fahai liushi nian', in *Haichao yin* (1993), v.5, pp.1-3; (1955) 'Fuyan xianhua', in (1972) *Jiaozhi jiaodian yu jiaoxue*, pp.213-227; 'Yi Fuyan er san shi – tan fojiao zai renjian', in *Yongguang ji* (2005), pp.181-187; (2005) *Pingfan de yisheng (zhongting ben)*, pp.94-111, 118-130;

⁶⁷ Wuyin ed. (1994) *Fuyan foxueyuan zhi*, p.43

'navigator', with Yinshun's writings and theology permeating teachers' lessons and students' reading.⁶⁸

The parallel between Yinshun's principles in founding the *jingshe* in the 1950s and the leading guidelines of the *foxueyuan* since the 1970s unveils a shift from the 'Yinshun' to the 'Post-Yinshun' patterns, as well as the main marks of identity for both the paradigms. Yinshun simply addressed the aims of: (1) Purifying body and minds; (2) Spreading the correct Dharma; (3) Benefitting sentient beings.⁶⁹ The Fuyan Buddhist Institute increased guidelines and objective of the institution listing four school objectives, three marks of educational policy and four main features of the foundation, which all show the 'post' legacy to Yinshun.⁷⁰ A further step in the construal of the Fuyan 'school' was the creation of a hymn and of general statement of the institute (*fuyan yuanxun* 福嚴院訓), which Zhenhua defined in the end of the 1970s. The latter recites:

Obeying Fuyan style,
with little wants and contentment,
thus being content to lead a humble but virtuous life;
Spreading Fuyan spirit,
understanding what is incorrect and what is correct,
and thus protecting Buddhism;
Preserving Fuyan honour,
truly studying and practising,

⁶⁸ Wuyin ed. (1994) *Fuyan foxueyuan zhi*, p.39

⁶⁹ Houguan, ed. (2003) *Fuyan foxueyuan wushi zhounian jinian tekan*, pp.165.

⁷⁰ Four objectives of the school (*banxue zongzhi* 辦學宗旨): (1) Forming monk talents; (2) protecting Buddhadharma; (3) Perpetuating Buddha's wisdom; (4) Purifying sentient beings' minds. Education policy (*jiaoyu fangzhen* 教育方針): (1) Guiding to the correct learning of Buddhadharma; (2) Influencing noble religious sentiments; (3) Teaching correct methods of study and practice; (4) Realising a tight and harmonious Sangha life. Four features of the institute (*benyuan tese* 本院特色): (1) Follow Yinshun's instruction "purifying body and mind, spreading the correct Dharma, benefitting sentient beings", with the aim to nurture Buddhist talents; (2) Besides the canonical scriptures (sutras, sastras and vinaya), including Yinshun's corpus of writing as compulsory reading in class; (3) do not limit study and practice to one or a few schools but focusing on the various traditions in order to enlarge Buddhist knowledge; (4) the institute is meant for a monastic community that practice Buddhadharma, with a quiet environment suitable to study and cultivation. See: Houguan, ed. (2003) *Fuyan foxueyuan wushi zhounian jinian tekan*, pp.166-167.

without mouthing high-sounding words;
Accomplishing Fuyan mission,
benefitting oneself through benefitting the others,
seeking Enlightenment and rescuing the sentient beings.⁷¹

This generational shift is reflected in the alteration of the curricula in the Fuyan. With Yinshun leading the *jingshe*, the study was centred on canonical scriptures, which were read in a precise sequence. Xuming included also some volumes authored by Taixu for the students of the *xueshe*. Finally, with the opening of the *foxueyuan*, under the leadership of Yanpei and then Zhenhua, Taixu's works were replaced with Yinshun's corpus of literature; moreover, the amount of canonical scriptures and Yinshun's writings were equally balanced, as evidence of the authoritative voice of the founder of Fuyan.

These details confirmed the institutional shaping of the Yinshunian doctrine, while the Fuyan curricula emphasised the Yinshunian dimension of the institution, as well as the Mādhyamika pattern of it. At the time of the foundation of Fuyan (1953), Yinshun included his *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji* within the reading for the first year, *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun* for the third year students of Fuyan Vihāra. At the Wulin Buddhist Institute (1961-1964), Xuming prescribed *Ru Zhonglun* to first and second year students. Later on in the 1960s, Yanpei lectured on *Ru Zhonglun* in Fuyan Buddhist Institute. The emphasis on Candrakīrti's scripture defies the criticism to Yinshun's total rejection of late Indian Buddhism and opens a discussion on the doctrinal and historical value of Fazun's translations.

The analysis of the Mādhyamika dimension of Fuyan curricula can resume the discussion of Yinshun's negotiation between 'modernity' and 'traditionalism', show his legacy to, as well as distance from Taixu and his peculiar position within the

⁷¹ Zhenhua (1992) *Fuyan jingshe zhongjian luocheng jinian tekan* 福嚴精舍重建落成紀念特刊, p.8

twentieth-century Chinese Buddhology. I would summarise Yinshun's educational programme under four headings: (1) Going beyond Chan and Pure Land schools. Similar to Taixu, Yinshun denounced the Chinese 'traditional' tendencies to focus on the well established Chan and Pure Land, at the expenses of the other schools, including Mādhyamika and Yogacara. Therefore, similarly to Taixu, Yinshun encouraged the study of all the Buddhist traditions, including those that did not become predominant in the Buddhist China. (2) Study of Indian Buddhism and only then of Chinese Buddhism. Different from Taixu, who maintained an overall devotion to the Chinese (local) tradition of Buddhism, Yinshun emphasised the importance of Indian (original) Buddhism, and, along to his historical viewpoint, made the study of the latter as preceding any study of the transformation of the religion in China. As a result, the study of Nāgārjuna's teachings became as important as, or even more important than the study of Jizang's commentaries. (3) Yinshun's negotiation with the 'tradition' of Chinese Buddhism. The scriptures belonging to the San-lun school, including the *Shi'er men lun*, were never missing in the Fuyan curricula, indeed they were among the foundational texts. (4) Yinshun's negotiation with the 'innovation' of his time. According to curricula and reports by former students and teachers in Fuyan, Yinshun underlined the study of *Ru zhonglun* as preparatory to the understanding of *Zhonglun* and Nāgārjuna's teachings in general.

III. 3 Followers of Yinshun's Interpretation of Mādhyamika

Yinshun's *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji* is the book with which most Chinese begin their study of Nāgārjuna's teachings. This book had an extremely deep influence on the Chinese Mādhyamika [*zhongguan* 中觀] scholarship, but we cannot avoid to say that this book also has its own shortcomings.⁷²

⁷² Wan Jinchuan (1998) *Zhongguan sixiang jianglu*, p.257.

This chapter began by assessing the Taiwanese discourse of a *Post* Yinshun pattern of (Mādhyamika) Buddhology, exploring key features and definition of this *Post*. This final segment returns to the issue and argues the complexity of the Post-Yinshun domain.

The affiliation to the Post-Yinshunness implied inheritance of Yinshun's theology, involved different degrees of comment and criticism to Yinshun's corpus of writing and resulted in the unavoidable reshaping of the figure and thought of Yinshun, with the final effect of the construal of a “new” Yinshun and Yinshunness.

The variety of those 'Post' intervention on Yinshun and Yinshunness demonstrates the multivocality and heterogeneity of the Post-Yinshun pattern, made of different generational levels and affiliations, discrepant (reasons of) engagement with Yinshun's scholarship. I argue that this creates a schism within the Post-Yinshun/Yinshunness, and the dichotomy between a “Post-Yinshun” and a “Post Post-Yinshun”, with the latter including those who have produced a scholarly contextualisation of Yinshun's works within a wider area of Buddhist scholasticism.

In specific, the scope of the section is to assess those who preserve and transmit the Yinshunian Mādhyamika, and reveal any shift in the hermeneutics and approach to the text in parallel with the shift from the Yinshun to the voices of the post-Yinshun Mādhyamika. We can group these figures into different institutional structures and scholastic accomplishments. Different from the previous chapter, which focused on Yinshun's fellows and contemporaries mostly from Mainland China, this part explores the generation of students and disciples that Yinshun nurtured after his arrival in Taiwan and therefore belongs to what I define as the Post-Yinshun pattern.

III. 3. 1 Monastic Disciples

Master [Yinshun] has a very good knowledge of Mādhyamika, which was always highly esteemed, and influenced those in Taiwan who have been studying Mādhyamika. The features of his Mādhyamika studies and Nāgārjuna's are similar. In all my academic papers and writings I inherited his discussions on 'conditional arising' and 'emptiness'.⁷³

The nun Zhaohui 昭慧 (b.1957), student of Yinshun and famous activist in defence of women and animal rights, continued by explaining how Yinshun's Mādhyamika has been influencing her methodological approach to scriptures and her daily life.⁷⁴ She is not the only case of followers affected by the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun.

In line with Yinshun's concept of complementarity of the two scriptures *Zhonglun* and *Da zhidu lun*, the two main Mādhyamika monastic followers are the well-known monk Houguan 厚觀 (b.1956), an expert of *Da zhidu lun*, and the less known monk Fazang 法藏 (b.1956), who formed a study group of mainly lay Buddhists with focus on *Zhong lun*. Houguan and Fazang are both part of the Fuhui Sangha Assembly and members of the Yinshun Buddhist Cultural Foundation.

Born in 1956 in Miaoli, Houguan at the early age of 18 became interested in Buddhism reading the *Da zhidu lun*, and then enrolling at the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies. Most of his studies have been conducted under the supervision of Yinshun himself, and thus, after the graduation in 1985, Houguan joined the Sangha

⁷³Pan Qian (2002) *Yinshun daoshi zhuan*, p.352.

⁷⁴Pan Qian (2002) *Yinshun daoshi zhuan*, pp.351-353; Lan Jifu, ed. (1988) *Yinshun daoshi de sixiang yu xuewen*, pp. 131-139; Zhaohui (1995) *Renjian fojiao de baozhongzhe*, pp.1-6.

with Yinshun as tonsure master, a fact that makes Houguan one of the few direct disciples of Yinshun. In 1990s, under Yinshun's suggestion, Houguan enrolled a PhD programme at the Tokyo National University, with a research project focusing on doctrinal aspects of *Da zhidu lun* itself, which he interrupted in 1997 and then returned to Taiwan. Abbot of Fuyan Vihara and Dean of Fuyan Buddhist Institute from 1999 to 2006, Houguan is currently abbot of Huiji Lecture Hall and president of the Yinshun Buddhist Cultural Foundation.⁷⁵

Houguan surely is the successor of Yinshun in what concerns Mādhyamika Buddhology in a few respects: he is the most representative case of 'Post-Yinshun Mādhyamika voice', the promoter of the shift from an Yinshunian Mādhyamika based on canonical scriptures to an Yinshunian Mādhyamika based on Yinshun's commentaries on (Nāgārjuna's) canonical scriptures, the contact through whom Yinshun became aware of the theories of Lamotte and Japanese scholarship on *Da zhidu lun* and thus participated in the international debate on the authorship and translation of the scripture.⁷⁶ Specifically about educational ideology, Yinshun's advice to Houguan, a Buddhist monk interested in mastering Mādhyamika, to pursue higher education in a Japanese institution reveals his judgement on local and foreign institutions, which differed from other senior monks contemporary to him who criticised the 'modern' way to approach the text in defence of the local 'traditional' (or better, conservative) methodology.⁷⁷

Fazang, born in 1956 at Pintong, is not a tonsure disciple of Yinshun, but studied under his supervision during his stay at Huiji Lecture Hall between 1985 and 1988. At that time, Houxing 厚行 was abbot of the centre, but Yinshun was giving lectures on *Zhonglun*. After a few years, Fazang established the Chongge Publishing

⁷⁵Pan Qian (2002) *Yinshun daoshi zhuan*, pp.255-289.

⁷⁶ See Chapter Eight on Yinshun's re-construction of *Da zhidu lun*.

⁷⁷ See Chapter Two.

House (重閣出版社), which was meant to distribute Yinshun's corpus of writings, and to be place of reunion and study for a group of lay Buddhists, of different ages and social classes, who concentrated on the study and practice of Mādhyamika teachings. The practical application of the concept of emptiness has been the core teaching of Fazang, and a peculiarity among the common adoption of Nāgārjuna's tenets.

III. 3. 2 Lay Scholarship

Some of the leader scholars of Buddhism in Taiwan today have been 'official students' of Yinshun, while others have been influenced by the latter in indirect ways. Even among the lay scholarship we can chart a number of generations, going from the elder Li Zhifu, Yang Huinan and Lan Jifu to the younger Wan Jinchuan and You Xiangchou 游祥洲.

Yang Huinan, one of the most esteemed professor of Buddhist studies in Taiwan, started his research because inspired by Yinshun, and mainly by Yinshun's research on Mādhyamika, and to Yinshun he dedicated his volume *Longshu yu Zhongguan zhexue* 龍樹與中觀哲學.⁷⁸ In 1965, during his graduate studies at the Taiwan National University, Dept. of Philosophy, You Xiangchou read Yinshun's *Xingkongxue tanyuan*, and decided to dedicate his career to the study of Nāgārjuna's school.⁷⁹

Charting the history of Yinshun's influence among the Mādhyamika Buddhology in Taiwan, we unveil a shift from Yang Huinan's generation, in which Yinshun's legacy is strong and undermines the degree of criticism to the *daoshi*, to

⁷⁸ Pan Qian (2002) *Yinshun daoshi zhuan*, pp.286-289.

⁷⁹ Pan Qian (2002) *Yinshun daoshi zhuan*, pp.100-105.

Wan Jinchuan's case, whose scholarly approach to Yinshun (and consequent criticism) and his way of historicising the monk within the international scholarship in the field shows a certain distance from the *daoshi* and a more critical analysis of his thought and oeuvre.

From a different perspective, whereas in the second half of the twentieth-century until the end of the 1980s Mādhyamika Buddhology in Taiwan shows influence from the Yinshunian Mādhyamika, in the most recent decades the scholarship in the field, like Lin Zhenguó's work titled *Kongxing yu xiandaixing* 空性與現代性 (1999) as representative case, seemed to have adopted a new framework which does not show traces of Yinshunness, but that might have never flourished without the former work of Yinshun.

III. 4 Conclusion

The reforms of the educational programmes for the Sangha, which was related to the new secular education initiated in twentieth-century China as effect to the wave of Westernisation in East Asia, were also adopted by the pre-Yinshun (i.e., Taixu), Yinshun and the post-Yinshun.

This chapter highlighted Yinshun in promoting his restatement of Mādhyamika through his own institutions. Yinshun institutionalized his identity and the post-Yinshun completed such a institutionalisation by adapting *Yinshun-ness* and Yinshun's original projects to new demands.

PART TWO

MĀDHYAMIKA TEACHINGS IN YINSHUN'S WORKS

I am not a disciple of a particular sect (I do not want to make myself as a founder either), I am not a Dharma teacher who expounds scriptures, I am not a scholar who makes critical study of texts just for the critical study itself, or makes research just for research itself either. I act in accordance with one conviction that derives from the scriptures, which is 'Study for the Buddhadharma', 'Study for Buddhism'.¹

After the historical analysis of the state of the Mādhyamika scholarship in twentieth-century, and of the intellectual and Buddhist environment wherein Yinshun learned and proposed his hermeneutics of Nagarjuna's teachings, this part focuses on the figure of Yinshun, discussing his conceptualisation of Buddhist doctrine, from its foundations to the distinct Mādhyamika tradition.

This section is divided into three chapters. Chapters Four and Five assess, respectively, the revised 'Buddhist (fundamental) dictionary' and the new 'Buddhist (Mādhyamika) encyclopedia' coming from Yinshun's thought. These two chapters provide the conceptual domain that Yinshun used as a base for the theoretical structure of his *renjian fojiao*, which Chapter Six aims to analyse and problematise by arguing a Mādhyamika framework in its theology.

All these chapters define, in different contexts, the 'negotiation' that Yinshun theorised and followed throughout his Buddhist career. According to Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China 'adjusted itself to the Chinese environment and, by so doing,

¹ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (2003) *Huayu ji*, v.4, p.47.

ceased to be Indian.² According to Yinshun, Buddhism in China should not have ‘ceased to be Indian’ in order to be Buddhism, therefore he proposed a resolution which could integrate both the stages of development in the religion.

Before analyzing the ‘Yinshun dimension’ of the Mādhyamika doctrine (and doctrinal history), it is therefore necessary to assess Yinshun’s interpretation of some basic concepts in Buddhism, which constitute the frame of his resolution on the renewal of Chinese Mahāyāna.

In the introduction to *Shuo yiqie youbu wei zhu de lunshu yu lunshi zhi yanjiu* 說一切有部爲主的論書與論師之研究 (1968) Yinshun listed eight arguments on what Buddhism is and how it should be conceived and studied.³ This eightfold personal statement is relevant here as evidence of how his understanding of Buddhism (and thus of Mādhyamika as well) was mainly a twentieth-century Chinese pattern of hermeneutics. I summarise here the main value of those assertions.

Firstly, Buddhadharma [*fofa* 佛法] is a religion [*zongjiao* 宗教], with the caveat that ‘religion’ does not imply either ‘secularisation’ [*suhua* 俗化] or ‘deification’ [*shenhua* 神化], but finds its ultimate definition in the phenomenon of *renjian fojiao* 人間佛教, which was introduced by Taixu’s *rensheng fojiao* 人生佛教. Yinshun’s statement sounds like a response to a general atmosphere when Buddhism was undermined by Western religions and the accusation of being a passive and negative influence on the society.⁴ This can be related to the sixth statement, which argues that Buddhadharma is neither merely a ‘theory’ [*lilun* 理論], nor just a ‘practice’ [*xiuzheng* 修證], but should be conceived as the combination of both. This explain the analytical bases on which Yinshun made Mādhyamika, an apparently

² Ch’en, Kenneth K.S. (1964) *Buddhism in China. A Historical Survey*, p.485.

³ Yinshun (1968) *Shuo yiqie youbu weizhu de lunshu yu lunshi zhi yanjiu*, pp.2-5.

⁴ Kwok, D.W.Y. (1965) *Scientism in Chinese Thought 1900-1950*, chapter one.

merely intellectual Buddhist tradition, integrated within the Chinese practical 'Engaged Buddhism', and indeed formed the theoretical framework of this socially involved dimension of Buddhism.

The second, third and fourth arguments focus on the origins of Buddhadharmā, as rooted in the Correct Awakening [*zhengjue* 正覺] of Buddha, and its feature of adaptability [*shiying* 適應] to the distinct nature of the sentient beings. The doctrine of 'skillful means' is the best manifestation of this feature. The concept of 'adaptability' facilitates the acceptance of Yinshun's strategy of negotiation and the final resolution, which he explained as the solution that fits the twentieth-century circumstances.

My dissertation argues that even if the main intention was to restore a pure Indian Buddhism, Yinshun did make a negotiation with the Chinese tradition, and, as sign of the Chinese dimension of Yinshun's teachings, the seventh argument recites:

'I am a Chinese Buddhist. Buddhism was originated in India and then transmitted in China, where it was reshaped, sinicised and eventually produced its own system. Therefore the respect for Chinese Buddhism implies even more consideration for Indian Buddhism (Taixu expressed the same idea in his "Aims and methods of Buddhology").'⁵

This statement demonstrates that Yinshun was a *Chinese* Buddhist, and moreover, with the search of authority in Taixu's teachings and the appeal for a recovery of Indian Buddhism, he shows to be a *modern* Chinese Buddhist. This conception of the history of Buddhism, from rise through development to fall, in the fifth statement is compared to the life of a human being, which passes the phases of childhood, youth, maturity, and finally old age and death. This was the thread of

⁵ Yinshun (1968) *Shuo yiqie youbu weizhu de lunshu yu lunshi zhi yanjiu*, p. 5.

Yinshun's *panjiao* 判教 and the vision of doctrinal history which explained his critical position to the Chinese tradition of Buddhism and final development of the religion in general.⁶ Because of this frame of evolution, Yinshun argued in the eighth statement, one should pay more attention to the period and factors of decline more than to the moment of glory in order to get benefits.

This eightfold statement summarises the theoretical framework of Yinshun's theology, and thus include preliminary issues that are essential to the understanding of his reshaping of Mādhyamika terminology, history and doctrines that this second part of my thesis will discuss, assess and clarify.

⁶ Yinshun's theology on the essence of the Dharma as subject to a gradual corruption along the history of transmission of Buddhism is well exemplified through the metaphor of the 'diluted milk': 'Buddhadharma [*fofa* 佛法] can be compared to milk. [Buddhadharma] cannot but attempt to be suitable and propose 'expedients' [*fangbian* 方便] in order to benefit the living beings. This is like to add water to the milk [...] In the end, the true taste of the Buddhadharma has become weak, and the Buddhism that there had been in India disappeared!'. Yinshun (1971) *Yuanshi fojiao shengdian zhi jicheng*, p.879.

CHAPTER FOUR

A NEW DEFINITION OF *LONGSHU FAMEN* 龍樹法門

After the investigation of the historical background and the intellectual, Buddhist, and especially Chinese, environment within which Yinshun developed and promoted his understanding of Mādhyamika, with consideration of the several voices that interacted with him, this chapter assesses the semantic and doctrinal frameworks of the school that the scholar-monk eventually restore.

IV. 1 Analysis of the Terminology adopted by Yinshun

Yinshun's eightfold statement introduces his foundational ideas on Buddhism and Buddhist history, and adopts technical terms such as *zongjiao* 宗教, *fojiao* 佛教 and *fafa* 佛法 with specific meanings that are essential to understand before reading his works on Mādhyamika terminology, history and textual identity, and interpreting the dynamics of formation of a 'new' identity of Nāgārjuna's school in modern Chinese Buddhism.

The first section of this chapter analyses pairs of terms that Yinshun used often in his volumes as in either antonyms or paronyms. The analysis of the first pair reveals Yinshun's understanding of Dharma. The second pair specifies what Yinshun meant for school affiliation and sectarianism, and why and how Yinshun claimed to side beyond any sect. The third pair explains Yinshun's modalities of practice. The fourth pair defines why Yinshun praised particularly the School of Nāgārjuna, and why this specific position of his stood in opposition to the mainstream of Chinese Buddhism.

How Yinshun dealt with these pairs unveil Yinshun's distinct position within contemporary Chinese Buddhism, as well as the general state of Chinese Buddhism

at that time. For instance, Yinshun underlined a distinction between 'school of thought', 'institution', and 'school of practice', a distinction that mirrors the concern for sectarianism expressed by many Buddhists at that time.¹ Secondly, Yinshun's process of rephrasing foundational concepts of Buddhism can be seen in line with the compilation of the new Buddhist dictionaries that distinguished the period 1920-1960.²

IV. 1. 1 *Fofa* 佛法 vis-à-vis *Fojiao* 佛教

About Indian Buddhism, I aim to understand the true meaning and the expedients of Buddhadharma [*fofa* 佛法], and decrease the distance between Buddhadharma and contemporary Buddhism [*fojiao* 佛教].³

In the first place Yinshun made a distinction between 'Buddhadharma' [*Fofa* 佛法] and 'Buddhism' [*Fojiao* 佛教], with 'Buddhadharma' [*Buddhadharma* 佛法] being the 'Correct Dharma' [*Zheng fa* 正法] that Buddha had realised and preached, and with 'Buddhism' [*Fojiao*] indicating the sophisticated phenomena developed through time and space, human affairs and locations.⁴

Yinshun uses 「佛法」 and 佛法, with or without brackets. Most of the times he used the former to indicate Early Buddhism, thus a specific stage of development of Buddhism, and the latter to mean Buddhadharma, which means Buddha's doctrine. Sometimes he interchanged the two options, in line with the equality between Early

¹ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, pp.35-40. The interviews I made during my fieldwork in 2001-2002, and 2005 provided most of the information for this chapter, especially for the issue of 'sectarianism'.

² Among the others, the compilation of the dictionary *Foxue da cidian* 佛學大辭典 by Ding Fubao 丁福保 (1874~1952) dates back to 1920.

³ Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, p.vii

⁴ Ruwu 如悟 (2004) 'Renjian daoshi, shifang dianfan' 人間導師,十方典範, in Houguan, ed. (2006) *Yinshun daoshi yonghui ji*, p.104.

Buddhism and Buddhadharma that he was promoting. This can explain why he adopted the term *fofa* instead of *fojiao* when he referred to late stages of development of Buddhism including Early Mahāyāna, Late Mahāyāna and the Esoteric tradition.

Yinshun's classification of Buddhist doctrines (*panjiao*) provides grounds for the understanding of Yinshun's definition of *fofa*, in its historical and doctrinal meaning, and facilitates the interpretation of the dichotomy between *fofa* and *fojiao*.⁵ According to Yinshun's *panjiao*, *fofa*, considered in its historical sense, comprehends the two phases of original Buddhism (原始佛教) and the first stage of sectarian Buddhism (部派佛教).⁶ Here is the doctrinal basis of Yinshun's negotiation between *Āgamas* and Mahāyāna that he promoted as the resolution for a new Buddhism, and therefore also the grounds of his understanding *Zhong lun* as en-compassing the *Āgamas* rather than being directly linked to the Prajñāpāramitā, arguments which, as I will argue in Chapter Seven, arose disappointment and criticism within the Buddhist communities in China.

IV. 1. 2 *Famen* 法門 vis-à-vis *Zongpai* 宗派

Those who study San-lun should keep clear in mind that the study of San-lun is also the study of the San-lun sect [*sanlun zong* 三論宗]. If studying San-lun, someone may only do reference to the San-lun sect, because the teachings of the San-lun sect already included the doctrine of the Tathāgata-garbha. As for the study of the San-lun sect, this does not include only three treatises, but other Mahāyāna scriptures

⁵ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.4, pp.1-70; Travagnin, Stefania (2001) 'Il nuovo Buddhismo per l'Umanita (trnjian fojiao) a Taiwan', in *Cina*, n.29, pp.65-102.

⁶ In his *panjiao*, Yinshun identified the original Buddhism with the seek of liberation from Samsara centred on the figure of Śrāvaka (*shengwen wei ben zhi jietuo tonggui* 聲聞爲本之解脫同歸), while the first sectarianism indicated the schism among the Śrāvaka and the origination of the tendency to the ideal of Bodhisattva (*pusa qingxiang zhi shengwen fenliu* 菩薩傾向之聲聞分流). Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.4, p.30.

such as *Vimalakīrtinirdesa sūtra*, *Lotus sūtra*, *Śrimaladevi sūtra*, and *Nirvana sūtra* are all part of the canon of the San-lun sect. The classification of teachings, cultivation, severing affliction, the graded stages of practice, the issue of Buddha-nature, all these matters deserve attention and must be understood well. It is terribly wrong to think that San-lun and San-lun sect are the same thing.⁷

The concepts of *zongpai* and *famen*, in association and opposition, gave rise to debate and different definition throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism. In twentieth-century Yinshun denied to belong to the 空宗, or to any 宗派, and in one of the very last interviews he also affirmed to have not created any new *famen*.⁸ According to the Taiwanese scholarship, Yinshun opposed the idea of sectarianism, which he saw as the seed of the corruption of the Dharma. Differently, I argue that Yinshun did propose sectarianism in his writings, but also suggested a revision of the meaning of the term *zongpai* in accordance with his plan of reconstruction of Chinese Buddhism.

This dissertation analyses the concept of *zongpai*, 'sect', in different chapters and in different respects, as a confirmation of its importance in shifting authorities and constructing traditions within twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism. Chapter Three addressed sectarianism in terms of 'lineage', and studies Yinshun's planning of his own lineage (and school) and how the post-Yinshun generations reshaped those intentions in the light of a different historical and cultural pattern. Chapter Six will examine the context of making the phenomenon of *renjian fojiao* as a school with its own lineage after Yinshun's death, a plan that was aimed to claim the roots of *renjian* Buddhism into the Chinese version of modern Buddhism. Finally, this section of Chapter Four proposes the semantic and doctrinal study of the term *zongpai* vis-a-vis

⁷ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, pp.38-39

⁸ Interview in 2003, Yinshun stated: *wo meiyou shenma famen* 我沒有什麼法門.

the concept of *famen*, in their pre-modern meaning as well as their modern re-definition. Yinshun serves here as a case-study of modern Buddhist adopting these two terms in their dynamics and dichotomy.

Zongpai and *famen* clearly indicate two distinct domains.⁹ The term *zongpai* identifies a 'Dharma unity', uniformity of rituals, practice, usually identified with one monastery or at least one group of practitioners. This reality was absent at the time of the Buddha, but took shape after the first schism that occurred in the Third Council at Pāṭaliputra (250 B.C.E.) and developed later on in the various Buddhist traditions and provoked several effects in different historical phases.

As for Chinese Buddhism, the phenomenon of *zongpai* became relevant from the Sui dynasty, when 13 *zongpai* were listed.¹⁰ However, at the beginning of Chinese Buddhism, monks do not necessarily belonged to one only *zongpai*, but the discourse of strict affiliations became popular with the importance given to the figure of patriarchs and to the ritual of Dharma transmission.¹¹

On the other hand, *famen* wants to be the Chinese translation of the Sanskrit *dharmaparyāya*.¹² Compound of *fa* 法 (what the Buddha taught) and *men* 門 ('gates' through which the living beings are introduced to the Buddhist path), the concept refers to the innumerable ways of cultivation available to Buddhists, and sometimes was regarded as a synonym of 'doctrine' in the history of Chinese Buddhism.¹³

Chinese Buddhists considered doctrinal affiliation and sectarian belonging sometimes as distinct elements and sometimes as interchangeable terms. As Holmes

⁹ See, for instance, Ciyi's *Foguang dacidian* and Mochizuki Shinko's *Bukkyo daijiten*.

¹⁰ Wang Junzhong (1995) 'Zhongguo fojiao zaoqi "zongpai" wenti yanjiu de xiangguan tantao- yi jizang jiqi sanlun jiao xue wei zhongxin', in *Diguan*, n.81, pp107-129

¹¹ Mochizuki, Shinko (1973) *Bukkyo daijiten*, v.1-6, p.2202b, v.9-10, pp.371c; Ciyi, ed. (1988) *Foguang dacidian*, v. 4, p. 3154.

¹² Akira Hirakawa (1997) *Bukkyo Kan-Bon daijiten*, v.1, p.763.

¹³ Mochizuki, Shinko (1973) *Bukkyo daijiten*, v.9-10, pp.964b ; Ciyi, ed. (1988) *Foguang dacidian*, v. 4, p. 3363; Soothill, Hodous, eds. (1970) *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p.273.

Welch wrote in the end of the 1960s:

‘Chinese like English distinguishes between school of doctrine (*fa-men*)¹⁴ and institutionalized sect (*tsung-p'ai*).¹⁵ Unfortunately the same word *tsung* can mean both, just as it can mean either the doctrine on which a school is based or the lineage on which a sect is based. This is why the name given to each of the schools of doctrine in China is often translated as “such-and-such a sect,” even when no sectarian institutions are involved’.¹⁶

Following Welch's argument, sectarianism in the early twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism is related to four main elements: ‘religious kinship’, ‘transmission of the dharma’, ‘loyalty to a charismatic monk’ and ‘regionalism.’¹⁷ We can add that political links and economic benefits are also part of the discourse.

We find the same factors as defining sectarianism in Buddhism in the second half of twentieth-century Taiwan. The character *pai* 派, for instance, is not only recurrent in Taixu's works but also in Daoan's diary, to indicate an ideological belonging and a doctrinal legacy.¹⁸

In theory, Yinshun attacked ‘sectarianism’ as the negative face of Buddhism, and refused to rely on the four elements listed above during his own Buddhist career. In practice, as Chapter Three have demonstrated, Yinshun created his own group, the Fuhui Sangha Assembly, which was founded on the principle of ‘loyalty to a charismatic monk’ and ‘regionalism’. The Fuhui was, and still is, responsible of the election of the abbots in Yinshun's monasteries, which is a form of ‘transmission of

¹⁴ Ch.: *famen* 法門

¹⁵ Ch.: *zongpai* 宗派

¹⁶ Welch, Holmes (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950*, pp.395-396.

¹⁷ Welch, Holmes (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950*, pp.397-398.

¹⁸ Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.9, pp.2526-2529 [22 August 1963].

the Dharma.' In Fuhui the 'religious kinship' is based on ideological legacy more than on tonsure or ordination master.

Why did Yinshun oppose to the principle of sectarianism, which is one of the key characteristics of Buddhism in China? According to Yinshun's argument, the phenomenon of 'sectarianism' does not belong to the very first phase of Buddhism, and in the modern period became cause of corruption. Yinshun even here seemed to refuse the Chineseness of Buddhism and to adhere to the 'pure' Indian Dharma. Asked how Yinshun justified the establishment of the Fuhui Sangha Assembly, the monk Fazang, who is member of the Yinshun Cultural Foundation as well as of the Fuhui Sangha Assembly, replied that Yinshun created the group as emulation of the very first monastic group started by the Buddha himself. Even here the attack to the Chineseness of Buddhism has been mitigated by recurrence to the authority of Indian Buddhism, and the result appeared to be perfectly in line with Yinshun's negotiating position.¹⁹

According to Yinshun, *zongpai* holds sectarian connotation, while *famen* has doctrinal value. Also, *zongpai* has a negative significance while *famen* has positive implications:

From the perspective of the Buddhist practitioners, all the *famen* [*yiqie famen* 一切法門] can be considered as Bodhisattva's stages of cultivation, correct way to the Buddhahood.²⁰

Therefore, the Mādhyamika that Yinshun was promoting had to be intended as a *famen* and not as a *zongpai*. In his writings Yinshun mentioned repeatedly the presence of 'several *famen*' (*zhongzhong famen* 種種法門) within Buddhadharma, and

¹⁹ Interviews during my fieldwork in June-December 2005, Taipei.

²⁰ Yinshun (1971) *Xue fo sanyao*, p.65.

that Nāgārjuna's *famen* (*longshu* 龍樹法門) represents the 'Correct Buddhadharma' (*zhengque de fofa* 正確的佛法).

In line with his negotiating Indian (original) and Chinese (late) Buddhism, and as basis of his declaring *Zhong lun* as a restatement of the *Agama* instead of a direct commentary of Prajñāpāramitā teachings, Yinshun defined Nāgārjuna's *famen* as the best restatement of the doctrine of Dependent Arising (*yuanqi famen* 緣起法門), which he regarded as the central doctrine in Buddhism.²¹

IV. 1. 3 *Rushi dao* 如實道 vis-à-vis *Fangbian dao* 方便道

I highly esteem the path of tathatā [*rushi dao* 如實道], but I do not oppose the path of expedient [*fangbian dao* 方便道] which is based on the emphasis on faith. Buddhists who practice the recitation of the Buddha's name [*nian fo* 念佛], have to believe in the three jewels, give importance to giving and discipline, and focus on benefiting the sentient beings (which implies benefiting Buddhism), because only in this way they can grow virtuous roots in the Buddhadharma [...]; some of them can gradually enter the path of tathata [*rushi dao*], or practice the doctrine of the six recollections [*liu nian famen* 六念法門], including faith, giving, discipline etc., is this not also very good? But if we abandon the path of the tathata, and we just do the recitation of Buddha's name, or misunderstand the real meaning of 'easy practice' [*yixing* 易行], and spread out a Buddhist practice like this one, and make it boundless prosperous, I cannot agree with this, because Buddhadharma is not so.²²

This statement clarified Yinshun's position towards the dichotomy (and dynamics) between *rushi dao* and *fangbian dao*.²³ To use the metaphor of the diluted

²¹ See especially Yinshun (1944) *Weishi xue taoyuan*.

²² Yinshun (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.5, p.293.

²³ Yinshun (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.2, divided the first part titled 'Buddhadharma' (*Fofa* 佛法) into the two sections "Correct Dharma of the Middle Way" (*Zhongdao zhengfa* 中道正法), which he explained also in terms of *rushi dao*, pp.14-41, and "Path of Expedients" (*Fangbian dao* 方便道), pp.41-95.

milk: *rushi dao* is comparable to the pure milk, while *fangbian dao* is the milk after being diluted with water. Moreover, according to Yinshun, the adoption of 'expedients' is not just a later development of Buddhism, but is also a distinct feature of the Chinese version of Buddhism, listed aside the practice of syncretism (*yuanrong* 圓融), the doctrine of tathāgatagarbha (*zhenchang* 真常), only-mind (*weixin* 唯心), reliance on Buddha (*tali* 他力), and the sudden enlightenment (*dunzheng* 頓證).²⁴

On the other hand, *rushi dao* is the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practice based on Buddha's teachings, and therefore embodying the original and correct teaching.²⁵ Yinshun in a private and unpublished interview at Lugu Vihāra (*Lugu jingshe* 鹿谷精舍) in 1999 highlighted that Buddhadharma (*fofa*) include *rushi dao* and *fangbian dao*, and that the latter did not reflect the original and true essence of Buddha's teachings, while the former did; moreover, Yinshun stated explicitly that he could unveil *rushi dao* within Nāgārjuna's works such as *Zhong lun* and *Da zhidu lun*, since these texts propose a re-statement of the *Āgama* doctrine in the light of the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practice.²⁶

IV. 1. 4 *Guantong* 貫通 vis-à-vis *Yuanrong* 圓融

Chinese really like syncretism [*yuanrong* 圓融]²⁷

Kenneth Ch'en wrote: 'T'ai-hsü remained within the tradition of Chinese Buddhism-that of harmonization and synthesis.'²⁸ And 'synthesis' is rendered in Chinese with *ronghui* 融會 or *yuanrong* 圓融, with the latter implying the perfection

²⁴ Yinshun (1943) *Yindu zhi fojiao*, p.vii.

²⁵ Yinshun (2005) *Yongguang ji*, p.215.

²⁶ I obtained a copy of the recording of this interview from the monk Fazang in September 2005.

²⁷ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.41

²⁸ Ch'en, Kenneth K.S. (1964) *Buddhism in China. A Historical Survey*, p.458.

of the result of syncretism.

Yinshun underlined this features in quite a few instances, emphasising that the tendency to (doctrinal) synthesis/syncretism was typical of traditional Chinese Buddhism especially since the end of the Song dynasty.²⁹ Such a syncretism had a negative connotation for Yinshun, who preferred to adopt the concept of *guantong* 貫通 or *tonghui* 通會, which also indicate a form of synthesis but in terms of encompassing resolution. In this way Yinshun made these two terms, *guantong* and *ronghui*, apparently similar in meaning, to embody the essence of the dichotomy between, respectively, Indian and Chinese Buddhism.

For instance, in the final group of writings, San-lun school is considered corrupted for embodying the Tathāgata-garbha doctrine through the process of *ronghui*, while Nāgārjuna's *Zhong lun* represents the correct Buddhadharma for its restatement, through the process of *tonghui*, of the *Āgama* teachings within a Mahāyāna frame.

In 1937 Taixu compiled the essay *Xin yu ronggui* 新與融貫, where he provided an overview of the historical development of Buddhism and the inter-relationship between the various traditions, with mention of the very recent Chinese translation of Lama Tsongkhapa's works.³⁰ Even if the division in 'early' and 'late' are in common with Yinshun, Taixu did use the expression *ronghui* and *guantong* as interchangeable or even in compound, which reveals a different perception of these categories by the two figures. In his *Faxing konghui xue gailun* 法性空慧學概論 (1942) Taixu affirmed that Nāgārjuna's conception of emptiness is a form of syncretism [*ronghui*], as, he argued, the dialectics in *Zhong lun* can confirm, with the

²⁹ Yinshun (1981) *Rulaizang zhi yanjiu* 如來藏之研究, p.57; Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, p.333.

³⁰ Taixu (1937) 'Xin yu ronghui' 新與融會, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v. 1, pp.444-458; Guo Peng 郭朋 (1978) *Taixu dashi sixiang yanjiu* 太虛大師思想研究, pp.506-509; Zhumo 竺摩 (1968) 'Taixu dashi de ronghui sixiang' 太虛大師的融會思想, in *Haichao yin*, v.49, n.12, pp.2-3.

caveat that *ronghui* should be read as expression of 'non-duality' (*bu er* 不二).³¹ Such a statement must be contextualised within Taixu's own reconstruction of Chinese Buddhist tradition, a programme that reflected the mainstream Chinese Buddhist understanding of doctrinal issues:

The second feature of Chinese Buddhism is syncretism [*ronghui*]. We do not only syncretise all the schools of the Chinese Buddhism, but aim to fuse all the Buddhadharmas, its different traditions in different periods and different regions. Only in this way we can achieve the objective to harmonise worldly Buddhism.³²

This is a further confirmation that Taixu was rooted and defendant of the Chineseness of local Buddhism, differently than Yinshun, who was a promoter of the differentiation between Chinese and Indian (original) Buddhism. Two different perspectives then, but with the same aim: reshaping the identity of Chinese Buddhism for a stronger revival of it in a crucial historical moment for China and Chinese culture.

IV. 2 The History of Mādhyamika according to Yinshun

'History is not an anaemic and meaningless "realistic" reconstruction of the past but an interpretation of the past in terms of the present, intended to serve as a guide for the future.'³³

Yinshun's very first articles were historical analysis of the Chinese San-lun, so

³¹ Taixu (1942) 'Faxing konghui gailun' 法性空慧概論, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v. 5, p.834.

³² Taixu (1942) 'Faxing konghui gailun', in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v. 5, p.835.

³³ Vogelsang, Kai (2005) 'Some notions of historical judgement in China and the West', in Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, Achim Mittag and Jorn Rusen, eds. *Historical Truth, Historical Criticism and Ideology*, p.166.

as most of the following volumes written by Yinshun focus on doctrinal history. The revised 'Buddhist dictionary' articulated by Yinshun and discussed above also reflects the monk's specific way to read, and then repropose, the historical development of Buddhism.

However, in line with the argument of the quotation above, Yinshun's historical reconstruction of Buddhism should be understood as instrumental to Yinshun's attempt to propose a 'new' Buddhism that could fit a 'new' China. This chapter analyses Yinshun's own reconstruction of the history of Mādhyamika, which, I argue, is index of specific historical and regional demands, and then investigates how Yinshun's descendants placed the own teacher in parallel with the main protagonists of the school, which, I argue, also responds to circumstantial factors, aiming to create a precise portrait of Chinese (and Taiwanese) Buddhism.

Zhongguan jin lun includes Yinshun's most complete reconstruction of the history of Mādhyamika:

Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika School was introduced into China in the beginning of the fifth century through the translations authored by Kumarajiva. Within the first development of Buddhism in China, the most remarkable honoured region was the area that extended from the Yangtse river to the south. Among this, it is evident that the correct tradition of Mādhyamika was continued by the only San-lun School. Besides that, Tiantai School also based on the teaching according to which the conditional arising [*yuanqi* 緣起] is emptiness [*kong* 空], and is apparent name [*jiaming* 假名], and is the middle [*zhong* 中], until finally exposing its peculiar feature of School of Perfection [*yuanzong* 圓宗]. The Mādhyamika of Nāgārjuna's system [*longshu xi de zhongguan xue* 龍樹系的中觀學] influenced Chinese Buddhadharma very widely and deeply, and not only Mādhyamika scholars and practitioners manifested high respect, or even showed affiliation to the teachings of

Nāgārjuna [*longshu de jiaomen* 龍樹的教門]. Afterwards, once [Mādhyamika was] transmitted into Japan, the saying that Nāgārjuna is “the patriarch of the eight schools” [*bazong gongzu* 八宗共祖] started spreading out. Mādhyamika was also transmitted into Tibet, in the ninth century, and it was transmitted from India. It is said that the Tibetan tradition of Mādhyamika includes the Prasāṅghika school [*yingcheng pai* 應成派] of Candrakīrti and Buddhapaṇita, and the Svatantrika school [*zixu pai* 自續派] of Bhāvaviveka and Santiraksita. Once transmitted into Tibet, because of the causes and conditions, after a long period of development, the Prāsāṅghika school of Candrakīrti and Buddhapaṇita already obtained the authority of Mādhyamika legitimacy [*zhongguan zhengtong de quanwei* 中觀正統的權威]. Part of the Mādhyamika canon in the Tibetan tradition has been recently translated into Chinese. At the same time, since the discovery of the Sanskrit version of *Zhong lun*, Japanese could obtain a new understanding of the text through a philological study of it. The special essence of Mādhyamika in the future can be revealed through the cross-reference and consultation of the Tibetan, Chinese and Sanskrit textual traditions, only in this way it will have a correct and complete development.³⁴

This is an up-to-date historical analysis, which includes the recent translations from Tibetan into Chinese attributed to Fazun too. Yinshun listed three important factors at the basis of the contemporary Mādhyamika scholarship: the importance of cross-reference to Tibetan, Chinese and Sanskrit versions of the texts; the adoption of new philological methods of approach to the text; the addition of translations from Tibetan. Later on, especially in the volume *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi* (1988) Yinshun rewrote this historical account without changing the core argument, but making it more detailed.³⁵

³⁴ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p.4.

³⁵ Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp.119-152, 321-384.

IV. 2. 1 Nāgārjuna and Post-Nāgārjuna: *longshu xue* 龍樹學 vis-à-vis *zhongguan xue* 中觀學

Yinshun's historical reconstruction of Mādhyamika school in India reflects the Chinese modalities of reception of Nāgārjuna's doctrine and legacy, which did not go beyond Kumarajiva's translations of the 'three treatises', and Jizang's commentaries on those. For this reason, the late translation of Candrakīrti in Chinese in 1941 made Candrakīrti becoming for Chinese Buddhism a representative of the 'late Mādhyamika'. In other words, the dichotomy between 'early period' (*chuqi* 初期) and 'late period' (*houqi* 後期) of Mādhyamika is based on the Chinese timing of domestication of Indian and Tibetan tradition of Buddhism. Finally, the lack of development of Prāsangika and Svatantrika in China made the Chinese discourse of Mādhyamika incomplete and disputable.

In line with Zhang Mantao's considerations that I discussed in conclusion of Chapter Two, it is clear that the distinction between the 'Nāgārjuna's school' and 'Mādhyamika school' should be read in terms of how Chinese had access to the relative scriptures. In this respect, and limited to the Indian and Tibetan tradition, Yinshun made a clear distinction between 'Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika' (*longshu de zhongguan xue* 龍樹的中觀學) and 'Mādhyamika of Nāgārjuna's lineage' (*longshu xi de zhongguan xue* 龍樹系的中觀學), and identified the former as 'Early Mādhyamika' (*chuqi de zhongguan xue* 初期的中觀學) and the latter as 'Late Mādhyamika' (*houqi de zhongguan xue* 後期的中觀學).³⁶

IV. 2. 2 From India to China: the San-lun School

As already mentioned in Chapter One, in the very early stage of his career,

³⁶ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p.4; Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp.119-153. On the interaction between Chinese and Tibetan Buddhisms, see Tuttle, Gray (2005) *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China*.

Yinshun used terms such as 'Indian San-lun' (*Yindu de sanlun*) and 'Tibetan San-lun' (*Xizang de sanlun*). This was index of the courses that he was attending in the Minnan Buddhist Institute and the consequent learning of a partial Mādhyamika tradition which he could amend after the meeting with Fazun.

However, Yinshun's very first articles are the only works that deal in detail with the transmission of Nāgārjuna's teachings from India to China and especially the development of the San-lun lineage in China and then Japan.³⁷ Yinshun dedicated other considerable space to the history of San-lun in the essays 'Zhongguo fojiao yu yindu fojiao zhi guanxi' 中國佛教與印度佛教之關係 (1956), especially in terms of the transmission from India to China,³⁸ in 'Zhongguo fojiao shilue' 中國佛教史略 (1944), as contextualised within Chinese Buddhism,³⁹ and in a section of *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*,⁴⁰ as explanation of the process of sinification of the school of Nāgārjuna. In the latter, Jizang became to be addressed as embodying the Tathāgata garbha doctrine and therefore not representative of the 'pure' Mādhyamika teachings anymore, a statement which proves a shift in Yinshun's development of thought.⁴¹

IV. 2. 3 From India to Tibet: Candrakīrti and Lama Tsongkhapa

Some time ago while I was staying in Hong Kong, under suggestion of Taixu, I have consulted Lama Tsongkhapa's *Lamrin chenmo*, and through some references to the Buddhist Canon, I wrote a simple book, *Cheng fo zhi dao*, which could synthesise all the Buddhadharma and reunify it into one vehicle.⁴²

³⁷ The articles are: 'Sanlun zong zhuanheng kao' (1934), 'Sanlun zong shilue' (1937) and 'Sanlun zong feng jianshuo' (1937).

³⁸ Essay included later in *Yi fofa yanjiu fofa*, published in 1972.

³⁹ Essay included later in *Fojiao shidi kaolun*, published in 1972.

⁴⁰ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, pp.36-41.

⁴¹ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, pp.38-40.

⁴² Yinshun (1960) *Cheng fo zhi dao*, pp.ii-iii

This section aims to analyse Yinshun's position towards late Indian Buddhism and the Tibetan tradition, especially the late Indian and Tibetan reception and development of Mādhyamika teachings through the works of Candrakīrti and Lama Tsongkhapa, by a reading of Yinshun's works and the complementary argumentation proposed by the monk Rushi 如石.⁴³

Although often labeled as a critical opposer to Tibetan Buddhism, I argue that Yinshun did rely on at least part of Tibetan Buddhism, and I use three case-studies as evidence in support of my thesis: the compilation of *Chengfo zhi dao*, his adoption of the concepts of 'deep contemplation' (*shen guan* 深觀) and 'extensive practice' (*guang xing* 廣行) as the features defining Mādhyamika,⁴⁴ and the reference to the three systems (*san da xi* 三大系) which were distinct to Lama Tsongkhapa's Buddhist classification.

I argue that whereas Yinshun considered the esoteric and tantric practice of Buddhism (in Tibetan, Indian, Japanese or Chinese traditions) as the fall of Buddhadharma, Lama Tsongkhapa's contribution to Mahāyāna and Mādhyamika in specific was highly estimated and considered in his own scholarship. This was due to the fellowship with Fazun and his translations, Taixu's support of the study of the Tibetan tradition and through the Japanese translation of Tibetan works, such as Taranatha's volume.⁴⁵ Surely China's interests in reinforcing relations with Tibet, which eventually ended in the occupation of the region in 1951, and the role played

⁴³ Rushi (2001) *Rushi fashi lunwenji* 如石法師論文集.

⁴⁴ For a complete definition of *shen guan* and *guang xing*, see *Foguang dacidian*, pp.3164c-3165a. Lama Tsongkhapa made a distinction between *zab-mohilla-ba* (*shenshen guan pai* 甚深觀派) and *rgya-chenspyod-pa* (*guangda xing pai* 廣大行派). This dichotomy had been originated in the previous tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, where the distinction was between *shen guan*, which was intended as Mādhyamika, and *guang xing*, which coincides with Yogācāra (*Foguang dacidian*, p.3889a-c). Later on, Lama Tsongkhapa re-elaborated this distinction and turned it into a distinction between the traditions of the *Madhyamakavatara* (*shen guan*) and *Abhisamayālamkāra*.

⁴⁵ Yinshun had access to Teramoto Enga's translation of the book. See Chapter One of this dissertation.

by Tibetan Buddhism in this programme created the foundational conditions for Taixu's Tibetan project.⁴⁶

Chengfo zhi dao, as Yinshun stated very clearly in its introduction, was written on inspiration of Lama Tsongkhapa's *Lamrim chenmo*, which Fazun had translated and Taixu highly promoted.⁴⁷ Later on this book became a compulsory textbook in most of the Buddhist institutes in Taiwan, and used in secular institutions of higher education as well. This detail has been easily overlooked by most of Yinshun's disciples with some exceptions.⁴⁸ The monk Chuanmiao underlined similar beginning and intentions of both the volumes, and parallel structures, even if they had been based on different previous scriptures and include different endings for the discrepancy between exoteric Buddhism (promoted by Yinshun) and esoteric teaching (promoted by Lama Tsongkhapa).⁴⁹ According to Rushi, most of the verses in *Cheng fo zhi dao* are mere translation of verses from Candrakīrti's *Mādhyamikavatara*, others are mere transcription of verses from Santideva's *Bodhicaryavatara* as quoted in *Lamrim Chenmo*.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Gray Tuttle's *Tibetans in the Making of Modern China* (2005) provides a detailed study of the political and religious intertwining of China and Tibet from the Yuan dynasty to the 1950.

⁴⁷ In this respect, Taixu was not only the founder of the Sino-Tibetan Institute, but sponsor of Fazun's translations. Taixu declared explicitly his support of the Chinese translation of Lama Tsongkhapa's works in his preface to Fazun's translation of *Lamrim Chenmo*. See also Chapter One of this dissertation.

⁴⁸ Huang Guoqing 黃國清 (2004) 'Yinshun fashi san sheng gong fa yu zongkaba dashi zhongshidao de bijiao yanjiu' 印順法師三乘共法與宗喀巴大師中士道的比較研究, in Anhui 安慧, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji* 印順導師百歲祝壽文集, v.1, pp. 277-302; Xingyan 性演 (2004) 'Wo du Chengfo zhi dao de yiju jiesong' 我讀成佛之道的一句偈頌, in Anhui, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji*, v.2, pp.98-102; Chuanmiao 傳妙 (2004) 'Chengfo zhi dao yu Putidao cidi guanglun ershu zhi luebi' 成佛之道與菩提道次第廣論二書之略比, in Anhui, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji*, v.2, pp.139-150; Hou Shenhong 侯伸宏 (2004) 'Cong Taixu dashi dao Yinshun fashi: yige sixiang shi jiaodu de guan cha' 從太虛大師到印順法師一個思想史角度的觀察, in Wuyin, ed. (2004) *Yinshun zhanglao yu renjian fojiao* 印順長老與人間佛教, R 1-60.

⁴⁹ According to Chuanmiao, *Chengfo zhi dao* referred to Taixu's thought and Lama Tsongkhapa's *Lamrim chenmo*, while *Lamrim chenmo* was based on, among the others, Atisa's *Bodhi-patha-pradipa* and Asanga's *Abhidharma-samuccaya*. As for the structure: *Chengfo zhi dao*'s first chapters 'Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures' and 'Attending the Dharma to Enter the Path' can be associated to *Lamrim chenmo*'s first introductory chapters; 'The Dharma Common to the Five Vehicles' can be put in parallel with the section 'Path of the Person of Lesser Capacity', 'The Dharma Common to the Three Vehicles' can be associated to the 'Path of the Person of Medium Capacity', 'The Distinctive Dharma of the Great Vehicle' can be put in parallel to the 'Path of the Person of Great Capacity'.

⁵⁰ Rushi (2001) 'Taiwan jiaojie xueshu yanjiu, ahanxue feng yu renjian fojiao zouxiang zhi zonghe shengsi' 台灣教界學術研究,阿含學風與人間佛教走向之綜合省思, in *Rushi fashi lunwenji*,

Yinshun claimed that the essence of Mādhyamika is the combination of 'deep contemplation' and 'extensive practice'. These two Chinese expressions, *shen guan* and *guang xing* do appear in the Chinese Buddhist Canon (Taishō edition), but not as associated within a common context. San-lun canonical texts do not include these characters in combination either. As confirmation of the absence of these terms within Chinese Buddhism, we see that even Ding Fubao's *Foxue da cidian*, published in 1920, does not include them. On the other hand, Fazun's translation of Lama Tsongkhapa's works informs us that the distinction between *shen guan* and *guang xing* was authored by Lama Tsongkhapa for indicating two groups of Tibetan Mādhyamika scriptures.⁵¹ The argument advanced by Yinshun's entourage that he invented the two categories of *shen guan* and *guang xing*, which is based to Yinshun's lack of reference to Lama Tsongkhapa, can then be easily confuted.⁵² Moreover, this can witness another legacy of Lama Tsongkhapa's thought into Yinshun's interpretation of Mādhyamika.

In *Zhongguan jin lun* Yinshun made a parallel between the Indian 'Mahāyāna Threefold system' (*dacheng san jia* 大乘三家),⁵³ the Chinese 'Prajna threefold system' (*banruo san jia* 般若三家),⁵⁴ and Tibetan 'Mādhyamika Threefold system'

pp.103-104

⁵¹ Wan Jinchuan also noticed that this dichotomy belongs to Late Indian tradition of Buddhism, see Wan Jinchuan (1999) *Zhongguan sixiang jianglu*, pp.48-49.

⁵² Yinshun proposed this division in *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.14-16.

⁵³ The Indian three systems are: (1) empty nature – Mādhyamika (*xingkongzhe* 性空者); (2) only-mind – Yogacara (*weishizhe* 唯識者); (3) tathagata-garbha (*zhenchangzhe* 真常者). These are the three systems that Taixu theorised and Yinshun reformulated. So it is still the Chinese (modern) interpretation of Indian Mahāyāna tradition, based on Chinese translation of scriptures.

⁵⁴ The three Chinese systems are: (1) conventional designations [i.e., conventional reality *sudi* 俗諦] are not empty [i.e., absolute reality *zhendi* 真諦] (*jiaming bu kong* 假名不空), which means a too restricted view of emptiness; (2) the emptying of conventional designations (*kong jiaming* 空假名), which means that conventional reality does not exist; (3) conventional designations are emptiness (*jiaming kong* 假名空), which mean that both conventional and absolute realities are different manifestation of the same truth, which is the middle way. Interestingly, the most extensive discussion on those are in Jizang's *Zhongguan lunshu* 中觀論疏 [T42 n1824: 29b16-c5] and *Dasheng xuan lun* 大乘玄論 [T45 n 1853: 24c6-25a12]. See also Swanson (1989) *Foundations of T'ien-t'ai philosophy*, pp.106-114, 361.

(*zhongguan sanjia* 中觀三家),⁵⁵ and the latter was formulated by Lama Tsongkhapa in his *Lamrim chenmo* in the section on Mādhyamika and Nāgārjuna's conception of emptiness.⁵⁶ This shows again Yinshun's familiarity with Lama Tsongkhapa's theories.

After these premises, it is clear that Yinshun did not deny the value of Tibetan Buddhism, indeed he relied on the Tibetan tradition of Mādhyamika for the bases of his own understanding and promotion of the school. His controversial position towards Candrakīrti and his *Madhyamakavatara* which will be analysed below should not deny the fact that he himself based his very first classes on *Zhonglun* dated back to 1955-1956 on Candrakīrti's work itself, a fact that Yanpei's *Ru zhonglun jiangji* cannot but confirm. Moreover, Yinshun listed a number of similarities between Candrakīrti and Nāgārjuna, and the mention of the former is recurrent throughout Yinshun's corpus of literature.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The three systems are: (1) overly broad conception of the object to be negated (*taiguo pai* 太過派); (2) overly narrow conception of the object to be negated (*buji pai* 不及派); (3) middle way (*zhongdao pai* 中道派). For the Chinese translation of the Tibetan text see: *Putidao cidi guanglun*, Fazun's translation (1935), ch.16 and ch.19. For English version of the Tibetan original text see: Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee (2002) *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, v. 3, pp.125-202.

⁵⁶ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.181-191. The parallel can be summarised as follows:

- 1) [Indian] Yogacara = [Chinese] conventional designation/reality is not empty = [Tibetan] overly narrowed conception of the object to be negated.
- 2) [Indian] Tathagatagarbha = [Chinese] conventional designation/reality is empty = [Tibetan] overly broad conception of the object to be negated.
- 3) [Indian] Mādhyamika (i. e., Nāgārjuna's scriptures, especially *Zhong lun*) = [Chinese] conventional designation/reality is emptiness/absolute reality = [Tibetan] the middle way.

⁵⁷ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*: Yinshun agreed with and cited Candrakīrti's doctrinal interpretation in commenting the Chapter One (on causes and conditions), pp.63-64, Chapter Ten (on fire and fuel), pp.208-209, Chapter Fifteen (on existence and non-existence), pp.252-254, Chapter Eighteen (on dharmas), pp.316-319, 326-332, Chapter Twenty-four (on the four noble truths), pp.471-472; Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*: Yinshun agrees with Candrakīrti's Prasāṅghika school especially in explaining the concept of 'existence' (*you* 有), pp.113-114, and 'movement' (*xing* 行), pp. 139-140, and, in association with also Lama Tsongkhapa, in the discussion on the practice of the Middle Way (*zhongdao zhi shijian* 中道之實踐), pp.233-263; Yinshun (1960) *Cheng fo zhi dao*, p.96: Yinshun relate the verse n. 45, which recites "Human depend on the basic necessities of life to obtain happiness, but these necessities are derived from previous charities. Thus, for sentient beings, the Buddha always praises first the good fortune of giving [Wing H. Yeung tr., *The Way to Buddhahood*, p.79]", to Candrakīrti's teachings expounded in the *Madhyamakavatara*; Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fo jiao sixiang shi*: in assessing the debate between Mādhyamika and Yogacara in the final phase of development of Mādhyamika, Yinshun took an explicit position similar to Candrakīrti's, pp.327-374.

IV. 3 Yinshun: Chinese San-lun or Indian Mādhyamika?

Yinshun has been subject to parallels with different figures, within and outside the Buddhist sphere. We can read comparison between Yinshun and D.T. Suzuki,⁵⁸ Rudolf Bultmann,⁵⁹ Sigmund Freud,⁶⁰ and also analogues with Buddhist monks from the past, such as Xuanzang and Nāgārjuna.

The discussion of parallels, especially when they involved a non-Buddhist partner, is index of an attempt to both contextualise and mythologise Yinshun even beyond the Buddhist borders.

IV. 3. 1 Yinshun vis-à-vis Nāgārjuna

It has been written that in the journal *Zhongguo fojiao* Yinshun was defined as equal to the historical Buddha Sakyamuni and Nāgārjuna, who are, respectively, the founder of Buddhism and the father of Mahāyāna, or, following the East Asian conception of Nāgārjuna, as the patriarch of the eight schools.⁶¹ Moreover, these are Indian figures, a fact that implies the willingness to link Yinshun to Indian Buddhist authorities, more than to Buddhists such as, for instance, Bodhidharma, who represent the beginning of the Chinese tradition of Buddhism.

Since Yinshun has been enshrined as the promoter of a revival of the San-lun, why was he never compared to the figure of Jizang? One explanation could be the fact that, even if Jizang was the real founder and the only scholar of the Chinese San-

⁵⁸ Huanyi 幻一 (2000) 'Yinshun yu Lingmu Dazhuo nian fogan zhi biao' 印順與鈴木大念佛觀之比較. In *Dazhuan xuesheng foxue lunwenji* 大專學生佛學論文集, n.10, pp.109-136.

⁵⁹ Lin Zhenguo 林鎮國 (2002) 'Buteman yu Yinshun de jieshenhua quanshixue' 布特曼與印順的解神話詮釋學. In *Dangdai*, n.184, pp.48-67.

⁶⁰ Ruyuan 如源 (2004) 'Yinshun daoshi zhi zongjiao guan yu Fuluoyide de zongjiao xinlixue' 印順導師之宗教觀與佛洛伊德的宗教心理學, in Anhui, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji*, v.1, pp.115-128.

⁶¹ This information is reported by Yinshun himself in *Huayu ji*, v.4, pp.271-272.

lun, he is still representative of the Chinese reception and decoding of an Indian thought. In other words, within the context of the original Mahāyāna and Mādhyamika, Nāgārjuna is conceived as 'author' and 'founder', while Jizang is considered just as the 'translator' and 'commentator', and this puts the latter in a lower position than Nāgārjuna. To put it in different words, Jizang was the founder of San-lun, but San-lun is nothing more than the Chinese reception of an Indian original school. Secondly, whereas San-lun did not maintain an integral form but was later on included into the most popular Chan/Zen and Tiantai/Tendai, the Indian Nāgārjuna maintained his appellative of 'patriarch common to the eight school' in the whole East Asian Buddhism, from the pre-modern period until today. Even if Yinshun's writings and textual critique show similarities with Jizang's works, the figure of Nāgārjuna resulted more appealing as counterpart of contemporary Chinese/Taiwanese monk. In other words, the main concern for Yinshun's descendants was not to find someone's legacy in Yinshun, but to link the latter to the 'best' option.

Related to this necessity to link Yinshun to Indian more than Chinese Buddhism, the monk Hongyin defined Yinshun as embodying the stereotype of the Indian monk:

In my opinion, Yinshun belongs to the category of the Indian-style eminent monks; generally speaking, we usually name Indian eminent monks as 'sastra teacher' [*lunshi* 論師] or 'Bodhisattva' [*pusa* 菩薩], like for instance Asvaghosa Bodhisattva, Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva, or Asangha sastra-teacher, Vasubandhu sastra-teacher, Dharmapala sastra-teacher, Silabhadra sastra-teacher etc. In China, we use to address as Bodhisattvas only the Indian eminent monks who were spreading Mahāyāna. Now, how may I say that Yinshun belongs to the Indian-style eminent monks? It is because the

Indian-style eminent monks all share a significant feature: they all aim to 'delete the wrong view and reveal the correct.'⁶²

Hongyin continued listing that the main feature of Chinese-style eminent monks are the emphasis on 'perfect melding' (*yuanrong* 圓融), the appreciation for asceticism or any form of monasticism that keeps apart from the society, and lack of interest for scholarly achievements.

Director of the Yinshun Foundation, and one of the few tonsure-disciples of Yinshun, the monk Houguan discussed the similarities between the Indian Nāgārjuna and the Chinese Yinshun. Houguan articulated his argument into four main issues:

1. Historical background. Nāgārjuna lived in a multifaceted environment where Hinduism and Early Buddhism (with the first signs of schism among the Sangha and sectarianism) were still prevailing. In that period Nāgārjuna relied on the teaching of the four *siddhāntas* in order to draw a comprehensive overview of the history of Indian Buddhism. Yinshun's time saw the coexistence of Chinese, Tibetan and Theravada traditions, with the addition of the local Daoism and Confucianism, and the imported Christianity, therefore he also lived within a plurality of traditions. Yinshun, as well as Nāgārjuna, adopted the four *siddhāntas* as 'measures' for systematising the coexistence of Dharma and non-Dharma doctrines, and for the analysis of the history of Buddhism from the origins to the later development.

2. Deep influence on any preaching location. Nāgārjuna was born in Southern India, then he moved to Northern India. Therefore Nāgārjuna could reflect in his treatises the situation of Buddhism in both Northern and Southern India, and influence the entire region by preaching his interpretation of Buddhadharma. Yinshun came from Zhejiang province (Mainland China), studied in Minnan

⁶² Hongyin 宏印 (1994) *Zenyang du Miaoyun ji* 怎樣讀妙雲集, p.4.

Institute, and then moved to Sichuan, where the meeting with Fazun gave him the opportunity to understand the main features of Tibetan Buddhism. Finally, Yinshun moved to Taiwan, and visited Southeast Asia. As a consequence, most of Yinshun's works were based on the knowledge of several Buddhist traditions, and could be circulated in a wide area, even if Yinshun's teachings, at the very end, influenced Buddhists especially in China and Taiwan.

3. All-encompassing thought, and combination of the features of the sūtra-teacher [jing shi 經師] and śāstra-teacher [lun shi 論師]. This is proved by the different categories of writings that both Nāgārjuna and Yinshun had produced. With Nāgārjuna, we have scriptures such as *Zhong lun* but also texts like *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論, so as Yinshun wrote volumes like *Zhongguan jin lun* as well as the very different short pieces that form the third section of *Miaoyun ji* 妙雲集.

4. Combination of the Deep Investigation [shen guan] of the emptiness of nature that is result of the conditional arising [yuanqi xingkong], and the Extensive Practice [guang xing] of the Bodhisattva. Nāgārjuna's *Zhong lun* is a scripture of 'deep contemplation' (*shen guan*), while *Da zhidu lun* and *Shi zhu piposha lun* 十住毗婆沙論 deal with Bodhisattva practice (*guang xing*). In the same way, Yinshun presented a theoretical analysis on the Correct Dharma in *Zhongguanlun song jiangji*, *Zhongguan jin lun*, *Kong zhi tanjiu* (which can be considered as belonging to the group of scriptures of 'deep investigation'), while in *Cheng Fo zhi dao*, *Chuqi dasheng fojiao zhi qi yuan yu kaizhan*, *Fo zai renjian*, *Xue fo san yao* Yinshun focused on the analysis of the Bodhisattva practice (*guang xing*).⁶³

Rather than discussing the legitimacy of Houguan's argumentation, we should reflect on the insistence in comparing Yinshun to Indian eminent Buddhist figures,

⁶³ Houguan (2004) 'Yinshun daoshi zantan de pusa jingshen' 印順導師讚嘆的菩薩精神, in Anhui, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji*, v.1, pp. 28-30; Chen Meiling 陳美玲, ed. (2005) 'Zhuanfang Houguan yuanzhang' 專訪厚觀院長, in *Fengcheng fayin* 風城法音, n.14, pp.3-12.

and first of all to the person of Nāgārjuna. Finally, none among the Chinese Buddhist monks have been compared to Nāgārjuna before Yinshun, and none of them have been defined as an ‘Indian-style’ monk.

In conclusion, it is then worth noting that the Chinese high conception of the figure of Nāgārjuna remained unchanged in the twentieth-century, which was the time when Chinese Buddhism was re-considering its history, and re-evaluating the ‘purity’ of the original (Indian) Buddhism. Finally, East Asian Buddhism enshrined Nāgārjuna as ‘the patriarch of the eight schools’ [*ba zong gong zu* 八宗共祖]. Similarly, the attempt to make Yinshun as *the* Chinese Nāgārjuna may sound as an effort to provide a new beginning for Chinese Buddhism, or the beginning of a new Chinese Buddhism.

IV. 3. 2 Yinshun vis-à-vis Jizang

Lan Jifu 藍吉富 defined Yinshun as ‘the first eminent figure since Xuanzang’ (玄奘以來的第一人 *xuanzang yilai de diyiren*).⁶⁴ This study, which is based on Yinshun’s Chinese understanding of Mādhyamika and within the context of the transmission of the school of Nāgārjuna into China, argues that Yinshun is better compared to the figure of the Jizang, and advances the definition of him as ‘the first eminent figure since Jizang’ [*Jizang yilai de diyi ren* 吉藏以來的第一人].⁶⁵

The monk Ciren 慈忍, who is a member of the Fuihui Sangha Assembly and former abbot of Huiji Lecture Hall, underlined Yinshun's contribution to the revival of scholarship and practice of Nāgārjuna’s teachings in China, and argued that Yinshun was the first Chinese Buddhist who re-proposed the school of Nāgārjuna to

⁶⁴ Lan Jifu (2005) ‘Xuanzang yilai, yi ren eryl’ 玄奘以來,一人而已, in *Hongshi* 弘誓, n.75, pp.44-46.

⁶⁵ Travagnin, Stefania (2005) ‘Fuhui tayuan yongjiu anxi. Ershi shiji chuancheng Longshu famen de gaoseng 福慧塔院永久安息——二十世紀傳承龍樹法門的高僧’ . In *Dangdai* 當代, n.215, pp.12-41.

Chinese Buddhism after hundreds of years. Quoting from Ciren:

Thinking of the master [Yinshun] within the history of transmission of the Chinese Buddhist tradition of the doctrine of 'empty nature' [*kongxing* 空性], the line [of this school] is as follow: Nāgārjuna → Kumarajiva → Jizang → Yinshun.⁶⁶

This is the view shared by Yinshun's entourage, and reveals the image of the monk that his legacy has been inventing. However, Yinshun's closest disciples were keen to associate their teacher to Nāgārjuna more than to Jizang, because this would have fitted Yinshun's critical judgment on the Chinese San-lun, a school that, according to him, embodies the (late) doctrine of tathāgata garbha. From a strictly doctrinal and philological perspective, I argue that Yinshun presents close similarities with Jizang, in confirmation of the relevance that Jizang's thought still was playing in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism. My argument is based on a close analysis of Jizang *Zhongguan lunshu* and Yinshun's *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, which is part of Chapter Seven of this dissertation.⁶⁷

IV. 3. 3 Yinshun vis-à-vis Late Indian and Tibetan Mādhyamika

I am not a practitioner of the Late Mādhyamika as present in the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism, but I value Nāgārjuna's treatises that have been transmitted and translated in China: *Zhong lun*, *Da zhidu lun*, *Shizhu piposha lun*.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Renci 忍慈 (2004) 'Gaoshan yangzhi yingxing xingzhi' 高山仰止, 景行行止, in Anhui, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji*, v.2, p.82.

⁶⁷ Another attempt to link Jizang to Yinshun on a doctrinal and philological level is: Zongzheng 宗證 (2004) 'Jizang dashi yu Yinshun daoshi dui *Zhonglun* pandu zhi yiyu' 吉藏大師與印順導師對《中論》判讀之一隅, in Anhui, ed. (2004) *Yinshun daoshi baisui zhushou wenji*, v.1, pp. 227-258.

⁶⁸ Yinshun (2004) 'Wei ziji shuo jijuhua' 爲自己說幾句話, in *Yongguang ji*, p.256.

This statement, which is an excerpt from Yinshun's essay collection that has been published after his passing (and therefore may represent the final stage of development of his thought), expresses a very clear idea of Yinshun's affiliation to just the Nāgārjuna's tradition of Mādhyamika, and his declared closeness to Nāgārjuna more than to the figure and thought of Candrakīrti.

His criticism to the post-Nāgārjuna finds confirmation elsewhere:

I value the early phase of the School of Nāgārjuna, I am not a teacher of Candrakīrti's Prasangika School.⁶⁹

On the other hand, Candrakīrti's *Ru zhonglun* was highly estimated, as this chapter has already demonstrated, and its contents is also seen as in line with the doctrine included in Nāgārjuna's *Da zhidu lun*:

Candrakīrti's view and what Nāgārjuna expressed in *Da zhidu lun* are approximately identical.⁷⁰

Whereas a previous section in this chapter already assessed Yinshun's controversial reception and adoption of Candrakīrti, this part problematises the general view of most of Yinshun's entourage, who affirmed that Yinshun's teachings could not accept Tibetan Buddhism for the latter being merely 'esoteric Buddhism' (*mimi fojiao* 秘密佛教), through the consideration of those Buddhist scholars who did associate Yinshun and Candrakīrti. Liu Jiacheng 劉嘉誠 listed five points of similarity between the two Buddhist figures: (1) methodology; (2) conception of the doctrine of dependent arising; (3) interpretation of *Zhong lun*; (4) criticism to

⁶⁹ Yinshun (2004) 'Wei ziji shuo jijuhua', *Yongguang ji*, p.247.

⁷⁰ Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, p.365.

Yogācāra (*weishi* 唯識) school; (5) definition of the practice that Buddhists should follow in order to reach the Buddhahood.

In spite of Yinshun's declared distance from Candrakīrti, and of Yinshun's disciples who preferred to associate Yinshun to the founder Nāgārjuna, Liu finally concluded arguing not just the closeness between the two Buddhist figures, but advancing the theory of Yinshun belonging not just to Mādhyamika school but in specific, indeed, to the Prasangika tradition.⁷¹

In conclusion, what are the bases of what Yinshun called *Longshu famen*? Firstly, *Longshu famen* is a *famen* and not a *zongpai*, which implies modalities of practice and not sectarian affiliations. Secondly, it is a *guantong* of the Pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna doctrine. Yinshun highlighted the Indian origins of the *Longshu famen* as well as the Chinese continuation and the Tibetan translation of it, and focused on the former as main teachings. Whereas Yinshun stressed the importance of the figure of Nāgārjuna, the Post-Yinshun classified Yinshun not only as embodying the stereotype of an Indian (scholar) monk, but indeed as the twentieth-century Chinese counterpart of Nāgārjuna. However, I argue, Yinshun's inheritance from Jizang cannot be neglected, and should be regarded as crucial in Yinshun's project of restoration of Mādhyamika.

Next chapter will continue this discussion, and articulate the negotiation between Mahāyāna and pre- Mahāyāna teachings in the doctrinal essence of Yinshun's *Longshu famen*.

⁷¹ Liu Jiacheng 劉嘉誠 (2005) 'Yinshun daoshi yu Yuecheng lunshi sixiang de qiying' 印順導師與月稱論師思想的契應, in *Faguang* 法光, n.189, pp.2-3.

CHAPTER FIVE

YINSHUN'S UNDERSTANDING OF MĀDHYAMIKA DOCTRINE

「*The dependent arising of the dharmas through the combination of causes and conditions, This is what I define Emptiness, It is Conventional Designation, And it is the meaning of the Middle Way*」.¹

This kārikā is of crucial importance in Yinshun's restatement of Mādhyamika.² However, the reason and modalities of Yinshun to rely on this verse differ from the San-lun (especially Jizang's) and the Tiantai (especially Zhiyi's) adoption of it; such divergence facilitates to reveal how Yinshun departed from that stream of traditional Chinese Buddhism.

Similar to Yinshun, Jizang commented this verse as joint to the following 19th kārikā.³ Then, Jizang and Yinshun both regarded the 18th verse as explanatory of the Twofold Truth (*er di* 二諦), which was the topic of the 8th and 9th verses from the same chapter.⁴

Different from Yinshun and Jizang, Zhiyi used this verse as basis for the formulation of the Threefold Truth (*san di* 三諦)⁵ and the Threefold Contemplation (*san guan* 三觀). Therefore, Yinshun and Jizang criticised Zhiyi's formulation of the

¹ *Zhong lun*, ch.24, v.18.

² Detailed explanation of the selection of this specific verse as axis of Nāgārjuna's teaching are in: (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.459-461; (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp. 126-128.

³ T42 n1824, 152b-152c.

⁴ Yinshun's more comprehensive discussion on the Twofold Truth is in *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.205-230. Main Western scholarship of the theme includes: Koseki, Aaron Ken (1977) 'Chi-tsang's ta-ch'eng-hsüan-lun: the two truths and the Buddha nature', PhD dissertation; Swanson, Paul (1989) *Foundations of T'ien-t'ai philosophy: the flourishing of the two truths theory in Chinese Buddhism*; Shih, Chang-Qing (2004) *The Two Truths in Chinese Buddhism*.

⁵ Bocking, Brian (1995) *Nāgārjuna in China*, p.461.

Threefold Truth as a complete misunderstanding of Nāgārjuna's teachings.⁶

Different from Jizang and Zhiyi, Yinshun's distinct emphasis on, and analysis of the 18th verse is meant to support his argument that Nāgārjuna's contribution to the development of Indian Buddhism was his ability of en-compassing Pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna in his final restatement of Mādhyamika.

The way to associate two teachings (dependent arising and middle way) to the *Āgamas*, and two teachings (emptiness and conventional designation) to *Prajñāpāramitā*, and to link the two traditions through Nāgārjuna's doctrine of no-self provides authority to Yinshun's attempt of restoration of the original Buddhism without 'betraying' the Mahāyāna ideals in Mainstream Chinese Buddhism through operating an apparently successful negotiation of the two traditions.

This chapter explores these four teachings within the context of Yinshun's understanding of *Zhongguan*, and after a preliminary analysis of what *Zhongguan* means to Yinshun. Whereas Chapter Four already assessed the historical meaning of *Zhongguan* in Yinshun, this chapter defines its doctrinal contents.

The first preliminary part of the chapter develops an analysis of 'guan', in its

⁶ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.474-475: The Tiantai school based on this verse (18) and developed its doctrine of the Threefold Truth. According to Mādhyamika, this Tiantai position is problematic. First of all, this defies the contents of the text: Nāgārjuna stated very clearly in a previous verse 'All Buddhas teach the Dharma for all the human beings relying on the Two Truths', therefore how is possible to unveil Three Truths in this verse? It is pretty clear that this is not in line with the text. Secondly, this doctrine defies the meaning of the verse: these two verses [18 and 19] are consistent in meaning and should so be taken together. Therefore, how is it possible to get a sense from breaking the discourse, to take the former verse and to formulate the doctrine of the Three Truths from that? Without knowing that the latter verse concluded with '[no dharma exists] which is not empty'; there is not the affirmation that 'there is no dharma that does not exist, this is emptiness, this is conventional designation, this is the middle.'[...]Making up the theory of the perfect syncretism of the three truths is just freedom of thought. Moreover, it can find foundation in the Late Mahāyāna, within the systems of marvelous existence, only mind and tathagatagarbha (*zhenchang weixin miaoyou de dasheng* 真常唯心妙有的大乘), why is it necessary to claim it to be authored by Nāgārjuna? Again, this is like as the other [Tiantai theory], which claimed that 'realising the three wisdom in one thought' (*san zhi yi xin zhong de* 三智一心中得) has been preached by Nāgārjuna in *Da zhidu lun*, this is really cheating all the human beings in the world! [...] The Chinese traditional scholarship has obliterated the real features of Nāgārjuna's doctrine, but keep saying that that is the doctrine of the nature of the dharmas, but when did Nāgārjuna say anything like that! (p.475). Yinshun was one from the many voices that arose criticism to Zhiyi's theory. See Swanson, Paul (1989) *The T'ien-t'ai philosophy*, p.7.

dynamic combination with ‘*lun*’, in order to explore the reasons and modalities of Yinshun to argue the integration between the theoretical and dialectical [*lun* 論] approach to the middle [*zhong* 中] and the practical and meditative [*guan* 觀] approach to the middle [*zhong* 中].

Therefore, this chapter investigates three main issues. First of all, the complementarity of theory and practice in Mādhyamika. Secondly, the historical development of doctrinal issues are instances of the research methodology adopted by Yinshun. It is evident that, through the emphasis laid on such ‘historicism’, Yinshun led Chinese Buddhists to see *continuity* instead of *discontinuity* and *sectarianism* of doctrine.

V. 1 The relevance of *guan* 觀 in traditional San-lun and in Yinshun’s system

The School of Nāgārjuna, is clearly proposing the teaching that all the dharmas are empty. However, Nāgārjuna’s treatises, with *Zhong lun* as representative of them, do not use the term ‘empty’ [*kong*] but named this concept as ‘middle’ [*zhong*]. Nāgārjuna expressed the equivalence of dependent arising [*yuanyi*], emptiness [*kong*] and middle way [*zhong dao*], moreover he made the middle way, which is what does not fall in any of the two extremes, as the fundamental teaching. [...] *Guan* means investigation [*guan*], [therefore *zhongguan* means] the correct investigation of dependent arising, emptiness and middle way.⁷

First of all: How did Yinshun define *zhongguan*? The quotation above already gave us a concise but comprehensive answer.

In two of his most important works on Mādhyamika, *Zhongguan lun song*

⁷ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p. 3.

jiangji (1952) and *Zhongguan jinlun* (1950), Yinshun provided a lengthy argumentation on the Chinese term *Zhongguan* (in its function of translation of the Sanskrit *Mādhyamika*) as basis for the explanation of the meaning of Nāgārjuna's doctrine.

In *Zhongguanlun song jiangji*, Yinshun defined *zhong* as 'correct' and 'real', and *guan* as both 'wisdom' and 'investigation of the principle':

Zhong indicates the Correct [*zhengque* 正確] and Real [*zhenshi* 真實], which is apart from the wrong views and the intellectual plays, and does not fall into any of the two opposites of being and not-being.

Guan in its essence means Wisdom, in its adoption means investigation and awakening of the essence.

The investigation of the Reality [*zhenshi* 真實] of all the dharmas through wisdom, 「the knowledge/awareness of the real characteristic of all the dharmas」 which does not grasp the wrong views of being and not-being, is called *Zhongguan* [Contemplation of the Middle]⁸

And continued drawing a link between 'contemplation of the middle' and 'correct view' as from the Eightfold Noble Path:

The Correct View [*zheng jian* 正見] (Correct Contemplation [*zheng guan* 正觀]) from the Eightfold Correct Path (*Āgama*) is the *Zhong guan* which is meant here. Correct [*zheng* 正] stands for Middle [*zhong* 中], View [*jian* 見] stands for Contemplation [*guan* 觀], therefore the View of the Correct is the Contemplation of the Middle, it is one and two, two and one.⁹

Similarly, in *Zhongguan jin lun* and *Cheng fo zhi dao*, Yinshun discussed

⁸ Yinshun (1952), *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.6

⁹ Yinshun (1952), *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.6

zhongguan in terms of *zhengguan*,¹⁰ moreover in *Zhongguan jinlun* Yinshun referred to the *Sanlun you yiyi* 三論遊意義, and specifically to the passage where Sengzhao 僧肇 addressed *Zhongguan lun* 中觀論 in terms of *Zhengguan lun* 正觀論, as authority for the semantic and doctrinal equivalence between ‘middle’ and ‘correct’.¹¹ In doing so Yinshun rooted his statement in the Chinese tradition of San-lun scholar-monks. Later, in the essay 'Jiaofa yu Zhengfa de yangxin' 教法與證法的仰信 (1957) Yinshun underlined again that Nāgārjuna had intended *zhong guan* as investigation of the middle way.¹²

Yinshun elaborated a detailed discussion on the value of the single character *guan* as well. The Sanskrit Mādhyamika (or Madhyamaka) means ‘the middle’, and thus finds correspondence to the sole character *zhong*. Consequently, the term ‘Mādhyamika school’ should have been translated into Chinese as *zhong zong* 中宗 or *zhong pai* 中派. The character *guan*, and with that the issue of ‘contemplative introspection’, was added during the process of the Chinese transformation of Buddhism and maintained continuously in East Asia as such. And it is Yinshun, a Buddhist monk who claimed to re-evaluate and re-propose Indian Buddhism, to stress a considerable emphasis on *guan*.

The inclusion of *guan* in the translation of the name of the Indian school appears then as the mark of the Chinese reception of Mādhyamika, and thus sign of the Chineseness of Mādhyamika in China. Yinshun analysed *guan* in terms of

¹⁰Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.9-10. Yinshun (1960) *Cheng fo zhi dao*, pp. 216-217: ‘The Middle Path is intended as correct, exactly right, it is without deviations, and does not fall into any of the two wrong views. The Middle Path in Buddhism finds expression in the Correct Path [*zhengguan*] of the Dependent Arising, it is the fundamental position wherein Buddha exposed the Dharma. Therefore, the Correct Path is also called Middle Path.’

¹¹ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, p.10: Middle means Correct, this is the reason why Sengzhao referred to the Treatise of Contemplation of the Middle [*Zhongguan lun*] as the Treatise of Contemplation of the Correct [*Zhengguan lun*], and defined the Middle Way [*zhong dao*] as the Eightfold Correct Path [*ba zheng dao*]. See T45 n1855: 119b18.

¹² Yinshun (1957) 'Jiaofa yu zhengfa de yangxin', later published in (1973) *Fofa shi jiu shi zhi guang*, p.170: ‘Nāgārjuna’s [*zhongguan*] is intended as the investigation [*guancha*] of the middle way [*zhongdao*]’.

action, actor and object of action:

Guan stands for investigation [*guan* 觀察], a term that implies three elements: (1) the investigator, in other words the subject who makes the investigation. Generally speaking, [the investigators] are human beings; distinctly speaking, it is the mental function *prajñā* that correlates the mind and other mental functions. Since the abstraction-meditation [*zhiguan* 止觀] mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures are identical with the *dhyana-prajñā* [*dinghui* 定慧], the substance of meditation [*guan ti* 觀體] is identified with *prajñā*. (2) the function of investigation: meditation is the investigative function of *prajñā*. In Buddhism, the term function [*yong* 用] and substance [*ti* 體] are often interchangeable.¹³

Yinshun himself stressed that the distinctive quality of Chinese Buddhism was the emphasis on meditative introspection (*chan guan* 禪觀), with the caveat of introspection (*guan*) intended as (religious) experience in practice (*xiuxue tiyan* 修學體驗). However, according to Yinshun, this emphasis on experience is common to Indian Buddhism, as Nāgārjuna's "contemplation of the middle" (*zhong guan*) could prove.¹⁴ But was Nāgārjuna and his 'school of the Middle' really stressing 'meditative introspection'? Or is this position another forcing trait instrumental to Yinshun's negotiation between the Indian and Chinese traditions of Buddhism?

In line with the ideal of complementarity of theory and practice in Buddhism, Yinshun argued the complementarity of *guan* and *lun* 論:

[The Mahāyāna doctrine of the Emptiness of the nature of all the dharmas] is reflected in the Mādhyamika dialectic (on the level of theory [*lilun* 理論]), as well as in the Mādhyamika

¹³ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.41-42.

¹⁴ Yinshun (1957) 'Jiaofa yu zhengfa de yangxin', pp.170ff.

meditation (on the level of practice [*shixian* 實踐]).¹⁵

Yinshun's affiliation to the Chineseness of Buddhism is not only evident in the underlining of *guan* in the Mādhyamika context. The legacy of the traditional Chinese San-lun scholarship in Yinshun emerges in his referring to a passage of a canonical text: 'Therefore the ancients said: "The debate in mind is called *guan*, the explanation in words is called *lun*."¹⁶ This probably is a re-phrasing of an extract from the preface to *Zhonglun* by Tanying 曇影 that is included in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集,¹⁷ or the citation of the same passage in Jizang's *zhongguan lun shu*¹⁸ and *Sanlun xuan yi*.¹⁹

This emphasis on the dichotomy and complementarity of the constructs *zhong lun* and *zhong guan* did find correspondence in the Chinese Mādhyamika (San-lun) scholarship prior to Yinshun, and also prior to the Sui Jizang. Nonetheless, as Koseki pointed out, it was with Jizang that the complementarity of theory [*lun*] and practice [*guan*] assumed a defined reality.²⁰

The expression *zhong guan*, and its dialectical relationship with the construct *zhonglun* were already in use at the time of Kumarajiva and the first translations of

¹⁵ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.ii

¹⁶ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, p.42: *cun zhi yu xin wei guan, tu zhi yu kou wei lun* 存之於心為觀，吐之於口為論。

¹⁷ T55 n2145, 77b08: 亦云中觀。直以觀辯於心論宣於口耳 (This is called *zhong guan*. *Guan* debating in the mind, and *lun* manifesting in the mouth).

¹⁸ T42 n1824, 6c12: 以觀辨於心論宣於口 (The debate in mind is called *guan*, the explanation in words in called *lun*).

¹⁹ T45 n1852, 13b28-29 以觀辨於心論宣於口 (The debate in mind is called *guan*, the explanation in words in called *lun*).

²⁰ Koseki (1981) 'The concept of practice in San-lun thought: Chi-Tsang and the "concurrent insight" of the two truths', *Philosophy East & West*, 31, pp.463-464: 'As a San-lun scholar Chi-tsang was, of course, committed to the task of a reasoned exposition of the two truths. Reasoning alone, however, was not sufficient, and by discussing the two truths in terms of *bodhisattva* practice, it is evident that the middle path was not a static principle, that is, something merely to reason out. [...] While this is not a radical departure from the middle path doctrine established by the *Middle Treatise*, it is a conceptual shift in perspective influenced by the practical manner in which such concepts are interpreted. [...] Thus, while Chi-tsang was not a meditation master, the inclusion of this practice in the two truths theory should be seen as a San-lun development of Prajñāpāramitā thought which cannot be regarded simply as an orthodox version of Mādhyamika's therapeutic dialectic.'

Nāgārjuna's texts. In *Zhaolun shu* 肇論疏, Sengzhao addressed *Zhonglun* as *Zhong guan lun*, with the *lun* intended as explanation of the introspection [*guan*] of causes and conditions [*yinyuan* 因緣].²¹ In addition, as it has been mentioned above, Sengzhao had defined the treatise of the introspection of the Middle [*zhongguan lun* 中觀論] as the treatise of the introspection of the Correct [*zhengguan lun* 正觀論].²²

Sengrui 僧叡 and Tanying assessed similarly the meaning of *zhong*, *guan* and *lun* in their prefaces to *Zhong lun* collected into the 出三藏記集.²³

With Jizang we face a second phase in the development of this argument. In *Wuliangshou jing xu* 無量壽經序 Jizang distinguished between *zhongguan lun* 中觀論 and *zhongdao zhengguan* 中道正觀.²⁴

In *Shengmao baoqu* 勝鬘寶窟, Jizang analysed the three characters *zhong* 中, *guan* 觀 and *lun* 論 as in explanation to Sengrui's preface: according to Jizang, *zhong* is the principle [*li* 理] of the Correct Dharma, *guan* is the practice [*xing ji guo* 行及果] of the Correct Dharma, *lun* is the exposition [*jiao* 教] of the Correct Dharma.²⁵

In *Jingming xuan lun* 淨名玄論, Jizang referred again to Sengrui's preface and provided an explanation of the three characters *zhong*, *guan* and *lun*, with the difference that this time Jizang also reported Sengrui's specific passages about the three characters and a more detailed comment. As result, *zhong* is here defined as the principle of the Middle Truth [*zhongshi zhi li* 中實之理]; *lun* is intended as the explanatory exposition [*jiao men xianming* 教門顯明]; *guan* indicates the practice of the law of cause and effect [*yinguo xing* 因果行].²⁶

²¹ T45 n1859: 167c16-18: *Zhongguanzhe. Zhong lun yi ming Zhong guan lun. Yi ci lun zhong ming guan yinyuan deng fa gu ye* 中觀者。中論一名中觀論。以此論中明觀因緣等法故也。

²² T45 n1855: 119b18.

²³ For Sengrui see: T45 n2145: 76c15-18; for Tanying see: T45 n2145: 77b08.

²⁴ T37 n1752: 238c27-28.

²⁵ T37 n1744: 29c-30a.

²⁶ T38 n1780: 901c26-902a2.

In *Zhongguan lun shu* 中觀論疏, Jizang commented again on the theme in a few sections. First of all, the famous passage ‘The debate in mind is called *guan*, the explanation in words is called *lun*’, which Jizang reported as part of his comment on Ch.1 of *Zhong lun*, and in reference to v.18 in Ch.24.²⁷ Then, the three characters *zhong*, *guan* and *lun* are interpreted as reflection of the trikaya: the ‘middle’ represents the Dharma-kaya (*fashen* 法身), the ‘correct introspection’ is compared to the Sambhoga-kaya (*yingshen* 應身), whereas the statement through words is intended as Nirmana-kaya (*huashen* 化身).²⁸ Later on, Jizang returned to the three themes of ‘middle’, ‘introspection’ and ‘treatise’ and provided another argumentation: ‘middle’ finds its definition in the delusive existence and calm extinction of the sentient beings, ‘introspection’ is the realization [*wu* 悟] that the sentient beings are originally calm extinction, and finally ‘treatise’ is the explanation in words of this principle.²⁹

In *Dasheng xuan lun* 大乘玄論 Jizang affirmed we can speak of *zhong guan lun* as well as of *guan zhong lun* and *lun zhong guan*, with the caveat that *zhong* is intended as ‘expression of the principle’ [*lijiao* 理教], and *guan* as ‘wisdom obtained from contemplation’ [*guan zhi* 觀智]. Middle way [*zhong dao*] is here explained as ‘correct Dharma’ [*zheng fa*] and ‘middle reality’ [*zhong shi* 中實], a phrasing that Yinshun reported as well. The combination of *guan* and *lun* is present here as well: ‘introspection of the middle’ [*zhong guan*], which is the ‘correct view’ [*zheng guan*] originated from the essence ‘middle reality’ [*zhong shi*] and with which the oppositions can be purified and eliminated, becomes ‘dialectical exposition of the middle’ [*zhong lun*] when worded verbally.³⁰

²⁷ T42 n1824, 6c12.

²⁸ T42 n1824: 70b22-24.

²⁹ T42 n1824: 84c27-29.

³⁰ T45 n1853: 73c-74a.

Among Jizang's disciples, Shi fashi 碩法師 provided his explanation of *Zhongguan* in his *Sanlun you yiyi* 三論遊意義, focusing on the difference and complementarity between *lun* and *guan*. Besides quoting from Tanying's 曇影 and Sengrui's 僧叡 prefaces to *Zhong lun*, Shi Fashi offered his own interpretation: *lun* is defined as 'oral speech' (*shuo* 說), while *guan* is identified with 'practical behavior' (*xing* 行).³¹ This is close to Yinshun's argument, which Yinshun articulated and completed with quoting the phrasings 'explaining the middle way' [*shuo zhongdao* 說中道]³² and 'cultivating the middle way' [*xing zhongdao* 行中道] from *Da zhidu lun*.³³

The complementarity and integration between *guan* and *lun* provided Mādhyamika with the essential traits of a 'religion', in the *zongjiao* 宗教 sense of the term, and to be more specific, in the Chinese Buddhist understanding of the term *zongjiao* as an expression formed of the single characters *zong* and *jiao*, with *zong* indicating the 'religious experience', and *jiao* standing for the exposition of such an experience.

This had been the traditional San-lun's point of view (prior and post Jizang), and this was Yinshun's understanding of the issue as well: *guan* is the introspection of the middle, it is the experience of the middle, whereas *lun* is its worded expression. In sum, whereas *guan* is comparable to *zong*, *lun* is comparable to *jiao*. All together, the treatise on the introspection of the middle [*zhong guan lun* 中觀論]

³¹ The relationship between introspection [*guan*] and argumentation [*lun*] reflects the relationship between practice [*xing*] and theoretical explanation [*shuo*]. The argumentation of the introspection is the doctrinal explanation following the practice. The introspection of the argumentation is the practice following the doctrinal explanation. To practice and then to explain, means to provide a theoretical explanation of the object of the practice. To explain and then to practice, means to practice the doctrine object of the exposition. The argumentation of the object of practice is named Treatise of the Middle. The introspection of the object of the argumentation is named Introspection of the Middle. (T45 n1855: 116b)

³² Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.259-260. Quotation from *Da zhidu lun*, fasc.70, ch.49 [T25 n1630: 551a10-12].

³³ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.259-260. Quotation from *Da zhidu lun*, fasc.61, ch.39 [T25 n1630: 492c5-6].

may be assumed as the religion of the middle [*zhong zongjiao* 中宗教]. Yinshun concluded that the single concept of *zhong* 中 actually includes both the aspects of *zong* and *jiao*: ‘middle’ if intended in its facet of ‘Truth’ [*zhongshi* 中實] is thus identified with *zong*, whereas ‘middle’ if intended in terms of ‘Correct’ [*zhongzheng* 中正] is thus described as *jiao*.³⁴

This search in the Chinese Buddhist Canon has helped tracing back Yinshun’s hermeneutics on *guan*, also in its association with *lun*.³⁵ Yinshun’s argument is rooted mainly in Sengzhao and Jizang, which is further evidence in support of my thesis that Yinshun is re-proposing Jizang’s arguments.

The choice of citing Jizang, as well as from Sengrui's and Taoying's prefaces to *Zhong lun*,³⁶ and the reference to Sengrui’s preface in his *Baoji jing jiangji*,³⁷ provided canonical authorities as ground of authenticity for Yinshun's theory. This selection of scriptures demonstrates which tradition and which texts were 'canonical' and thus 'authoritative' for Yinshun: his professed preference for the early (original) Buddhism and the *Āgamas* is actually replaced in practice by Chinese (San-lun) traditional works. Yinshun's affiliation to the Chineseness of Mādhyamika was part of the negotiation and resolution that he proposed as the basis for a new Mahāyāna

³⁴ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.11-12. For explanation of ‘middle’ as ‘Truth’ and ‘Correct’, see the section on ‘middle way’ in this chapter.

³⁵ The versions of the Chinese Buddhist Canon considered here are the Longzang and the Taishō, being those the most consulted by Yinshun.

³⁶ T45 n1855: 77a-77b.

³⁷ Yinshun (1964) *Baoji jing jiangji*, pp.90-93: According to this scripture and the Mādhyamika thought, the introspection of the middle [*zhongguan* 中觀], the introspection of the correct [*zhengguan* 正觀] and the introspection of the real [*zhenshiguan* 真實觀] are different designations of the same meaning. Not wrong stands for correct, not disposed (to any form the two sides) means middle, not delusion is the real. The pre-modern scholarship called the *Treatise of the Introspection of the Middle* as *Treatise of the Introspection of the Correct*. Sengrui also affirmed: “Taking the middle for name, and reflecting its reality”. Therefore, the introspection of the middle in Buddhism is neither ambiguous nor equivocal, but its completeness is reality, is just perfection. Introspection of the middle, introspection of the correct, these all mean investigating the contemplative-wisdom of the exact principle. As for *guan*, it translates the Sanskrit vipasyana. [...]. Therefore, the functions of introspection [*guan* 觀] and cessation [*zhi* 止] are different, [*guan*] means pondering, inquiring, observing. However, introspections are divided into two distinct groups of [introspection of] the worldly [truth] and [introspection of] the ultimate [truth]; the introspection of the middle is the pondering and enquiring of the real, is the introspection of the ultimate [truth]. (p.91)

and a new (Buddhist) China.

Although Yinshun's stress on intellectual understanding combined with the practical facet of cultivation found authoritative roots in Jizang, we should also note the difference in understanding of *guan* and 'practice' in Jizang and Yinshun, and thus identify the shift from Jizang to Yinshun.

V. 2 The 「Pre-Mahāyāna」 pattern: Dependent Arising and Middle Way

Yinshun's interpretation of Nāgārjuna's doctrine is based on the tension and coexistence of Early Buddhism and Mahāyāna. For this reason the chapter develops a distinct analysis of the pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna patterns, defining their doctrinal as well as historical identities, in order to understand how and why their mutual combination created the identity of the School of Nāgārjuna.

This section attempts to assess the historical development of the four doctrines (dependent arising, middle way, emptiness and conventional designation), questioning their supposed pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna designation in the context of the overlapping and combination of the two traditions.

Yinshun's attempt to argue doctrinal consistency throughout the history of Buddhism is index of his way to approach doctrinal study and apply 'historicism' (歷史觀) to teachings and textual analysis. In this case, his historicism proposes a division into four stages:

- (1) Pre-Mahāyāna origins;
- (2) Mahāyāna development;
- (3) Shift from Pre-Mahāyāna to Mahāyāna;
- (4) Continuity from Pre-Mahāyāna to Mahāyāna: the Nāgārjuna's resolution.

V. 2. 1 *Yuanqi* 緣起³⁸

In *Fofa gailun* Yinshun referred to the definition from the *Agamas* for the definition of *yuanqi*, and thus *yuanqi* is identified with *yinyuan* (causes and conditions):

Causes and conditions are a matter of activity, and also of calm; causes and conditions in motion are identified with the principle of dependent arising. The law of dependent arising is defined as follow: “the being of this and therefore the being of that; the origination of this and therefore the origination of that.”³⁹ This explains the criteria of existence based on interdependence.⁴⁰

Later, in *Zhongguan jinlun* Yinshun proposed the Mādhyamika interpretation of the *yuanqi* doctrine, which becomes synonym of the Mahāyāna conception of emptiness, and therefore of the absolute and conventional truths:

According to the Mādhyamika, the principle of dependent arising is based on interdependence and complementarities, and [it demonstrates] the absence of self-nature, the only no-self and again the delusion of the conventional truth created by [the manifestation of] cause and effect. [...] The law of dependent arising [stands on the middle], is neither only related to the phenomena nor merely to the universal principle; [it explains] the differences in the phenomena and does not contest the equanimity of the universal principle, it is in accordance with the universal principle and does not

³⁸ For Yinshun’s complete examination of *yuanqi*, see the following works: (1944) *Weishixue tanyuan*, pp. 10-27; (1949) *Fofa gai lun*, pp. 147-156; (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp. Vi-vii, 25-40, 59-82, 237-252; (1960) *Cheng fo zhi dao*, pp. 137, 158, 199; (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.218-232; (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp. 18-32, 126-146.

³⁹ This *Agama* statement is usually linked to the following: “The non-being of this and therefore the non-being of that; the extinction of this and therefore the extinction of that.”

⁴⁰ Yinshun (1949) *Fofa gailun*, p.147.

question the differences within the phenomena.⁴¹

To go into details, in his writings Yinshun defined *yuanqi* through association to five concepts, which develops the law of dependent arising in parallel and engagement with other pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna principles:

- a. Dependent arising vis-à-vis Cause and Conditions [yinyuan 因緣]. This is the preliminary parallel in Yinshun's argumentation: the association between *yuanqi* and *yinyuan*, which Yinshun addressed through reference to the *Āgamas*, is the ground for the following doctrinal associations.⁴²
- b. Dependent arising vis-à-vis Dependent origination [yuansheng 緣生] A distinction that, as Yinshun pointed out in his historical prospective, appears already in the *Āgamas* and Abhidharma. In this way dependent arising is read as 'cause', and dependent origination as 'effect'.⁴³
- c. Dependent arising as implying both origination [sheng 生] and extinction [mie 滅]. As the famous sentence of the *Āgamas* states: "the being of this and therefore the being of that; the origination of this and therefore the origination of that. The non-being of this and therefore the non-being of that; the extinction of this and therefore the extinction of that."⁴⁴ In line with his ideal of Nāgārjuna's negotiation of Early and Prajñāpāramitā Buddhism, Yinshun referred not merely to the *Āgamas* but also to *Da zhidu lun*.⁴⁵
- d. Dependent arising: active dharma [weifa 爲法] or non-active dharma [wuweifa 無爲法]? As Yinshun's account of doctrinal history reports, according to the Mahasanghika tradition, dependent arising is non-active dharma, while the

⁴¹ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, p.6.

⁴² Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.219-223.

⁴³ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.220.

⁴⁴ See quotations above.

⁴⁵ T25 n1509: 136c4-5.

Sarvastivada defines it as active-dharma. Quoting from the *Āgamas* and *Abhidharma* for reference, Yinshun concluded proposing Nāgārjuna's agreement with the Sarvastivada position.⁴⁶

- e. Dependent arising vis-à-vis Nirvana [*niepan* 涅槃] Evidence of Yinshun's statement, that Nāgārjuna's doctrine encompasses *Āgama* and *Prajñāpāramitā* teachings, found evidence in Nāgārjuna's bridging the doctrine of dependent arising with nirvana. Following Yinshun's argument, the *Āgamas* use to address tathata (*zhenru* 真如) and dharma-dhatu (*fajie* 法界) in terms of *yuanqi*, while the *Prajñāpāramitā* do define those as *niepan*.⁴⁷ With the premise that *yuanqi* corresponds to active-dharma and *niepan* with non-active dharma, in *Da zhidu lun* Nāgārjuna drew the equivalence between *yuanqi* and *niepan* by arguing the coexistence of active-dharma (*youwei*) and non-active dharma (*wuwei*),⁴⁸ a statement that restates a *Prajñāpāramitā* tenet.⁴⁹

Specifically on Mādhyamika, Yinshun underlined that Nāgārjuna's doctrine is the statement of the dependent arising from the middle way of the eightfold negation (*babu zhongdao de yuanqilun* 八不中道的緣起論). According to Yinshun, Nāgārjuna was able to make a 'deeper investigation' and to bridge the principle of dependent arising with the teaching of emptiness through the concept of *asvabhāva* (lack of self-nature), as, Yinshun argued, *Zhong lun* Ch.24: v.18, demonstrates.

Yinshun's early works on dependent arising, so as those on the three teachings analysed below, do not find any parallel in the contemporary early twentieth-century Chinese Buddhology, and became grounds for later works, as Chapter Two already

⁴⁶ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.222.

⁴⁷ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.247-248.

⁴⁸ T25 n1509: 289a.

⁴⁹ T8 n223: 232b22-23.

illustrated.⁵⁰

V. 2. 2 *Zhongdao* 中道⁵¹

The heart of Buddhist teachings – the practical promotion, purification and perfection of existence – is called the way [*dao* 道] in the Buddhist scriptures. When Buddha first turned the wheel of law [*falun* 法輪] for the five bhiksus in the Deer Park at Rsipatana near Benares, he had already pointed out that the salient feature of the way is its being 「middle」 [*zhong* 中]⁵².

Yinshun articulated his argumentation on the middle way into the following arguments:

- a. Middle Path as way of cultivation [*xingwei* 行爲] and theoretical correct view [*zhijian* 知見]. Yinshun distinguished the ‘middle way on the level of practice’ [*xing de zhongdao* 行的中道] from the ‘middle way on the level of principle’ [*li de zhongdao* 理的中道], and the middle way in practice is conceived as guided by the Correct View.⁵³ In line with the ideal of integration of theory and practice as thread in Buddhism,⁵⁴ Yinshun explicitly promoted the integration of the ‘theoretical exposition’ [*shuo* 說], which is identified here with *zhijian*, and ‘practical cultivation’ [*xing* 行], which corresponds here to *xingwei*. In other words, ‘middle way’ as theory is a foundational norm [*face* 法測], while as

⁵⁰ Yinshun's hermeneutics on *yuangqi*, for instance, became basis of Yanpei's following work *Fojiao de yuangqi guan*.

⁵¹ Yinshun (1949) *Fofa gailun*, pp.169-179; Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp. 5-12, 181-192, 231-237; (1950) 'Zhongdao de fojiao', in (1973) *Fofa zhi qiu shi zhi guang*, pp.145-157; (1960) *Chengfo zhi dao*, pp.210ff; (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.255-261; (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp.20ff;

⁵² Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p.5

⁵³ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.8-9.

⁵⁴ 'Start the virtuous practice [*dexing* 德行] relying on the true principle [*zhenli* 真理], realise and embody the true principle basing on the virtuous practice, the integration of the true principle and the virtuous practice, the accomplishment of the complete perfection of principle and wisdom, wisdom and practice, here is the high objective of the Dharma.' [Yinshun (1949) *Fofa gailun*, p.175]

practice is the cultivation of the eightfold correct path [*ba zheng dao* 八正道].

- b. Middle Path as Eightfold Correct Path [*ba zheng dao* 八正道]. In *Fofa gai lun* Yinshun stated that *zhong dao*, or otherwise called *zheng dao*, is the eightfold correct path, which is defined as 'the only correct way for the human beings' (*weiyi de rensheng zhengdao* 惟一的人生正道).⁵⁵ The fact that the Eightfold Correct Path is the manifestation of the Middle Path on the level of practice finds confirmation in the extensive discussion published in *Cheng fo zhi dao*, which is considered as Yinshun's 'manual of practice', where the Eightfold Correct Path is related to the 'three studies' (*san xue* 三學) - discipline, meditation and wisdom.⁵⁶ In *Zhongguan jinlun* Yinshun discussed further the equivalence between Middle Path and Eightfold Correct Path, and emphasised the guidance role played by 'Correct View', which the *Agamas* comments as the guide of all the activities, so as the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras* do with its Māhāyana counterpart, Wisdom.⁵⁷
- c. Middle Path as related to the Eightfold Negation [*babu* 八不]. Yinshun stressed that the Middle Path in the *Middle Treatise* is intended as the 'Eightfold-negation Middle Path' [*babu zhongdao* 八不中道]. According to Yinshun, if we rely on the equivalence between conventional designation and emptiness (in other words, on the doctrine of empty nature and only name [*xingkong weiming* 性空唯名]) in order to explain the middle path of dependent arising [*yuanqi zhongdao* 緣起中道], the middle path becomes the state between the two extremes, and also invokes the eightfold negation presented in the *Middle Treatise*. Then, according to the Middle Path, the dependent arising of the eightfold negation [*ba bu de*

⁵⁵ Yinshun (1949) *Fofa gailun*, p.169

⁵⁶ Yinshun (1960) *Cheng fo zhi dao*, pp.207-232.

⁵⁷ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.5-7. In his explanation of the significance of 'middle', Yinshun made a parallel between the two extremes and the solution to it in Buddhism and the extremist position, which denies the 'middle', taken by Schopenhauer, whose thought is defined as an 'emotion-based philosophy' [*yi qingyi wei ben de jielun* 以情意為本的結論], and so opposed to the Buddhist doctrine (pp.6-7).

yuanqi 八不的緣起], which is expression of the conventional designation [*jiaming* 假名], does become basis of all the dharmas that appear in the secular truth [*shisu di* 世俗諦]. Finally, according to the Middle Path, the eightfold negation of dependent arising [*yuanqi de babu* 緣起的八不], which is expression of emptiness [*kong* 空], do not fall into the opposed views and be in accordance to the ultimate truth [*shengyi di* 勝義諦]. This is, according to Yinshun, the doctrinal contents of the v.18 of Ch.24, which Yinshun also summarised with the following chart. The cross-shaped scheme shows the *Āgama* concept (on one line (dependent arising and middle way), and Prajñāpāramitā tenets (emptiness and conventional designation) on the other, with the central point of convergence occupied by “no-self nature”. Nāgārjuna's contribution thus represented graphically in its aspect of en-compassing 'middle' resolution:⁵⁸

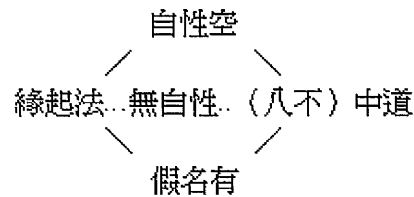


Table 14 – Nāgārjuna's en-compassing resolution

- d. Middle Path: Middle as Truth [*zhongshi* 中實] and Middle as Correctness [*zhongzheng* 中正]. Middle Way is identified as Middle Truth [*zhong shi*] and Middle Perfection [*zhong zheng*]. The former indicates non-attachment to name and appearance [*bu zhu yu ming xiang* 不著於名相] and non-falling into relativity [*bu luo yu duidai* 不落於對待]. The latter invoke three arguments: all Buddha's teachings (including the doctrine of dependent arising, emptiness and

⁵⁸ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.257. For the definition of Middle Path from the perspective of the twofold truth, see Ibidem, pp.257-260.

middle path) are all middle in the sense of correct; 'correctness' is the embracing integration of 'perfect emptiness utmost truth' and 'conventional existence secular truth'; dependent arising should be understood as expression of the middle way of emptiness, which explain the correct abandoning of the opposed positions 'being' – 'non-being', 'conventional marks – noumenical nature'.⁵⁹

- e. Middle Path and Dependent Arising. Referring to the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures, Yinshun argued that the doctrine of dependent arising implies the absence of self-nature, and therefore entails the mere existence of conventional designation (non-substance), the absence of self-nature, and therefore is equivalent to emptiness. The dependent arising of conventional designation implies the distance from the opposed views and the empty calm.⁶⁰
- f. Middle Path as in relation with 'overly broadness' [taiguo 太過] and 'overly narrowness' [buji 不及] from the Tibetan tradition.⁶¹

Yinshun proposed a comprehensive hermeneutics of the concept of Middle Way throughout the history of Buddhism, with references to the Indian, Chinese, and Tibetan traditions. In other words, Yinshun linked Pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna, so to make his entire argumentation as instrumental to his overall plan of negotiation between Indian and Chinese Buddhism for the recreation of a new Buddhism. His making references to Indian, Chinese and Tibetan traditions served to find an authoritative support of his argument.

⁵⁹ Yinshun(1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, pp.11-12.

⁶⁰ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.257.

⁶¹ See Chapter Four.

V. 3 The 「Mahāyāna」 pattern: Emptiness and Conventional Designation

V. 3. 1 *Kong* 空

The meditative introspection of the empty nature cannot be performed in separation from dependent arising, but one should base on dependent arising and contemplate the emptiness of nature. At the same time, the emptiness of nature does not contradict the law of dependent arising. This is the view of the middle way [*zhongdao guan* 中道觀], wherein there is being and therefore emptiness, and emptiness does not defy being, and [the view of the middle way] is the meditation of the intensified effort [*jiaxing guan* 加行觀] that should be carried on from the beginning of the practice to the achievement of awakening.⁶²

One from the very early monographs (*Xingkong xue taoyuan*) and one from the very late works (*Kong zhi tanjiu*) are dedicated to the analysis of emptiness and emptiness of nature, being the latter supposed to be a revised and complemented version of the former. In a section entitled 'Kongyi de yanjiu' 空義的研究, Yinshun listed three essential guidelines for the correct understanding of emptiness. First of all, emptiness is *the* essence of the Dharma, therefore it should not be investigated from the standpoint of any specific sect, nor be considered a teaching distinctive of the San-lun school. In other words, all the Buddhist doctrines centre on emptiness. Secondly, emptiness in Buddhism should be understood in mutual relation to 'being' [*you* 有]. Finally, according to Yinshun, so far emptiness has been defined through 'being', but the vice versa process has been neglected, and that was going to be his contribution to the topic.⁶³

The doctrinal history of *kong* from the Agama to Nāgārjuna was distinct topic

⁶² Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jinlun*, p.235.

⁶³ Yinshun, *Xingkong xue taoyuan*, pp.12-15.

of the writings *Xingkong xue tanyuan*, *Zhongguan jinlun*, *Kong zhi tanjiu*. Then, the understanding of *kong* in the late (Yogācāra-imbued) Mādhyamika and in the Tathagatagarbha view are exposed in *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi* and *Rulaizang zhi yanjiu*. Finally the preface of *Kong zhi tanjiu* reported briefly the main traits of *kong* from the early Buddhism to the renewed interpretation by Nāgārjuna.

Yinshun highlighted four different levels of understanding of emptiness:

- a. Emptiness in the Pre-Mahāyāna Āgama tradition. Yinshun referred to a large number of sutras but focused especially on the *Xiaokong jing* 小空經, and *Dakong jing* 大空經, is related this tenet to the liberation path [*jietuo dao* 解脫道].
- b. Emptiness in the Pre-Mahāyāna Sectarian tradition [*Bupai* 部派] There was a gradual development of the conceptualisation of *kong*, which was subject to various classification.
- c. Emptiness in the *Prajñāpāramitā* is intended as emptiness of nature [*xingkong* 性空] of the dharmas.
- d. Emptiness in Nāgārjuna is the integration of the teachings of Middle Path and Dependent Arising (Pre-Mahāyāna) with the teachings of Emptiness (of the nature of the dharmas) and Conventional Designation (Mahāyāna).

Yinshun attempted to reveal how (and why) the Early Mahāyāna (Indian tradition) conceptualization of *kong* evolved in the Late Mahāyāna (Yogācāra and Tathāgatagarbha – Indian tradition), and how Chinese Buddhism (especially San-lun, Tiantai and Chan) reshaped it.

Yinshun did not add a new definition to emptiness, but recovered textual references and reorganised them in an unprecedented way, because instrumental to his attempt of restoring Chinese Buddhism through a new formula that could

encompass the original Indian and the local Chinese Buddhist traditions, and have Nāgārjuna as the enshrined authority.

V. 3. 2 *Jiaming* 假名⁶⁴

Nāgārjuna explained the existence of all the dharma through the doctrine of “conventional combining.” The conventional existence dependent on conditions is illusory and changeable; because of being conventional, such existence has the function of being heard and being seen, and is not different from the naming of an empty flower.⁶⁵

Kong zhi tanjiu provides the most detailed and comprehensive examination of *prajñapti-upādāya*. Concerning Yinshun’s method of analysis, and consequently it is the main reference source so as it was for the conceptualization of Emptiness.

How did Yinshun construct the examination of *jiaming*? We can see a fivefold argument:

- a. Coventional designation within the Prajñāpāramitā literature. He first of all reported the Mahāyāna’s interpretation of the concept through reference to the chapter on ‘sanjia’ 三假 from Prajñāpāramitā,⁶⁶ and especially through the extended explanation provided in *Da zhidu lun*. Consultation of *Da zhidu lun* and comparative scheme of the threefold prajñapti in the different versions of Prajñāpāramitā scriptures, looking for a historical definition and evolution of the doctrine is representative of Yinshun’s approach to texts and doctrine.
- b. Mahāyāna vis-à-vis Pre-Mahāyāna (Abhidharma). Secondly, Yinshun drew a

⁶⁴ Yinshun developed his analysis on *jiaming* in the following works: (1985)*Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.233-242, (1950)*Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.176-178, (1993)*Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, pp.62-63, (1981)*Chuqi dacheng fojiao zhi qiyuan yu kaizhan*, pp.727-728, (1988)*Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp.130-131.

⁶⁵ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.241.

⁶⁶ T8:233, 230b-232c.

comparative chart included the Mahāyāna's threefold conventional designation [*sanjia*] and the Pre-Mahāyāna theory of five being (*wuyou* 五有).

- c. Mādhyamika conceptualization of *jiaming* within Mahāyāna. Only then, Yinshun discussed the Mādhyamika view on *jiaming* through a twofold level of analysis, with the first being Mādhyamika view as derived from the Mahāyānist interpretation. According to Yinshun's analysis, in the *Prajñāpāramitā* 'dependent arising' corresponds to *dharma-prajñapti*, 'emptiness' is equivalent to *nāma-prajñapti*, while a discrepancy occurs in the *Prajñāpāramitā* and Mādhyamika adoption (and understanding) of *upādāna-prajñapti*.
- d. Mādhyamika conceptualization of *jiaming* from Pre-Mahāyāna (Vatsiputriya) The second level of analysis sees Mādhyamika view as derived from the Pre-Mahāyāna interpretations, with the Pre-Mahāyāna in this case identified with Vatsiputriya, although Sarvastivada and Mahasanghika are also included in the comparative debate. With the caveat that Vatsiputriya had argued the ineffability of the I, whereas Nāgārjuna in the *Middle Treatise* argued the 'no-self' (*wuwo* 無我), and Vatsiputriya made the correspondence between conventional designation and pudgala, whereas Nāgārjuna in the *Middle Treatise* established the equivalence between conventional designation and dependent arising.
- e. Nāgārjuna's resolution. In conclusion, Yinshun focused on Nāgārjuna's resolution: here is Yinshun's effort to demonstrate Nāgārjuna's combination of Pre-Mahāyāna (Vatsiputriya) with Mahāyāna (*Prajñāpāramitā*). According to Yinshun, Nāgārjuna did not rely on *nāma-prajñapti*, because this is misleading and can portare to 'wei-shi'; Nāgārjuna did not rely on *dharma-prajñapti*, because this can lead to the doctrine of real existence, core teaching of sectarianism, which denies emptiness. Then, Nāgārjuna did refer to *upādāna-*

prajñapti for explaining the existence of the dharmas.

V. 4 Concluding Remarks: Nāgārjuna's contribution

To conclude, in Yinshun's view, are Nāgārjuna and Nāgārjuna's teachings Mahāyānist or do they still belong to the Pre-Mahāyāna? Yinshun's emphasis on the Pre-Mahāyāna (especially *Āgamas*) made him receiving the appellation of 'betrayer of Mahāyāna', and opened a still unsolved debate. This chapter aimed to unveil how Yinshun articulated his strategy of negotiation, in its highly criticized tension between Mahāyāna and Pre-Mahāyāna, on a doctrinal level.

Yinshun affirmed that it was through the concept of the absence of self-nature [*wu zixing* 無自性] that Nāgārjuna argued the equivalence between Dependent Arising and Emptiness, and thus encompassed the opposition between 'Buddhadharma' (that Mahāyāna called as 'the Sravaka doctrine' [*shengwen fa* 聲聞法]) and 'Mahāyāna Buddhism'.⁶⁷ And it will be on this doctrinal background and through a similar analytical framework that, as I argue in the next chapter, Yinshun theorised his *renjian fojiao*.

⁶⁷ Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, p.131.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MĀDHYAMIKA FRAMEWORK OF *RENJIAN FOJIAO* 人間佛教

The Buddhadharma that I understood from sūtras and śāstras, which is pure and correct, plain and true, and then the Bodhisattva practice of benefitting the self through benefitting the others, these are the foundational elements of the 'Buddhism for the Human Realm', which corrects the tendency to spirits and theism of the Dharma. This ideal, in a traditional reality and utilitarian system of thought, seems to be destined to get lost in the sand; it is very difficult to make it growing vigorous and successful! ¹

The news of the death of Yinshun on the 4th of June 2005 captured the attention of Taiwan and remained on the media for ten days. The fact has been reported and commented in several ways, according to different receptions of the figure Yinshun, and of the role that he had played (or that they wanted him to have played) in the history of Chinese Buddhism and Buddhism in Taiwan.

We can group these divergent voices under three headings:

1. the local non-Buddhist mass media (including printed newspapers,² magazines,³ and TV news), which took this opportunity for describing this religious figure and the position that he had held in the (not necessarily merely religious) history of Taiwan, focusing of the role that Yinshun played in the making of an identity for Taiwan.

¹ Yinshun (1994) *Pingfan de yi sheng*, p. 170.

² The news was published from 4 to 13 June on: *Zhongshi wanbao* 中時晚報, *Taiwan ribao* 台灣日報, *Ziyou shibao* 自由時報, *Minsheng bao* 民生報, *Pingguo ribao* 蘋果日報, *Lianhe bao* 聯合報, *Zhongguo shibao* 中國時報, *Zhongyang ribao* 中央日報, and the English *Taipei Times*.

³ Journals on general culture such as *Dangdai* 當代 dedicated one special issue to Yinshun in July 2005.

2. Buddhist organisations, not directly linked to Yinshun, such as the Chinese Buddhist Association (*Zhongguo fojiao hui* 中國佛教會)⁴, Foguangshan 佛光山⁵, Fagushan 法鼓山⁶, The Taipei Temple Association (*Taipei fosi xiehui* 台北佛寺協會)⁷, Hong Kong Buddhist Association (*Xianggang fojiao hui* 香港佛教會)⁸, the American Buddhist Society (*Meizhou fojiao hui* 美洲佛教會).⁹

3. Taiwanese Buddhist organisations whose leaders were closely connected to Yinshun. This group includes: the Tzu Chi Foundation (*Ciji gongde hui* 慈濟功德會), whose founder is the Buddhist nun Zhengyan 證嚴 (b.1937), tonsure disciple of Yinshun¹⁰; Miaoyun Vihāra (妙雲蘭若)¹¹; the Hongshi Buddhist Institute (*Hongshi foxueyuan* 弘誓佛學院), whose founder and leading figure is the Buddhist nun Zhaohui (b.1957), student of Yinshun.¹²

In sum, on the one hand we have Buddhist groups that mourn the passing of Yinshun in a ‘traditional’ way, through classical eulogistic formulas, whose emphasis and metaphorical parallels varied according to the degree of connection to the Buddhist figure. On the other hand we have the local media, whose reports show the local social-historical interpretation of the figure of Yinshun.

As for the newspapers, the key words that recurred more often for defining

⁴ Editorial of *Zhongguo fojiao* 中國佛教, v.49, n.7.

⁵ Articles on the daily *Renjian fubao* 人間福報, from 6 to 13 June.

⁶ Special issue of *Rensheng zazhi* 人生雜誌, v.263.

⁷ Special issue of *Fosi jikan* 佛寺季刊, n.48.

⁸ Special issue of *Xianggang fojiao* 香港佛教, n.245.

⁹ Special issue of *Mei fohui xun* 美佛慧訊, n.97.

¹⁰ Besides a special issue of *Ciji yuekan* 慈濟月刊, and a memorial book entitled *Lijing zhuisi. Renjian fojiao daohangshi – Yinshun daoshi* 禮敬 追思. 人間佛教導航師 – 印順導師 (which is mostly the reprinting of the former magazine with some additional interviews), Tzu Chi published a few DVDs, including the cartoon on Yinshun’s life and the documentary of the last days of the life of the monk, the moment of his death and the funeral service. See section above.

¹¹ Special issue of *Miaoyun xuexun* 妙雲學訊, n.34; Miaoyun also produced the publication of a few pages from Yinshun’s handwriting in occasion of the 100th day from Yinshun’s death.

¹² Special issue of *Hongshi* 弘誓, n.75.

Yinshun were 'Buddhism for the Human Realm' (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教) and 'the master of Zhengyan' (*Zhengyan fashi de shifu* 證嚴法師的師父).

The Buddhist nun Zhengyan 證嚴 (b.1937) is the founder in 1966 of the Tzu Chi Foundation (*Ciji gongdehui* 慈濟功德會), which is dedicated to the four missions of education, culture, medicine, and charity, focusing especially on the last two.¹³ Zhengyan has been described as "One of the most powerful figures in the Buddhist world",¹⁴ and "The mother superior of Buddhism"¹⁵. The fame of the nun may explain the reason why a senior monk has been defined through one of his disciples, a phenomenon that is unusual in the history of Chinese Buddhism.

The association between Yinshun and *renjian fojiao* brought also the discussion on a possible '*renjian fojiao* lineage' (with lineage expressed in terms of *chuancheng* 傳承), which, according to the newspaper who posted the news, started with Taixu, the reformist monk of the modern Chinese Buddhism, has Zhengyan as current patriarch, and finds Yinshun in the intermediate (and bridging) position.¹⁶

What we face here is a case of retrospective lineage in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, the construction of a genealogical order of Dharma transmission claimed by the final ring of the chain but neither evidently nor explicitly established by the presupposed initial patriarch. For this purpose it is necessary to operate a deconstruction of the genealogy of the lineage, and a careful examination of the figures who contested or are simply (and passively) involved in it, as well as a reading of the sources that seem to contradict the existence of this affiliation.

¹³ For details about Zhengyan and her relationship with Yinshun within the context of *renjian fojiao*, see: Travagnin, Stefania (2007) 'Master Yinshun and Buddhist Nuns in/for the Human Realm. Shift and Continuity from Theory to Practice of *renjian fojiao* in Contemporary Taiwan', in Storm and Harrison, eds. *The Margins of Becoming*, pp. 83-100. See also: Laliberté, André (2004) *The politics of Buddhist Organisations in Taiwan: 1989-2003*; Madsen, Richard (2007) *Democracy's Dharma*.

¹⁴ Jones, Charles B. (1999) *Buddhism in Taiwan*, p.155.

¹⁵ Ching, Yu-ing (1995) *Master of Love and Mercy: Cheng Yen*, p.vii.

¹⁶ Jian Dongyuan 簡東源 (2005) 'Taixu, Yinshun, Ciji yimo chuancheng' 太虛,印順,慈濟一脈傳承, in *Zhongguo shibao*, 5 June, p.A5.

We can start considering the two figures who are mentioned besides Yinshun: Taixu and Zhengyan. I argue that the presence of the figure of Taixu, who plays the role of 'Patriarch', serves the Taiwanese's purpose of rooting the lineage into the mainstream of modern Chinese Buddhism, and thus the legitimacy of claiming an affiliation to Chinese Buddhist authorities, instead of, for instance, Japanese Buddhism. The link between Taixu, Yinshun and Zhengyan does not stand as an invention of Taiwanese media, but it was already discussed by recent scholars. For instance, Donald S. Lopez's *Modern Buddhism* listed both Taixu and Zhengyan in the group of leading figures in the so-called 'Modern Buddhism' in China, but did not include Yinshun in the list.¹⁷ Then, in his work on Taixu Don Pittman never mentioned the existence of a lineage which Taixu was part of, but used instead the term "legacy" to define the heritage of Taixu in contemporary time, including both Yinshun and Zhengyan in the group of Taixu's "descendants."¹⁸

This chapter aims to question this supposed '*renjian fojiao* lineage' within the specific context of modern and contemporary Chinese Buddhism, and in parallel to the discussion on creating a hagiography, construing an image and mythologising a Buddhist figure in twentieth-century China. After a first section questioning the '*renjian fojiao* lineage', challenging and finally refuting its legitimacy, this chapter continues with the definition of Yinshun's own *renjian fojiao*. With the dissertation arguing a Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun, the second segment of the chapter argues that Yinshun's hermeneutics of *renjian fojiao* should be considered within the context of Nāgārjuna's teachings. It thus demonstrates how a re-newed and re-shaped Chinese Mādhyamika came to terms the 'Buddhism for the Human World', and therefore how an apparently merely intellectual Buddhist tradition was integrated

¹⁷ Lopez, Donald S. (2002) *Modern Buddhism: readings for the unenlightened*.

¹⁸ Pittman, Don A. (2001) *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms*.

within the Chinese practical 'Engaged Buddhism', and indeed formed the theoretical framework of this socially involved dimension of Buddhism.

VI. 1 The issue of retrospective lineage in Modern Chinese Buddhism

According to the Dharma, Dharma cannot be passed on.¹⁹

Welch analysed the issue of 'lineage' in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.²⁰ According to Welch, the practice of Dharma transmission (*chuan fa* 傳法) from one master to a selected disciple, a matter that was, and in some environments still is, a marking feature of Chinese Buddhism, implied the passing of the abbotship as well, and thus involved both spiritual authority and material properties. However, quoting Welch, 'Several of the most eminent monks of the Republican period were opposed to any connection between the dharma and the abbotship'²¹. Welch reported the Tiantai monk Tanxu's 倓虛 view on the matter: 'I believe that private transmission of dharma and abbotship is one of the main reasons why large monasteries throughout the country have gone into a decline and have been unable to keep going over the long term. Furthermore, it is a defect in our religious practice.'²²

Welch's conclusion on the Chinese practice of transmission of the abbotship along with the dharma is that it 'was another step in the progress of Buddhism away from the Indian Buddhist ideal of universal, direct democracy and toward the Chinese ideal of the family as the model for all social organisations.'²³

¹⁹ Yinshun (1989) 'Zhongguo fojiao suotan' 中國佛教瑣探, in (1993) *Hua yu ji*, vol. 4, p. 168.

²⁰ Welch, Holmes (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950*; (1963) 'Dharma Scrolls and the Succession of Abbots in Chinese Monasteries', in *T'oung-pao*, n.57, pp. 93-149.

²¹ Welch (1967) *The practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900-1950*, p.173.

²² Tanxu (1955) *Yingqian huiyi lu*, v.2, p. 227-228. Translation from Welch (1967) *The practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900-1950*, p.174

²³ Welch (1967) *The practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900-1950*, p.176.

The reformer Taixu joined Tanxu in the concern for the issue of *chuan fa*, which he included in his plans of reform. In line with Welch's perception, Taixu argued that the custom of *chuan fa* did not belong to Buddhism at the time of Sakyamuni, but was introduced in China, and should be considered as part of the process of sinicisation that Buddhism was subject to, and so part of the Confucian heritage in Chinese Buddhism.²⁴ The resulted sectarianism was conceived even by Taixu as one of main factors that determined the decay of Buddhism in China:

The Ceremony of the transmission of the Dharma (*chuan fa*) consists merely in recording the original teachings of the patriarch in a scroll, as evidence of the passing and legitimacy of the figure who receives the Dharma, and can be considered as element of the succession and protection of the patriarch's teachings and possession. This actually does not have any strong relationship with the original Buddhadharma. Therefore, the Sangha system that exists nowadays in China, became an organisation of monasteries that resemble small and big clans one distinct from the other, and whose main point is getting descendants and so preserving the rules and the property of the patriarch.²⁵

Although distant from Taixu in the critical and historical approach to Buddhist texts, and in the interpretation of the development of Indian and Chinese Buddhism, Yinshun was in line with his mentor about reforming the system of the Sangha. In his works Yinshun expressed a similar concern for the concept of *chuan fa*:

These two sinicised [*zhongguohua* 中國化] systems, one being the administration of each monastery, the other being

²⁴ Taixu (1924) 'Jin Fojiao zhongzhi nannü sengsu xianmi wenti' 今佛教中之男女僧俗顯密問題, *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.9, pp.643-644.

²⁵ Taixu (1932) 'Renjun zhengzhi yu fojiao sengzhi' 人群政制與佛教僧制, *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.13, p.1098.

the organization of Buddhism in the whole China, have been perpetuated continuously until the end of the Qing dynasty. Nevertheless, China is a patriarchal society constituted of familiar units, and the political system lacks any democratic representative structure, therefore even the monasteries became gradually based on a system of descendants, and the large monasteries [*conglin* 叢林] started their own properties and the system of Dharma transmission [*chuan fa*], and became self-administrated; they could not create a democratic compact association and establish the unification of the monastic system. In such a state of disunity and lack of spirit of cooperation, Buddhism and the Chinese nation became suffering of the same disease.²⁶

To return to Yinshun, he recalled Taixu's argument explicitly:

As for the religious propriety, Master [Taixu] proposed the 'collective propriety' (see his 'Shanghai fojiao conghui quanguo jihui bu lianhehui yijianshu' [上海佛教總會全國支部聯合會意見書]). He also proposed 'not to gather disciples [*shou du* 收度] and not to perform the transmission of the Dharma [*chuan fa*]', which is a major reform for the religious system and is also related to the former point. [...] As for the assets of tonsure and Dharma sectarianism, the Master [Taixu] throughout the last forty years opposed to the passing of private propriety.²⁷

When I interviewed Yinshun's disciples on this matter, I have been told that Yinshun had considered the idea of transmitting the Dharma as wrong in its basic formulation, since Dharma could not be identified as a belonging, and for not belonging to anyone, none can claim to transmit it to others.²⁸ The quotation from Yinshun's writings at the beginning of this section communicates the same message.

Another similarity between Taixu and Yinshun is that neither the former nor the

²⁶ Yinshun (1972) *Jiaozhi jiaodian yu jiaoxue* 教制教典與教學, p.7.

²⁷ Yinshun (1950) 'Geming shidai de Taixu dashi' 革命時代的太虛大師, in (1973) *Hua yu xiang yun*, p.289.

²⁸ Interviews dated to 2005, Taiwan.

latter performed the classical *chuan fa* at the end of their career. Taixu's testament included dispositions about all his institutes and initiatives, which different monks (most of them students or fellows, but not tonsure disciples of his) were appointed to continue. On this occasion Yinshun was appointed to the editing and publication of Taixu's Dharma-body relics (*fashen sheli* 法身舍利).²⁹ Likewise, Yinshun's will, signed in 1989, lists a number of missions to be taken care of, and those individuals and communities who were appointed to the arrangement of those, but there was not mention of a specific 'successor'.³⁰

We can conclude that, ironically, the part of Taixu's reforms that Yinshun actually supported fully, in other words, Taixu's legacy in Yinshun is embodied in the opposition to the classical idea of 'lineage'.

We should not neglect the fact that Taixu is representative of the Buddhist reformist group in the early twentieth-century China. At the same time there was a consistent group of monastics with a conservative view on doctrinal and institutional issues. Both the factions were present at Yinshun's time, and are still present today. For instance, in Taiwan we can list Foguangshan 佛光山 and Fagushan 法鼓山 as monasteries that are still following the practice of Dharma transmission.

Ironically, founders and abbots of Foguangshan and Fagushan are patriarch of the Chan school, and the two institutions follow the Chinese traditional joint practice of Chan and Pure land, in spite of the modern 'Buddhism for the Human Realm' that they claimed to support and propagate, and the ideals of Taixu, whom both the institutions regard as the inspiring leader.

²⁹ See Xuming (1956) 'Zhi yao dashi jingshen changcun' 只要大師精神長存, a preface to *Taixu dashi quanshu*. 'Dharma-body relics' (*fashen sheli*) is the classical Buddhist way to call the body of writings left by a teacher.

³⁰ See Chapter Three for the full translation of Yinshun's will, the definition of Yinshun's legacy and the establishment of the Fuhui Sangha Assembly.

VI. 1. 1 Zhengyan: creation of a myth, construal of a Dharma transmission

Yinshun is the master under whom the founder of Tzu Chi Zhengyan took refuge in the Dharma.³¹

Taiwan ribao 台灣日報 continued reporting:

Particularly valuable is the fact that even though Yinshun did not have his own monastic community, Zhengyan, who took him as guiding master, and her disciples established Tzu Chi and made the 'Buddhism for the Human Realm' popular and prospering.³²

As Yinshun died, most of the Taiwanese newspapers, such as *Taiwan ribao*, *Ziyou shibao* 自由時報, *Zhongguo shibao* 中國時報 and *Zhongyang ribao* 中央日報 stressed the relationship between the monk and Zhengyan, focusing merely on the latter and not mentioning the other disciples of Yinshun. The short biographies of Yinshun that most of the newspapers reported neglected accomplishments of the monk and all his legacy but underlined his association with Zhengyan. The *Taipei Times* remarked: "Yin Shun is closely associated with the Tzu Chi Foundation", and mentioned the only nuns Zhengyan and Zhaohui 昭慧 (b.1957) as his descendants.³³ Also, most of the newspapers published Zhengyan's photo, and not Yinshun's photo even on the front page and in reference to the news.

The attention was on Zhengyan, a fact that surely demonstrates the high popularity of the nun (and of Tzu Chi Foundation) on the island, and may justify a supposed special link between Yinshun and her. This section questions the legitimacy of this "special link" through the analysis of the iconic representation of Yinshun,

³¹ Editorial of *Taiwan ribao* 台灣日報, June 5, 2005.

³² Editorial of *Taiwan ribao* 台灣日報, June 5, 2005.

³³ Editorial of *Taipei Times*, 'Buddhist master Yin Shun dies at 100', June 5, 2005.

and Tzu Chi's modalities of intervention in creating the hagiographical portray that the monk was subject to in the final phase of his life.

Yinshun the longer he lived, the more he was made to resemble the stage of a legendary (and therefore authoritative) figure. Besides the organization of 'scholarly' activities, such as local conferences and international symposium on Yinshun's life and works, the monk's life was subject of documentaries. This mythmaking was a process that lasted a few years. We count a list of CDs, VCDs and DVDs, going from the VCD on the history of Fuyan Vihara and Fuyan Buddhist Institute, with enclosed a CD containing a photo-history as well as all the academic material available from the Fuyan website, to the Tzu Chi's DVDs. Most of the DVDs are actually Tzu Chi's products, and are all meant to show the relationship between Tzu Chi (the producer), especially the founder Zhengyan, and Yinshun. Planned from a specific perspective and with a particular purpose, these DVDs worked on a re-construction of Yinshun:

| TITLE | NOTES | PRODUCER | DATE |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| The Navigator of Life | 'Essence of the Bodhi Mind Series', Documentary, Chinese with English Subtitles | Tzu Chi Foundation (Jing si Publications) | April 2003 |
| <i>Yinshun daoshi zhuan</i> 印順導師傳 [Biography of the Guiding Master Yinshun] 2 DVD set | Documentary [including interviews to Yinshun and Yinshun's legacy; 3D effects], Chinese with Chinese subtitles | Tzu Xhi Foundation Da-Ai Television Jing si Publication | August 2003 |
| <i>Fuyan jingshe wushi nian</i> 福嚴精舍五十年 [Fuyan Vihara 50 th anniversary] 2 VCD set | 1. Documentary on foundation, structure and missions of Fuyan [Chinese with Chinese subtitles] 2. Photo and articles archive | Fuyan Vihara | October 2003 |
| <i>Yinshun daoshi donghua dianying</i> 印順導師動畫電影 [Cartoon on the Guiding Master Yinshun] | Motion picture - cartoon, Chinese with English subtitles. EXTRA-FEATURES: Interview to Producer/Director and team | Tzu Chi Foundation Da-Ai Television Jing si Publication | April 2004 |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Yinshun daoshi zhuisi jilu</i> 印順導師追思紀錄 [Commemorative Dossier of the Guiding Master Yinshun] | Documentary Chinese with Chinese subtitles | Tzu Chi Foundation Da-Ai Television Jing si Publication | September 2005 |
| <i>Yinshun daoshi yuanji zhounian jinian</i> 印順導師圓寂周年紀念 [Commemoration of the 1 st Anniversary of the passing of Yinshun] | 1. Interviews to Yinshun 2. Description of Yinshun Memorial Hall in Fuyan Chinese with Chinese subtitles | Fuyan Vihara | May 2006 |
| <i>Yinshun daoshi faying</i> 印順導師法影 [Guiding Master Yinshun Dharma shades] | 1. Yinshun and the foundation of Huayu Vihara 2. Interviews to Yinshun 3. Yinshun's hymn | Huayu Vihara | September 2006 |
| <i>Yinshun daoshi Chengfo zhi dao jiesong</i> 印順導師成佛之道偈頌 Guiding Master Yinshun: <i>Cheng fo zhi dao</i> praises | Dharma service with the verses from Yinshun's <i>Cheng fo zhi dao</i> as 'main scripture' | Huayu Vihara | September 2007 |

Table 15 – Yinshun in Motion Pictures

In 2003, in occasion of Yinshun's 98th birthday, a series of programmes on Yinshun's life was broadcasted by Tzu Chi TV channel, and published later in August 2003. Three issues were of main concern: Yinshun's magnitude, the roots of Yinshun's philosophy [Pre-Yinshun, which became identified with Taixu's teachings], the future of Yinshun's philosophy [Post-Yinshun, which is clearly identified with Tzu Chi missions].

In 2004, Yinshun's 100th birthday was celebrated with the production of an animated cartoon on his life. The cartoon, which received a nomination to the Golden Horse Award in 2005, became purchasable in September 2005, and sold in a special package that included a short DVD documentary on Yinshun's death as well.

This is how Tzu Chi worked on the figure of Yinshun. However, as the table above shows, Zhengyan's association was not alone in celebrating Yinshun through the production of DVDs. In October 2003, in occasion to the 50th anniversary of the

foundation of Fuyan, Houguan supervised the production of a double CD and a book on the history of the Vihara and the Buddhist institute. One year later, in celebration of Yinshun's 100th birthday, Houguan supervised the publication of Yinshun's notes on *Da zhidu lun*.³⁴ Also in occasion of Yinshun's birthday in 2005, Houguan promoted the digitalization of the *Taixu dashi quanshu*, whose paper copy had been edited by Yinshun in the late 1940s.

A third case is the nun Huili 慧理, abbess of the Miaoyun Vihara (*Miaoyun jingshe* 妙雲精舍), who, in occasion of 100 days from Yinshun's death, published a booklet of Yinshun's draft and notes.³⁵

Here there are three tonsure-disciples of Yinshun, who adopted two different ways for honoring their own master. Whereas Houguan and Huili emphasised the so-called Dharma body [*fashen*] of Yinshun, Tzu Chi created a Tzu Chi centred commemoration, which generated the 'special link' between Yinshun and Zhengyan, and stressed explicitly the greatness of Yinshun for celebrating implicitly a logically consequent greatness of Tzu Chi itself.³⁶

Although this is not the place for a comprehensive study of the themes of hagiography and biography in the Modern Chinese Buddhism, a few notes are nevertheless necessary for a better understanding of the topic in exam.

Watching Tzu Chi's DVDs, we encounter the rising of Yinshun to the status of legendary figure, and the intervention of the nun Zhengyan (and Tzu Chi) in the portray. A fundamental part in the Yinshun 'mythmaking process' is played by several parallels between the twentieth-century Chinese monk and Buddhist figures of the past, without mentioning the historical parallels with European philosophers

³⁴ See Chapter Eight for further details of Yinshun's notes on *Da zhidu lun* and the late CD.

³⁵ Huili ed. (2005) *Miaoyun yongliu: Yinshun daoshi shougao jinianji* 妙雲永流:印順導師手稿紀念集, Jiayi: Miaoyun Vihara [limited printing]

³⁶ Huili and Houguan, but not Zhengyan, have been called by Yinshun as starting members of the Yinshun Foundation.

and literates. The closure sentence of the cartoon documentary says ‘Buddha [Sakyamuni] lived 80 years in the human world (*renjian*), Yinshun passed away at the age of 101, how blessed we are for having had the opportunity to live in the same era of Yinshun.’ May this allude to a superiority of Yinshun to Sakyamuni? The digital sceneries that open each episode of the biography documentary, together with the digital intervals of lotus flowers, bright sky and green landscape that separate one scene from the other resemble the Western Pure Land. In this context, it should be remembered that the creation of a Pure Land in the Human Realm [*renjian jingtu*] is meant to be the result of practicing the ‘Buddhism in the Human Realm’. There is also allusion to the figure of Maitreya, the future Buddha. The biography-documentary begins stressing that 1906 was the year of tragic natural calamities all over the world, a year of war, and it was in this year that Yinshun arrived in the human world. Does this statement want to allude that Yinshun is the Maitreya coming at the apex of the Mappo? Later on, something similar is said for the year 1936: in this year of war in China, Yinshun completed the reading of the Chinese Buddhist Canon, and is ready to leave his solitary confinement [*biguan*], the monastery, and to return to the human world again [*miandui renjian* 面對人間]. Reading the *Longzang* signed a new beginning for Yinshun’s doctrinal path, and the imaginary used resemble the scenery on Yinshun’s birth in 1906. Even here, the return of Yinshun into the human society at the peak of national disasters reminds the future arrival of Maitreya at the acme of the age of the decline of the Dharma. This scene ends with the icon of Maitreya appearing in the screen, and the disappearing and leaving the stage to an old picture of Yinshun. Zhengyan is the only disciple mentioned in the four DVDs produced by Tzu Chi. Yinshun himself does not mention his tonsure disciples in any of his six autobiographies.³⁷ In the cartoon the

³⁷ See Chapter One for the complete list.

almost legendary account on the encounter between Yinshun and Zhengyan is celebrated by a triumphal soundtrack and the image of a rainbow in a blue sky. On the other hand, in the sixth episode of the biography documentary Yinshun, who was skeptical in accepting disciples, explained why he agreed to become Zhengyan's tonsure master:

I thought, in the eastern part [of Taiwan] there are not so many people who make the intention and determination to become monks or nuns, but she was so firmly committed to enter the nunhood. It was because she did not understand the Buddhist system,³⁸ and therefore to leave her as just a member of the laity would have been really a pity!³⁹

Yinshun's less glorious statement has been somehow ignored.

The documentary on the passing of Yinshun plays an even more central role in the invention of a transmission of the Dharma [*chuan fa*] from Yinshun to Zhengyan. The focus on Zhengyan shown by the newspapers was also motivated by the fact Yinshun died in the Tzu Chi Hospital (Hualian), and that Zhengyan was the last one who spoke to him. As supporting evidence of this apparently decisive event, the Tzu Chi documentary recorded Zhengyan's words and the passing of Yinshun immediately afterwards.

The veneration and celebration of Yinshun was indeed instrumental to the the celebration of the disciple Zhengyan and her (Buddhist) missions. As result, what the public media proposed and what local masses received was a principal position

³⁸ The obstacle that Zhengyan faced when she applied for the full monastic ordination was the fact that she had shaved her head by herself and did not have any tonsure master. According to the Buddhist system, in order to receive a full monastic ordination it is necessary to go through a regular tonsure ceremony, entailing tonsure under a regularly ordained Buddhist cleric, beforehand.

³⁹ Luo Yuemei 羅月美, ed. (2005) *Yinshun daoshi zhuan* 印順導師傳, p.191.

occupied by Zhengyan, and the “master” Yinshun as defined by his “disciple” Zhengyan.

To return to our main theme of a legitimacy of a '*renjian fojiao* lineage', Zhengyan and Yinshun are certainly linked by the practice of *renjian fojiao*, which each of them interpreted and developed in the own way. In any rate, the evidences that media and Tzu Chi provide to justify a lineage-link between Yinshun and the nun do not concern *renjian fojiao* itself.

VI. 1. 2 Taixu: a case of *legacy* turning into *lineage*

The *renjian fojiao* that I am promoting has been certainly influenced by Master Taixu, but is also quite different.⁴⁰

As I started studying the Buddhadharma (San-lun and Wei-shi schools), I realised the distance between what I was reading and the real Buddhist world. I kept this problem into my mind, then I got through a first inspiration in Taixu's thought, and a second one in the statement 'Buddha manifest in the Human Realm, it is not in the Deva Realm that the Buddhahood is gained.'⁴¹

After questioning the legitimacy of a *renjian fojiao* lineage as defining the relationship between Zhengyan and Yinshun, this section analyses if Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* is 'really' rooted in Taixu's *rensheng fojiao*, or better, if Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* is the descendant continuation of Taixu's *rensheng fojiao*.

A lineage involves shifts and changes between the generations involved,

⁴⁰ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.4, p.44.

⁴¹ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.4, p.47.

however the idea of constructing a lineage around a theory implies a certain common ground that this chapter aims to assess and finally confute.

We cannot deny a Taixu's legacy in Yinshun's thought, as the first quotation incipit of this section says, and the influence that the reformer monk had on Yinshun's early formation, and at the same time we cannot refuse to see the presence of Yinshun's teachings in Zhengyan's (and in Tzu Chi as well) ideal of Bodhisattva Path [*pusa dao*]. However, Yinshun is representative of his time, which is neither the era of Taixu, nor that of Zhengyan. And so is Yinshun's *renjian fojiao*, which is both a reaction to and the acceptance of Yinshun's era.

This is not the place for a further analysis of differences and similarities between Yinshun and Taixu. Nevertheless, a few issues must be underlined.

I propose the reading of Taixu's 'Lun Zhongguo fojiao' 論中國佛教 (1944)⁴² and 'Wo zenyang panshe yiqie fofa' 我怎樣判攝一切佛法 (1940),⁴³ vis-à-vis Yinshun's 'Zhongguo fojiao shi lue' 中國佛教史略 (1944)⁴⁴ and his system of classification of Buddhist teachings [*panjiao*]. In other words, if we consider what Taixu meant for 'Mahāyāna threefold school' (*Dacheng san zong* 大乘三宗) in parallel with what Yinshun meant for 'Mahāyāna threefold system' (*Dacheng san xi* 大乘三系), and then assess Taixu's interpretation of the development of Chinese Buddhism in confrontation with Yinshun's account of the Chinese reception and transformation of the Dharma, we should have as result enough data for uncovering the different theoretical framework and doctrinal basis of these two figures.⁴⁵ A third important issue is the distance between these two figures in their educational projects for the Sangha.⁴⁶ The reviews that Taixu made to Yinshun's book *Yindu zhi fojiao* 印

⁴² Included in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.875-881.

⁴³ Included in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.510-531.

⁴⁴ Included in Yinshun (1973) *Fojiao shidi kaohun*, pp.1-94.

⁴⁵ See Chapter One for the parallel between Yinshun and Taixu's threefold doctrinal and historical division of Mahāyāna.

⁴⁶ See Chapter Three.

度之佛教 in 1942⁴⁷ and 1943⁴⁸ also help to understand fundamental divergences between the two monks on the level of understanding the historical development of Buddhism, and in the field of doctrines.

The difference between Taixu's *rensheng fojiao* and Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* is not so much on the level of the terminology adopted (*rensheng vis-à-vis renjian*)⁴⁹ but on the level of doctrinal contents. Yinshun himself in 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao' underlined both legacy and three main disagreements with Taixu: they give a different definition of the period of Final Dharma (*mo fa*); the core of Taixu's teachings is based on Chinese Buddhist traditions and therefore Taixu is still proposing the *fangbian dao*, while Yinshun attempted a re-evaluation of the *rushi dao* that Agama and Early Mādhyamika teachings, according to him, do embody; the theistic aspect of Buddhism was not totally expelled in Taixu's teachings.⁵⁰ In other words, the shift from Taixu's to Yinshun's teachings does not lay in the adoption of *renjian* instead of *rensheng* but in a difference understanding of the doctrinal essence of the ideal *fojiao*.

Taixu's link with Yinshun allows us to confirm a Taixu's legacy in Yinshun, so as the similarities between Yinshun and Zhengyan lead us to admit some inheritance of Yinshun's thought in Zhengyan's ideals. Moreover, *renjian fojiao* is a common dimension of these three figures. However, as the section above has shown, Zhengyan's link with Yinshun has been forced and the image of the latter exploited

⁴⁷ Taixu (1942) 'Yi Yindu zhi fojiao' 議印度之佛教, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.16, pp.48-50.

⁴⁸ Taixu (1943) 'Zai yi Yindu zhi fojiao' 再議印度之佛教, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.16, pp.51-68.

⁴⁹ Especially because Taixu himself used the term *renjian fojiao*, see Taixu (1943) 'Zenyang lai jianshe renjian fojiao' 怎樣來建設人間佛教, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.14, pp.431-457.

⁵⁰ For the main divergences between Taixu's and Yinshun's thought, see Travagnin, Stefania (2001) 'Il nuovo Buddhismo per l'Umanita' (renjian fojiao) a Taiwan', in *Cina*, v.29, pp.65-102.

in order to provide a strong authority to the success of Tzu Chi Foundation.

Similarly, Taixu's image has been used by Taiwanese Buddhists to claim Chinese roots of the socially Engaged Buddhism that had developed on the island after the arrival of monks from Mainland China, through the help of local government and as response to the social welfare activities promoted by Christian missionaries.⁵¹ References to Taixu have been constant since the arrival of Chinese monks in Taiwan. In the 1950s a Taixu Library (*Taixu tushuguan* 太虛圖書館) was built inside the Maitreya Inner Hall (*Mile neiyuan* 彌勒內院), monastery founded by Cihang 慈航 (1895-1953) in Xizhi 汐止, Taipei.

A second Taixu Library was established in 1960 inside Shandao Temple 善導寺 in Taipei. Sponsor of the initiative was the lay Buddhist Li Zikuan 李子寬 (1882-1973), and the aim was 'commemorating the great spirit of Taixu'.⁵²

In 1966 a Taixu Memorial Hall (*Taixu jinianguan* 太虛紀念館) was built in Taizhong, under the supervision of the lay Buddhist Li Bingnan 李炳南 (1890-1986). Yinshun, Xuming and Yanpei were leading the opening ceremony.⁵³ As the senior monk Moru 默如 (1906-1991) argued, commemoration of Taixu was conceived as a necessary tribute, being the reformist monk representative of a specific historical period and an inspiring pioneer for the generation of monks who created Taiwanese Buddhism in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁴ Finally, Yinshun himself founded a Taixu Buddhist Institute in Taipei in 1968.⁵⁵ It is clear that since the 1950s there was already awareness and emphasis on the inheritance of Taixu's *rensheng fojiao* in the

⁵¹ See especially: Jones, Charles (1999) *Budhism in Taiwan*; Chandler, Stuart (2004) *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth*; Laliberté, André (2004) *The politics of Buddhist organizations in Taiwan: 1989-2003*; Madsen, Richard (2007) *Democracy's Dharma*.

⁵² Li Shijie 李世界 (1961) 'Taixu tushuguan jianjie' 太虛圖書館簡介, in *Haichao yin*, v.42, n.6, pp.20-23.

⁵³ The journal *Putishu*, v.15, n.2, 1967, dedicated good space and a photo section to the event.

⁵⁴ Moru 摩如 (1967) 'Taixu jinian guan luocheng dianli kaishi' 太虛紀念館落成典禮開示, in *Putishu*, v.42, n.6, pp.40-43.

⁵⁵ See Chapter Three.

current form of *renjian fojiao* in Taiwan. Again, these facts show a legacy, more than a lineage in name of *renjian fojiao*.

VI. 1. 3 Conclusion

Chapter Four and Five have discussed the issue of sectarianism [*zongpai*] throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism and as intended by Yinshun, here the topic returns but the institutional practice of Dharma transmission and concept of lineage [*xitong* 系統] are the main concern, and *renjian fojiao* represents its doctrinal essence.

Even if Taixu and Yinshun avoided the creation of descendants, we have to consider these two figures as part of a particular stream, which started in the beginning of the Republican China and whose origination did not delete the traditional custom of transmitting the Dharma but simply constituted an alternative and new course for it. As it has been stated above, the classical and modern streams are still coexisting in the contemporary Chinese Buddhism.

Secondly, what seems to be important for the Taiwanese is to create a link between Mainland China and Taiwan. In a time when the affiliation to monastic institutions is still the main concern, the need to root the mainstream of Buddhism of Taiwan into Taixu's teachings shows more historical and political connotation than doctrinal convictions. Taixu was based and active mostly in Mainland China, Zhengyan is native of Taiwan, Yinshun is one from the Buddhist monks who fled from Mainland to Taiwan, and undoubtedly the one who effected the island the most. Rooting Taiwanese Buddhism in the Republican Chinese Buddhism may be also a way to stress, and probe, the 'Chineseness' of the tradition, in spite of the fifty year occupation of Japan and Japanese Buddhism.

This chapter aims to argue that the definition of Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* is rooted in his understanding of Mādhyamika. And also that reason the link between Zhengyan and Yinshun, or between Taixu and Yinshun becomes deceptive. The following section explore Yinshun's adoption and explanation of *renjian fojiao* through the analysis of Yinshun's writings.

VI. 2 Yinshun's *renjian fojiao*

It must be assured that *renjian* Buddhism is not the same as one from the charity activities carried out in the world, but it is from the Buddha Vehicle see us human beings, how to reach the Buddhahood on the level of human beings.⁵⁶

The expression *renjian fojiao* [Buddhism for the Human World] occurs more than a hundred times throughout Yinshun's literature. The main references are the books *Fo zai renjian* 佛在人間 (Buddha is in the Human World) (1971)⁵⁷, *Fofa gai lun* 佛法概論 (1950), and the essays 'You xin fahai liushi nian' 遊心法海六十年 (1984), 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao' 契理契機之人間佛教 (1989), 'Tan fojiao zai renjian' 談人間佛教 (1994)⁵⁸.

These books have been written in different periods, a fact that shows Yinshun's consistent emphasis on the topic. If *Fo zai renjian* includes Yinshun's first

⁵⁶ Yinshun (1971) *Fo zai renjian*, p. 73.

⁵⁷ Yinshun (1973) *Banruo jing jiangji*, p.ii: '*Fo zai renjian*: this is a book title that I have used in the past, emphasising the actual implication of *renjian fojiao*, which is the way as human beings to reach the Buddhahood through correct practice.'

⁵⁸ Later on included in the collection *Yongguang ji* (2004), pp.188-190.

comprehensive exposition of *renjian fojiao*, only later on in 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao' we can get the systematisation of its doctrine, later considerations, minor changes and final remarks. For this reason this essay is the main reference source for this section of the chapter.

The occurrences of the expression *renjian fojiao* and the related *fo zai renjian* [Buddha within the Human Realm] reveal that according to Yinshun's literature *renjian fojiao* is defined as the very true essence of Buddhism, which is rooted in Sakyamuni's teachings and, most importantly, finds its complete and concrete manifestation in the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva practice [*pusa xing*].

The expression *renjian fojiao* has been translated into English in different ways, such as 'Humanistic Buddhism' and 'Buddhism for the Human Realm', and associated to the phenomenon called 'Engaged Buddhism'.⁵⁹

Different denominations underline a different interpretation of the original term, or just identify the several modalities of practice that Chinese Buddhists themselves used to name *renjian fojiao*. These differences in practice were result of of their belonging to different historical periods, generational patterns and/or environmental circumstances. The *renjian fojiao* professed and protected by the nun Zhengyan and Zhaohui, for instance, since their involvement in humanitarian campaigns and social welfare, has been classified as a Taiwanese form of 'Engaged Buddhism'. Similarly, Taixu's Buddhist reforms that touched political issues made his *renjian fojiao* close to a form of 'Engaged Buddhism'.⁶⁰

How about Yinshun's *renjian fojiao*? Is Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* also

⁵⁹ 'Engaged Buddhism' is a term coined by the Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh in the 1960s to indicate the involvement of the Sangha in humanitarian campaign and social welfare, and later adopted by reformist Buddhist figures in South, South East, East Asia as well as in the West.

⁶⁰ Travagnin, Stefania (2007) 'Master Yinshun and Buddhist Nuns in/for the Human Realm'. In Storm, Carsten and Harrison, Mark (eds.), *The Margins of Becoming. Identity and Culture in Taiwan*, pp.83-100.

classifiable as 'Engaged Buddhism'? According to my interviews to Yinshun's disciples, Yinshun emphasised the *fofa* ("Dharma") aspect of *renjian fojiao* more than underlining the *renjian* ("involvement in the human realm") feature, and this was the fundamental difference between Yinshun's and Zhengyan's understanding and practice of *renjian fojiao*, being the latter highlighting a concern for the *renjian*. Yinshun's statement 'renjian Buddhism is not the same as one from the charity activities carried out in the world' from the quotation above is an articulation of the same argument. Yinshun's and Zhengyan's different understanding and practice of *renjian fojiao* is also linked to the different historical backgrounds of these two figures, and can explain the dissimilar role they have been playing in the public spot and in the development of Buddhism in China and of Taiwanese Buddhism.

About the understanding of *renjian*, Yinshun declared in 1989:

In contemporary Taiwan, 'Buddhism of Human Life' [*rensheng fojiao* 人生佛教], 'Buddhism for the Human Realm' [*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教], 'Buddhism of Human Vehicle' [*rensheng fojiao* 人乘佛教] have gradually developed, but mostly fitted the path of expedients [*fangbian* 方便] of the current circumstances and only at a minimum rate were in accordance with the tathatā [*rushi* 如實] of the Buddhadharma. If there is no right knowledge of the Buddhadharma, and we aim at organising only activities, what we accomplish is merely a process of secularisation of the religion. Some think that liberation path [*jietuo dao* 解脫道] and Bodhisattva path [*pusa dao* 菩薩道] cannot be one only thing, but this would mean ignoring the correspondence and integration between Wisdom and Compassion that the sutras are expounding. Some do not adopt a Buddhist terminology to spread Buddhadharma, and this can consequently manifest merely an unobstructive coexistence and perfect syncretism [*yuanrong* 圓融] with all the theistic religions. Some promote *renjian fojiao*, and, in regards to

Buddhadharma and the other religion (which combines Buddhism and theistic forms), express tolerance and interconnection. These attitudes perhaps can bring success to human affairs, but the real purification [*cunzhenghua* 純正化] and modernisation [*xiandaihua* 現代化] of Buddhadharma may not have a future in this way, instead this would bring the problems of the final period of Indian Buddhism (with Buddhism corrupted first and then eliminated by theistic religions).⁶¹

In other words, any form of Buddhism in order to be “correct Buddhadharma” must be in line with the *rushi dao* of Buddhadharma, follow the integration of Wisdom and Compassion and avoid the mere forms of activism and secularisation which could not but lead to the end of the Dharma. Because of this premise, the recent developments of Buddhism in Taiwan are missing the essence of Buddhadharma.

According to Houguan, Yinshun emphasised the *fojiao* part of the phenomenon, he did not only or especially underline the *renjian* part. The *fojiao* that Yinshun wanted to promote centres on the Bodhisattva practice, to be more precise, on the 'Human Bodhisattva practice' (*ren pusa xing* 人菩薩行) within the context of a *renjian fojiao* that is aware of the difference between Buddhadharma and the secular world. Otherwise, *renjian fojiao* could not distinguish itself from any other social or religious (non-Buddhist) organization of social welfare.⁶² The theory of *ren*

⁶¹Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Huayu ji*, v.4, pp.65-66.

⁶² Chen Meiling, ed. (2005) 'Zhuanfang Houguan yuanzhang', in *Fengcheng fayin*, n.14, pp.3-12. Quotation from p.5. Houguan also added: As the senior monk Zhenhua said: The *renjian fojiao* that Master [Yinshun] was talking about rooted its essence on the 'human being' [*ren*], from making the vow in the human existence and then cultivating the Bodhisattva practice, from cultivating the Bodhisattva practice and then reaching the Buddhahood. The two characters *renjian* in special way not only oppose the tendency to death and ghosts, but at the same time also oppose the tendency to spirits and eternal life. Buddha comes from the human realm, and to get existence as human being is rare, therefore the human being is in a key position, the Three Minds [*san xin* 三心] (Vow of Bodhi, Mind of Great Compassion, Wisdom of the Emptiness of Nature) and the Three Virtuous Deeds as essential, cultivate the Bodhisattva practice in the human body. Master [Yinshun] said: *renjian fojiao* must not keep apart from the essence of *fojiao*, otherwise there would be just *renjian* and not *renjian fojiao*! [...] Master [Yinshun] declared that for practicing *renjian fojiao* it is necessary to develop the threefold

pusa xing is also present in Taixu's teachings, and therefore part of Taixu's legacy in Yinshun.⁶³

VI. 2. 1 *Śūnyata* defining *renjian fojiao*

The 'Buddhism for the Human World' [*renjian fojiao*] is the essence of the entire Buddhadharma. The core of this matter is 'Human being – Bodhisattva - Buddha', that means, as human being develop the Bodhi-mind and cultivate the Bodhisattva practice, and achieving the Buddhahood through the Bodhisattva path.⁶⁴

The rumor that the last sentence pronounced by Yinshun on the day of this passing was 'It's not like this, it's not like that, all the dharmas are empty'⁶⁵ spread out in Taiwan as a confirmation of Yinshun's affiliation to the School of Emptiness, which is the School of Nāgārjuna.

This section argues that the Mādhyamika dimension of Yinshun also involved his formulation of *renjian fojiao*, and demonstrates how, according to Yinshun, the practice of *renjian fojiao* coincides with the cultivation prescribed by Mādhyamika, and that the doctrinal foundations of *renjian fojiao* are the fundamental teachings of the School of Nāgārjuna.

One of the core teachings that form the doctrinal framework of *renjian fojiao* is 'The Integration of Dependent Arising and Emptiness' (*yuanqi yu kong de tongyi*)⁶⁶.

mind [*san xin*] analysed in the Prajñāpāramitā Scriptures, which are the Bodhi-Mind, Great Compassion-Mind, Empty Nature-Sight; then, it is necessary to purify body and mind [*jingzhi shenxin*], to rescue the living beings [*lijī youqing*], to spread the Correct Dharma [*hongyang zheng fa*]. Such a few teachings are meant to remind everyone to grow the mind of the *renjian fojiao* practitioner.

⁶³ Taixu (1939) 'Pusa xing yu dasheng shengjie' 菩薩行與大乘勝解, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.4, pp.794-801; Taixu (1940) 'Pusa xing yu xin shenghuo yundong' 菩薩行與新生活運動, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.13, pp.713-717; Yinshun (1973) *Fofa shi jiu shi zhi guang* 佛法是救世之光, pp.381-386; Yinshun (1973) *Huayu xiangyun*, pp.339-348.

⁶⁴ Yinshun (1971) *Fo zai renjian*, p.27.

⁶⁵ Ch: *Bu shi zheyang, bu shi nayang, yiqie fa jie kong* 不是這樣,不是那樣,一切法皆空.

⁶⁶ Yinshun (1971) *Fo zai renjian*, pp.107-109.

Here is Yinshun's understanding of Nāgārjuna, whose teachings embraced the core of Buddhadharma (i.e., the Original Buddhism from the *Āgamas*) and the distinct Mahāyāna doctrine (i.e., the principle of Emptiness, Apparent naming and Bodhisattva Vehicle) without contradiction but, instead, with successful integration. Quoting Yinshun:

With the 'Buddhism for the Human Realm', that invokes the practice of the Human Bodhisattva Cultivation (*ren pusa xing*), 「Buddhadharma」 and 「Early Mahāyāna」 have the appropriate manifestation.⁶⁷

In explaining 'Buddhism for the Human Realm', Yinshun specified that the Bodhisattva Practice (*pusa xing*) he was referring to was identified with the Human Bodhisattva Practice (*ren pusa xing*), which he defined as rooted in the original teachings of Buddha:

'Buddhism for the Human Realm' emphasised the Human Bodhisattva Practice.⁶⁸

The Human Bodhisattva Practice entailed by the Buddhism for the Human Realm is based on the Buddhadharma at the time of the Buddha Sakyamuni.⁶⁹

The Practice of 'Buddhism for the Human Realm', which is the Human Bodhisattva Practice, is based on the Threefold Mind (*san xin* 三心): the Bodhi Mind (*puti xin* 菩提心), the Great Compassion Mind (*dabei xin* 大悲心), the Realisation of the Empty Nature (*kongxing jian* 空性見).⁷⁰

Yinshun continued specifying that *puti xin* means to make the intention to

⁶⁷ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Hua yu ji*, vol.4, p. 61.

⁶⁸ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Hua yu ji*, vol.4, , p. 50.

⁶⁹ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Hua yu ji*, vol.4, p. 52.

⁷⁰ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in (1993) *Hua yu ji*, vol.4, p. 57.

practice the Bodhisattva Path; *dabei xin* is the root of the Bodhisattva practice; the ‘empty nature’ mentioned in the third *kongxing jian* coincides with the empty nature of the dependent arising.⁷¹

Yinshun's disciples explained further the Mādhyamika dynamics of *renjian fojiao*. Fazang, a student of Yinshun who is also member of the Yinshun Foundation, explained through a series of passages the identification, more than the combination, of Mādhyamika and *renjian fojiao* in Yinshun's teachings. As Fazang argues, “Zhongguan” (*zhongguan* 中觀) means “investigation of the Middle Way” (*zhongdao de guan* 中道的觀察), and “Middle Way” (*zhongdao* 中道) should be intended as keeping apart from the opposites (*li er bian* 離二邊). As *Zhonglun* (ch.24, v.18) recites, Conditional Arising (*yuanqi* 緣起), Apparent Naming (*jiaming* 假名) and Emptiness (*kong* 空) are all identified with the Middle Way. The doctrine of emptiness of the self (*zixing kong* 自性空) implies the practice of the “mind of equality” (*pingdeng xin* 平等心), which represents the fundamental essence of the Bodhisattva Path (*pusa dao de jieben jingshen* 菩薩道的基本精神). *Renjian fojiao* is nothing but the cultivation of the (Mahāyāna) Bodhisattva Path, and the practice of the Bodhisattva Path is actually the correct cultivation for the Mādhyamika practitioners as well (*zhongguan xuezhe de zhengxiu* 中觀學者的正修). It follows then, as the logical conclusion in a pretty long syllogism, that Mādhyamika is *renjian fojiao*, that Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* means “correct Buddhadharma” (*zhengque de fofa* 正確的佛法) and that, according to Yinshun, “correct Buddhadharma is in the Human Realm” (*zhengque de fofa zai renjian* 正確的佛法在人間).⁷²

⁷¹ Yinshun (1989) ‘Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao’, in (1993) *Hua yu ji*, vol.4, p. 58-60.

⁷² Interview to Fazang in Taipei, 20 November 2005.

VI. 2. 2 *Renjian fojiao* defining *sūnyata*

I, Ananda, through abiding in (the concept of) emptiness, am now abiding in the fulness thereof.⁷³

Following Yinshun's writings, Mādhyamika is not simply a theory, but invokes a practice. Yinshun's identification of Mādhyamika as *renjian fojiao* made then *renjian fojiao* as shaping Mādhyamika, and rendering what was considered a logical and purely theoretical system of thought as essence of a practice, which is, in Yinshun's view, the practice of the correct Budhadharma (*zhengque de fofa*). As Yinshun pointed out, the application of Mādhyamika requires the achievement in the practice of contemplation, and this also entails a deep understanding of the law of Dependent Arising. Only if these conditions are satisfied, [Mādhyamika] may be applied in the daily life.⁷⁴

Combination of theory and practice is well reflected in Yinshun's investigation of the scriptures attributed to Nāgārjuna, which Yinshun classified into two groups: the 'theoretical' *Zhong lun*, and the group of texts concerned with 'practice', *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun*. The following and final part of this dissertation will analyse Yinshun's study of those texts.

This understanding of Mādhyamika as centred on practice entails another difference between Yinshun and Taixu. According to the latter, in fact, the Mādhyamika and Yogācāra traditions focused on 'study' [*xue*], a diligent critical investigation of their distinct corpus of scriptures, and not on 'practice' [*xing*], which, instead, was one of the features of mainstream Chinese Buddhism (represented by

⁷³ T1 n190: 737a04.

⁷⁴ Yinshun 'Tan fojiao zai renjian' 談佛教在人間, in (2004) *Yongguang ji*, p.187.

Chan, Pure Land, Tiantai, Huayan).⁷⁵ Taixu's argument actually reflects the traditional Chinese understanding of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra that was followed in China.

VI. 3 Conclusion

Yinshun's appeal to the re-evaluation of what he defined Correct Dharma [*zheng fa*], his promotion of the Doctrine of Dependent Arising and his focus on the Bodhisattva Path from a Early Nāgārjunian perspective brought Yinshun's career on a different direction from Taixu's path, and from Taixu's *rensheng* (or *renjian*) *fojiao*. An initial Taixu's legacy Yinshun's thought is undeniable, so is a background of Yinshun's legacy in Zhengyan's ideals. That these three figures are connected in a form of (traditional Chinese) lineage and that such an association is labelled *renjian fojiao* are demands of a historical moment where the issues of nationalism and identity have been, and still are, critical concepts, and the Sangha in Taiwan have planned (and still plan), to root *Taiwanese* Buddhism into Mainland Chinese Buddhism (rather than into, for instance, Japanese Buddhism).

At the same time Yinshun's *renjian fojiao* may be considered as a Mādhyamika discourse. Yinshun applied the interaction between Pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna Buddhism (as discussed in Chapter Five), and adopted Nāgārjuna as the authoritative frame to his *renjian fojiao* as well. In this way *renjian fojiao* is the all-embracing teaching that includes the Mādhyamika-*Āgama* doctrinal framework and its practice, which is the cultivation of the Bodhisattva Path.

⁷⁵ Taixu (1944) 'Zhongguo zhi fojiao' 中國之佛教, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.881-891.

PART THREE

YINSHUN'S STUDY ON MĀDHYAMIKA SCRIPTURES

Nāgārjuna was a practitioner of Mahāyāna who performed deep investigation [*shen guan* 深觀] and followed the extensive practice [*guangda xing* 廣人行], therefore we do have to base on *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun* in order to have a complete understanding of Mahāyāna.¹

The argument that Yinshun played a central role in the revival and reshaping of the San-lun tradition in twentieth-century China implies a discourse on the scriptural contents of this 'new' twentieth-century San-lun school.

The previous chapters have assessed the doctrinal framework of the 'new' San-lun and its 'Yinshunian dimension', while the following three chapters question and explore the textual identity of the school, outlining which scriptures came to constitute its canon, the religious and historical reasons behind the selection of those scriptures as well as the modalities of their interpretation. Yinshun has been usually defined as 'historian' of Buddhism, the theorizer of *renjian fojiao*, but the next three chapters want to present Yinshun in his engagement in the field of textual study. Secondly, the consideration of how Yinshun applied 'historical consciousness' in the context of scriptural exegesis will provide more elements for defining Yinshun's own understanding and adoption of 'historicism' in textual studies, as well as the intentions behind the philological project to create a new synthesis of teachings that would have been instrumental for the 'new' Chinese Buddhism.

In his definition of 'scripture', Graham argued:

Every text that achieves scriptural status in a religious

¹ Yinshun (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, p.126.

community elicits extensive popular and scholarly exegesis and study of its contents. The valid kinds of scriptural interpretation are fundamental elements in a community's relationship to its sacred book, for they provide a bridge between the text and its application to life and between the era in which the text originally arose and all subsequent ages in which it must serve changing needs in new situations.²

In other words, religious texts turn into scriptures, and therefore assume a sacred value, not for the contents of the writing itself but as a consequence of the audience's reception of it and the role it plays in the community. In this sense, the label 'scripture' does not entail a style of literature, but embodies a religious and historical significance.³ A scripture can become an object of analysis, and serve as analytical framework of a religious (and beyond) context; scripture can be an authority as well as a basis on which to create an authority. In this way scriptures and especially their hermeneutical narratives reflect ideologies and challenges of specific historical periods.⁴

The investigation on Yinshun's textual study involves a threefold discussion. First of all, the selection of particular scriptures, and thus the re-shaping of the scriptural identity of Mādhyamika are a reflection of the Buddhist context wherein Yinshun made his own intervention.⁵

Secondly, Yinshun's own work signed a shift in methodology of textual exegesis, scriptural hierarchy, and hermeneutics of doctrinal history. Besides being representative of the contemporary state of Chinese Buddhism, Yinshun's works

² Graham, William (1987 and 2005) 'Scripture', in Jones, Lindsay, ed. *Encyclopedia of Religion*, v.12, pp.8202-8203.

³ Graham, William (1987 and 2005) 'Scripture', pp.8194-8205.

⁴ See Gifford, Paul 'Religious authority: scripture, tradition, charisma', in Hinnells, John R., ed. (2005) *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, pp.379-391.

⁵ The mid of the twentieth century signed the moving of Buddhist figures from Mainland China to Hong Kong, and most of them eventually fled to Taiwan. All the projects of the Chinese Buddhist Association and the plans of the 'Buddhist refugees' focused on the reestablishment of Chinese Buddhism as a way to create a new Buddhist China. See Introduction.

introduced some new theories that provoked serious reactions and opposition within the Chinese Buddhist community. This dissertation argues that Yinshun's attempt to define a 'new' Chinese Mādhyamika through his provoking ideas was actually part of his wider plan of creation of a 'new' Chinese Mahāyāna, therefore his debate around the identity of the new Mādhyamika is related to the reshaping of the identity of a new Mahāyāna. Surely Yinshun was not the only figure involved in this mission, indeed a large number of leading-monks were active in this respect, and most of them showed opposition to Yinshun's ideas. The nature of this opposition will be explored in this final segment of my study.

Finally, there is the discourse of modernity, or better, of the Chinese Buddhist reception of 'modernity', in relation to the different concepts of 'innovation' and 'tradition', in the mid of the twentieth century.⁶ The next three chapters will attempt to define the distinction between being 'traditional' (term here intended with the meaning of being adherent to the classical mainstream of the tradition), 'innovative' and 'modern' in the context of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism through the analysis of Yinshun and his exposition of Mādhyamika. I will show that there is not a clear and definitive boundary or firm exclusiveness between being 'modern' and being 'traditional', as well as between 'legitimation' and 'transformation' of authority. To return to Yinshun, he was not either 'traditional' or 'innovative', instead he was 'innovative' (but not necessarily 'modernist') for some respects, while for some others he showed to be 'traditional' ('classical' and 'conservative'). The game

⁶ Recent works about modernity in China include: Duara, Prasenjit (1995) *Rescuing history from the nation*; He Ping (2002) *China's Search for Modernity*. Recent works about modernity in the context of religion include: Benavides, Gustavo (1998) 'Modernity' in Mark Taylor ed. *Critical terms for religious study*, pp.186-204. Recent studies about modernity in Buddhism include Ivy, Marilyn (2005) 'Modernity' in Donald S. Lopez, ed. *Critical terms for the study of Buddhism*. Recent studies on modernity in Chinese Buddhism list Tarocco, Francesca (2007) *The cultural practices of modern Chinese Buddhism*. Recent studies on modernity in Chinese religion and Buddhism as in Taiwan include Clart, Philip and Charles B. Jones, 'Introduction' in Clart and Jones, eds. *Religion in Modern Taiwan*, pp.1-9; Jones, Charles B. (2003) 'Transition in the practice and defense of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism' in Heine, Steven and Charles S. Prebish *Buddhism for the Modern World*, pp. 186-204.

around these labels provides more light on the modalities of ‘modernity’ within the recent development of Chinese Buddhism.

Preliminary to the analysis of Yinshun's philological study of Mādhyamika is an investigation on the three different classifications of Nāgārjuna's scriptures that Yinshun proposed in his writings.⁷ The distinction between commentaries of texts (*shi jing lun* 釋經論) and texts of root teachings (*zong jing lun* 宗經論) is not an invention of Yinshun, but a repetition of the system of classification of texts that Taixu proposed in 1936.⁸ A second classification divided Nāgārjuna's scriptures in early and late works, as in accordance with the historical moment of their appearance. Nevertheless, the classification that Yinshun had used more often, and that appears in the quotation at the beginning of this section as well, distinguishes the scriptures on the ‘deep investigation’ (*shen guan* 深觀) from those on the ‘extensive practice’ (*guang xing* 廣行). Even if Taiwanese scholarship attributed the dichotomy ‘deep investigation’ and ‘extensive practice’ to Yinshun, this grouping was also present in Lama Tsongkhapa's scholarship. In the process of creation of a new beginning for Chinese Buddhism, the fact that Yinshun has been acknowledged as theorist of the dichotomy ‘deep investigation’ and ‘extensive practice’ should be read, in my opinion, as aimed to provide modern *auctoritas* for the new era of Chinese Buddhism.⁹ The combination of ‘investigation’ with ‘practice’ as required for the correct understanding of Mādhyamika is one of firm points in Yinshun's agenda. This statement remembers how Yinshun articulated the distinction between ‘dialectic argumentation’ (*lun* 論) and ‘contemplative investigation’ (*guan* 觀) of the

⁷ Yinshun (1942) *Yindu zhi fojiao*, pp.99-103; (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp. 13-17; (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.1-3; (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.201-206; (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp.122-125; (1993) *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, pp.106-112

⁸ Taixu (1936) 'Wangsheng jingtu lun jiangyao' 往生淨土論講要, in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.7, pp.2654-2655.

⁹ See Chapter Four.

Middle, making the former as the theory and the latter as the practice, and their integration as fundamental for the correct following of Buddhism.¹⁰ In specific, Yinshun indicated *Zhong lun* as the ‘deep investigation’ scripture, *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun* as the ‘extensive practice’ scriptures.¹¹

Therefore, *Zhong lun*, *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun* are listed and treated here as the core scriptures of the ‘correct’ Buddhism according to Yinshun, and Yinshun’s textual and doctrinal exegesis of these scriptures are instrumental to understand the essence of Yinshun’s intervention in the modern reshaping of Chinese Mahāyāna.

¹⁰ See Chapter Five.

¹¹ Yinshun (1993) *Da zhi du lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, pp. 107-108. The same concepts, sometimes rephrased, appear in many other writings of Yinshun, and became the classification of Mādhyamika scriptures adopted by Yinshun's descendants.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RE-STATEMENT OF *ZHONG LUN* 中論

Yinshun's argument '*Zhong lun* is the thorough argumentation (*tong lun* 通論) of the *Āgamas*' summarised Yinshun's intervention on *Zhong lun*, the reasons of the criticism he received by contemporary Chinese Buddhists, as well as the core of his plan of restoration of Chinese Buddhism in the mid-twentieth century China.

The chapter is divided into two main section. The first part is dedicated to Yinshun's textual exegesis of *Zhong lun*, and is therefore complementary of the previous chapters that explored Yinshun's conception of Buddhist doctrine and history. The modalities of his approach to the text and the way he dealt with the previous Chinese traditional textual scholarship and canonical scriptures (especially Jizang's works) will be taken in particular consideration.

Then the analysis of Yinshun's work is instrumental to unveil a twentieth-century attempt to reshape the Chinese 'tradition' of Buddhism, as well as provoking new directions for interpreting 'tradition' in the tension between 'conservatism' and 'modernity'. The shift from *Zhong lun* as rooted directly in the *Prajñāpāramitā* to *Zhong lun* as derived directly from the *Āgamas*, and Yinshun's adoption of the term 'en-compassing teaching' (*tong jiao* 通教) as definition of the doctrine of Nāgārjuna came to question the 'classical' (mainstream) Chinese reception and practice of Mahāyāna, with the result to provoke a lively and longterm debate within the contemporary Chinese Buddhist sphere. In this way, the chapter also delineates the 'modern' discourse of *Zhong lun* as part of the more complicated Chinese discourse of 'modern' Mahāyāna.

VII. 1 Yinshun's textual exegesis

As Fafang and I returned in the evening to the Donglian Juefan, I heard that Yinshun had given lectures on the kārikās of *Zhong lun*. Yinshun is the expert of Chinese San-lun, he especially uses original Buddhism for explaining Mahāyāna treatises, so to unveil syncretism and encompassing argumentation, grasp the theoretical principles, explain the profound in simple language, clear and well-articulated. He can really be considered a śāstra-teacher [*lunshi* 論師].¹

In any hermenetical process, the text is not a static reality but its historical significance develops in and through the process of interpretation. With the premise that 'the hermenetical experience understands what is said in the light of the present', and that 'the task of interpretation, then, is that of bridging historical distance', I argue that Yinshun's exegesis of *Zhong lun* should be seen as a dialectical encounter with the scripture, the tradition that the scripture represented and embodied, and its adaptation to circumstantial factors such as the definition of early twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism and Buddhist China.²

VII. 1. 1 The 'Yinshun dimension' of *Zhong lun*

The core teaching of *Zhong lun* is: the temporary arising is the sole existence.³

The 'Yinshun dimension' of *Zhong lun* (intended as the monk's interpretation, of the text) is better understood after consideration of the 'Zhong lun dimension' of Yinshun. Yinshun's autobiographies testify that *Zhong lun* was among the first

¹ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.5, p.251 [27 October 1949]

² Palmer, R. (1969), *Hermeneutics*, pp.242-253.

³ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.52

Buddhist books that Yinshun bought in the 1920s, and that the first commentary of the scripture that he read was Jizang's work.⁴ The citations from *Zhong lun* in Yinshun's works, and not merely in his autobiographical accounts, reveal that he made a consistent study of the scripture throughout his career.⁵ Finally, in *Fofa gailun* (1949) Yinshun for the first time mentioned the *Āgama*'s legacy in *Zhong lun* as a new conception (may we say 'modern reception'?) of the overall Mahāyāna rather than a mere doctrinal statement limited to a re-interpretation of the sole Mādhyamika, a thesis that in a few years became central in Yinshun's theology and topic of the next section of the chapter.⁶

Yinshun's study on the text reveals elements of interest on the level of research methodology, textual critique and doctrinal hermeneutics, and conclusions that are unprecedented in the history of Chinese Buddhology. These elements can be labelled as the 'Yinshunian dimension' of *Zhong lun* and can be summarised as follows:

1. *Zhong lun: doctrinal and historical patterns.* The introductory chapter of *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* includes Yinshun's notes on the authorship, translation and commentaries of the text. By proposing the integration of *Āgama* and Prajñāpāramitā teachings as doctrinal framework of *Zhong lun*, Yinshun emphasised the *Āgama* more than the Prajñāpāramitā roots of the Mādhyamika teachings expounded in the scripture.⁷ His historical analysis focused on the shift in doctrinal hermeneutics that was result of the transmission of the text from India to China. As a consequence he considered Jizang's commentary as a perfect case of the 'sinification' of

⁴ See Chapter One, and (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.i-iii.

⁵ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p.iii.

⁶ Yinshun (1949) *Fofa gailun*, p.i: 'About Buddhadharma, I obtained a deep and correct understanding of the religion through reading Nagarjuna's *Zhong lun*: the true mark, the dichotomy in great and lesser, and the distinction between Mahāyāna and Hinayana in Buddhadharma can be recognised only on the level of practice. Dependent arising and middle way is the only absolute correct view in Buddhadharma, therefore the *Āgamas* are the canon that the three vehicles all rely on.

⁷ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.1-41.

Zhong lun, and presented the Chinese San-lun understanding of the scripture as a misunderstanding of Nāgārjuna's doctrine, and as an instance of the Chinese tendency to syncretism (*ronghui* 融會) and thus to corrupt the original teachings of the text.⁸

2. Language and technical vocabulary. Yinshun combined the modern and colloquial paraphrases and doctrinal explanation with a complicated system of classification of the contents of the scripture. As I will show later, Yinshun's classifications of the verses and the terminology that he adopted for it are reminiscent of Jizang's style, and it was surely effect of the classification scheme (authored by a contemporary monk) appendix of the edition of Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* published by the Jinlin Scriptural Press and that Yinshun read.
3. Comparative analysis of the existent commentaries on *Zhong lun*. In his work Yinshun engaged with the previous commentaries on *Zhong lun*. As result, the book is not only another explanation of Nāgārjuna's teachings, but also a sort of '*Zhong lun* encyclopedia' with the addition of excerpts and cross-references from the main previous commentaries available in China and canonised through their inclusion in the Taishō Tripitaka. Yinshun's book intended to be a 'modern' work but still based on the Pre-Modern mainstream Chinese Buddhism, summarising the past and starting a new phase in the history of the text. The commentaries examined by Yinshun were all canonical texts, and therefore considered authoritative scriptures: Pingala's *Zhong lun shi* 中論釋,⁹ Bhāvaviveka's *Banruo deng lun shi* 般若燈論釋,¹⁰ Asannga's *Shun zhong lun* 順中論,¹¹ Sthiramati's *Dasheng*

⁸ See Chapter Four for Yinshun's definition of the terms *ronghui* 融會 and *guantong* 貫通.

⁹ T30 n1564.

¹⁰ T30 n1566.

¹¹ T30 n1565

zhongguan shi lun 大乘中觀釋論,¹² and Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* 中觀論疏.¹³ Yinshun also referred constantly to the *Akutobhaya* (Ch: *Wuwei shu* 無畏疏) in the commentary of almost each chapter.¹⁴ *Akutobhaya* is preserved in Tibetan, and has been translated in Japanese only at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁵ Yinshun probably relied on Teramoto's translation, even if we do not have evidence for that.¹⁶ A final observation concerns what I call Yinshun's 'historical consciousness': even if Yinshun has been internationally recognised as a historian, his limits in this respect are evident in his comment to *Zhong lun*, since he used to refer to the different commentaries without consideration of the date of their compilation but with the only concern for the doctrinal contents. It is the doctrinal contents here to become instrumental and supporting Yinshun's proposed value of *Zhong lun*.

4. Quotations from other canonical scriptures. Besides quotations from the previous commentaries listed above, Yinshun related *Zhong lun* to the other San-lun texts (*Shi'er men lun* and *Bai lun*), the *Āgamas* and the Prajñāpāramitā literature. In this way Yinshun showed the intention to locate the school of Mādhyamika/San-lun sphere in the wider context of the Chinese tradition of Buddhism. Secondly, there are only a few quotations from *Da zhidu lun*, which Yinshun had highly regarded and made subject of his deepest study. This fact might infer that Yinshun was not yet familiar with the text when he gave the lectures on the kārikās, and I would thus

¹² T30 n1567. According to Yinshun, the Chinese translation was made by Dānapala (*Shihu* 施護, Song dynasty), while it is usually attributed to the joint effort of Dharmapala and Weijing 惟淨. See Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lunsong jiangji*, p.4; Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, p.210.

¹³ T42 n1824

¹⁴ Yinshun referred to it as *Wuwei lun* 無畏論.

¹⁵ Huimin 惠敏 (1986) *Zhongguan yu Yujie* 中觀與瑜珈, pp.14-15. Huimin listed two Japanese translations of the text: one by Ikeda (1932) and one by Teramoto Enga (1937).

¹⁶ See Chapter One for details on Yinshun's consultation of Japanese scholarship.

conclude that he first mastered *Zhong lun* and then *Da zhidu lun*.¹⁷ A third observation concerns the passages from the Buddhist Chinese Canon quoted by Yinshun: most of them are Yinshun's paraphrases, some of them are 'missing' (I did not find any correspondence in the Taishō nor in the *Longzang* edition), others are taken from Jizang's work. Yinshun seems to rely on Jizang's quotations from the Canon more than to quote directly from the Canon; this might be a further index of the Jizang's legacy in Yinshun's work. Then, Yinshun's preference to agree with the theories proposed in the texts attributed to Nāgārjuna more than to those presented in commentaries authored by post-Nāgārjuna figures can be a confirmation of his tendency to trust the 'original' scriptures, even if this 'original' is read in its Chinese, and thus 'non original', translation.¹⁸

5. Proposition of alternative verse order. In his work Yinshun drew a comparative analysis of the several Chinese and Tibetan commentaries, and then proposed a reconstruction of sequence of Nāgārjuna's verses based on his study. For instance, in Chapter 17, Yinshun did not follow Pingala's but Bhāvaviveka's work, and postponed v.1 after v.10.¹⁹
6. General catalogue of the contents of *Zhong lun*. Yinshun's classification of the contents is unique in the history of exegesis of the text. Differently than the previous commentaries available in Chinese, which all made a distinction between the chapters 1-25 (considered as concerning Mahāyāna) from the chapters 26-27 (regarded as related to Hīnayāna),²⁰ Yinshun

¹⁷ Chapter Eight will provide further evidence in support of this thesis.

¹⁸ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.72: *Da zhidu lun* and Qingmu proposed a different reading of Ch.1, verses 7-9. Yinshun agreed with the former not because sounded more acceptable but because the text is authored by Nāgārjuna.

¹⁹ Yinshun affirmed to follow in this case Bhāvaviveka and *Akutobhaya*. However, the different order of the verses recurs in Bhāvaviveka's commentary but not in *Akutobhaya*.

²⁰ According to Jizang and the Tiantai tradition, Chapter 1 to 25 concern the Bodhisattva doctrine, Chapter 26 concerns the Pratyekabuddha doctrine, and Chapter 27 regards the Śrāvaka doctrine. Twentieth-century monks like Taixu followed this scheme (Taixu (1942), 'Faxing konghui xue gailun',

grouped the 27 chapters under the headings of the Four Noble Truths.²¹ This reflects Yinshun's emphasis on Early Buddhism. Secondly, Yinshun's articulation aimed to oppose the mainstream Chinese firm distinction between Mahāyāna and Pre-Mahāyāna (mostly defined with the term Hīnayāna) and to propose a common doctrinal pattern in line with the principle of the 'Dharma common to the Three Vehicles' (*sancheng gongfa* 三乘共法). As Yinshun argued: 'This present classification of *Zhong lun* does not make a distinction of Mahāyāna from Pre-Mahāyāna (Hīnayāna) in terms of mutual exclusiveness, but assesses the principle of emptiness as common to the Three Vehicles'.²²

7. Chapter-by-Chapter examination. The study of each chapter follows the same structure: (a) preface, which includes the contextualisation of the chapter within the entire scripture, summarises the argument of the chapter and introduces the main doctrinal issues of the piece; (b) paraphrases and comment: the verses are followed by the rewording in modern and colloquial Chinese, and a doctrinal explanation;²³ (c) quotations from the existent commentaries of *Zhong lun* and other canonical scriptures, to supply an extensive explanation of the teachings; (d) parallel between the *Zhong lun* doctrine (Early Mādhyamika) and the teachings of the other Buddhist schools (Mahāyāna and Pre-Mahāyāna) and non-Buddhist philosophies.

8. Refusal but adoption of Jizang. Throughout his career, Yinshun was a

in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v. 5, pp.808-825).

²¹ Yinshun made the following division: (a) Chapter 1-2, general view; (b) Chapter 3-5, 1st Noble Truth – Suffering; (c) Chapter 6-17, 2nd Noble Truth – Accumulation of Suffering; (d) Chapter 18-25, 3rd Noble Truth – Extinction of Suffering; (e) Chapter 26-27, 4th Noble Truth – Noble Path to the extinction of suffering. See table below for further details.

²² Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.43. See also the comment on Chapter 18, pp.316-317.

²³ For his commentary Yinshun relied on the Taishō edition [T30 n1564] of the kārikās.

Chinese Buddhist who criticised the Chinese commentaries in name of the 'pure' Indian counterparts. In Yinshun's view, Jizang, who was the master of the Chinese San-lun, represented and developed the 'impure' Chinese reception of the *Zhong lun* teaching and Nāgārjuna's doctrine in general. Therefore, following Yinshun, Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* should also be considered misleading.²⁴ Nevertheless I found quite a few similarities between Yinshun's and Jizang's commentaries: as the next section will show in detail, Yinshun's analysis of some chapters are structured in the same way and include the same metaphors and examples found in Jizang's work. The fact that Jizang's commentary was one of the first books that Yinshun bought in 1925 facilitated an implicit 'inheritance' from the San-lun master. I would argue a doctrinal refusal but textual adoption of Jizang's work since, as it has been mentioned above, Yinshun's method of classification of contents for each chapter remembers Jizang's way of organising the text, and some of the quotations reported from other scriptures are actually taken from Jizang rather than directly from those scriptures. This is a further evidence in support of the thesis of a Jizang's legacy in Yinshun.

9. A new milestone in the history of the *Zhong lun* study? Yinshun gave lectures on a number of sutras and sastras, but published only a few.²⁵ In the field of Mādhyamika, Yinshun was the first one who wrote a complete commentary on the kārikās after the Tang dynasty, and the fact that Lan Jifu listed Yinshun's *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* as one of the most important Chinese commentaries of *Zhong lun*, besides its being the only modern and non-canonical text of the group, testifies the general recognition paid by the

²⁴ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.39.

²⁵ The Yinshun Cultural Foundation preserves the recording and written transcription of Yinshun's lectures on the *Lotus Sūtra*, *Vimalakīrti Nirdesa Sūtra* and *Five Skandha Śāstra*. These commentaries remain unpublished.

Chinese Buddhist scholarship to the work.²⁶ The statement ‘On the level of doctrinal interpretation, Yinshun can be defined as the most outstanding scholar of *Zhong lun* after Jizang’ cannot but confirm the role that Yinshun played, or at least that most of the Taiwanese scholarship wanted him to play, in the process of renaissance of the Mādhyamika study, and specifically of *Zhong lun* in China.²⁷ In 1956 Daoan wrote that he had to mention Yinshun and *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* in his essay on the modern state of the San-lun scholarship in China, since Yinshun had been enshrined as the modern authority of the *Zhong lun* studies and as such should have been mentioned.²⁸ In his *Zhongguan sixiang jianglu* (1998), Wan Jinchuan included Yinshun's *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* within the modern international scholarship on *Zhong lun*, stressing contributions and shortcomings of the book. As Wan Jinchuan argued, whereas the going

²⁶ Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, pp.205-216. Lan Jifu listed, following a chronological order of compilation: Pingala's commentary (included in the Taisho, T30 n1564); Asanga's *Shun zhonglun* (included in the Taisho, T30 n1565); Bhavaviveka's *Banruo deng lun shi* (included in the Taisho, T30 n1566); Sthiramati's *Dasheng zhongguan shi lun* (included in the Taisho, T30 n1567); Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* (included in the Taisho, T42 n1824); and finally Yinshun's *Zhongguan lun song jiang ji*, which is not a canonical scripture (even if, as mentioned in Chapter Three, Yinshun's *Cheng fo zhi dao* was 'canonised' through liturgical recitation). Quoting from Lan Jifu: 'After the Tang dynasty, there was not so much Chinese Buddhist scholarship on *Zhong lun*. Recently, Taixu's book *Faxing konghui gailun* was an explanation of *Zhong lun*. This is included in the volume 13 of *Taixu dashi quanshu*. We need to wait until the contemporary Yinshun in order to have new significant interpretations of the teachings of *Zhong lun*.' (p.214) Lan Jifu also listed Yinshun's *Zhongguan jinlun* among the scholarship of the field, and concluded: 'This book [*Zhongguan jinlun*] and *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* are perfectly complementary, and form the structure of Yinshun's Mādhyamika system.' (p.222)

²⁷ Lan Jifu, (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, p.215.

²⁸ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, pp. 1512-1513 [17 April 1956]. Daoan listed *Xingkong xue tanyuan* and *Zhongguan jin lun* as Yinshun's works on San-lun, a fact which proves the popularity of the volumes, and also mentioned Shanyin and Taixu as other eminent scholar-monks of the field. In addition, Daoan listed *Zhongguan jin lun*, *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, *Xingkong xue tanyuan*, and *Yindu zhi fojiao* among the reference material for researching San-lun (pp.1460-1461 [7 February 1956]). Daoan also commented on the reality of 'sectarianism' in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, underlining his being not part of any school (*wupai xi* 無派系), which made him eligible to provide valuable advices, and Yinshun's affiliation to the San-lun school (pp.1408-1409 [16 July 1955]), which emphasised the general consideration for Yinshun in the Buddhist China. In this way, the critical reception of Yinshun's scholarship reopens the discourse of lineage and affiliation in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, also in relation to the discourse of Buddhist modernity. Differently than Daoan, Lan Jifu argued more specifically that Yinshun, because of his negotiation between Mahāyāna and Pre-Mahāyāna doctrine, did not belong to a lineage or school in the traditional [*chuantong* 傳統] sense (Lan Jifu, 1993, *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, p.215). Lan Jifu's statement leads us to think that cross-traditional syncretism should be conceived as index of 'modernity.'

beyond Pingala's commentary and the comparative analysis of a number of canonical commentaries of the scripture identifies Yinshun's unprecedented achievement within the Chinese monastic scholarship, the reference to Candrakīrti and the thought-provoking thesis of a doctrinal inconsistency between Candrakīrti and Nāgārjuna was not supported by any evidence.²⁹ Lan Jifu provided a critical review of Yinshun's work as well. According to Lan Jifu, Yinshun's work outstands in involving not just the contrast between Mahāyāna and Pre-Mahāyāna, but a comparative analysis and confutation of (especially traditional Chinese) Mahāyāna schools. On the other hand, the adoption of modern colloquial Chinese and Western philosophical terms could facilitate semantic misunderstanding and doctrinal confusion.³⁰ Wan Jinchuan's and Lan Jifu's analyses represent two ways of assessing and classifying the historical development of scholarship, being the critical assessment of the former involving an international monastic, lay and non-Buddhist frame, while the latter writes from the only standpoint of (traditional) Chinese Buddhism, and locate Yinshun within the traditional, or better conservative, Chinese 'doctrinal judgment'. In any rate, such an attention on Yinshun's work facilitated his enthronement as authority in modern Madhyamika/San-lun field of study.

Yinshun's classification of the 27 chapters of *Zhong lun* is translated here below.³¹

²⁹Wan Jinchuan (1998) *Zhongguan sixiang jianglu*, pp.256-257. Wan Jinchuan also proposed an association between Yinshun's *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* and Ng Yu-kwan's *Longshu zhonglun de zhexue jiedu* 龍樹中論的哲學解讀 (1997), which are defined as the new beginning of a *Zhonglun* scholarship in China, and a comparison between Yinshun's work and Ng Yu-Kwan's, Kalupahana's *Nagarjuna, The Philosophy of the Middle Way* (1986), Pandeya's *Nagarjuna's Philosophy of No-Identity* (1991), and Garfield's *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* (1995), with the conclusion that Yinshun's work is the most comprehensive among all (pp.256-263).

³⁰ Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, pp.214-216.

³¹ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.45-46

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------|
| Thesis and homage | [the first two verses] | | | | | | | |
| Doctrinal explanation | General View³² | Accumulation and Non-origination | | Cause and Conditions | (01) | | | |
| | | Annihilation and Non-going (into Nirvana) | | Going and Coming | (02) | | | |
| | Distinct View³³ | Secular World – Suffering | | The Six Faculties | (03) | | | |
| | | | | The Five Skandhas | (04) | | | |
| | | | | The Six Elements | (05) | | | |
| | | Secular World | Effects of illusion and action | Illusion and thus origination | Passion and the Impassioned One | (06) | | |
| | | | | | The Three Marks | (07) | | |
| | | -Accumulation | Samsāra | Doing and thus receiving | Deed and Doer | (08) | | |
| | | | | | A Substrate | (09) | | |
| | | Voidal nature of the impermanent activities | | Without the three limits | Fire and Fuel | (10) | | |
| | | | | | Without the four creating | Original Limits | (11) | |
| | | | | | All the predispositions | Predispositions | (13) | |
| | | | | | | Contact and combination | Combination | (14) |
| | | | | | | Existence and non-existence | Existence and Non-existence | (15) |
| | | Bondage and Liberation | The (various) karma | Karma | Bondage and Liberation | (16) | | |
| | | | | | Karma | (17) | | |
| | | View of the phenomenal appearances | | Dharmas | | (18) | | |
| | | Towards the Attainment of Awakening | | Time | | (19) | | |
| | | | | Cause and effect | | (20) | | |
| | Becoming and Dissolution | | | (21) | | | | |
| | Secular World – Extinction | Elimination of Afflictions and Awakening | Pudgala | Tathagata | (22) | | | |
| | | | | Dharma | Perverved views | (23) | | |
| | | | | | The Four Noble Truths | (24) | | |
| Nirvana | | | | | (25) | | | |
| Secular World | Correct view of Dependent Arising | | The Twelve Causes | (26) | | | | |
| -[Noble] Path to the Extinction | Distance from the Wrong View | | Wrong views | (27) | | | | |
| Conclusion and homage | [the last verse] | | | | | | | |

Table 16 – Yinshun's classification of *Zhong lun* in accordance with the Four Noble Truths

³² Of the dependent arising of the eightfold negation.

³³ Of the dependent arising of the eightfold negation and according the four noble truths.

VII. 1. 2 Jizang's legacy in Yinshun

Chapter Four discussed why Yinshun can be considered as the second Jizang more than the second Nāgārjuna, and why the local Buddhist community proposed the opposite theory. This section argues Jizang's legacy in Yinshun providing evidences from the field of textual critique.

Yinshun's criticism to Jizang is in line with his search for the pure Dharma that he identified with the earliest doctrine of Indian Buddhism. The first accusation moved to Jizang to 'corrupt' the core of Nāgārjuna's teachings dated back to the late 1930s, which means just after the investigation, under the guidance of Fazun, of the Indian and Tibetan tradition of Mādhyamika. In fact, Jizang appeared as the San-lun master without any negative appellation in Yinshun's early works on San-lun.³⁴ This fact demonstrates that Yinshun's interpretation of Jizang changed along his study of the Mādhyamika/San-lun school. Nevertheless, in the early 1940s, date of Yinshun's first lectures on *Zhong lun*, Yinshun's theology still maintained a strong heritage from Jizang. The last part of this chapter will show how the silent acceptance of Jizang can be interpreted as Yinshun's strategical expedient to make his theory better accepted by the Chinese Buddhist tradition, and thus in line with Yinshun's strategy of negotiation and final domesticated resolution.

I argue that Jizang's legacy in Yinshun is articulated in the following elements:

- classification scheme and technical terminology. The arrangement of the verses of each chapter theorised by Yinshun finds a close similarity with the way Jizang himself had classified them.³⁵ We should consider that Yinshun

³⁴ For the list of Yinshun's early works on Mādhyamika see Chapter One.

³⁵ Similarities are present especially for Ch.1; Ch.2 (the division into 'three gates' [*sanmen* 三門] is common to Pingala, Jizang and Yinshun); Ch.3: Yinshun and Jizang adopted the same system of classification of the six faculties, being Yinshun's scheme only slightly more detailed; Ch.5: Yinshun and Jizang adopted the same headings in grouping verses; Ch.8: Yinshun repeated exactly the same headings that Jizang adopted; Ch.9: Yinshun in his comment of vv.3-4 (p.190) reported Jizang,

probably bought the *Zhongguan lun shu* published by the Jinling Script. Press. This edition, which is today reprinted by the Xinwenfeng Press in Taipei, includes in appendix charts compiled in 1914 on the contents of each chapter. Taixu and Fazun in the same years used similar method and terminology for cataloging the contents of Buddhist scriptures. We can then conclude that rather than just following Jizang's system, Yinshun was also conforming to the present standard of the local Buddhist scholarship.

- confrontation between Mahāyāna, Hīnayāna and non-Buddhist schools. Pingala and Bhāvaviveka, the latter more than the former, used to put *Zhong lun* doctrine in engagement with the other Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools. Nevertheless, the quality and the quantity of cross-references that Yinshun listed find specific similarity with Jizang's work. Moreover, for some chapters Yinshun made the same parallels, in the same order and with the same quotations that Jizang had done in his work.³⁶
- quotations from canonical scriptures. As I mentioned above, many from the

however the reference does not find any correspondence in the text but seems to summarise Jizang's scheme of the chapter as reproduced in the version printed by Jinling Scriptural Press; Ch.10: Yinshun's scheme repropose Jizang's classification of contents; Ch.13: Yinshun followed the same scheme adopted by Jizang; Ch.14: Yinshun's commentary of this chapter (pp.242-249) should be read in parallel to Jizang's own commentary of the same [T42 n1824: 108c22-111b19]: there are numerous similarities in contents, terminology, structure and order of quotations; Ch.16: Yinshun repeated the same division proposed by Jizang, with strong similarities also in the headings adopted; Ch.25: Yinshun's scheme is almost identical to Jizang's classification of contents.

³⁶ Ch.3: in comment of vv.2-4 Yinshun made a reference to the Vatsiputriya (p.105), so as Jizang did [T42 n1824: 62c9-10], indeed one of the distinct features of Jizang's commentaries are references to and comparisons with other Buddhist schools such as Sarvastivada and Vatsiputriya; Ch.7: Yinshun referred to Vatsiputriya, Sarvastivada and Mahasanghika to comment on v.4 (pp.149-151), and the only Jizang among the previous commentators referred to Vatsiputriya in this respect [T42 n1824: 74a22-23]; Ch.9: Yinshun made reference to Vatsiputriya and Sautrāntika in the general survey of the contents of the chapter (pp.186-187), so as Bhāvaviveka and Jizang [T42 n1824: 92a4-10], but not Pingala, have done in their own commentaries, while references to Samkhya school, which Yinshun did as in comment on vv.8-10 (pp.194-195), are present only in Jizang [T41 n1824: 92a-94a], who used to make parallel to Samkhya school frequently; Ch.10: Yinshun's reference to Vatsiputriya as promoters of the metaphor of fire/woods (pp.196-197) had been mentioned only in Jizang's work [T42 n1824: 94b24-28]; Ch.15: Yinshun criticised Sarvastivada's doctrinal position in his comment of v.3 (p.254), and the same argumentation, even if at the end of the comment of the chapter, is present in Jizang's work [T42 n1824: 113a27].

quotations in Yinshun do not find correspondence in the relative texts. Most of these inaccurate quotations are actually taken from Jizang's works, *Zhongguan lun shu* in primis but not only. It seems that Yinshun did not check the Buddhist Canon and did not quote directly from sūtras and śāstras, but indirectly and relying totally on Jizang's quotations.³⁷

- explanatory conceptualisations. Yinshun used to associate the *Zhong lun* instructions to Buddhist teachings that are not explicitly mentioned in the scripture. This is not unique in the history of Buddhist exegesis, but it is probably not a coincidence that Yinshun in quite a few occasions selected the same teachings that Jizang also reported and in the same sequence.³⁸

³⁷ Ch.1: in comment to vv.7-9 Yinshun made a reference to *Shi'er men lun* (p.72), so as only Jizang among the other commentaries did [T42 n1824: 40b28-29]; in comment of v.11 Yinshun quote a sentence from Nagarjuna's *Da zhidu lun* on the Middle Way (p.75) which does not find correspondence in any of Nagarjuna's scriptures but is mentioned in the same terms, also as from *Da zhidu lun*, in Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* (T42 n1824: 50c19-20); Ch.3: the quotation on the equivalence between emptiness and non-origination (p.103) is a quotation from Jizang's scripture [T42 n1824: 205c14]; Ch.8: Yinshun (p.176) referred to *Weimojing shao* [T85 n2773: 424c], and the same quotation is present in Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* with the same function [T42 n1824: 91a22], but does not appear in any other commentaries on *Zhong lun*; Ch.12: in the general introduction to the chapter, Yinshun referred to *Da zhidu lun* (pp.220-221), however the sentence does not find any correspondence in *Da zhidu lun*, but in Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* [T42 n1824: 102c24-25], and Jizang himself reported the passage as a quotation from *Da zhidu lun*; other passages that Yinshun reported as from *Da zhidu lun* are actually paraphrases of passages from *Lotus Sutra*, and again Jizang himself reported the same passages and reported them as quotations from *Da zhidu lun* [T42 n1824: 442c19], therefore Yinshun made wrong references by following Jizang's mistakes, he even reported the passages in the same sequence used by Jizang; a fact which shows Yinshun's reliance on Jizang's text; Yinshun in comment of v.1 (p.222) quoted from *Jingming jing* 淨名經 [T85 n2777: 461b7], and only Jizang, among the various commentaries of *Zhonglun*, mentioned the same passage [T41 n1824: 102b19]; Ch.15: Yinshun in his comment of vv.8-9 (pp.259-260) quoted from Prajñāpāramitā scriptures (probably by memory since the quotations does not find the exact correspondence in the Prajñāpāramitā corpus), and this is what Jizang also did [T42 n1824: 107a06-07]; Ch.16: Yinshun quoted from Prajñāpāramitā literature (p.271) and *Avatamsaka sutra* (p.276), so as Jizang had done in the same parts [respectively, T42 n1824: 114a3-6, and T42 n1824: 114c5-6], while these references are missing in the other commentaries of *Zhong lun*; Ch.17: Yinshun in his comment of v.19 (p.299) quoted from *Mingliao lun* 明了論 [T24 n1461], however the quotation does not find correspondence in the text, Yinshun was probably referring to Jizang's passage [T42 n1824: 119a10-11]; Ch.24: Yinshun reported a quotation from *Da zhidu lun* [probably the rephrasing of T25 n1609: 703b24-27] in comment of v.7 (pp.452-453) and the twofold truth (*erdi* 二諦), and the same passage was quoted by Jizang several times in his *Zhongguan lun shu* [T42 n1824: 28b15, 108c07, 149b29], *Buke erdi zhangxu* 補刻二諦章敘 [T45 n1854: 82c2-8], and *Fahua xuan lun* 法華玄論 [T34 n1720: 396b12-14].

³⁸ Ch.4: Yinshun referred to *Bailun* in order to explain vv.1-3 (pp.115-116), and similar references were done by Jizang [T42 n1824: 67c5], but are not present either in Pingala's or in Bhavaviveka's commentaries; Ch.7: Yinshun referred to *Bai lun* and the metaphor of the lamp as in comment on v.9 (p.153), and Jizang also did the same [T42 n1824: 81c9-15]; Ch.10: Yinshun's explanation of the title of the chapter, the metaphor of the fire, and the parallel between fire/woods and self/five skhandas

- narrative: parables and stories. Quite a few from the parables and stories that Yinshun included in his commentary are present in Jizang's works but not in the other previous commentaries.³⁹

The presence of Jizang is not merely index of Yinshun's own sympathy for the San-lun master, but the result of the state of Buddhism in the first half of the twentieth-century China. Yang Wenhui brought Jizang's scriptures back to China from Japan and the Jinling Scriptural Press made them available to the Chinese readership. That Jizang's *Zhongguan lun shu* was one of the very few Buddhist books that Yinshun found purchasable at the beginning of his learning confirms the diffusion of the text in China during the first decades of the twentieth century. Another from the first Buddhist books bought by Yinshun, Maeda's *Sanronshū kōyō* 三論宗綱要,⁴⁰ underlined the role that Jizang's scholarship came to play after the reprinting of his works in early twentieth century. In fact, in the *Sanronshū kōyō* the San-lun scriptures are analysed, and their contents classified as in accordance with Jizang's own study; in the preface dated 1923, Jiang Weiqiao 蔣維喬 (who had translated Maeda's book into Chinese) affirmed that in the recent years Jizang's works, once reprinted and newly available in China, had stimulated and facilitated the research on San-lun. This is another sign of the diffusion and the value of Jizang at that time.

Two conclusions are possible here. Jizang's popularity might have influenced (pp.197-198) finds correspondence only in Jizang's commentary [T42 n1824: 94b20-94c23]; Ch.10: Yinshun's argumentation (pp.203-205) on interdependence (*xiangdai* 相待) and *lakṣaṇa-hetu* (*xiangyin* 相因) finds a second occurrence only in Jizang's work [T42 n1824: 93b5-95a1]; Ch.18: Yinshun referred to a 'San-lun master' (*Sanlun xuezhe* 三論學者, *Sanlun zhe* 三論者), and he was sure intending Jizang [T42 n1824: 124a21-23]; Ch.19: as in comment to the general meaning of the chapter Yinshun referred to *Da piposha lun* 大毗婆沙論 (pp.350-351), and so did Jizang [T42 n1824: 130c8]; Ch.23: Yinshun's argumentation on the 'four errors' (*sidao* 四倒) and 'eight errors' (*badao* 八倒) resembles Jizang [T42 n1824: 144c4].

³⁹ Ch.19: the parable of bottle and mud (p.368) recurs also in Jizang [T42 n1824: 134b17-20].

⁴⁰ See Chapter Two.

Yinshun's teachings and brought Yinshun to rely on Jizang's works. Or in alternative, we may hypothesise that Yinshun relied on Jizang mostly because the works of the latter were well-known to the audience of his lectures on *Zhong lun* and then to the potential readership of his *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*.

VII. 2 Rethinking Chinese Mahāyāna

'The True Buddhism, naturally is the True Sravakayana, and also is the True Bodhisattvayana.'⁴¹

Yinshun's book, the criticism and appreciation that it has received go beyond the context of textual exegesis, and concern the reinvention of 'tradition', which in this case is the Chineseness of Buddhism. Yinshun's reception and 'sinification' of Pre-Mahāyāna Buddhism, the negotiation between traditions, which the quote above summarises, and the final resolution assumed then a historical and doctrinal significance.

This part of the chapter analyses Yinshun's hermeneutics of *Zhong lun* moving the focus from the context of Chinese San-lun scholarship to the context of the Chinese understanding of Mahāyāna.

VII. 2. 1 *Tong lun* 通論 and 通教: Bridging Āgama and Prajñāpāramitā

My personal understanding of the middle way as proposed in *Zhong lun* is that it represents the core essence of the *Āgamas* as unveiled by Nāgārjuna, who then founded the right view of the empty nature of dependent origination in the profound

⁴¹ Yinshun (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, p.42.

and extensive system of Mahāyāna. In other words, while the doctrine of dependent origination, emptiness and middle way is propagated by the Mahayanists, this is not a doctrine apart from that of the *Āgamas*, but it has not been understood by the Hīnayānists who cling to the phenomenal aspects of reality.⁴²

The argument '*Zhong lun* is the encompassing argumentation (*tong lun* 通論) of *Āgamas*' is one of the main points of Yinshun's agenda, and also one of the most challenging. Yinshun was the first one in the history of Chinese Buddhism who had proposed this argument, therefore this idea provoked serious criticism within Chinese (and Taiwanese) Buddhology.

This section assesses Yinshun's argument and the critique that it was subject within the international field of doctrinal and textual interpretation of *Zhong lun*, as well as the role that it has played in the historical moment of the restatement of the Mahāyāna tradition in China.

Yinshun's thesis remained unchanged from its first appearance in *Zhongguan jin lun* (1950)⁴³ to the re-affirmation, in *Kong zhi tanjiu* (1984).⁴⁴ A comparative study of these two books shows a slight shift in debate, which was due to the development of Yinshun's thought and the reaction to the criticism received previously. In *Kong zhi tanjiu*, for instance, the *Āgama*'s legacy in *Zhong lun* and the inconsistency between the Prajñāpāramitā doctrine and *Zhong lun* teachings are given equal emphasis, while in the previous *Zhongguan jin lun* Yinshun focused mostly on *Āgama*'s legacy in *Zhong lun*.⁴⁵

⁴² Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, p.18.

⁴³ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.17-24

⁴⁴ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, pp.209-216

⁴⁵ Yinshun articulated the same argumentation in other writings, mainly (1949) *Fofa gailun*, pp. 1-5; (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp. 12, 29, 42-43; (1988) *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi*, pp. 134-135.

The chart below summarised Yinshun's theory as it was articulated in the two books, with the highlight on the shift in his position:

| <i>Zhongguan jin lun</i> (pp.17-24) ⁴⁶ | <i>Kong zhi tanjiu</i> (pp.209-216) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (1) All the sayings of the Buddha quoted in <i>Zhong lun</i> are from the <i>Āgamas</i> . ⁴⁷ | (2) Most of the sayings of the Buddha quoted in <i>Zhong lun</i> are from the <i>Āgamas</i> . ⁴⁸ |
| (2) When we examine the contents of the <i>Zhong lun</i> , we can also see that the work is based on the doctrines contained in the <i>Āgamas</i> , with occasional reference to the classical <i>Abhidharma</i> , and that its aim is to refute the misinterpretations (of the Dharma) by the disciples in general and to reveal the true meaning of Gautama Buddha's middle way of dependent origination. ⁴⁹ | (3) <i>Zhong lun</i> is divided into 27 chapters. According to Pingala's commentary and the Akutobhaya, <i>Zhong lun</i> is divided into two parts: chapters 1-25, and chapters 26-27. Since the point (1) and (2), I cannot agree with this distinction. <i>Zhong lun</i> does not adopt any terminology specific to Mahāyāna, like Bodhi-mind, Six Paramitas, Ten bhumi, Solemn Buddha Land, but use the language of Āgama |

⁴⁶Most of the translation from *Zhongguan jin lun* (pp.17-24) is from Fayen S.K. Koo's translation, published in 1965, *Haichao yin*, v.46, n. 3, pp. 25-27.

⁴⁷ The correspondences indicated by Yinshun in *Zhongguan jin lun* are as follows: (1) *Zhong lun* Ch.11, T30 n1564: 16a8-9 and 16b8-9 are from T2 n99: 69b5-7; (2) *Zhong lun* Ch.13, T30 n1564: 17a27-28, 17b3-4 are from *Āgama* corpus, but verse is not specified; (3) *Zhong lun* Ch.15, T30 n1564: 20b1-2 are from T2 n99: 66c-67a; (4) *Zhong lun* Ch.24, T30 n1564: 33a14-15 are from T2 n125: 593a21-b1; (5) *Zhong lun* Ch.24, T30 n1564: 34c6-7 are from T2 n125: 708a17-20, T1 n26: 464a-467b; (6) *Zhong lun* Ch.25, T30 n1564: 35b14-15 are from T2 n99: 60a13-19.

⁴⁸ The correspondences indicated by Yinshun in *Kong zhi tanjiu* differ slightly from those listed above: (1) *Zhong lun* Ch.11, T30 n1564: 16a8, 16b9 are from T2 n99: 69b5-7; (2) *Zhong lun* Ch.13, T30 n1564: 17a27, 17b4 are from *Āgama* corpus, but verse is not specified; (3) *Zhong lun* Ch.15, T30 n1564: 20b1-2 are from T2 n99: 85c21-28; (4) *Zhong lun* Ch.24, T30 n1564: 33a14-15 are from T2 n125: 593a22-b1; (5) *Zhong lun* Ch.24, T30 n1564: 34c6-7 are from T1 n26: 467a27-498c8; (6) *Zhong lun* Ch.25, T30 n1564: 35b14 are from T2 n99: 60a13-21.

⁴⁹ Yinshun, *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.19-20: Yinshun expressed in a more articulated and phrased way the scheme of the structure of *Zhong lun* that appears in *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.45-46, in a table-form. Regarding the *Āgama* and *Abhidharma* framework: (1) Ch.1-2 deal with the eight negation; (2) Ch.3-27 deal with the Four Noble Truths [Ch.3-5: Suffering; Ch.3-17: Accumulation; Ch.18-25: Extinction; Ch.26-27: Noble Path]. More specifically: the doctrinal arrangement of the Ch.3-5 (from the six emotions to the five skandhas and finally the six emotions) find correspondence with the structure of *Middle Āgama*, fascile 34; Ch.6-7: the location of these chapters after what has been expounded in Ch.3-5 resembles the structure of the *Abhidharmas* (*Abhidharma Heart sastra*, for instance); Ch.8-10: the contents of these chapters find correspondence in the doctrine taught in the *Āgama*; Ch.11-12: the samsara theory expounded here is based on the *SamyuktĀgama*, sutra 302; Ch. 13-17: here are important teachings from *Āgama*; Ch.18: the understanding of 'no-self' (*anatman*) is a fundamental concept of the *Āgama*; Ch.19-21: these are the subject of deep investigation by the scholars at the time of the compilation of *Zhong lun*; Ch.22: the description of Tathagata finds correspondence in the 'Fourteen Inexpressibles' (*shisi bukeji* 十四不可記) of the *Āgama*; Ch.23-25: clear reference to the *Āgama*, especially Ch.25 repeats the contents of *SamyuktĀgama*, sutra 293; Ch.26-27: the first of these is entirely based on the *Āgamas*.

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>and Abhidharma. <i>Zhong lun</i> is structured on the order of the Four Noble Truths, uncovers the deep doctrine of <i>Āgama</i> but going through the investigation of Mahāyāna practice, and just for that is also in agreement with the deep doctrine of Mahāyāna.⁵⁰</p> |
| <p>(3) <i>Zhong lun</i> has made it clear at the outset that dependent origination is the middle way of the eight negations. <i>Zhong lun</i> is named the Middle Treatise simply because the middle way is manifested by the eight negations.⁵¹</p> | <p>(1) The initial stanzas of <i>Zhong lun</i> explain the dependent arising of the eightfold negation. Dependent arising is the characteristic of the Dharma that is not in common to the non-Buddhist doctrine, dependent arising is the middle way that is distant from the two oppositions. It is the <i>Āgamas</i> and not the <i>Prajñāpāramitā</i> to preach the dependent arising and name this argumentation as (treatise of) the middle.⁵²</p> |

Table 17 – Shift from *Zhongguan jin lun* to *Kong zhi tanjū*

The criticism moved to Yinshun’s argument was not much concerned with the presence of Pre-Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Mahāyāna scripture, an element that Chinese Buddhists had not denied, but regarded the nature of the link between *Āgamas* and *Zhong lun* instead. The Chinese (Mahāyāna) common view was that *Zhong lun* was ‘directly’ linked to the *Prajñāpāramitā* scriptures and only through the *Prajñāpāramitā* corpus, therefore ‘indirectly’, linked to the *Āgamas*. As Lan Jifu stated, *Zhong lun* is the ‘tong lun’ of the *Prajñāpāramitā*, and the *Prajñāpāramitā* is

⁵⁰ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjū*, pp.212-213: Yinshun summarised the same argumentation that he had proposed earlier in *Zhongguan jin lun*, with the difference that there is no reference to any specific text from the corpus of *Āgama* or *Abhidharma*.

⁵¹ Yinshun listed these evidences: (1) ‘no arising and no cessation’: see T2 n99: 83c; (2) ‘no permanence and no impermanence’: see T2 n99: 85c11-15; (3) ‘no identity and no difference’: see T2 n99: 84c20-25; (4) ‘no arriving and no departing’: see T2 n99: 92c16-24.

⁵² Yinshun listed these evidences: (1) ‘no arising and no cessation’: see T2 n99: 67a6-7, 92c22-23, 100a16-17; (2) ‘no permanence and no impermanence’: see T2 n99: 85c11-13; (3) ‘no identity and no difference’: see T2 n99: 84c20-25; (4) ‘no arriving and no departing’: see T2 n99: 92c16-21.

connected to *Āgamas*.⁵³

Among the international scholarship we find a general tendency to contextualise *Zhong lun* in the Prajñāpāramitā domain rather than stressing the *Āgama*'s legacy in the text. Nevertheless, contemporary Taiwanese Buddhology attempted to show similarities between Yinshun's theory and the thesis advanced by some Western and Japanese scholars. For instance, Wan Jinchuan related the thesis of a mostly Pre-Mahāyāna and less Mahāyāna legacy in Nāgārjuna that Kalupahana and Warder had proposed to Yinshun's statement on *Zhong lun*.⁵⁴ Qiu Minjie 邱敏捷 underlined a similarity between Japanese scholarship and Yinshun, and made explicit reference to Yuichi Kajiyama and his theory of a strong presence of *Āgamas* in *Zhong lun*, which however did not include what Qiu defined as the 'extremist' conclusion proposed by Yinshun.⁵⁵

A different position was taken by the nun Ruyong 如永, who underlined the legacy of *Zhong lun* in the Mahāyāna literature and hence defined *Zhong lun* as neither restatement of *Āgamas* nor restatement of the Prajñāpāramitā, but gave the text an unique position in the development of Buddhism, between the *Āgama* and the Prajñāpāramitā.⁵⁶

Lan Jifu did agree that *Zhong lun* teachings were rooted into the *Āgamas*, but

⁵³ Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, pp.224-225; Chen Xueren (1999) 陳學仁, 'Luelun *Zhong lun* yu *Ahanjing* de guanxi' 略論中論與阿含經的關係, in *Xiangguang zhuangyan* 香光莊嚴, n.57, pp.78-84; Chen Xueren (2000) *Longshu pusa zhonglun babu bu sixiang tanjiu* 龍樹菩薩中論八不思想探究; Rushi, 'Taiwan fojiao jie xueshu yanjiu, Ahan xuefeng yu renjian fojiao zouxian zhi zonghe shengsi', in Rushi (2001) *Rushi fashi lunwenji*, pp.99-184; Ruyong 如永 (2002) 'Yinshun fashi de *Zhong lun* shi *Ahanjing* de tonglun zhi tantao' 印順法師的中論是阿含經的通論之探討, in *2001nian foxue lunwenji* 2001年佛學論文集, pp.57-85; Huang Ruikan 黃瑞凱 (2002) 'Xingong siziang yanjiu de yige mianxiang: panding "zhonglun shi ahanjing tonglun" de zonghe shengsi' 性空思想研究的一個面向：判定「《中論》是《阿含》通論」的綜合省思. Available on-line from: www.yinshun.org.tw/91thesis/91-03A.doc (10 January 2004).

⁵⁴ Wan Jinchuan (1998) *Zhongguan sixiang jianglu*, pp.56-59. Other Western scholars such as Richard Robinson and Christian Lindtner emphasised the Mahāyāna dimension of *Zhonglun*, with the former linking the scripture to the Prajñāpāramitā literature and the latter underlining the influence of *Lankavatara sūtra* on *Zhong lun*.

⁵⁵ Qiu Minjie (2000) *Yinshun daoshi de fojiao sixiang*, pp.190-204.

⁵⁶ Ruyong (2001), 'Yinshun fashi de "Zhonglun shi *Ahanjing* de tonglun"', pp.13-14.

he disagreed with Yinshun who, according to Lan Jifu, made *Zhong lun* as reaffirmation of the doctrine of Dependant Arising and Middle Way of the *Āgamas*. Lan Jifu argued that the direct influence of the Prajñāpāramitā on *Zhong lun* was much deeper than any inheritance from the *Āgamas*. To conclude, Lan Jifu proposed this other statement as more correct: ‘*Zhong lun* is the thorough argumentation of the Prajñāpāramitā, and the Prajñāpāramitā doctrine is linked directly to the *Āgamas* teachings.’⁵⁷ Following Lan Jifu, Yinshun’s emphasis could bring the readers to neglect the direct relations between Prajñāpāramitā and *Āgamas*, and to wrongly consider that *Zhong lun* surpassed the Prajñāpāramitā and inherited directly from the *Āgamas*.⁵⁸ Lan Jifu also adduced historical reasons to confute Yinshun’s doctrinal argument: (1) in terms of contents: *Zhong lun* and Prajñāpāramitā both centred on the teaching of *kong* 空 (emptiness), whereas *Āgamas* did not adopt *kong* as a key concept; (2) in terms of terminology: the *Āgamas* centred on *wu yin wuchang* 五陰無常 (‘impermanence of the five elements’), but rarely mentioned *kong*; (3) in terms of Nāgārjuna’s scholarship: *Da zhidu lun* is the evidence that Nāgārjuna was doing the ‘encompassing argumentation’ (*tong lun*) of the Prajñāpāramitā; from the contents of *Da zhidu lun* and the emphasis on the term *zhidu* 智度 (‘perfection of wisdom’), we hence should deduce Nāgārjuna’s stress on, and close connection with, the Prajñāpāramitā doctrine; (4) in terms of historical development of doctrine: the Mahāyāna quality of *Zhong lun* does not find correspondence in the *Āgamas*, but are all direct derivation from the Prajñāpāramitā, which had developed in a later period, so as the commentaries of Pingala, Bhāvaviveka and Asanga evidenced; (5) in terms of quotations: Nāgārjuna probably cited from the *Āgamas* and not from the Prajñāpāramitā to confute the wrong views of Abhidharma only for convenience, since at that time the Prajñāpāramitā was not well consolidated yet and Buddhists

⁵⁷ Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, pp.224-225.

⁵⁸ Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, p.226.

were more familiar with the *Āgamas*.⁵⁹

Chen Xueren 陳學仁 listed a few elements that could confute Yinshun's thesis: (1) concern for history: according to Nāgārjuna's biography, Nāgārjuna read the Mahāyāna scriptures and therefore centred his career on the Prajñāpāramitā. At the time of Nāgārjuna, non-Buddhist sects and Hīnayāna were predominant, hence Nāgārjuna compiled *Zhong lun* to spread the Mahāyāna teaching of emptiness with the purpose to correct the wrong views and make the Prajñāpāramitā prevailing; (2) pattern of literature: Yinshun's thesis is disputable for his own conception of the corpus of the *Āgama*. We have a Northern tradition and a Southern tradition of the *Āgama*, with the former only translated into Chinese. Yinshun read only the Northern tradition but took it as the corpus of the whole Early Buddhism. We should question if the Northern tradition is exhaustive of the doctrine of the entire Early Buddhism, and only afterwards discuss the link between *Zhong lun* and *Āgamas*.⁶⁰

Yu Heng 毓恆 moved another objection to Yinshun: the monk's emphasis on Mādhyamika and on the legacy of the *Āgamas* in *Zhong lun*, is read as the attempt to devaluate the Chinese 'traditional' Buddhism by attributing value mainly to the Early Indian Buddhism, which, Yu Heng argued, Yinshun identified with the *Āgamas*.⁶¹

Besides the literary and historical arguments used to confute Yinshun's effort to bridge *Zhong lun* and the *Āgamas* directly, some scholars contested merely Yinshun's adoption of the term 'tong lun.' In this respect, Chen Xueren suggested that *Zhong lun* could be considered as a *shen lun* 申論 ('extended argumentation') more than 'tong lun.'⁶² Differently, Huang Ruikai 黃瑞凱 proposed *zongjing lun* 宗經論

⁵⁹ Lan Jifu (1993) *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, pp.226-227.

⁶⁰ Chen Xueren (1999) 'Luelun zhonglun yu ahanjing de guanxi', in *Xiangguang zhuangyan*, n.57, pp.78-84; Chen Xueren (2000) *Longshu pusa zhonglun babu bu sixiang tanjiu*.

⁶¹ Yu Heng (2005) *Yinshun fashi de beihuai* 印順法師的悲哀, pp.33-40.

⁶² Chen Xueren (2000) *Longshu pusa zhonglun babu sixiang tanjiu*, p.14. According to Chen, *Zhong lun* debates the concept of emptiness which is a Mahāyāna doctrine that Prajñāpāramitā scriptures explain. However, links with the doctrine included in the *Āgama* are also evident. Chen concluded that *Zhong lun* cannot be defined as an encompassing treatise of *Āgama* but as an 'extended argumentation' of the meaning of *kong*.

(‘argumentation on sūtras’) as a better alternative to what Yinshun meant with *tong lun*.⁶³

I argue that Yinshun's thesis aims to go beyond the specific scripture *Zhong lun*, indeed it declares the *Āgamas* as doctrinal basis of the entire corpus of Nāgārjuna's literature, and, consequently, as the quality of the entire Early Mahāyāna. In this way, the mission to return to Early Indian Buddhism is accomplished and at the same time well integrated within the Mahāyāna that constitute the basis of Chinese (and East Asian) Buddhism. Yinshun summarises his project here below:

In sum, according to the *Āgamas*, the confutation of the different teachings and the revelation of the true teaching of Buddha is the position of *Zhong lun*. Of course, this does not mean that *Zhong lun* is not related to Mahāyāna at all, but it means that the doctrine of emptiness of all the dharmas expounded in *Zhong lun* is the true teaching of all the doctrines of Buddhadharma and so bridging the two vehicles; in the investigation of Mahāyāna, one should focus on the true teaching of Mahāyāna, and on this basis revealing the features of the Mahāyāna practice. Therefore Nāgārjuna, in conformity with the deep view of Mahāyāna, chose the teachings of *Āgamas* (and *Abhidharma*), and thus demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the *Āgamas* and Mahāyāna scriptures like the *Prajñāpāramitā*. As there is ‘thorough teaching’ in the Buddhadharma, then *Zhong lun* can be considered as the model of thorough treatise of Buddhadharma!⁶⁴

I would then read the criticism to Yinshun's position not as a mere debate on

⁶³ Huang Ruikan (2002) 'Xingong siziang yanjiu de yige mianxiang: panding “zhonglun shi ahanjing tonglun” de zonghe shengsi', pp.18. Huang recalled the distinction between 'treatises explanatory of sutras' (*shijing lun*) and 'treatises on the deep teachings of sutras' (*zongjing lun*), which Taixu, and then Yinshun, had adopted.

⁶⁴ Yinshun (1985) *Kong zhi tanjiu*, p.214.

the exegesis of a canonical text, but as a reaction against Yinshun's general understanding of Nāgārjuna, who was considered as the 'Patriarch of the Eight Schools' and the founder of Mahāyāna in East Asian Buddhism, and thus against Yinshun's conceptualisation of Mahāyāna itself too. Yinshun attempted a new definition of Mahāyāna through the formulation of *tong lun*, and this 'innovation' was neither shared nor easily accepted by mainstream Chinese Buddhism.

A few clarifications of the state of Buddhism in twentieth-century China is herein due.⁶⁵ I would divide the period into two main phases. While the first half of the century saw the re-assessment of Mahāyāna (especially through the intervention of Taixu and the movement of humanisation of Buddhism), which was aimed to unify and reinforce Chinese Buddhism as a whole, the last quarter of the century witnessed the reinforcement of Mahāyāna ideology in Taiwan. It is in the final decades of the century that Buddhism in Taiwan created its identity and produced a *Taiwanese* Buddhism, drawing clear terms of relations with not only Japanese Buddhism but also, and perhaps especially, Chinese (Mainland China) Buddhism.⁶⁶

The years between these two phases is a key period to understand the shift from one historical pattern and the other. In the late 1940s, with the arising of the Communist Party to power in China, Buddhist monks moved from China to Hong Kong, and eventually most of them fled to Taiwan. That period was signed by a new schism between 'conservatives' and 'reformers,' a schism that was dictated by a

⁶⁵ Besides the well-known works of Welch, Dongchu, Jones and Pittman, see also Fafang 法舫 (1937), 'Yijiusanliunian de zhongguo fojiao' 一九三六年的中國佛教, in *Haichao yin*, v.18, n.4, pp.13-23; 常惺 Changxing (1937) 'Xiandai zhongguo fojiao' 現代中國佛教, in *Haichao yin*, v.18, n.6, pp. 5-9; Taixu (1937) 'Tingjiang Xiandai zhongguo fojiao zhi hou' 聽講「現代中國佛教」之後, in *Haichao yin*, v.18, v.6, pp. 10-12.

⁶⁶ This construction of a Buddhist identity and the reinforcement of the religious sphere in Taiwan in the late twentieth-century was not merely an effect of the end of the martial law (1987), but also a consequence of the general change of policy of the political leadership on the island, who gradually pushed for the independence from, rather than the reconquest of Mainland China. Among the others, see Madsen, Richard (2007) *Democracy's Dharma*, pp.9-15, 152-156. See also Jones, Charles (1999) *Buddhism in Taiwan*.

different understanding and practice of the conceptualisation and identification of 'authority'. That those reformers might be called 'innovators' or 'modernist' is a further matter. The monk who is generally indicated as key-figure in the 'reforming' and 'modernisation' of Chinese Buddhism was Taixu. Taixu called for the humanisation of Buddhism, the reform of the teachings and the renewal of the monastic education, and named all these initiatives as part of the process of 'modernisation' of Chinese Buddhism. On the other hand, Taixu was also the monk who defended the Chineseness of Buddhism as the foundation of a new Buddhist China. Taixu promoted the study of Indian Buddhism, but never neglected the traditionally Chinese emphasis on the Tathāgata doctrine, on the Tiantai, Chan and Pure Land. According to Pittman, Taixu sought the 'creative recovery of the tradition.'⁶⁷ Put differently, he was 'traditional', 'innovator' and 'modern' at the same time. And the 'authority of the past' (to adopt He Ping's words) that he appealed to was the sinicised Buddhism.

Most of the monks who moved to Hong Kong and then to Taiwan were affiliated to Taixu, or better, they all aimed to recur to Chinese Buddhism as the 'authority' and to legitimate the basis of a new Buddhist China through that. Daoan's diary is plenty of correspondence between the Buddhist figures who could move to Taiwan and those who remained in China or Hong Kong, and evidences of the project common to all of them: 'the renaissance of Buddhism must start from the free China.'⁶⁸ And Taiwan was the 'free China.' The crucial role that Taiwan was playing at that time can explain the tension arisen within the Buddhist community on the island on issues such as nominating a 'leadership' within the group, and dealing with maintaining or manufacturing a 'tradition'. At that time we also begin reading the

⁶⁷ Pittman, Don (2001) *Toward a modern Chinese Buddhism*, pp.196-254.

⁶⁸ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v. 7, p.1023 [17 January 1953]: *Fojiao fuxing yao cong ziyou zhongguo zuoqi* 佛教復興要從自由中國作起

terms 'Taiwanese Buddhism', 'Mainland Buddhism' and 'Chinese Buddhism' as labels for distinct realities.⁶⁹ Surely, most of the monks who fled to Taiwan at that time were also affiliated to the KMT, who provided easy entrance to Taiwan. And whereas Buddhist monks were planning the restoration of a new Chinese Buddhism to bring back to Mainland China, KMT was planning the defeat of the Communist Party and the reconquest of Mainland China.

The death of Taixu signed the time for the election of a new leader. Yinshun had such a privileged position, Daoan himself annotated that the Taiwanese had hoped to have Yinshun in Taiwan and engaged in the mission of systematising Chinese Buddhism (1951),⁷⁰ and later on that Yinshun came to hold the top position among the monks who went to Taiwan from Mainland China (1957). Even for this fact it is worth mentioning the help provided by Li Zikuan 李子寬, who was a national legislator as well as a lay disciple of Taixu, in providing Yinshun with a VISA in Taiwan.⁷¹

Yinshun's way to deal with the 'authority of the past' differed from Taixu's. Yinshun's revaluation of Indian Buddhism, his stress on Early Buddhism, his identifying the superiority of Mahāyāna in embodying the core doctrine of Early Buddhism do not find correspondence in Taixu. It was the emphasis on the *Āgamas* that brought Yinshun the accusation of undermining Mahāyāna. The document *Jiaru mei you dacheng* 假如沒有大乘 ('If there were not Mahāyāna') that the monk Cihang (1893-1954) wrote in 1953 to criticise Yinshun well reflects the common

⁶⁹ Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.9, p.2556 [14 November 1964]

⁷⁰ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v. 6, p. 635 [27 June 1951].

⁷¹ Charles Jones in *Buddhism in Taiwan* (1999) analysed in details the relations between religion and state in Taiwan from 1660 to 1990, as well as providing a background of the situation in Mainland China at the time of Taixu.

Chinese 'traditional' atmosphere.⁷² According to Cihang, some from the Chinese Buddhists had become experts in defaming Mahāyāna. Quoting Cihang: 'Is it because once that Mahāyāna has been destroyed, Chinese Buddhism may arise again?'. 'If there were not Mahāyāna, there would not be the need to separate the Two Vehicles from the Bodhisattva [Vehicle] anymore.[...] If there were not Mahāyāna, Taixu would not be like you anymore. If there were not Mahāyāna, you should not continue editing the complete collection of Taixu. [...] If there were not Mahāyāna, the Zhengwen Publ. should not have commentaries [...] If there were not Mahāyāna, the *Zhong lun* that you highly esteem would become Hīnayāna. [...] If there were not Mahāyāna, then Nāgārjuna, Aryadeva, Asaṅga, Maitreya are all false.'⁷³

Similar to Taixu, Yinshun had to face opposition and criticism, and that criticism came from the conservative group. Similar to Taixu, Yinshun attempted to establish a new framework for the renaissance of Buddhism, but, differently than Taixu, Yinshun did not make a firm discrimination between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, indeed he proposed the integration of those bases as a new resolution.⁷⁴

Was Yinshun's construal of a new Mahāyāna also a sort of 'creative recovery of the tradition'? This depends on what is 'tradition' and what is the 'authority of the past' for Yinshun. Yinshun did emphasise Early Buddhism, but he also relied on Jizang's works for structuring and compiling his own commentary of *Zhong lun*. In other words, Yinshun proposed a revised Jizang as text base of his attempt to make the 'renaissance' of Mahāyāna. Jizang's legacy in Yinshun is another 'negotiation'

⁷² It is said that Cihang wrote the essay to start a written debate with Yinshun. Yanpei persuaded Cihang to pursue his scope, took Cihang's essay with him and showed it to Yinshun. As result, Cihang's *Jiaru mei you dacheng* was never published. However, Daoan wrote the Cihang-Yanpei episode in his diary, with the addition that Yanpei showed the essay to Daoan before leaving the Maitreya Inner Hall and returning to Xinzhu. Daoan could read the work and summarised its conclusion in his diary. So far, this is the only publication of Cihang's essay available.

⁷³ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi guiji*, v.7, pp.1280-1284 [24 December 1953].

⁷⁴ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.8 p.1833 [27 February 1957].

that Yinshun made in his career in order to make his ideology in line with both the 'pure' (Indian) Dharma and the sinification of Buddhism. Taixu had called for a reform of teachings, a programme that Yinshun said not to agree with.⁷⁵ However, his way to re-define Mahāyāna sounds like a reform on the level of doctrine.

In light of these considerations, Cihang's reaction assumes a historical significance. Now we can better understand Cihang's criticism to Yinshun for the formulation of the 'Mahāyāna threefold system,' the devaluation of the Yogācāra and Tathagata doctrines, and the presumed plan to become 'the new master' (*xin dashi* 新大師) and the only 'master' (*dashi* 大師) after the death of Taixu.⁷⁶

Questioning and revising the figure of Nāgārjuna, defying the Chineseness of Buddhism and undermining the core of Mahāyāna were all felt as a danger in the process of restructuring Chinese Buddhism. As a result, Yinshun was also defined as belonging to the 'sect of impartiality' (*duanjian pai* 斷見派), 'sect of opportunism and speculation' (*touji pai* 投機派) and the 'fence-sitter sect' (*qiqiang pai* 騎牆派).⁷⁷ Because of Yinshun and his supporters, there was the danger that 'the Buddhist who had come from Mainland China could leave a bad impression in Taiwan.'⁷⁸

Nevertheless Taixu and Yinshun have been both, but in different modalities, 'historians', who 'are engaged in invention of tradition, in as much as they contribute, consciously or not, to the creation, dismantling and restructuring of images of the past.'⁷⁹

The critique to Yinshun's conceptualisation of Mahāyāna and stress on Early Buddhism remained unchanged in the course of the time, but different were the

⁷⁵ Yinshun (1974) 'Youxin fahai liushinian', in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.7-8.

⁷⁶ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, p.1283 [24 December 1953].

⁷⁷ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, p.1284 [24 December 1953].

⁷⁸ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, p.1281 [24 December 1953].

⁷⁹ Hobsbawm, Eric, ed. (1983) *The Invention of Tradition*, p.13.

accusers. Since the end of the 1980s a number of figures, lay and monastics, attacked Yinshun's position that they could not accept for being a 'sabotage' in the core of the Chineseness of Buddhism. This shows a similar atmosphere in dissimilar historical periods. The only difference with the criticism dated to the 1950s is the fact that in late twentieth-century there was not just the concern for the reestablishment of Buddhism in Mainland China but also the programme to invent a Taiwanese Buddhism. The different tendencies of the Buddhist community thus reflect the shift in ideology of the political class and public opinion. Nevertheless, Yinshun's statement of a direct connection between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna was highly attacked.

Song Zelai 宋澤萊 understood Yinshun's argument as a modern misunderstanding of the core of Buddhism and especially as a betrayal of the spirit of Chinese Buddhism. In his article entitled *Yinshun foxue sixiang de weixianxing* 印順佛學思想的危險性 (The dangerous nature of Yinshun's thought), written in 1989, Song Zelai accused Yinshun to have misunderstood the teachings of Āgama, the Mādhyamika doctrine, and overall to have devalued the role of Nāgārjuna in the development of Mahāyāna. Again, the direct link from Āgama to *Zhonglun* is seen as in opposition to the Chinese reception (and perhaps also transformation) of Mahāyāna. As Song Zelai reasons, 'Āgama and *Zhong lun* are totally in opposition'. And:⁸⁰

Nāgārjuna was only one called "patriarch common to the eight schools", and is not related to Hīnayāna at all. *Zhong lun* has to be considered only as the dialectical argumentation of the Prajñāpāramitā, and does not have any relation with the Āgama. Then, Nāgārjuna himself did not think to make a thorough study of Himayana and Mahāyāna scriptures. Therefore, the Nāgārjuna and the Mādhyamika that are in

⁸⁰ Song Zelai (2002) *Bei beipan de fotuo – xuji* 被背叛的佛陀 – 續集, p.163.

Yinshun's mind are certainly not common.⁸¹

In the same year Song Zelai declared the necessity for Taiwanese Buddhism to be reformed and obtain a new identity, and remarked the importance of Mahāyāna as core of Taiwanese Buddhism. Yinshun's viewpoint was thus regarded as mistaken, a stage that should have been surpassed as soon as possible for the development of *Taiwanese Buddhism*.⁸² As Song Zelai argued:

'He [Yinshun] after his arrival in Taiwan was able to offend "all the Buddhist colleagues who had moved to Taiwan", but actually he had already caused "offence" before his arrival in Taiwan.'⁸³

The critique moved by the Modern Chan Society in the end of the 1980s should also be read in these terms. According to Wen Jinke 溫金柯, Yinshun was the figure who most emphasised Early Buddhism throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism. That Yinshun defined *Zhong lun* as the encompassing argumentation of the *Āgamas* is index of the attention that he devoted to Early Buddhism and his devaluation of the value of Chan and of the Chinese reception of the Pure Land school.⁸⁴ For Wen Jinke, such an emphasis was one of the factors that provoked the arising of the new generation of Taiwanese scholarship that valued the *Āgamas*.⁸⁵

Decoding the meaning of the term *tong lun*, especially of the first character *tong* becomes crucial for the understanding of Yinshun's theory and of the

⁸¹ Song Zelai (2002) *Bei beipan de fotuo – xiji*, p.145.

⁸² Song Zelai (2000) *Bei beipan de fotuo 被背叛的佛陀*, p.66.

⁸³ Song Zelai (2000) *Bei beipan de fotuo*, p.59.

⁸⁴ 'The MCS's viewpoints that are different from those of Master Yinshun can be summarised in 4 points: 1. Mādhyamika is not the only way of conceptual explanation for the ultimate truth; 2. To comment favorably on Chan, Vajrayana and Pure Land; 3. To affirm the spirit of practising urgently for enlightenment; 4. The practice of Bodhisattva with pure Dharma-Eye is the true meaning of the Mahāyāna Bodhisattva Way.' Available from www.whpq.org.

⁸⁵ Wen Jinke 溫金柯 (2001) *Jicheng yu Pipan 繼承與批判*, pp.349-354.

consequent debate arisen within the Buddhist community. Similarly to Huang Ruikan, I see the term *tong lun* closely related to the *tong jiao* 通教 ('encompassing teaching') coined by the Tiantai school. Differently than Huang Ruikan, I also argue that the way Yinshun adopted the concept of 'encompassing treatise' (*tong lun*) recalled the definition that he gave to the 'encompassing teaching' (*tongjiao*) in the *panjiao* that he had theorised. Moreover, the distance that Yinshun takes from Huayan and Tiantai in his *panjiao* provides an explanation of what is 'innovation' and what is 'tradition' in Yinshun's thought, and of 'the discursive representations' of those within his teachings.⁸⁶ Therefore consideration of Yinshun's *panjiao* is preliminary for the correct understanding of the significance that Yinshun imposed to the terms *tong lun* and *tong jiao*.

In 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao' (1989), while explaining his own *panjiao*, Yinshun expressed high appreciation for the term *tongjiao* coined by Zhiyi, being *tong* meaning 'comprehensive of the previous (three) basket teaching, and of the following distinct and perfect teaching'.⁸⁷ The term *tong jiao* means the teaching 'common' to the Three Vehicles if taken as *gong tong* 共通, and implies the transition from the Pre-Mahāyāna to the Late and Esoteric Mahāyāna (identified with the Tathagata garbha doctrine) if intended as *tong ru* 通入.

Yinshun's *panjiao* would deserve a longer discussion, which goes beyond the scope of this dissertation. What is essential here is to highlight what Yinshun meant for 'correct' Buddhism and *tong jiao*, and the dynamic encounter of those. As the

⁸⁶ Yinshun recalled his *panjiao* in the following words: (1942) *Yindu zhi Fo jiao*; (1968) *Shuo yiqie youbu weizhu de lunshu yu lunshi zhi yanjiu*; (1980) *Chuqi dasheng Fo jiao zhi qiyuan yu kaizhan*; (1970) *Yuanshi Fo jiao shengdian zhi jicheng*; (1971) *Fo zai renjian*; (1988) *Yindu Fo jiao sixiang shi*; (1960) *Cheng Fo zhi dao*; (1981) *Rulaizang zhi yanjiu*. Among his essays I list the following: (1941) 'Fa hai tan zhen', in *Huayu ji*, v.4, pp. 71-113; (1984) 'You xin Fa hai liushinian', in *Huayu ji*, v.5, 1985, pp. 1-60; (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in *Huayu ji*, v.4, pp.1-70. Among secondary sources on Yinshun's *panjiao*, see: Travagnin, Stefania (2001) 'Il "uovo "Buddhismo per l'umanita" a Taiwan', in *Cina*, v.29, pp.65-102.

⁸⁷ Ch: *tong qian zangjiao, tong hou bieyuan* 通前藏教，通後別圓, in (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in *Huayu ji*, v.4, p.12

tables below show, Yinshun's (and Tiantai) *tongjiao* referred to Early Mahāyāna, that in Yinshun's mind corresponds to the Mahāyāna system of emptiness, and bridge and embody the various stages of development of the Bodhisattva vehicle, passing from the Pre-Mahāyāna to the Mahāyāna tradition:

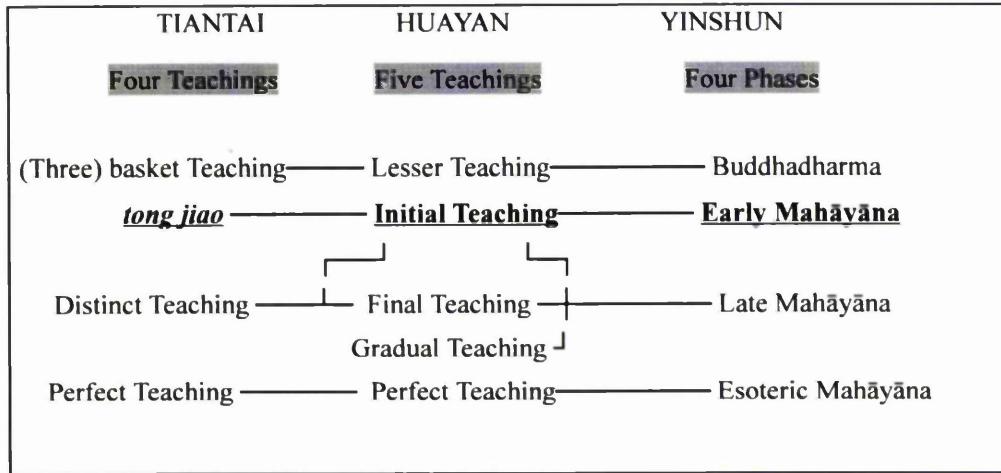
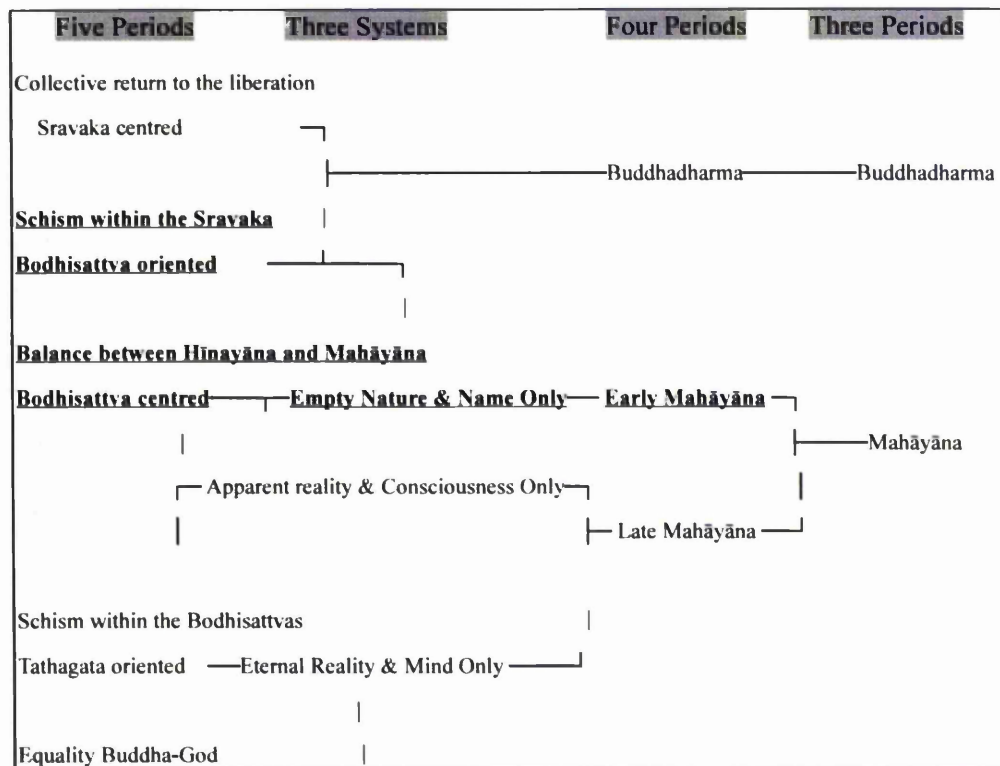


Table 18 – Chinese traditional (Tiantai and Huayan) *panjiao* and Yinshun's *panjiao*.⁸⁸



⁸⁸ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in *Hua yu ji*, v.4, p.10. English translation, bolding and underlining are mine.

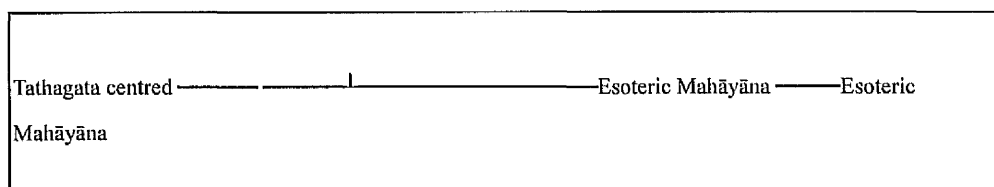


Table 19 – History of Indian Buddhism according to Yinshun⁸⁹

From a different perspective, Yinshun's emphasis on *tong jiao* is perfectly in line with his overall agenda. His stressing the importance of the *Āgamas* teachings, his quest for the return to the original 'pure' Buddhism and, at the same time, his appeal for following the Bodhisattva path, all these apparently oppositions found a solution through the adoption of *tongjiao*. Put differently, *tongjiao* is the 'skillful means' that allowed Yinshun to negotiate harmoniously the double tendency of his system of thought. Consequently, the definition of *Zhong lun*, which is the most important scripture of the Chinese (San-lun) Mādhyamika, as the restatement of the *Āgamas* teachings is the perfect realisation of a '*tong jiao* mentality.'

However, Yinshun's negotiation and his use of the *tong jiao* expedient received negative reactions from the mainstream Chinese Buddhists in Taiwan, so as did his adoption of the term *tong lun*. The classical Chinese view wants the 'superiority' of Mahāyāna based on its distance from the Pre-Mahāyāna (Hīnayāna), while, on the other hand, Yinshun with both *tong lun* and *tong jiao* based the 'superiority' of Mahāyāna on its being rooted into the Pre-Mahāyāna (Hīnayāna) and still embodying the doctrine of the latter. Yinshun's position thus created a tension within twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

In the light of what has been argued in this chapter, Yinshun was 'modern' in his philological approach to the scripture and textual hermeneutics, he was

⁸⁹ Yinshun (1989) 'Qili qiji zhi renjian fojiao', in *Hua yu ji*, v.4, p.9. English translation, bolding and underlining are mine.

‘traditional’ in maintaining Jizang’ legacy in his work, and was ‘innovative’ in his definition and use of the concept *tong jiao*. In other words, Yinshun intervened in the debate of his time with a new theory that had the effect to destabilise the Buddhist community.

His study on *Zhong lun* contributed to develop and renew the Mādhyamika scholarship in twentieth-century China, and the new role that he had given to the text and Mādhyamika in general undermined traditional Chinese Buddhism and formed the bases for a reconstruction of a ‘new’ Chinese Buddhism.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RE-CONSTRUCTION OF *DA ZHIDU LUN* 大智度論

Yinshun's research on *Da zhidu lun* signed a further contribution to the debate on authorship and translation of the scripture, providing new arguments on the doctrinal identity of the text and intervening in an international debate which involved confrontation with Western and Japanese scholars.

This chapter analyses the three main researches of Yinshun on *Da zhidu lun*: the new edition and re-construction of the text, his argumentation on its authorship and translation that involved a confutation of Lamotte's theories, and the influence of his study on the Post-Yinshun generation of scholars and practitioners. Aim of the chapter is questioning Yinshun's longterm study of this scripture in the context of constructing a set of authorities, and especially *the* authority of Nāgārjuna, for a new (Chinese) Mahāyāna.

VIII. 1 Yinshun's research on *Da zhidu lun*

This section explores Yinshun's notes on *Da zhidu lun*, his new critical edition of the scripture that was published in the late 1970s, and his position within the international debate on the authorship and translation of the text. Yinshun is thus investigated within the context of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, as well as in engagement with the internationally recognised modern authorities in the field of *Da zhidu lun* studies like Lamotte.

VIII. 1. 1 *Da zhidu lun biji* 大智度論筆記: the foundation of a new school?

Yinshun's notes is a corpus of 388 pages taken in different periods throughout

his life and collected into at least six different notebooks. The annotations, which were meant to be the basis for a book that at the end Yinshun did not complete, do not follow the structure of the scripture, with the result to make its decoding and analysis quite difficult.¹

History of the publication of the notes

In 1990 Yinshun donated his annotations to his disciple Houguan, who at that time was starting his study of *Da zhidu lun*.² The passing of the notes from Yinshun to Houguan was more than a donation but may be interpreted as a transmission, from teacher to student, and overall from master to disciple.

In 2004 the Yinshun Cultural Foundation made Yinshun's annotation available to the public in digital format. The CD-ROM included the scanning of the original pages and their transcription as a searchable full-text database. In 2006, in occasion of the first anniversary of Yinshun's death, the notes were republished again in a CD-ROM but with a slightly improved format, and enclosed to the CD of the Yinshun's corpus of writings.

The two editions followed the same cataloguing criteria, which I find needy of optimisation. The division into ten groups, named A to J, do not follow the chronology of compilation of the work, neither a distinction of the forms of analysis

¹The paper 'Yinshun daoshi *Da zhidu lun* biji zhi tese yu yingyong' 印順導師大智度論筆記之特色與應用 presented by Changci 長慈 at the conference *Yinshun daoshi yu ren pusa xing* 印順導師與人菩薩行 in 2006 provided detailed information on the history, interpretation and publication of Yinshun's notes.

² See Chapter Three for Houguan and his interest on *Da zhidu lun*.

nor the different kinds of notebooks that Yinshun used.³ This section will propose an alternative classification of the notes, with the aim to offer a more accurate reading of its contents. I will refer to the A-J categories only as I need to make reference to the published notes.

History of the compilation of the notes

The history of compilation of the notes is still unclear. First of all, the pages of the notebooks are not dated. Secondly, we find only a few mentions of the notes in Yinshun's writings, and those mentions facilitate the understanding of how and why more than of when he wrote those glosses.⁴

Despite the impossibility to read and define the notes in a diachronical perspective, which might have also provided us with the history of Yinshun's study

³ General information of the notebooks and the catalogue made by the Yinshun Cultural Foundation as follow: [A001-063]: *School Exercise Book*, printed by Zhonghua Press (*Zhonghua shuju* 中華書局), with both front and back cover, 34 sheets (16.3x20cm) and a total of 63 pages (plus 5 blank pages), Yinshun entitled the notebook as 'Explanatory charts' (Ch: *biao jie* 表解); [B001-032]: notebook without front or back cover but pretty similar to the *School Exercise Book*, 16 sheets and a total of 32 pages, no title for the group; [C001-030]: notebook without front or back cover but pretty similar to the *School Exercise Book*, 15 sheets and a total of 30 pages, no title for the group; [D001-032]: *Exercise Book* printed by the Wuchang Hulin Yilun Miaomiao wenju she 武昌胡林翼路妙妙文具社 notebook with, with both front and back cover, 16 sheets (16.3x20.5cm) and a total of 32 pages, Yinshun entitled the notebook as 'Catalogue' (Ch: *lei lu* 類錄); [E001-025], without front or back cover but pretty similar to the *School Exercise Book*, 14 sheets and a total of 25 pages (plus 3 blank pages); [F001-043], without front or back cover, 22 sheets (40x28cm) and a total of 43 pages; [G001-012]: the same format of the class F, 11 sheets and a total of 11 pages; [H001-028]: without front or back cover, two-hole loose-leaf paper, 28 sheets (18.9x26.8cm) and a total of 28 pages; [I001-080]: class included two kinds of paper: 1. [I001-076], notebook with the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Institute stamp, without front or back cover, a total of 76 pages (18x28.6cm); 2. [I077-080], without front or back cover but pretty similar to the *Exercise Book*, 2 sheets (16.3x20.5cm) and a total of 4 pages; [J001-044], without front or back cover but pretty similar to the *Exercise Book*, 28 sheets and a total of 44 pages (plus 12 blank pages).

⁴ Yinshun (1974) 'You xin fa hai liushi nian', in *Hua yu ji*, v.5, p.44: *Da zhidu lun* is the commentary of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* in 27 fascicles. The entire manuscript (sutra and sastra combined) consists of 100 fascicles. The commentary is an explanation based on the sutra, and therefore is different from any sectarian scripture. [...] I used to classify the contents into groups and then added collected record. For instance, I took 'emptiness' [*kong* 空] as general subject, and listed below all the passages in the sastra that discuss emptiness. Concepts such as true-mark [*shixiang* 實相], dharma-body [*fashen* 法身], pure land [*jingtū* 淨土], stages in the Bodhisattva practice [*pusa xingwei* 菩薩行位], different classes of Bodhisattva [*butong leixing de pusa* 不同類型的菩薩], and the cited scriptures also have been catalogued one by one (through grouping according to the meaning, not mere quotations); Yinshun (1974) 'You xin fa hai liushi nian', *Hua yu ji*, v.5, p.22-27: In 1952, early autumn, I moved from Hong Kong to Taiwan; in 1964, early summer, I entered a solitary retreat at Miaoyun Vihara, almost twelve years occurred between these two moments. In this period, the time I spent with my fellows in communitarian practice was not long, my progress and benefit were also very little. I just made a pretty serious study of *Da zhidu lun* and *Da piposha lun*, catalogued the contents of the scriptures under specific headings, and wrote some reference material.

of the text, we can still reconstruct the order of compilation through a few considerations.

First of all, we should consider the notebooks used by Yinshun, which were all produced in Mainland China and were not available in Taiwan. This fact may imply the Yinshun started his annotation before leaving the Mainland in 1949, since moving from one area to another was not an easy task, and it is difficult to believe that Yinshun carried with him a large amount of blank notebooks. Secondly, only two out of ten notebooks include the front and back cover, and both the preserved front covers report a title that Yinshun wrote to define the theme of the notes included, a discrimination in themes that then surely preceded his stay in Hong Kong and Taiwan. On the level of contents, I find similarities between the exegetic methods that Yinshun adopted to read *Da zhidu lun*, and the system of charts and indexes that are recurrent in the early writings of Yinshun.

On the other hand, a comparison between the notes and the passages from *Da zhidu lun* that Yinshun reported in his early works supports my thesis that Yinshun started but did not complete the annotation in the first half of the twentieth century. The monk Changci provided a parallel between Yinshun's notes and his *Zhongguan jin lun*, and finally demonstrated a number of discrepancies in the understanding of the doctrinal contents of the scripture.⁵ At least part of the annotations date after the publication date (1950) of *Zhongguan jin lun*, but Yinshun continued and developed his research on *Da zhidu lun* while in Hong Kong and later on in Taiwan.

In 'You xin fa hai liushi nian' Yinshun wrote to have done an in-depth investigation of *Da piposha lun* and *Da zhidu lun* in the first twelve years of his stay in Taiwan (1952-1964), and here we may have the confirmation of the thesis

⁵ Changci (2006) 'Yinshun daoshi *Da zhidu lun* biji zhi tese yu yingyong', pp.10-19.

advanced above.⁶

Features of the notes and alternative catalogue

Differently than the Yinshun Cultural Foundation, I will propose here a classification based on Yinshun's methods of textual analysis (mainly charts and listing) and the distinction in contents that he adopted.⁷ I propose a division of the notes into six groups:

1. The 'explanatory charts.' This is the usual tool adopted by Yinshun and recurrent in all his writings. The charts aim: (a) to schematise the contents of one fascicle or one section of the fascicle, (b) to report a main teaching as in relation to sub-teachings, focusing on the links between the many components. Some of the charts reveal Yinshun's concern for the Chinese reception and translation of doctrinal issues, especially the discrepancies between Kumarajiva's translation and Xuanzang's translation of the Prajñāpāramitā literature.
2. the 'index of doctrinal issues.' This category is threefold: (a) the 'name-only list', which is a mere list of concepts without reference to the text or related concepts ; (b) the 'single-level index', which includes the name of the subject and references to its recurrence throughout the text; (c) the 'composed multiple-level index', which includes the name of the subject of investigation, the list of

⁶ Yinshun (1974) 'Youxin fa hai liushinian', in *Huayu ji*, v.5, pp.20-50.

⁷ See for instance group F. A few example are reported below:

The Four Incommensurable Minds

[*si wuliang xin* 四無量心]CHART: F007INDEX: F001Liberation eightfold path

[*ba beishe* 八背舍]CHART: F007INDEX: F001

[*jiu xiang – shi xiang* 九想 – 十想]CHART: F007, F008INDEX: F003

[*ku xiang* 苦想]CHART: F010INDEX: F003

[*wuchang xiang, ku xiang, wuwo xiang* 無常想、苦想、無我想]CHART: F010INDEX: F003

[*famen fenbie* 法門分別]CHART: F008INDEX: F003

[*shi xiang – san dao* 十想 – 三道]CHART: F010INDEX: F003

[*duan xiang, li xiang, jin xiang* 斷想、離想、盡想]CHART: F010INDEX: F003

related issues or brief explanation and the relative references to the text. I would read these three groups in a diachronical perspective, with the first group representing the early phase of research, and the latter representing the completion of the study. One entire notebook (class J in the Fuyan catalogue) include concepts that are numerically identified.

3. the 'index of Buddhist parables.' *Da zhidu lun* is famous for the steady number of stories and parables present throughout the text, and aimed to illustrate some doctrinal concepts. This class is twofold: (a) 'title-only list', which is the mere list of story titles; (b) 'title-reference index', which also include where story or parable appears in the text.
4. the 'index of Buddhist scriptures.' This list was probably meant to identify which Buddhist schools and which scriptures were quoted in the texts. This class is threefold: (a) 'text-only list', which is the mention of only the title of the text; (b) 'text-reference index', which also includes where the quotations from those texts appear in *Da zhidu lun*; (c) 'quotation-reference index', which includes quotations from the scriptures. This analysis was helpful to Yinshun to unveil the presence of both Pre-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna texts in *Da zhidu lun*. The only Mādhyamika scripture included in the lists is *Zhong lun*. I pasted two lists on *Zhong lun* below as sample of the category examined here: the first list, which belongs to the class (b), includes only references to the texts, whereas the second index, which belongs to the class (c), also reports excerpts of the scripture. I would argue that the first list is representative of the preliminary stage of Yinshun's research, and the second scheme summarises its later and final completion. This assumption can support my theory of a diachronical order of the annotations, and a possible reconstruction of its history through the

analysis of its contents. For instance, Yinshun compiled the list of the passages from *Zhong lun* that he had found in *Da zhidu lun*, but in his *Zhongguan lun song jiangji* he did not make the vice versa cross-reference. This supports the thesis that those notes on *Zhong lun* were taken after the publication of *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*. I provide further details on the quotations in footnotes. Finally, the scheme below (Table 21) shows that Yinshun's analysis, as it appears in the notes, is far from the standard of precision that, for instance, Saigusa Mitsuyoshi proposed in his research.⁸

5. the 'index of places.' This category is twofold: (a) 'name-only list', which is the sole list of locations; (b) 'name-reference index', which also include where the place is mentioned in the text.

6. the 'index of figures.' This category is twofold: (a) 'name-only list', which is the sole list of figure; (b) 'name-reference index', which also include where that specific figure is mentioned in the text.

| |
|---------------------------------------------|
| 中論・一・19 ⁹ ；五・7；十九・2；二十五・15；三十八・9 |
|---------------------------------------------|

Table 20 – Yinshun's notes, page 1002

⁸ Saigusa Mitsuyoshi (1962) *Studien zum Mahaprajnaparamita(upadesa)sastra*.

⁹ Chinese and Arabic numeration often recur in Yinshun's notes: the Chinese number refers to the fascicle, while the Arabic number probably refers to the page.

中論：

「(偈)無常見有常」—¹⁰

「(摩訶衍義偈)語言盡竟(頌)¹¹，一切實一切非實(頌)」—¹²

「若有所不空(二偈)又不二安隱門(偈)：(論無)」—¹³

「有業亦有果，二偈(偈)」—¹⁴

「言語已息(偈)」五¹⁵

「法相偈」(首二頌)五¹⁶

「(偈)因緣生法」(三頌)十九¹⁷

「涅槃不異世間」十九¹⁸

「若信諸法空，三頌半(非中論所有，疑屬如理)」二十五¹⁹

「一切諸法實，二頌」三十八²⁰

Table 21 – Yinshun’s notes, page H018

¹⁰ *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. According to Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* (p.36 n2), this is a rewording of: 「於無常著常是則名顛倒空中無有常何處有常倒」 [T30 n1564: 31c10-11]

¹¹ *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte also did not make any reference to *Zhong lun*. Yinshun quoted the verses in *Cheng fo zhi dao* (p.364) as from *Da zhidu lun*, and in *Dasheng qixin lun jiangji* (p.70) as from *Zhong lun*.

¹² *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* also did not signal the reference to *Zhong lun*. I would argue that this is a rewording of: 「yiqie shi fei shi yi shi yi fei shi, fei shi fei fei shi, shi ming zhu fofa 一切實非實亦實亦非實,非實非非實是名諸佛法」 [T30 n.1564: 24a05-06].

¹³ *Da zhidu lun* explicitly says this is a quotation from *Zhong lun*. Yinshun added the postscript that *Zhong lun* does not include the verses. On the contrary, Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* (p.69 n1) found the concordance with T30 n1564: 18c.

¹⁴ *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* also did not signal the reference to *Zhong lun*, but only underlined that they embody the spirit of Mādhyamika. I would argue that this is a rewording of T30 n.1564: 22c.

¹⁵ *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* also did not signal the reference to *Zhong lun*.

¹⁶ *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. Yinshun probably meant the rewording of T30 n1564: 1b11-13.

¹⁷ *Da zhidu lun* does not say that these verses are from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* also did not signal the reference to *Zhong lun*, probably because pretty obvious. The 1st verse is from *guan sidi pin* 觀四諦品, T30 n1564: 33b11-12; the 2nd verse is from *guan youwu pin* 觀有無品, T30 n1564: 20b05-07; the 3rd verse is from *guan fa pin* 觀法品, T30 n1564: 24a03-04. The fascicle number 19 is wrongly reported by Yinshun: it is actually fascicle 12.

¹⁸ *Da zhidu lun* explicitly says this is a quotation from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* (p.1143 n1) signalled *guan niepan pin* 觀涅槃品, T30 n1564: 36a04-11.

¹⁹ *Da zhidu lun* explicitly says this is a quotation from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* identified the 1st verse as T30 n1564: 33a22-23 (p.1609 n3), the 2nd verse as T30 n1564: 34b18-19 (p.1610 n1), the 3rd verse as T30 n1564: 24a03-04 (p.1610 n2), while he did not identify the 4th verse (p.1610 n3). These are not precise quotations but rewording of the same contents, so as Yinshun pointed out in brackets.

²⁰ *Da zhidu lun* explicitly says this is a quotation from *Zhong lun*. Lamotte (1944) *Le Traite de la Grande Verte de Sagesse* did not translate this fascicle. The 1st verse is a rewording of *guan fa pin* 觀法品, T30 n1564: 24a05-06; the 2nd verse is a rewording of *guan niepan pin* 觀涅槃品, T30 n1564: 36a10-11.

Overall observations on the notes

Yinshun's notes probably functioned also as potential quotations for his future books: some mistakes in the quotations reported in his books recurred earlier on in the annotations as well.²¹

The screening of Yinshun's notes reveals that Yinshun analysed all the 100 fascicles of *Da zhidu lun*. Yinshun's reading and notes sometimes followed the order of the text, but sometimes followed the list of concepts. According to Yinshun's postscripts, we can affirm that he read fascicles 1 to 30, and 40 to 80 entirely.²² Charts and indexes relative to the first half of the text are more numerous, a fact that may indicate his familiarity with that section of the scripture.

Yinshun's notes show some distance from Lamotte's study of the text. Various discrepancies in punctuation, and therefore interpretation, are due to the different editions of the text that Lamotte and Yinshun used.²³ We can also make a comparison between Yinshun's work and Saigusa Mitsuyoshi's and Venkata Ramanan's publications. In his *Studien zum MahaPrajñāpāramitā(upadesa)sastra* (1962), Saigusa proposed indexes of doctrinal issues and lists of scriptures, showing an approach to the text apparently similar to the one adopted by Yinshun. Saigusa's appendix 'Vergleich und Analyse der Verse im *Mpps* und in den *Madhyamakakarikas*' (pp.211-225) provides the complete list of quotations from *Zhong lun*, which results longer and more comprehensive than Yinshun's scheme. Saigusa's work thus takes distance from Yinshun's in the precision of referencing and in the use of secondary sources. Venkata's *Nāgārjuna's philosophy as presented in the Maha-Prajñāpāramitā-sastra* (1975), a narrative aimed to elucidate the main

²¹ See the table for page H018, points two and five.

²² The complete reading of the fascicles 43 to 80 is certified by the postscript 'fascicle complete' (*juan qi* 卷訖).

²³ Lamotte relied on the Taishō Tripitaka, while Yinshun also used the *Longzang* Canon, and made cross-reference to the Song and Ming edition of the Tripitaka.

Mādhyamika teachings recurring in *Da zhidu lun* sided with Yinshun and mainstream Chinese Buddhism in the debate on authorship and translation of *Da zhidu lun*, as the next section of the chapter will discuss in detail.

In conclusion, Yinshun demonstrated doctrinal concern, philological interest, and showed attention to the scriptural and sectarian affiliation of *Da zhidu lun*. The effort in listing the Chinese transliteration of Sanskrit terms might have aimed to help its memorisation and/or to be part of a Chinese-Sanskrit glossary in progress.²⁴

The edition/editions of the text used for the notes

As I have discussed in Chapter One, Yinshun did not use the only Taishō edition of the Canon, but often relied on the *Longzang* especially in the 1930s.²⁵ Yinshun's work on *Da zhidu lun* reveals that he was familiar with the Song and Ming editions of the Chinese Canon. Some from the notes report passages that are not present in the Taishō but occur in the Jiaxing Ming edition of the Canon (*Jiaxing zang* 嘉興藏).²⁶ Then, Yinshun used to write at the end of almost each note one Chinese number and one Arabic number, the former indicating the fascicle that the note refers to, and the latter showing probably the page number. Those page numbers do not find correspondence with the Taishō page numbers, and this is a further support of the thesis that Yinshun did not use the Taishō edition of the text but the edition published by the Suzhou Scriptural Press (*Suzhou kejing chu* 蘇州刻經處),²⁷ which is based on the Jiaxing edition.²⁸

²⁴ Mīaoyun Vihāra some from Yinshun's draft papers and notes made available to the public: one of these pages is a Chinese-Sanskrit glossary.

²⁵ See Chapter One.

²⁶ Some examples are reported in Changci (2006) 'Yinshun daoshi *Da zhidu lun* biji zhi tese yu yingyong', pp.18-19.

²⁷ The Suzhou Scriptural Press was one of the five publishing centres founded by Zheng Xuechuan 鄭學川 (1826-1880), who later became a monk with the name Miaokong 妙空. The *Da zhidu lun* that Yinshun used was published in the 1882. Book dimension: 24.5x15cm; each sheet is divided into two pages; each page has 10 lines, and each line contains 20 characters. Each book included four fascicles, therefore the whole *Da zhidu lun* was a set of 25 volumes.

²⁸ That the Arabic number refers to the page numbers is an information divulged by Fuyan.

VIII. 1. 2 *Da zhidu lun biaodian ben* 大智度論標點本: A new edition of the text

In the end of the 1970s, Yinshun completed a new critical edition of *Da zhidu lun*, which has been the first and the only one published so far in the modern period. Yinshun contributed a precise punctuation, as well as an intervention (deletion, addition and change) on the characters in accordance with his study and understanding of the scripture.

This section aims to question why and how the scripture was re-edited, when and where this happened, and what effects did this initiative had on the revival of interest in Mādhyamika and generally on the Buddhist China, as well as on improving the circulation of the text in not the only China. These questions recall several circumstantial issues that this section aims to assess:

1. The relationship between Hong Kong Buddhism and Taiwanese Buddhism, and especially the role that the former played in the development of Buddhism in the Chinese region. The history of the edition can be considered as case-study of the cooperation between the two regions and the local Buddhist communities, and signed another page of the history of the relationship between Yinshun himself and Buddhism in Hong Kong, a history that started in 1949, before his arrival in Taiwan, and is still perpetuated even after his passing, thanks to quite a few disciples of him who remained active in Hong Kong.²⁹

2. Yinshun's edition as the beginning of a new historical pattern of textual study. Questioning the innovations that Yinshun's 'scientific' approach to the text

²⁹ The nun Huixing holds a special position among the disciples of Yinshun present in Hong Kong, Huixing, in cooperation with the Hong Kong Buddhist Association has organised the local conference on Yinshun and Buddhism for the Human Realm in 2004 and 2005. The periodical *Xianggang fojiao* 香港佛教 ('Hong Kong Buddhism'), official journal of the Hong Kong Buddhist Association, reported on Yinshun's death. This is not merely a link between Yinshun and Hong Kong, but shows an active cooperation between the two Buddhism areas Taiwan and Hong Kong.

brought to the Chinese Buddhist scholarship questions the issue of 'modernity' in the monastic scholasticism.

3. Yinshun's edition vis-à-vis Lamotte's *Traité*, mainly in the context of authorship and translation of the scripture.

4. The reception of the Chinese Buddhist Canon in the twentieth century. Yinshun's comparative approach to the canonical editions can be intended as part of the general discussion on the Chinese Buddhist Canon that opened lively debates within the Chinese Buddhist community.³⁰ The delicate relationship between 'tradition', 'modernity' and 'authority of the past' is involved herein.

These questions are all meant to demonstrate why Yinshun's textual edition was a crucial element of his programme of restatement of the Mādhyamika/San-lun school. From a different perspective, the several issues involved here demonstrate the relevance of Yinshun's work within the wider context of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

The reconstruction of the history of Yinshun's edition is difficult for the lack of relative information. However we have data on the modalities of production of the project, the identity of those who sponsored it financially, and the distinct features of the new edition.

The monk Miaolian 妙蓮, a Pure Land practitioner abbot of the Focijing Monastery (*Focijing si* 佛慈淨寺) in Hong Kong, commissioned and sponsored the initiative. The unprecedented project of an edition of the *Da zhidu lun* is index of the relevance of the text in twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism. Appointing Yinshun to

³⁰ See Chapter One for Yinshun's contribution to the debate, and Yinshun (tr. Wu Hui) (1964b) 'The Position of Chinese Tripitaka in World Buddhism', in *Haichao yin* 海潮音, v.45, n.1-2, pp. 35-37; Yinshun (tr. Wu Hui) (1964c) 'The Position of Chinese Tripitaka in World Buddhism', in *Haichao yin* 海潮音, v.45, n.3, pp. 25-27. See also: Zhang Mantao, ed. (1977) *Dazangjing yanjiu kebian* 大藏經研究彙編, vols. 1-2; Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.1 'Zhongguo dazangjing fanyi keyin shi' 中國大藏經翻譯刻印史; Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.2 'Zhongguo dazangjing ke shi hua' 中國大藏經刻印史話; Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1981) *Xinbian hanwen dazangjing mulu* 新編漢文大藏經目錄.

the edition of the text is index of the current popularity of Yinshun's research on the text, and of Yinshun as an authoritative voice in the Chinese Buddhist community.

According to Miaolian's postscript to the new edition, *Da zhidu lun* discusses 'the true mark of all the dharmas', in other words 'emptiness,' which is the foundational doctrine of Mahāyāna and the utmost teaching of Buddhism. The sponsorship of a new edition of *Da zhidu lun*, provided with modern punctuation and therefore easier to read, was seen by Miaolian as a duty for a member of the Sangha.³¹ Miaolian's postscript reveals the relevance of Nāgārjuna's teaching even in the recent time and Nāgārjuna's legacy in twentieth-century Mahāyāna, or vice versa, this may be sign of the 'plan' of the Chinese Buddhist community to strengthen the position of Nāgārjuna in twentieth-century Chinese Mahāyāna.

The accomplishment of the publication, its preface and final notes were published in November and December 1979 in the Taiwanese Buddhist Journal *Putishu* 菩提樹.³² According to *Puti shu*, the first publication, completed at the end of 1975, saw the printing of totally 3,300 sets, which were distributed to the following centres:

- (1) Hong Kong: 1000 sets; sent to universities and libraries, for students and practitioners.
- (2) Taiwan: 1300 sets; most of the copies were donated to libraries, Buddhist circles and monastic communities, while 130 sets were deposited at the Yinshun's Huiyi Lecture Hall, under the custody of the abbot Houzong 厚宗, and made available to the private citizens.
- (3) America-Canada: 700 sets; sent to the World Buddhist Centre in New York.

³¹ See Miaolian (1979) 'Da zhidu lun jin banji' 大智度論今版記, in *Putishu*, n.324, p.52.

³² Yinshun (1979) 'Da zhidu lun jiaoji' 大智度論校勘記, in *Putishu*, n.324, p.53; Editorial (1979) 'Zhongyin Da zhidu lun ji jiang shaing wen shi' 重印大智度論即將殺青問世, in *Putishu*, n.324, p.52

(4) North East Asia and Philippines: 200 sets; for the Buddhists of Japan, Korea and Philippines.

(5) Singapore: 100 sets; for Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.

The Taiwanese copies were sold out in a few days. In order to face the high demand of the publication, local Buddhist centres collected funding for providing the re-printing and thus continuing the distribution of the text on the island.³³ The last re-printing (1000 copies) of this edition of the *Da zhidu lun*, which was sponsored and accomplished by the Buddhist Cultural Foundation 佛陀教育基金會 (Taipei), is dated back to October 2005.

Yinshun's contribution to the work was acknowledged in the publication but not underlined, with the result that only a few Taiwanese who belong to Yinshun's entourage have been aware of Yinshun's intervention to the text. One re-print reported even Miaolian as editor of the text, and most of the people that I have interviewed during my fieldwork in 2005 also thought that the editor was the first publisher Miaolian.

What were the features of Yinshun's edition? How did it differ from the current and previous canonical editions? Yinshun intervened to the text in two main respects: punctuation and phrasing. Yinshun's punctuation and choice of words differed from the Taishō edition, and also from the previous Ming and Qing editions of text. Any addition, deletion and change of characters are result of a comparative analysis that Yinshun made among the different editions of the scripture. The resulted text reflects how Yinshun understood the text and its doctrinal contents; moreover, it is representative of an innovated form of textual critique. In appendix to the re-edited text, Yinshun include a short postscript on the collation and his main concerns, documents that are the starting points of contesting and questioning the supposed

³³ Editorial (1979) 'Da zhidu lun zhou shao seng duo' 大智度論粥少僧多, in *Putishu*, n.325, p.53.

'critical approach' that he used for the study of the scripture, and whether we are allowed to define his textual critique as 'scientific'. First of all, in his work Yinshun distinguished between one edition of the text that he called 'chief version' and was intended to be the closest to the 'original' version of the scripture, and other versions of the text that were considered as secondary copies to collate with the former, in the pursue of *the* 'correct' textual version. According to Yinshun a cross-analysis was required since the text went through changes along the history of its transmission. His conclusion was that any textual edition should have been result of a comparative analysis of the different versions of the scripture in exam, with the purpose of discovering whether the 'master copy' had been subject to any deduction, mistake, addition or wrong arrangement in characters, and with the caveat that 'any correction had to be made on the basis of the oldest edition.'³⁴ So as Yinshun emphasised the *Āgama*, declared that the 'superiority' of Mādhyamika is identified with its roots in the *Āgama*, argued the link between *Zhong lun* and the 'traditionally' defined Pre-Mahāyāna rather than the 'traditionally' defined Mahāyāna doctrines, in the same way his textual study of *Da zhidu lun* was guided by the conviction that the early edition should have been the most 'correct.'

For 'typesetting and printing convenience',³⁵ a reason that I would not consider 'scientific', Yinshun used the version printed by the Suzhou Scriptural Press as the 'primary' Buddhist Canon. And the 'master copy' of the Suzhou press version was the version printed in the Ming dynasty *Jiaxing zang* 嘉興藏 (1676).³⁶ The 'secondary' Buddhist Canons were the editions from the other three Ming Canons, and the editions from the Song, Yuan, Qing and the recent Taishō Canons.

³⁴ Yinshun (1979) 'Da zhidu lun jiaoji' 大智度論校勘記, in *Putishu*, n.324, p.53.

³⁵ Yinshun (1979) 'Da zhidu lun jiaoji', in *Putishu*, n.324, p.53.

³⁶ Lan Jifu (1993) 'Jiaxing zang yanjiu' 《嘉興藏》研究, in *Zhongguo fojiao fanlun*, pp.115-180.

The deconstructionist analysis of Yinshun's edition reveals a number of matters that he had to deal with during the comparative study of the different editions of the text:

(1) 'literary inconsistency.' Yinshun listed four cases: (a) characters that were interchangeable in the past but are dissimilar in meaning in the present;³⁷ (b) characters used to replace others that were not yet in use;³⁸ (c) addition of characters without effect on the meaning;³⁹ (d) different characters with the same semantic value.⁴⁰ Yinshun decided to correct the text only if necessary in order to avoid misunderstanding.

(2) 'sūtra-śāstra literary inconsistency.' Literary discrepancies between the 'new' vocabulary that Kumarajiva used for the translation of the Prajñāpāramitā sutra and the 'old' Buddhist terminology found in *Da zhidu lun*. According to Yinshun, the history of transmission of the text, and the still usual reliance on the 'old' terminology, explains the archaism in *Da zhidu lun*.⁴¹ Yinshun corrected the inconsistencies only if necessary to avoid misunderstanding.

(3) 'sūtra-śāstra order of arrangement.' Yinshun underlined that he referred to the old edition to correct the misplacements. And this confirms his tendency to rely on the 'oldest' as the 'correct.'

(4) 'punctuation.' Yinshun found the pauses result of the heavy punctuation in the old edition problematic for a fluent reading of the text. His changes in punctuation aimed to correct or specify uncertainties and lengthen the sentences for

³⁷ Ch: *gu tong jin bie* 古通今別. Yinshun mentioned the instance of *yi* 已 and *yi* 以.

³⁸ Ch: *jie jia zi* 借假字. Yinshun mentioned the case of *hui* 惠 used for *hui* 慧.

³⁹ Ch: *zi zengjuan er yi wu bie* 字增捐而義無別. Yinshun reported the case of *he yi* 何以 and *he yi gu* 何以故.

⁴⁰ Ch: *zi yi er yi xiangtong* 字異而義相同. Yinshun reported the case of *shijie* 世界 and *guotu* 國土.

⁴¹ Yinshun listed a few cases: *wu zhong* 五眾 and *wu yin* 五陰, *Shijiaven* 釋迦文 and *Shijiamouni* 釋迦牟尼, *ba jietuo* 八解脫 and *ba beishe* 八背捨.

facilitating the readership.⁴²

(5) 'suggested changes.' In certain cases, Yinshun did not dare to change the text of his 'master copy' but just suggested modifications. His suggestions did not come from any existent edition of the text, but embodied his own understanding of the doctrinal contents of the scripture. The potentially modifiable characters were marked with the symbol ※ and followed by the proposed replacements. These suggestions and the punctuation represent the very innovation and contribution of Yinshun to the textual critique, being the rest of his intervention a mere operation of polishing based on previous editions. Except for a few, most of the suggestions are not mentioned in the previous editions of the text.

Finally, we should consider some peculiar features of the edition of the Suzhou Publ. Press that Yinshun maintained in his work. First of all, Yinshun deleted the glosses (*jiaowei* 校譌), but maintained the phonetic explanations (*yinshi* 音釋), then, each page of Yinshun's edition has 11 lines, and 25 characters per line, a typesetting format similar to the old printing of the scripture.⁴³

In the general context of 'modern' Chinese Buddhism, Yinshun's new edition was received as provocative for the historical moment of its publication. After twenty years from the printing of the *Zhonghua dazangjing* 中華大藏經, but especially after the debates on the reasons and structural criteria at the basis of the creation of a new Chinese Buddhist Canon, Yinshun completed a very new and separate edition of one of the most important scriptures for the Chinese Mahāyāna and Chinese Buddhism in general. This fact demonstrates as the history of the Buddhist canon in China has not reached an end but is still developing, and secondly, that besides the creation of new

⁴² Yinshun (1979) 'Da zhidu lun jiaoji' 大智度論校勘記, in *Putishu*, n.324, p.54.

⁴³ *Jiaowei* 校譌 were glosses similar to the notes in the Taishō, while *yinshi* 音釋 were phonetic references. They both listed the literary discrepancies with other canonical edition, Usually, the 'secondary' editions used for comparison are the *Song zang* 宋藏, *Nan zang* 南藏 and *Bei zang* 北藏.

versions of the entire Canon we still have the sponsorship and printing of private editions of individual scriptures.

Yinshun's edition can be analysed in parallel to Lamotte's work, being the latter the author of a similar project and that can thus be defined as the Western counterpart of the scholar-monk.⁴⁴ Besides a discrepancy in background and religious affiliation, the main differences between the two authors are the sources they adopted and the aim of their work. Yinshun used the Song, Yuan, Ming, Qing and Taishō editions of the Canon, while Lamotte relied on the only Taishō. Yinshun aimed to produce a philological reconstruction of the correct Chinese version of the text, while Lamotte pursued a reconstruction of the hypothetical Sanskrit original text based on the Chinese Taishō version.

In the scheme below I question the modifications that Yinshun suggested through a comparison with Lamotte's *Traité* and the consequences that they might have on the general interpretation of the scripture:

| Taishō | Yinshun's suggestions for modification | Lamotte | Effect on the text |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T25, 57a27 | (1) 「杖」 is meant for 「仗」 (2) 「焉」 is meant for 「爲」 | (1) — (2) — | |
| T25, 76c25 | 「婆翅多」 should be changed in 「婆翅多」 | It seems that Lamotte used Pali name ⁴⁵ | 「婆翅多」 is the Chinese for the Skr. <i>Cāketa</i> ; 「婆難多」 is the Chinese for the Pali <i>Sāketa</i> . Yinshun's suggestion cannot be accepted. |
| T25, 87b16 | 「不譬喻知」 to be replaced with 「譬喻知」 for consistency with the following sentences. | no mention ⁴⁶ | Even if the term 'incomparable' is followed by a comparison, the deletion of the negation also deletes the literary consistency with the previous and sequent phrasing. |

⁴⁴Lamotte, Etienne (1944-1980): *Le Traité de la Grande Verté de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahaprajnaparamitasāstra)*, Tome I-V.

⁴⁵ Lamotte, *Le Traité*, pp.173-174: 'So tch'e to (Sāketa).' See also: Lamotte, *Le Traité*, p.174 n.1.

⁴⁶ Lamotte, *Le Traité*, p.251: 'D'après d'autres enfin, ce mérite est incommensurable (*aprameya*) et incomparable (*anupanna*).'

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T25, 100c17 | 「正願」 should be changed in 「心願」 | no mention ⁴⁷ | The change does not change the meaning of the sentence, but involves a different emphasis. |
| T25, 105c18 | 「以是故說諸法如化」 should be deleted | no comment ⁴⁸ | |
| T25, 122b18 | For consistency with the sastra: 「梵眾天」 to be replaced with 「梵世天」 | no comment ⁴⁹ | For consistency with the the text of the sastra, and for the 梵世天 being inclusive of 梵眾天, the suggestion seems logical and acceptable. |
| T25, 124a01 | For consistency with the previous section: 「眼耳無礙」 should be replaced with 「眼見無礙」. The changed in 「眼可無礙」 suggested by 石本 is rejected. | no comment ⁵⁰ | |
| T25, 146c20 * | (1) The <i>Jixing</i> , 宮本 and 石本 「獼猴復戴鳥」 should be replaced with the Korean, and then Taishō 「獼猴獼猴戴鳥」 | (1) = Taishō ⁵¹ | (1) Taishō version (and so the suggested change) correct |
| T25, 153a01 | (2) According to the contents: 「瞻」 may be replaced with 「膳」 | (2) Lamotte keeps 「瞻」 ⁵² | (2) Change disputable. |
| T25, 160c17-18 | The separation made by the chapter title 「釋初品中讚尸羅波羅蜜義」 is not suitable. It should be deleted, so as it was in the 宮本 and 石本. | no mention ⁵³ | |
| T25, 173c18 | The Taishō 「若乘山羊」 in <i>Jixing</i> was 「若乘山崖」. Yinshun proposed to follow the 石本 and change it with 「若垂山崖」. The 石本 alternative is in note in Taishō. | no comment in note, but the translation is from <i>shiben</i> and not from Taishō ⁵⁴ | |
| T25, 183c21 | 「復次」 should be deleted because not necessary | No note, but no transl. of 復次 either ⁵⁵ | |
| T25, 195b28 | 「十七聖行」 should be 「十六聖行」. Taishō reports the option in note as from the 宮本 and 石本. | Lamotte maintained 17 and did not mention the 宮本 | Mention of 「十七聖行」 only in this passage of <i>Da zhidu lun</i> , while 「十六聖行」 recurs in several scriptures. |

⁴⁷ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.352: 'le Bodhisattva a formé le grand serment de sauver tous les êtres.'

⁵⁰ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p. 527: 'L'œil (*caksus*) at l'oreille (*śrota*) du Buddha sont exempts d'obstacle (*āvarana*).'

⁴⁹ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.517: 梵眾天 as Brahmakāyika; (p.519): 梵世天 as Brahmāloka. Brahmāloka includes the three: (a) Brahmakāyika; (b) Brahmāpurohita; (c) Mahābrahmā.

⁴⁸ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.387: the whole passage [T25, 105c10-18] was not translated by Lamotte.

⁵¹ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.721: 'Un chasseur (*hubdhaka*), entré dans la forêt, vit l'éléphant portant le singe, et le singe portant l'oiseau.' [T25, 146c19-20]

⁵² Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.768: 'bon service (*upasthāna*).'

⁵³ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.839.

⁵⁴ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p. 943: 'ou sur un chemin de montagne'

⁵⁵ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p. 1013.

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| | | option ⁵⁶ | |
| T25, 201c11 | 「是斷見」should turn into「是斷知」,「非斷見」 should turn into 「非斷知」. | Lamotte did not translate 201b-c ⁵⁷ | Since the whole passage begins with 「以慧知」, the change of 「見」 into 「知」 may be correct. |
| T25, 257c19-20 | 「菩薩摩訶薩欲得道慧當習行般若波羅蜜」 should be deleted, so as in the 石本 edition. The option was included in the Taishō in note. | Lamotte held and translated the sentence ⁵⁸ | The sentence is present in the Sanskrit version of the sutra, therefore the omission of the sentence is not justified. |
| T25, 266a25 T25, 267c12 | (1) 「五恒河伽藍牟那」 to be replaced with 「五河：恒伽、藍牟那」 (2) 「如一本生經中說」: the presence of 「一」 is doubtful. | (1) Lamotte's translation respects Yinshun's version more than the one in the Taishō ⁵⁹ (2) not clear ⁶⁰ | |
| T25, 280a14 | 「大也」should be replaced with「天也」 | same change ⁶¹ | Change suggestion acceptable |
| T25, 331c04 | In accordance with the general meaning of the passage: 「不著三毒」 should be replaced with 「著三毒」 | — | The omission of 「不」 is grammatically correct. |
| T25, 357b29-c01 | (1) The whole passage「須菩提 譬如身和合故有。是亦不生不滅。但以世間名字故說」 does not fit the contents of the sutra and seems to be a repetition: to be deleted. | — | (1) This is indeed a repetition, but repetitions is one of the main features of <i>Da zhidu lun</i> . Is thus the omission justified? |
| T25, 362b21 | (2)「得是心」 to be replaced with 「菩提心」 | — | (2)「是心」 might have been used for「菩提心」, therefore I would suggest the replacement 「得菩提心」instead of the only「菩提心」. |
| T25, 381b18 | 「先滅憂喜故」to be changed with「先滅憂苦故」 | — | I personally see two possible changes: (a) 「斷苦樂故先滅憂喜故」; (b) 「斷喜樂故先滅憂苦故」 |

⁵⁶ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p. 1104: 'les dix-sept nobles pratiques.'

⁵⁷ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p. 1170 n6: 'Suit une longue énumération que je ne crois pas utile de traduire. Elle présente beaucoup d'analogies avec le Vibhanga pali, p.206.'

⁵⁸ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.1735: 'Le Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva qui veut obtenir la science des chemins doit s'efforcer à la perfection de sagesse.'

⁵⁹ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.1837: 'Les cinq fleuves, Heng-k'ie (Gangā), Lan-meou-na (Yamunā).'

⁶⁰ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.1853: 'Comme il est dit dans le *Pen-cheng king* (Jātakasūtra).'

⁶¹ Lamotte, *Le Traite*, p.1955: 'Sura, en langue des Ts'in, signifie: divinité'; (p.1955 n.1): 'Lire t'ian 天 au lieu de ta 大.'

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| T25, 391c12 | (1) 「自立」 is doubtful (2) According to the overall meaning 「答曰」 should be moved after 「亦不生邪疑」, otherwise it results as misplaced in the midst of a question. | — | |
| T25, 406a15 | <u>sūtra-śāstra wrong sequence</u> : the 2,308 characters quoted from the sutra should be anticipated, since the antecedency of the explanation, and attached to the previous quote from the sutra, with which is perfectly fused in terms of contents | — | |
| T25, 452a01-18 * | According to the Ming edition, the 109 characters 「五眾從因緣…佛亦如是」 [452a01-08] should be in this position, so as is in the Taishō. In the Yuan edition, these characters should be postponed. Yinshun accepted the Ming edition. | — | |
| T25, 463a02 | <u>sūtra-śāstra wrong sequence</u> : the 80 characters 「先已說…時滅去」 [463a02-07] are not part of the sutra but should be attached at the end of the previous sastra passage. | — | |
| T25, 528c12 | The part 「爾時…是念已」 [528c12-19] to be moved at the beginning of the next sastra section after 「釋曰」 [529b18] | — | |
| T25, 537b11 | 「必」 may be replaced with 「心」 | — | The change shows consistency with the previous and following phrasing. |
| T25, 542b24 | 「是魔相爾」 may be replaced with 「是魔法爾」 | — | The change has sense and makes the sentence more understandable |
| T25, 552c05 | 「白衣得道者多」 should be replaced with 「白衣得道者少」 | — | The change alters the meaning totally. |
| T25, 561b15 | 「上品未說」 should be replaced with 「上品未說」 | — | Change is correct. This probably was a mistake result of text transmission and hand copying. |
| T25, 622a02 | 「色即生色不可得」 should change into 「即色生色不可得」. | — | The change fits the later passage and is grammatically correct. |
| T25, 629c01-02 | In order to fit the sense of the section, 「尸羅」 should be changed with 「精進」. | — | Doubtful change, which does not find correspondence nor confirm in Saigusa or Ramanam. Secondly, the 「不受二乘」 issue is related to <i>sila</i> and not to <i>virya</i> in the rest of the fascicle. |
| T25, 647c10-11 | To fit the context of the following quote from the sutra and relative sastra, 「不學無爲般若波羅蜜」 should be subtracted of the 「不」. | — | |

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| T25, 669a14 | 「尸羅波羅蜜名為學」 should be turned into 「尸羅波羅蜜禪波羅蜜名為學」. | — | The change fits the rest of the discourse on 「學」, since the following sentence on <i>xue</i> includes both <i>sila</i> and <i>dhyana</i> |
| T25, 684a12 | 「彌帝隸力利菩薩」 should be replaced with 「彌帝隸尸利菩薩」 | — | |
| T25, 690c19 | 「令諸法非實非空」 may be replaced with 「今諸法非實非空」 | — | 「令」 recurs too often and in similar sentences to be replaced with the very different 「今」 |
| T25, 714a22-23 | 「論議者正可論其事不能測知是故不應戲論」 may lack the three characters 「其可論」 and actually be 「論議者正可論其可論其事不能測知是故不應戲論」 | — | Doubtful change since the overall meaning of the excerpt. |
| T25, 733b27-28 | 「又如行遣」 to be replaced with 「又如行遠」. Taishō, note, reports the option 「道」 for 「遣」(宮本) | — | The change proposed is disputable and fits the sentence of the metaphor. |
| T25, 755c20 | 「云何當得不離諸佛聞法親近佛不」: the second 「不」 to be deleted because grammatically not necessary. | — | |

Table 22 – Yinshun's edition and Lamotte's *Le Traite*

First of all, Yinshun analysed the entire scripture, while Lamotte's translation remained a partial and unfinished work. Yinshun was producing a study of a Chinese text for a Chinese readership and within his project of recreation of Chinese Buddhism, and this can explain his meticulous attention to Chinese linguistic details. Most of Yinshun's changes were aimed to make the text more understandable, trying to create consistency with the previous and following sections. On the other hand, Lamotte was not addressing a Chinese audience and conceived his translation as part of his study of Indian Buddhism. This can explain why Lamotte overlooked certain expressions that Yinshun questioned and contested, and sometimes even did not translate some sentences, even if they appeared in the Taishō Canon. Yinshun also aimed to recreate consistency with the other works attributed to Nāgārjuna, and this leads again to the main difference, in background and aim, between Lamotte and

Yinshun. The former was pursuing the study of Indian Buddhism, and trying to reconstruct a text belonging, according to him, to the Sarvastivada tradition (and not authored by Nāgārjuna), while the latter was pursuing a negotiation between the Indian and Chinese Buddhist traditions, and trying to reconstruct the authority of Nāgārjuna, and this was all conceived in his project of creating a new Chinese Buddhism for the twentieth-century China.

VIII. 2. Debate on Authorship and Translation

Da zhidu lun had a very deep influence on the more than one thousand year history of Chinese Buddhism [...] Only recently, I became aware of the views of foreign scholars on *Da zhidu lun* and the details of their arguments through the Chinese translations of their works published in local periodicals. They were able to break through language obstacles, and to investigate this important Mahāyāna treatise, of which the only version available is Chinese. The result of such an investigation took the shape of abundant material, which is evidence of a strong commitment. This all should be considered very rare. Even if I do not totally agree with their arguments, their works provided the right conditions for realising the writing that I have planned at the beginning of my career.⁶²

I would divide the debate on authorship and translation of *Da zhidu lun* into three historical periods, and list eight main viewpoints on the matters. Among the latter the first five are: (1) Pre-Modern Chinese Buddhist theory, according to which Nāgārjuna is the author of the treatise, probably because of the special status that Nāgārjuna, the ‘patriarch of the eight schools’, held in East Asian Buddhism; (2) Modern Western scholarship, including figures like Lamotte, Demieville, Conze, and

⁶² Yinshun (1993) *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, p.12.

also Lamotte's legacy in Japan, which included Japanese scholars like Katō Junshō 加藤純章.⁶³ They all strongly believe that *Da zhidu lun* cannot be totally or ever attributed to Nāgārjuna. (3) Position of negotiation, which is represented by the Japanese scholar Ryūsho Hikata 千瀉龍祥, who maintained a 'middle' position and argued a Nāgārjuna-Chinese 'joint authorship' of the text.⁶⁴

Western and Japanese scholarship of the field reached China, provoking different reactions and two main responses: (4) 'traditionalists', like Yinshun, responded repeating the classical Chinese position (Nāgārjuna's authorship) on this issue. Even if not Chinese, the Indian scholar Venkata Ramanan took the Chinese side and disagreed with Lamotte.⁶⁵ (5) 'modernists', like the lay scholar Yang Baiyi 楊白衣, based the own theory on modern critical textual study, which at that time was the Japanese-style methodology of philological critique, supported the non-Chinese opinion and argued that *Da zhidu lun* could not be authored by Nāgārjuna.⁶⁶

These five positions belong to the first two historical phases that I mentioned above, and which Lamotte's theory served as division-landmark of. For this reason I would argue that Lamotte, his theory and the hermeneutical process that had led him to his conclusion, signed a shift in twentieth-century Chinese and Japanese Buddhology.

The third and final historical phase is constituted by the 'post-Yinshun' period,

⁶³ Katō Junshō 加藤純章, Hongyin 宏音 tr. (1988) 'Da zhidu lun de shijie' 大智度論的世界, in *Diguan* 諦觀, v.52, pp.1-47. Katō was student of Lamotte.

⁶⁴ Ryūsho Hikata 千瀉龍祥 (1958) 'Dai chido ron no kyosha ni tsuite' 大智度論の著者について, *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究, v.7, n.1, pp.1-12. The same article was originally part of his English book *Suvikravikrami-Pariprccha Prajñāpāramitā-Sutra*, pp.lii-lxxv. The recent Chinese translation of the article by Lai Xianye 賴顯邦 was published in *Diguan* 諦觀, 1992, n.68, pp.85-121.

⁶⁵ Ramanan, Venkata K. (1975): *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy as presented in the Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-cāstra*, p.13: 'Professor Lamotte has advanced arguments to doubt Nāgārjuna's authorship of the *Sastra*. These arguments have not persuaded me and I believe that cogent arguments can be made in favour of the traditional view.'

⁶⁶ Yang Baiyi, 'Foxue yanjiu fa shuyao' 佛學研究法述要, in Zhang Mantao, ed. (1978) *Foxue yanjiu fangfa* 佛學研究方法, pp.22-23.

and included those who recognised Yinshun's thesis as another voice in the debate and engaged with Yinshun's position in the formulation of their own argument. I would list three positions: (6) 'pro-Yinshun' side, which is identified with Yinshun's descendants, and thus figures like the monk Houguan and the lay Buddhist Guo Zhongsheng; (7) 'pro-Lamotte' side, whose Katō Junshō is a representative; (8) new theory, like the conclusion advanced by Zhou Bokai 周伯戡, who argued that Sengrui was the author of the text, with the caveat that the authorship actually should be intended as 'a historical event rather than a personal identity'.⁶⁷

Yinshun's theory is important for its contents but especially for how he articulated his argument. The theoretical perspectives and scholarly critique that had constituted the analytical framework of Yinshun's response to the opposite positions signed an innovation within the Chinese monastic community.

VIII. 2. 1 Yinshun's response to the Western and Japanese Scholarship

The scholars, each of them in a different extent, have eventually confuted the common theory that enthroned Nāgārjuna as the author of the scripture. I believe that this position deserves further analysis. A careful investigation of the opinions advanced in their papers reveals that they usually failed to grasp the features of the scripture, and thus also failed to measure the translation process, with the result of wrong conclusions.⁶⁸

Yinshun's article '*Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*', published first of all in the journal *Dongfang zongjiao yanjiu* (1989), then as a separate book (1993) and finally, according to Yinshun's will, it was included into his very last collection of

⁶⁷ Chou, Po-kan (2004) 'The Problem of the Authorship of the *Mahaprajnaparamitopadesa*: A Re-examination', in *Taida lishi xuebao* 臺大歷史學報, n.34, pp.281-327.

⁶⁸ Yinshun (1993) *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, p.8.

essays, *Yongguang ji* (2004), that was published one week after his passing. That Yinshun included this piece into his last collection tells that it constitutes an important part of his theology. Besides the reasons for which it was important for the Chinese Buddhist community to claim Nāgārjuna's authorship has been explained already above, it is also worth asking *why* it was important for members of the monastic community to respond to the secular (and mostly Western and Japanese) scholarship in the field and with the toolkit of secular scholarship. This shift may be considered as a sign of 'modernity', if for modernity we mean a scholarly approach to the 'sacred' scriptures and a new delineation of scholasticism within monasticism.

Since Yinshun structured his thesis as a response to the theories of other scholars, I will organize this section by the figures involved and the doctrinal issues concerned. Yinshun engaged explicitly with Lamotte,⁶⁹ Junshō Katō,⁷⁰ Akira Hirakawa,⁷¹ and Ryūsho Hikata.⁷² The debate on authorship and translation developed around five main issues: (1) the language: translation and glosses; (2) the contents of the scriptures; (3) the association between *Da zhidu lun* and *Zhong lun*; (4) the association between *Da zhidu lun* and *Shi zhu piposha lun*; (5) the development of Nāgārjuna's thought. Another consideration is that most of the figures involved in the debate are usually identified as historians of Buddhism, which explain the concern on doctrinal history that they had claimed to pursue.

Yinshun questioned rather than confuting Hirakawa's doctrinal concerns.⁷³

Contrary to Yinshun, Hirakawa argued that *Shizhu piposha lun* and *Da zhidu lun*

⁶⁹ See especially the 'Introduction' of Tome III of *La traite*, pp.v-lv.

⁷⁰ Katō Junshō 加藤純章, Hongyin 宏音 tr. (1988) 'Da zhidu lun de shijie' 大智度論的世界, in *Diguan* 諦觀, v.52, pp.1-47.

⁷¹ Hirakawa, Akira 平川彰 (1956) 'Jūjūbībasharon no kyosha ni tsuite' 十住毗婆沙論の著者について, in *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究, v.5, n.2, pp. 176-181.

⁷² Ryūsho Hikata 千瀉龍祥 (1958) 'Dai chido ron no kyosha ni tsuite' 大智度論の著者について, in *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究, v.7, n.1, pp.1-12.

⁷³ Yinshun (1993) *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, pp.62-65, 96-102.

cannot be attributed to the same author, and he listed four main evidences in support of his argument. First of all, *Da zhidu lun* mentioned 'twelve divisions of the Buddhist Canon' (*shi'er bu jing* 十二部經)⁷⁴, while *Shizhu piposha lun* mentioned 'nine divisions of the Buddhist Canon' (*jiu bu jing* 九部經).⁷⁵ Yinshun responded arguing that both *Da zhidu lu* and *Shizhu piposha lun* are characterised by inner doctrinal inconsistency. For instance, *Da zhidu lun* mentioned the 'five paths' (*wu dao* 五道) as well as the 'six paths' (*liu dao* 六道).⁷⁶ In the same way, *Shizhu piposha lun* mentioned both the 'twelve divisions' and the 'nine divisions'.⁷⁷ According to Hirakawa, in *Da zhidu lun* the laity can take only a few from the five precepts (*wu jie* 五戒), but, according to *Shizhu piposha lun*, all the five precepts must be taken together. Also, *Da zhidu lun* reported that not eating after noon is not part of the eight precepts (*ba jie* 八戒), while, according to *Shizhu piposha lun*, this is the eighth precept. Yinshun responded arguing that such a disagreement between the two scriptures is effect of the inconsistency existing within the Sarvastivada tradition, and that Nagarjuna reported in his works. A fourth doctrinal inconsistency pointed out by Hirakawa concerns the 'ten virtues' (*shi shan* 十善), which are taken as monastic rules (*zongxiang jie* 總相戒) in *Da zhidu lun* and as rules common to the three vehicles (*sansheng jie* 三乘戒) in *Shizhu piposha lun*. Yinshun responded arguing that the concept of the 'ten virtues' as monastic rules is common to both the treatises, with the different emphasis due to the different sūtras the treatises were commenting, namely the *Prajñāpāramitā* for *Da zhidu lun*, and *Shizhu jing* 十住經 [T10 n286] for *Shizhu piposha lun*.

Discrepancies between Yinshun and Lamotte in modalities of approach to the

⁷⁴ See *Foguang dacidian*, p.344.

⁷⁵ See *Foguang dacidian*, p.145.

⁷⁶ See *Foguang dacidian*, p.1298.

⁷⁷ T26 n1521: 106a05.

text and aims of research have been mentioned in an early section of this chapter. I argue that the further disagreements in respect to doctrinal issues (such as the Sarvastivada pattern of the text), language matters (the presence of glosses in Qin 秦 dialect, and a difference in the style of writing between *Da zhidu lun* and *Zhong lun*), and generational overlapping (the quotations from the works by Nāgārjuna's disciples in *Da zhidu lun*) are result of Lamotte's and Yinshun's different understanding of the development of Buddhism in India.⁷⁸

Ryūsho Hikata, as I mentioned above, maintained an 'intermediate' position, neither asserting nor confuting Nāgārjuna's authorship of the scripture, but, different from Yinshun, attributing a partial more than complete authorship of the text to Nāgārjuna, and arguing Kumarajiva's possible additions to the text.⁷⁹ According to the Japanese scholars, the theory that Nāgārjuna's authorship is doubtful because of the lack of the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions is indefensible. The quotations from scriptures whose authors were Nāgārjuna's disciples were also acceptable, since most of them were contemporary of Nāgārjuna, and therefore that was not a valid reason to deny the at least partial authorship of Nāgārjuna.⁸⁰ In response to a Kumarajiva's intervention to the text, Yinshun argued that all those additions in Qin dialect had been made by the transcribers of the oral translation of Kumarajiva, not by Kumarajiva himself, and were provided for convenience of the Chinese readership, as the addition of the character *qin* 秦 could prove. Explanation of Sanskrit terms had been done for the same purpose. However, this addition could not corrupt

⁷⁸ A comparison between Lamotte's *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien* and Yinshun's *Yindu zhi fojiao* 印度之佛教 and *Yindu fojiao sixiang shi* 印度佛教思想史 provide further evidences in support of this thesis.

⁷⁹ Yinshun (1993) *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, pp.26-32, 104-111.

⁸⁰ Ryusho Hikata, 'On the author of 大智度論', in *Suvikrantavikrami-Pariprecha Prajñāpāramitā-Sutra*, pp.lii-lxxvi. In addition, similarly to Yinshun, Hikata argued that *Shi zhu piposha lun* was also authored by Nāgārjuna, and classified *Zhong lun* as theoretical scriptures and *Da zhidu lun* and *Shi zhu piposha lun* as scriptures of practical view.

Nāgārjuna's authorship of the doctrinal contents of the scripture.

VIII. 2. 2 Questioning Yinshun's argument

Sūtras are compiled in accordance with the present circumstances and this explains the differences among them. This explain why there are discrepancies among the śāstras in comment to the sūtras. However, those differences do not imply contradictions among those treatises, and surely cannot produce the wrong assumption that 'the author of the two treatises cannot be one' . Actually, if we are familiar with the Indian canon of śāstras we should not find strange that one author proposes different ideas in different works.⁸¹

Yinshun justified the Chinese interpolations of the text as normal effect of the Chinese reception of the scripture. From his point of view, the addition of characters, which he had considered as an usual effect of the process of oral translation and written transcription done by the traditional Chinese 'translation team', does not affect the discourse of the authorship.

As the quotation above says, Yinshun tended to define the different schools mentioned in the treatise in accordance with how they were depicted in the śāstra and not to see how the śāstra shaped their meaning, an approach that is disputable. I would argue that Yinshun's approach demonstrates the controversial nature of his theology, how he was modern in some respects but also traditional (and Chinese) in others.

⁸¹ Yinshun (1993) *Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi*, p.99

VIII. 3 Propaganda of the scripture

VIII. 3. 1 Reprinting and circulation of Yinshun's edition

The reception, circulation, use and perhaps 'exploitation' of Yinshun's notes and edition of *Da zhidu lun* within the contemporary Chinese Buddhist community reveals in what extent Yinshun's textual study influenced the state of the Mādhyamika scholarship in the late twentieth-century. We count many reprints of Yinshun's edition of the text in the past 25 years, so that the text is now available in all the Buddhist libraries in Taiwan and Hong Kong.⁸²

In the present time we do not find any alternative to Yinshun's research on *Da zhidu lun* within the modern Chinese Buddhist scholarship, therefore the 'reconstruction' of the scripture that Yinshun accomplished becomes scriptural basis for the 'new' San-lun, as well as a milestone for the present and future research on the text.

The research carried out in the Fuyan Buddhist Institute in the years 2004-2006 demonstrates how Yinshun's lineage attempted to highlight the Yinshunian dimension of *Da zhidu lun*. In fact, from September 2004 to June 2006, the students at Fuyan produced a new exegesis of the scripture based on Yinshun's edition of the text, also restructuring the scripture on the basis of Yinshun's notes. The continuous comparison between Yinshun's conclusions and Lamotte's arguments was meant to provide the work with a more international, and therefore 'critical', quality. This new critical edition has been printed by the institute in a still draft form.⁸³ A more official publication after further revision is expected shortly.

The generational shift from Yinshun to the post-Yinshun generation involved

⁸² So far I have not found any sign of diffusion of this edition in Mainland China.

⁸³ The draft edition is also available for consultation online from Fuyan website: www.fuyan.org.tw.

the passage from considering the Canon as the authority to taking Yinshun's oeuvre as the authority of the field and thus basis of a new (modern?) San-lun Canon. For instance, Yinshun's new edition of *Da zhidu lun* was based on the version printed by the Suzhou Scriptural Press (which was based on the *Jiaxing* Canon), with secondary reference to the Taishō. Differently, Fuyan edition used Yinshun's edition and is structured on Yinshun's notes, with secondary reference to the Taishō, as well as to Lamotte's work, with footnote reference to Buddhist literature (from the Āgama to the Mahāyāna corpus), and the international scholarship of the field.

We can then reckon a devaluation of the official Buddhist canons, which have been replaced by Yinshun's and Lamotte's modern exegesis and relegated to a secondary level. We are not facing any official canonisation of Yinshun's work, but we cannot neglect its implicit enshrinement either.

The process of diffusion of Yinshun's work involved important modifications that the work became subject to, sign of the beginning of a 'post-Yinshun epoch' and index of a precise generational paradigm. For instance, we should consider how Fuyan community itself intervened on the text: the new generation of scholar-monks trained in Xinzhu started questioning the corrections of the mistakes and wrong textual references that Yinshun made throughout the notes, challenging, in this way, the usual 'sacredness' of the respect for the teacher. This present edition includes the addition of the Taishō page and line, and quite a few from the changes that Yinshun had made to the text disappeared totally or are reported only in footnote as 'possible alternative'.

VIII. 3. 2 The *Diguan* Journal and a modern era of translation.

Yinshun's new doctrinal framework and literary edition of *Da zhidu lun* opened

a wider discourse on the state of the East Asian Buddhist scholarship at that time.

Chapter Two focused on the state of the Chinese Mādhyamika scholarship, which also included the modern Chinese translation of Mādhyamika scriptures from Tibetan or Sanskrit, whereas this section aims to portray the state of translation and consequent diffusion of non-Chinese (Japanese and Western) modern scholarship within the Chinese community.

In the second half of the twentieth century Chinese Buddhist scholarship came to terms with the non-Chinese study of Mādhyamika, and especially of *Da zhidu lun*. According to my research, Lamotte's *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse* was already available in Taiwan in the 1980s⁸⁴. The fact that the Japanese scholar Ryūsho Hikata was aware of the first two volumes of Lamotte's work in 1958 is sign of the general awareness in Japan of the Western scholarship on Mādhyamika. Moreover, the frequent and productive Dharma and Sangha exchanges between the two islands hypothesise that Lamotte arrived to Taiwan 'via' Japan.⁸⁵

If Japan played an important role in circulating Western scholarship within the Chinese community, we should also acknowledge the importance of the Chinese translation of those works and the efforts of the main institutions and figures who made the non-Chinese publications available to the Chinese readership.

In this way the first decades of the twentieth century was a key period for the Japanese translation of Tibetan Mādhyamika 'primary sources', the 1940s was the phase of the Chinese translations of Tibetan Mādhyamika 'primary sources', and the 1980s signed the beginning of the Chinese translations of non-Chinese Mādhyamika 'secondary literature'. Finally, the beginning of the twenty-first century marks the

⁸⁴ According to the library catalogue of the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, Lamotte's works arrived in the 1980s.

⁸⁵ See Travagnin, Stefania (2005) 'A Religious Bridge: Dharma and Sangha Exchanges between Taiwan and Japan in the Post-Colonial Period,' unpublished paper presented at *19th World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions*, March 2005, Tokyo.

‘Chinese synthesis’ of previous and international debate and the creation of a new exegesis as starting point of a re-newed and re-shaped San-lun.

Among the principal protagonists of this new ‘mission of translation’ I list the Buddhist journal *Diguan zazhi* 諦觀雜誌, which was founded in 1983 by a small Buddhist association and published mostly translations of Japanese and Western works on Mādhyamika, and the Taiwanese lay Buddhist Guo Zhongsheng 郭忠生, who has been the main translator of those Mādhyamika studies.⁸⁶ Another interesting consideration is that the will to know the non-Chinese ‘secondary literature’ on Mādhyamika came from the Buddhist community and was satisfied within the Buddhist community, and not among a more secular and academic environment.

Published by the Beiguang wenjiao jijinhui 悲廣文教基金會, at Lingshan monastery (*lingshan si* 靈山寺), *Diguan* was firstly published as a monthly (1983-1987), and later as a quarterly journal (1987-1996). The publication of the journal was interrupted in 1996 for financial reason, but in 1997 it was replaced by the quarterly *Zhengguan zazhi* 正觀雜誌, which did not focus on translation of only Mādhyamika related works, but published research articles on any aspect of Buddhism, Mādhyamika included. I would notice that all the exegetical papers on *Da zhidu lun* published on *Zhengguan zazhi* are authored by Houguan and Guo Zhongsheng.

Diguan Journal published the translation of eight parts from Lamotte’s *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse* (tome I and III), the translations were all signed by Guo Zhongsheng and published from 1990 to 1992.⁸⁷ The translation of other

⁸⁶ Guo Zhongsheng also collaborates with the Yinshun Cultural Foundation, and is the main examiner for the in process English translation of Yinshun’s corpus of literature.

⁸⁷ Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun zhi zuozhe jiqi fanyi (fanwen yi Da zhidu lun disan ce xuwen)*’ 《大智度論》之作者及其翻譯〔法文譯《大智度論》第三冊序文〕, *Diguan*, 1990, n.62, pp.97-179 [translation of: Lamotte, tome III, ‘Introduction’, pp.v-lv]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun chu pin. Diyi zhang. Da zhidu lun zhi yuanqi*’ 《大智度論》初品 - 第壹章 - 《大智度論》之緣起, *Diguan*, 1990, n.63, pp.1-118 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.3-55]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr. ‘*Da zhidu lun chu pin. Dier zhang. Shi “Ru shi wo wen yi shi”*’ 《大智度論》初品 - 第貳章 - 釋「如是我聞一時」, *Diguan*, 1991, n.64, pp.1-35 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.56-79]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da*

works of Lamotte, and the publication of even a short biography of his demonstrates that Lamotte was held in high esteem within the recent Chinese Buddhist scholarship.⁸⁸ This is one of the very first Western scholars who deserved serious attention within the Buddhist ‘insider’ community and not with the only purpose of defaming the ‘outsider’ scholarship.

From a different perspective, I see that the results of the mission of translation present some problematic issues that may question the value and validity of the whole project. For instance, Lamotte translated the Taishō version of the text, and we also know that he had no opportunity to confront that text with the Dunhuang version, and all the non-Taishō elements that he knew had come from the notes included in the Taishō.⁸⁹ Guo Zhongsheng for his translation of the *Traité* used both the Taishō and the Yinshun’s edition of the text too.⁹⁰ This fact demonstrates the Chinese attempt to confront Lamotte with Yinshun and, from a different perspective, the aim to put Yinshun’s and the Taishō’s edition side by side.

The new mission of translation was not limited to the sole Lamotte. *Diguan*

zhidu lun chu pin. Di san zhang. Shi zong shuo ru shi wo wen’ 《大智度論》初品 – 第參章 – 釋總說 如是我聞, *Diguan*, 1991, n.65, pp.31-89 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.80-114]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun* chu pin. Di si zhang. Shi poqiepo’ 《大智度論》初品 – 第肆章 – 釋婆伽婆, *Diguan*, 1991, n.66, pp.37-106 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.115-161]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun* chu pin. Diwu zhang. Shi zhu wangshecheng’ 《大智度論》初品 – 第伍章 – 釋住王舍城, *Diguan*, 1991, n.67, pp.81-143 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.162-197]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun* chu pin. Diliu zhang. Shi chu pin zhong gong mohe biqiu seng’ 《大智度論》初品 – 第陸章 – 釋初品中共摩訶比丘僧, *Diguan*, 1992, n.68, pp.37-84 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.198-231]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun* chu pin. Diqi zhang. Bie shi chu pin san zhong yi’ 《大智度論》初品 – 第柒章 – 別釋初品中三眾義, *Diguan*, 1992, n.69, pp.1-4 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.232-234]; Guo Zhongsheng, tr., ‘*Da zhidu lun* chu pin. Diba zhang. Shi chu pin zhong pusa’ 《大智度論》初品 – 第捌章 – 釋初品中菩薩, *Diguan*, 1992, n.69, pp.5-106 [translation of: Lamotte, tome I, pp.235-308].

⁸⁸ For the biography: ‘Etienne Lamotte (1903-1983) zhi shengping yu zuopin’ Etienne Lamotte (1903-1983) 之生平與作品, in *Diguan*, 1991, n.64, pp.145-162. Lamotte’s *L’Enseignement de Vimalakīrti* (Louvain: 1962) was translated by Guo Zhongsheng and published by the Diguan Press (*Diguan zazhi she* 諦觀雜誌社) in the 1991.

⁸⁹ Demieville, Paul (1950) ‘Review of E. Lamotte, *Le traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nagarjuna (Mahaprajnaparamitasāstra)*, Tome II, Louvain 1949’, in *Journal Asiatique*, pp.375-395.

⁹⁰ In the ‘notes of the translator’ that precede all the translations, Guo Zhongsheng reported to confront three editions: (1) Lamotte’s French version (*la ben* 拉本); (2) Taishō text (*dazheng* 大正); (3) Yinshun’s new edition (*yin ben* 印本).

also published the Chinese translation of works on Mādhyamika by scholars such as Richard Robinson,⁹¹ A. K. Warder,⁹² M. D. Eckel,⁹³ N. Katz,⁹⁴ R.F. Olson,⁹⁵ and K. V. Ramanan.⁹⁶

Besides the large amount of translation, *Diguan* published a special issue on

⁹¹ From (1978) *Early Mādhyamika in India and China*: the chapter 'The Lineage of the Old Three Treatise Sect' (pp.162-173) was translated by Darong 大容 with the title 'Gu sanlunzong de chuancheng' 古三論宗的傳承, and published in *Diguan*, n.5-6; the chapter 'Prajna has no knowing' (pp.212-221) was translated by Darong with the title '[Banruo wu zhi] zhu' [般若無知論] 註, and published in *Diguan*, n.7; the chapter 'Emptiness of the Non-absolute' (pp.222-226) was translated by Darong with the title 'Sengzhao [Buzhen kong lun]zhu' 僧肇[不真空論]註, and published in *Diguan*, n.8; the chapter 'Things do not shift' (pp.228-234) was translated by Darong with the title 'Sengzhao [Wu bubian lun] zhu' 僧肇[物不遷論]註, and published in *Diguan*, n.9; the chapter 'The Chief Ideas of the Mahāyāna: The Four Marks' (pp.181-183) was translated by Darong with the title 'Huiyuan ji Jiumaluoshi zhi *Dasheng da yi zhang – lun sixiang zhu*' 慧遠及鳩摩羅什之《大乘大義章-論四相》註, and published in *Diguan*, n.10, the chapter 'Seng-jui' (pp. 115-122) was translated by Darong with the title 'Shi Sengrui' 釋僧叡, and published in *Diguan*, n.11; the chapter 'The Chief Ideas of the Mahāyāna: Suchness, Dharma-nature, and Reality-limit' (pp. 184-186) was translated by Darong with the title 'Huiyuan ji Jiumaluoshi *Dasheng da yi zhang – lun ru, faxing, zhenji zhu*' 慧遠及鳩摩羅什《大乘大義章-論如、法性、真際》註, and published in *Diguan*, n.11; the chapter 'The Chief Ideas of the Mahāyāna: The Emptiness of Division into Parts' (pp. 191-195) was translated by Darong with the title 'Luoshi yu Huiyuan *Dasheng da yi zhang – lun fen pokong zhu*' 羅什與慧遠《大乘大義章-論分破空》註, and published in *Diguan*, n.13; the chapter 'The Chief Ideas of the Mahāyāna: Existence of Real Dharmas' (pp. 187-190) was translated by Tantung 曇昕 with the title 'Luoshi yu Huiyuan *Dasheng da yi zhang – lun shi fa you zhu*' 羅什與慧遠《大乘大義章-論實法有》註, and published in *Diguan*, n.13; the chapter 'Preface to the Twelve Topic Treatise' (pp. 209-209) was translated by Tantung 曇昕 with the title 'Sengrui [Shi'er men lun xu] zhu' 僧叡[十二門論序]註, and published in *Diguan*, n.14; the chapter 'Early Indian Mādhyamika' (pp. 21-70) was translated by Tantung 曇昕 with the title 'Yindu zaoqi zhongguan xuepai' 印度早期中觀學派, and published in *Diguan*, n.17-23; the chapter 'Preface to the Hundred Treatise' (pp. 210-211) was translated by Darong with the title 'Shi Sengzhao [Bailun xu] zhu' 釋僧肇[百論序]註, and published in *Diguan*, n.19; the chapter 'Preface to the Middle Treatise' (pp. 206-207) was translated by Darong with the title 'Shi Sengzhao [Zhonglun xu] zhu' 釋僧肇[中論序]註, and published in *Diguan*, n.20; the chapter 'Preface to the Abridged Great Perfection of Wisdom Treatise' (pp. 200-205) was translated by Darong with the title 'Shi Huiyuan [Da zhidu lun chao xu] zhu' 釋慧遠[大智度論抄序]註, and published in *Diguan*, n.22; the chapter 'Seng-chao' (pp. 123-155) was translated by Tantung with the title 'Shi Sengzhao' 釋僧肇, and published in *Diguan*, n.25-29; the chapter 'Questions and methods' (pp.3-20) was translated by Tantung with the title 'Yindu yu Zhongguo zaoqi zhongguan sixiang' 印度與中國早期中觀思想, and published in *Diguan*, n.30-32; the chapter 'Hui-yuan' (pp. 96-114) was translated by Tantung with the title 'Shi Huiyuan' 釋慧遠, and published in *Diguan*, n.47.

⁹² Warder, A. K. (1973) 'Is Nāgārjuna a Mahāyānist?', in Sprung, ed. *Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta*, was translated by Ying Guyue 映古月 with the title 'Longshu shi dasheng sixiangzhe ma?' 龍樹是大乘思想者嗎?, and published in *Diguan*, n.12.

⁹³ Eckel, Malcolm D. (1978) 'Bhavaviveka and the early Mādhyamika theories of language', in *Philosophy East and West*, v.28, n.3, pp.323-337, was translated by Darong with the title 'Qingbian yu zaoqi zhongguan xuepai zhi yuyan lilun' 清辨與早期中觀學派之語言理論, and published in *Diguan*, n.24.

⁹⁴ Katz, N. (1976) 'An appraisal of the Svatantrika-Prasangika debates', in *Philosophy East and West*, v.26, n.3, pp.253-267, was translated by Fashi 法施 with the title 'Zhongguan yingchengpai yu zixupai

Nāgārjuna and Mādhyamika, to prove the main intent of the journal.⁹⁷

From the evidences reported above I can conclude that the publishing market showed a firm attention not only on Mādhyamika text, but also on the non-Chinese secondary literature of this school. From a historical perspective, I notice that the Mādhyamika-centred development of the publication market examined above occurred after Yinshun had published his works on Mādhyamika but before the publishing of his notes on *Da zhidu lun*. Besides the fact that Fuyan decided to make the notes available to the public on the 100th birthday of the monk (2004), as a way to honour the master and to underline the importance of *Da zhidu lun* in Yinshun's theology, such publication might have been the logical outcome of a general atmosphere.

History and state of scholarship do not find correspondence necessarily with the realm of popular practice. On the level of scholarship, we do have a revival of interest on Mādhyamika and development (in terms of contents and methodology), but this revival did not seem to affect the wider group of Buddhist practitioners. We can see then a clear separation between scholasticism and popular belief in the world of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism.

zhenglun pingyi' 中觀應成派與自續派者爭論評議, and published in *Diguan*, n.24.

⁹⁵ Olson, R.F. (1974) 'Candrakirti's critique of Vijnanavada', in *Philosophy East and West*, v.24, n.4, pp.405-441, was translated by Fayu 法雨 with the title 'Yuecheng dui weishizong de piping' 月稱對唯識宗的批評, and published in *Diguan*, n.32.

⁹⁶ Ramanan, K. V. (1966) 'Life and work of Nāgārjuna', in *Nāgārjuna's philosophy as presented in the Maha-Prajñāpāramitā-sastra*, pp.25-37, was translated by Tantung with the title 'Longshu pusa zhi shengping yu zhuzuo shuyao' 龍樹菩薩之生平與著作述要, and published in *Diguan*, n.50.

⁹⁷ See *Diguan*, 1984, n.12.: it also includes Yinshun's 'Zhong lun de tese.'

CHAPTER NINE

RE-ASSESSMENT OF *SHIZHU PIPOSHA LUN* 十住毗婆沙論

Those with a timid and inferior fundamental nature who want to become Buddhas but do not want to practice the great deeds and difficult tasks of Bodhisattvas wish to have a fast, easy, and simple path. This is not in tune with the vows or the Bodhisattva deeds, however, because seeking to accomplish the Buddha Way definitely requires the practice of the great bodhisattva deeds. This is similar to the discourse by Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva on the ‘Chapter on Easy Practice’ in the *Daśa-bhūmika-vibhāṣā-śāstra*.¹

I have argued that Yinshun engaged in the revival (and reshaping) of Mādhyamika, based on the assumption that Mādhyamika, which is intended as Yinshun's hermeneutics of Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika, was the *tong jiao* in the *panjiao* that he had theorised, and thus corresponding to the ‘correct’ Buddhism.

Yinshun's adoption of the term *tong jiao* affected the micro-reality of Mādhyamika as well as the macro-context of Mahāyāna, being Yinshun's exegesis of Mādhyamika instrumental to the creation of a ‘new’ Mahāyāna. Thus Yinshun used ‘Mādhyamika criteria’ to intervene into the different Mahāyāna schools popular in China, including the Pure Land School.²

This chapter will argue Yinshun's intervention in the Pure Land practice, and will demonstrate that Yinshun's hermeneutics was part of a general discourse on Pure Land that had developed in twentieth-century China.³ Yinshun's own contribution to

¹ Yin-shun, Wing H. Yeung tr. (1998) *The Way to Buddhahood*, pp.245-246.

² For a thorough investigation of Yinshun's understanding of Pure Land, see: Travagnin, Stefania (2004) ‘Master Yinshun and the Pure Land Thought’, in *Acta Orientalia*, v.57, n.3, pp.271-328.

³ Essential bibliography on the development of Pure Land school starting from the Qing dynasty: Welch, Holmes (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950*, pp.89-104; Welch, Holmes (1968) *Buddhism Under Mao*, pp.288-291 (Marxist Pure Land); Chen Bin and Deng Zimei, *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao 二十世紀中國佛教*, pp.365-400; Deng Zimei, *Chuantong fojiao yu zhongguo*

this discourse is identified in the doctrinal exegesis of one particular scripture: *Shi zhu piposha lun* [T26 n1521].

In line with the previous two chapters, I will analyse Yinshun's study on *Shi zhu piposha lun* from three perspectives. First of all, Yinshun's study on *Shi zhu piposha lun* will be contextualised in a precise historical period and religious atmosphere. It will thus be clear that Yinshun's restatement of the 'path of easy practice' (*yi xingdao* 易行道) and revaluation of the 'path of difficult practice' (*nan xingdao* 難行道) have assumed a precise meaning in consideration of the local cultural history, especially with the contemporary attempt to stimulate the engagement of religions within the society, and the phenomenon of 'engaged Buddhism' which became better known with the name *renjian fojiao*. Secondly, his re-assessment of the scripture, and his thought-provoking perspective on the Mādhyamika foundations of the 'pure' practice of the Pure Land school provoked tension within the sphere of traditional Pure Land practitioners.⁴ If Yinshun's restatement of *Zhong lun* was subject to criticism, his revision of Pure Land practice received an even worse reaction, such as the burn of his books on the subject.⁵ Also in this context Yinshun was criticised to have betrayed the spirit of Chinese Pure Land, and thus to have undermined the Chineseness of Chinese Buddhism.

His emphasis on a Nāgārjunian understanding of Pure Land practice implied the identification of Nāgārjunian Early Mahāyāna as the authority of the school, a

jindaihua 傳統佛教與中國近代化, pp.59, 169, 249, 256; Jiang Canteng (1998) *Renjian jingtu de zhuxun – zhongguo jinshi fojiao sixiang yanjiu* 人間淨土的追尋—中國近世佛教思想研究; Kan Zhengzong (1999) *Taiwan fojiao yibainian* 台灣佛教一百年, pp.221-240.

⁴ For an analysis of Yinshun's attempt to demythologise the Pure Land school and his aim to purify conception and practice of the school refer to: Yang Huinan (1988) 'Taiwan fojiao de chushi xingge yu paixi fenzheng' 台灣佛教的出世性格與派系紛爭. In *Dangdai*, n.30, pp.75-87; Yang Huinan (1988) 'Taiwan fojiao de chushi xingge yu paixi fenzheng' 台灣佛教的出世性格與派系紛爭. In *Dangdai*, n.31, pp.68-81; Lin Zhenguang (2002) 'Buteman yu Yinshun de jieshenhua qianshixue'. In *Dangdai*, n.184, pp.48-67.

⁵ Yang Huinan (1991) *Dangdai fojiao sixiang zhanwang* 當代佛教思想張望, p.23; Jiang Canteng (1988) 'Taiwan dangdai jingtu sixiang de xindongxiang' 台灣當代淨土思想的新動向. In *Dongfang zongjiao yanjiu* 東方宗教研究, v.2, n.9, pp.163-184.

discourse which sounds pretty similar to the one done for *Zhong lun*. From a different perspective, Yinshun's thesis might have been the attempt to construct a new Pure Land doctrine, distinct from the Mainland Chinese and Japanese traditions, and hence could constitute a further aspect of the identity of Taiwanese Buddhism. Finally, to borrow He Ping's words, Yinshun's research on *Shizhu piposha lun* evokes the discourse of Yinshun's relation with the 'tradition', his managing the 'authority of the past' and his own imposing 'modernity' on Pure Land practice.⁶

Why such an emphasis on Pure Land School? This question involves consideration of two elements: the position of the school within Chinese mainstream Buddhism and its embodying the Chineseness of Buddhism, and the history of the school in twentieth-century China. As happened to the other Buddhist schools in China, the interpretation of the essence of Pure Land was adapted to the historical circumstances and the needs of (not merely) religious figures. For instance, the construction of the concept of the 'Marxist Pure Land' and the transformation of Mao and his regime into Amitabha and the Western Pure Land are only two from the many examples.⁷ Kenneth Ch'en also estimated the relevance of the Pure Land school in early twentieth-century China:

Of the four million or so lay devotees of Buddhism in China during the 1930's, it is estimated that sixty to seventy per cent considered themselves to be followers of the Pure Land School. This was the harvest reaped by the reforms of Yinkuang.⁸

⁶ For the issue of modernity in Pure Land, see Jones, Charles B. (2003) 'Transitions in the Practice and Defense of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism'. In Heine, Steven and Charles S. Prebish, eds., *Buddhism in the Modern World*, pp.125-142.

⁷ Welch, Holmes (1967) *Buddhism under Mao*, pp.288-289. Monks like Taixu used to compare the Western Pure Land to the Marxist classless society, so as Yinshun recalled in (1970) *Jingtu yu Chan* 淨土與禪, pp.13. On the topic see also: Charles, Jones (2000) 'Buddhism and Marxism in Taiwan: Lin Qiuwu's Religious Socialism and Its Legacy in Modern Times', in *Global Buddhism*, n.1, available from <http://www.globalbuddhism.org/1/jones001.html> (date of access: 20 August 2007)

⁸ Ch'en, Kenneth K.S. (1964) *Buddhism in China. A Historical Survey*, p.460.

Daoan's diary mentioned series of lectures on Pure Land doctrine and practice in the late 1950s and 1960s in Taiwan, which demonstrates the importance of Pure Land school in Taiwan as well.⁹

Yinshun's Mādhyamika interference in the foundations of the Pure Land School addressed two related themes: the legitimacy of syncretism, and the tension between the textual Dharma and the popular Dharma, between written and practiced Buddhism. Surely, Yinshun's intervention in the Pure Land practice is in line with the reformist and 'modern' Chinese Buddhists at that time. In the late Qing and early Republican China we find open a debate on two ways of practice: an "easy" practice, which relied on Buddha's strength and became identified mostly with the Pure Land devotionalism, and a "difficult" path, which involved self-reliance and became associated with the Chan practice. Taixu aimed to oppose the 'traditional' Pure Land devotionalism through his process of humanisation and reform of the Buddhist community and practice, and meant to encourage a more engaged form of cultivation.¹⁰ Similar to Taixu, Yinshun emphasised a difficult practice and undervalued the Pure Land devotionalism followed, for instance, by the Pure Land master Yinguang 印光 (1861-1940).¹¹ Different from Taixu, Yinshun did not repeat the classical Chinese discrimination between the 'easy' Pure Land path and the

⁹ Daoan (1981) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.6-7.

¹⁰ For Taixu's vision of Pure Land and *renjian* Pure Land, see: Taixu (1931) 'Zao renjian jingtu', in *Haichao yin*, v. 12, n.1; Taixu (1930) 'Zhongguo jingtuzong zhi yanbian' 中國淨土宗之演變, in Zhang Mantao, ed. (1979) *Jingtuzong shi lun*, pp.137-166; Guo Peng (1978) *Taixu dashi sixiang yanjiu*, pp. 496-506; Jiang Canteng (1989) *Renjian jingtu de xunzhuo*, pp.177-186.

¹¹ Yinguang (1983) *Yinguang fashi wenshao quanji* 印光法師文鈔全集, 2 v.; Jianzheng 見正 (1998) *Yinguang dashi de shengping yu sixiang* 印光大師的生平與思想; Jiang Canteng (1989) *Taiwan dangdai jingtu sixiang de xindonghua*, pp. 165-176.

'difficult' Chan path.¹² Taixu manifested the Chineseness of his teachings even in the distinction easy-difficult path, whereas Yinshun moved the attention to the Indian core of the doctrine.

Yinshun's intervention in the Pure Land School evoked social, historical and doctrinal implications. On the social level, Yinshun attempted to change the public common opinion on Pure Land practitioners, and worked on the demythologising of Amitabha Buddha and the Western Pure Land. On the historical level, the practice but especially the image of Pure Land was exploited and interpreted differently in the different historical time. In any civil crisis, from the sixth century of Daochuo 道綽 to the late nineteenth-twentieth century of Yinguang, the Pure Land was indicated as the only successful practice for Buddhists. Then, in the mid-twentieth century, when Yinshun started theorising his Mādhyamika oriented-Pure Land, we find also the socialist-Marxist use of Pure Land.¹³ On the doctrinal level, Yinshun's exegesis shows another attempt of negotiation and integration between Indian (Nāgārjuna) and Chinese (Pure Land) traditions of Buddhism.

Numerous are the references to *Shizhu piposha lun* in the oeuvre of Yinshun, who mainly referred to the scripture under three headings: (1) the discourse on Easy Path and Difficult Path; (2) the explanation of the practice of recollection of Buddha (*nian fo* 念佛); (3) the account of Nāgārjuna's corpus of scriptures.¹⁴ Yinshun's approach seems then to be perfectly in line with the perspective of the previous

¹² Taixu mentioned *Shizhu piposha lun* as text authored by Nāgārjuna, and therefore belonging to the Mādhyamika school. Secondly, the scripture explains the dichotomy of Easy Path and Difficult Path. According to Taixu, Easy Path and Difficult Path constitute the 'cultivation duet' for the Eight Schools: Easy Path belongs to the Pure Land School, whereas Difficult Path belongs to the other seven schools. In another piece, Taixu specified the affiliation of Easy Path to Pure Land school and Difficult Path to the Chan school. For Taixu's understanding of *Shizhu piposha lun*, see Taixu (1931) 'Foqi kaishi lu', in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.19, p.1189, for the theory of the dichotomy between Easy Path/Pure Land and Difficult Path/Chan, see: Taixu (1930) 'Chan tai xian liu gui jingtu xing', in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.1, pp.715-754; 'Jingtu famen zai fofa zhong zhi zhiwei', in *Taixu dashi quanshu*, v.7, pp.2414-2415.

¹³ Welch (1968) *Buddhism under Mao*, pp.288-299.

¹⁴ Yinshun (1950) *Zhongguan jin lun*, pp.14-17; (1952) *Zhongguan lun song jiangji*, pp.1-5; Travagnin, Stefania (2004) 'Master Yinshun and the Pure Land Thought', in *Acta Orientalia*, v.57, n.3, pp.271-328.

Chinese and Japanese scholarship, which classified the scripture as ‘Pure Land scripture,’ ‘Prajñāpāramitā-Mādhyamika scripture’ and ‘Nāgārjuna-authored scripture’.¹⁵ To sum up, Yinshun underlined the scripture as embodying the teachings for practicing the Bodhisattva Path, teachings for which Yinshun referred particularly to the scriptures that belong to the second phase of Nāgārjuna’s career. Since the dubious authorship of Nāgārjuna was topic of the previous chapter, I will focus here on the Nāgārjunian framework of Pure Land practice as part of Yinshun’s plan of a new Mahāyāna.

A final question here is: can Yinshun be considered as the ‘modern’ patriarch of the Pure Land School? With Yinshun’s intervention contextualised within a series of ‘adjustments’ that the Pure Land doctrine was subject to in adaptation to the ‘modern’ world, and with consideration of his distinct action of adopting Mādhyamika teachings and the authority of Nāgārjuna to accomplish his objective, we can easily conclude that he might be regarded as a new patriarch of Pure Land school.

¹⁵ Hisao Inagaki contributed two volumes and several articles on the subject: Inagaki, Hisao (1998) *Nāgārjuna’s Discourse on the Ten Stages (Dasabhumika-vibhasa). A Study and Translation from Chinese of Verses and Chapter 9*. Ryokoku Gakkai: Ryokoku Literature Series V; Inagaki, Hisao (1998) *Ojoronchu. T’an-luan’s Commentary on Vasubandhu’s Discourse on the Pure Land: A Study and Translation*. Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo. Japanese transcriptions of the *Dasabhumika vibhasa sastra*: (1) *Kokuyaku issaikyo*, Shakkyoronbu 7, Daitoshuppan: Tokyo, 1935 (with an introduction and marginal notes by Keiki Yabuki); (2) *Jujubibasharon*, Shinkokuyaku daizokyo, Shakkyoronbu 12, Daizoshuppan: Tokyo, Vol. 1, 1994, Vol. 2, 1995 (with an introduction, marginal notes and supplementary notes by Ryushin Uryuzu). English translations of the Chapter on the Easy Practice: (1) Kosho Yamamoto (1955) ‘A Book on the Easy Practice’. In *The Shinshu Seiten*, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii; (2) Hisao Inagaki (1983) ‘The Path of Easy Practice’. In *Ryukokudaigaku ronshu*, n. 422, Ryukoku University, pp. 36-58; (3) Hisao Inagaki (1988) ‘The Path of Easy Practice’. In *The Pure Land*, New Series, n. 5, Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, pp. 140-156. A glossary of the proper names: Hisao Inagaki (1982) ‘A Glossary of the Proper Names which Appear in the Chapter on Easy Practice of the Jujubibasharon’. In *Jodokyo no kenkyu*, Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, pp. 43-71. Hikata (1958), *Suvikravikrami-Pariprccha Prajñāpāramitā-Sutra*, p.lxxiv: ‘Next we shall go into the mental developments of the author as reflected on these works. In Madh., Nag. is found to be considerably theoretical, but later on he gradually turns more practical, till he gets, after ‘Ta-lun’ and Bodhi-S., to Dasabhumika-vibh., in which his practical exhortations based on the views given in Bodhi-S. are found in a more marked degree. He sets forth ‘易行品’ (the way of Easy Practice), holding that Avaivartika is to be attained through ‘Meditation on Buddha’ and ‘Invocation of Buddha’s Name’ and also with the aid of ‘Confession of sins’ and ‘Transference of merits’. This no doubt indicates that in his advanced ages he is leaving his theoretical side to devote himself to the practice of the meditation and invocation on Buddha and also of the confession and transference.’

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first part presents Yinshun's interpretation of the significance of 'easy path' and 'difficult path' from a synchronic perspective, through the screening of the corpus of his writings, and in relation to the various tendencies of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism. The second part analyses Yinshun's theory from a diachronic perspective, in the context of the previous history of Chinese Pure Land, especially the history of transmission and reception of Nāgārjuna's *Shizhu piposha lun* in China.

IX. 1 A Mādhyamika-based Pure Land practice: Yinshun's exegesis of 'Difficult Path' and 'Easy Path'

It has been said that Yinshun did not recognise the Pure Land and opposed the *nianfo* practice. In fact, Yinshun just proposed the teachings of Easy Path and Difficult Path as expressed by Nāgārjuna in his *Daśabhūmika-vibhāsā śāstra*. Yinshun's Pure Land philosophy, even if different from the Pure Land doctrine of Shandao 善導 (Tang dynasty), Lianchi 蓮池 (Ming dynasty), Yinguang (Qing dynasty), did not deny the Pure Land at all.¹⁶

As I mentioned above, Yinshun recurred to Nāgārjuna's authority in order to revise Pure Land practice. From a different perspective, the Yinshun's understanding of Nāgārjuna contributed to demythologise the image of Amitabha, and to turn the popular passive Pure Land practice into the correct active Bodhisattva Path.

Yinshun articulated his argument in a few writings. The first study specifically on the easy and difficult path, with special reference to *Shizhu piposha lun*, is the essay 'Jingtu xin lun' 淨土新論 (1951).¹⁷ The last part of the essay, entitled 'Yi

¹⁶ Hongyin (1994) *Zenyang du Miaoyun ji*, pp.19-20.

¹⁷ 'Jingtu xin lun' 淨土新論 was originally a Buddhist lecture that Yinshun delivered in the winter 1951 in Hong Kong (Qingsha monastery), then recorded and transcribed by Yinshun's monastic

xingdao yu nan xingdao' 易行道與難行道, includes the core of Yinshun's ideas, which have been repeated, more than restated, in his following works.¹⁸

The first part of this chapter argues that Yinshun worked on a threefold level: proposing a re-statement of the Easy Path, in terms of re-evaluation of the practice explained in the *Banzhou sanmei jing* 般舟三昧經 [T13 n418];¹⁹ the promotion the joint practice of Easy Path and Difficult Path, instead of their mutual exclusion; the emphasis on the Difficult Path.

IX. 1. 1 Restatement of the Easy Path

Those who are timid and inferior,
Wish to have an easy path to practice.²⁰

Yinshun discussed the relationship between Easy Practice and *nianfo*, and questioned their mutual identification, with the caveat that the development of Pure Land School in China had lived a gap between the 'correct' (original) *nian fo*, which should be intended as 'mindful recollection of Buddha' (*zhuan xin nian fo* 專心念佛), and the *nian fo* that became popular in China, which coincides with the 'oral recitation of the Buddha's name' (*chengming nianfo* 稱名念佛).²¹ Yinshun argued that the correct Easy Practice was not limited to the *chengming nianfo*.

Yinshun's thesis on *nian fo* is then articulated around two main themes: the

followers Xuming 續明 and Yanpei 演培, and published in the 1960s. Later on, the essay became part of the volume *Jingtu yu chan* 淨土與禪, which was published in Taiwan in 1970.

¹⁸ Yinshun (1970) *Jingtu yu Chan*, pp.64-76.

¹⁹ Haihong 海弘 (1992) 'Da zhidu lun yu Shizhu piposha lun zhongzhi banzhou sanmei luetan' 《大智度論》與《十住毗婆沙論》中之般舟三昧略探, <http://www.fuyan.org.tw/81/08.htm> (date of access: 30 July 2007)

²⁰ Yin-Shun, tr. Wing H. Yeung (1998) *The Way to Buddhahood*, p.245.

²¹ Jones, Charles B. (2003) 'Toward a Typology of *Nien-fo*: A Study in Methods of Buddha-Invocation in Chinese Pure Land Buddhism', in *Pacific World*, pp.219-239. Lan Jifu (1999) 'Yinshun daoshi dui nianfo guan de kanfa' 印順導師對念佛觀的看法, in *Hongshi shuangyuekan* 弘誓雙月刊, n.42; Fanglun 方倫 'Yixing men zhongde yixing fa' 易行門中的易行法, in Zhang Mantao, ed. (1979) *Jingtu zong gailun* 淨土宗概論, pp.333-350.

rectification of the object of the ‘practice of recollection’ in the light of Nāgārjuna’s teachings, and the amendment of the exact meaning of ‘recollection of Buddha’ (*nianfo*). According to *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun*, this practice implies the recollection of not *one* Buddha, but of all the Buddhas of the ten directions and all the Bodhisattvas. In this way, Yinshun was reconsidering the mainstream Chinese Pure Land School by proposing a re-evaluation of all the Mahāyāna Buddhas, and opposed the devotionism to the sole Amitabha, the so-called ‘Amidism’, which was still a feature of the Modern Chinese Pure Land.²² Yinshun problematised the Chinese modern reception of the Pure Land doctrine and the role of Amitabha and the Western Pure Land, operated a deconstruction of the Chinese Pure Land, distinguishing the Chineseness of the tradition from the ‘original’ teachings (which are identified with the originally non-Chinese scriptures), and then proposed a reconstruction of the practice of the school that could, in his mind, filling in the gap between the Indian and the Chinese tradition of Buddhism.²³

Therefore the easy practice should not be regarded as limited merely to the chanting of the Buddha’s name, but includes the seven branches and the ten great vows of Samantabhadra so as listed in the ‘Puxian xingyuan pin’ 普賢行願品 [‘Chapter on Samantabhadra’s vows of practice’]²⁴. Here is the denounce of the

misunderstanding of the true *nian fo* teachings, and a disparagement of the practice

²² With ‘Modern Chinese Pure Land’ I mainly refer to the figure of the Pure Land patriarch Yinguang (1861-1940) and the lay Li Bingnan 李炳南 (1890-1986). See Jones, Charles B. (1999) *Buddhism in Taiwan*, pp.115-124.

²³ Yin-Shun, Wing H. Yeung tr. (1998), *The Way to Buddhahood*, p.248-251. See also Travagnin, Stefania (2004) ‘Master Yinshun and the Pure Land Thought’, in *Acta Orientalia*, v.57, n.3, pp.271-328..

²⁴ Yinshun (1970) *Jingtu yu chan*, p. 214: ‘The path of the easy practice is not simply the practice of the recollection of the Buddha, but is the practice of the ten great vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva’. The ten aspirations are: (1) *lijing zhufu* 禮敬諸佛 [respect and make prostrations to all Buddhas]; (2) *chengzan rulai* 稱讚如來 [eulogise tathagata]; (3) *guangxiu gongyang* 廣修供養 [make abundant offerings]; (4) *chanhui yezhang* 懺悔業障 [repent the evil doings]; (5) *suixi gongde* 隨喜功德 [rejoice the meritorious deeds]; (6) *qingzhuan falun* 請轉法輪 [request Buddha to perpetuate the Dharma-wheels]; (7) *qing fo zhushi* 請佛住世 [request Buddha to live on earth]; (8) *chang sui foxue* 常隨佛學 [follow constantly Buddha’s teachings]; (9) *hengshun zhongsheng* 恆順眾生 [be in accordance with the sentient beings]; (10) *pujie huixiang* 普皆迴向 [transfer the merits to all sentient beings]. See *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 [T10n293, 844b19-848b23]

which was spread in China (Pre-Modern and Modern period) and Taiwan. Yinshun aimed especially to take distance from the so-called ‘popular’ Dharma as conceived and practiced in the modern age in China.²⁵

In *Cheng fo zhi dao* Yinshun indicated a fivefold meaning of the easy path: (1) *cheng ming* 稱名 [to chant the names]; (2) *yi nian* 憶念 [being mindful (i.e., of all buddhas of then ten directions)], *li jing* 禮敬 [to prostrate and respect], *cheng zan* 稱讚 [to praise (with verses)]; (3) *chan hui* 懺悔 [to repent], *quan qing* 勸請 [to make request], *sui xi* 隨喜 [to rejoice], *hui xiang* 迴向 [to transfer merits]; (4) ‘the easy path was taught to the timid beginners with an emphasis on embracing and protecting their faith’; (5) these all ‘lead to being reborn in a Pure Land. It is generally said that after reaching a Pure Land, people gradually practice and are determined not to retreat and to attain supreme bodhi’.²⁶ In the later essay ‘Dacheng “nian fo” famen’ 大乘「念佛」法門 (1985), Yinshun highlighted that the Samantabhadra’s aspirations embodied the essence of the ‘correct’ Easy Path, with each of the aspirations being a different form of *nian fo*.²⁷

Yinshun opposed the modern popular interpretation of the *nian fo* as well as the esoteric interpretation of the doctrine, which derives from the ‘tathāgata garbha teachings’ (*rulaizang sixiang* 如來藏思想) and does not find correspondence to the Bodhisattva practice. Yinshun is here problematising the value of the tathāgata garbha tradition that, according to Yinshun, is not the core of the Early Mahāyāna cultivation but is rooted in the late Indian Buddhism and became very popular in

²⁵ As the monk Yin Hai 印海 recalled, Yinshun was neither pursuing a rebirth in the Western Pure Land nor undervaluing the Easy Practice, but was redefining the core essence of Easy Practice. According to Yinshun, the ‘Chapter on Samantabhadra’s vows of practice’ (Puxian xingyuan pin 普賢行願品), part of the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 [T10n293] was the Easy Practice. See Yin Hai (2006) ‘Yongheng huainian renjian de daoshi 永恆懷念人間的導師’, in Houguan, ed. (2006) *Yinshun daoshi yonghuai ji*, p.63.

²⁶ Yinshun (1960) *Cheng fo zhi dao*, pp.298-299. English translation from Yin-shun, Wing H. Yeung tr. (1998), *The Way to Buddhahood*, p.247.

²⁷ Yinshun (1985) ‘Dasheng nianfo famen’, in *Hua yu ji*, v.2, pp.133-164

China in its Chinese version.

The recitation of the ten vows of Samantabhadra were elements shared by the Buddhist community at that time.²⁸ Even Taixu underlined the chapter on Samantabhadra and the essence of the Bodhisattva practice as depicted in the text as basis for the making of the *renjian* Pure Land, and the Pure Land patriarch Yinguang included the recitation of this text in the daily practice of his monastery. Again, Yinshun induced a different lens through which to read a very popular scripture in the Buddhist China.

This attack to the Chinese popular cultivation of *nian fo* makes Yinshun part of a general pattern of criticism to the so called traditional Pure Land practice. The critics include Taixu and the lay Yang Baiyi and Zhang Mantao, while the supporters of the popular *nian fo* include Yinguang, Shengyan and the lay Zhang Chengji.²⁹ For instance, the pragmatical and activist Taixu opposed the devotionism for the ‘belief that the active way, the way of self-reliance, was the most appropriate and responsible form of Buddhist practice in the modern world, and that the dominance of the passive way, the way of dependence, had led to deleterious misunderstandings of the religion both inside and outside of the Sangha’.³⁰

²⁸ Zhenhua reported: ‘Because of the merit and benefit of holding to and chanting the Vows of Samantabhadra are so great, I often saw Pure Land practitioners on the mainland chanting them morning and evening as their regular devotions. For this reason I regularly recited it for two years, but being unable to recite it from memory, I could not continue to chant it while in the army. Only later, when I went to the Ling-ch’uan Monastery in Keelung, did I make this chapter part of my regular devotions. While at His-chih, Nuan-nuan, and Hsin-chu I seldom let a day go by without chanting it. Though trivial matters have kept my head swimming for the past several years, each morning after ising and washing I chant it devoutly as a prayer for the day. In chanting the ten great vows I am not thinking to “attain to the limitless virtue of Tathagata” but only hoping, with the sublime power of these ten great vows, to be “reborn in the world of bliss” at the “last moment, when all faculties have scattered”.’ Zhenhua (1992) *In Search of the Dharma*, p.270.

²⁹ Jiang Canteng (1989) *Renjian jingtu de zhuixun: Zhongguo jinshi fojiao sixiang yanjiu*, pp.194-202.

³⁰ Pittman, Don (2001) *Toward a modern Chinese Buddhism*, pp.201-203.

IX. 1. 2 Mutual exclusion or complementarity between Easy Path and Difficult Path

According to *Da zhidu lun*, the cultivation of the Easy Path can lead to the accomplishment of the believing mind, therefore originate the compassionate mind, and eventually advance to the practice of the six perfections. This can show the consistency within the Bodhisattva Path, and that the Easy Path that emphasizes faith, and the Difficult Path that highly values wisdom and compassion are not in opposition, but are just following different tendencies within the Dharma practice.³¹

The tendency to rely mostly or only on the Easy Path would provoke the oblivion of the Bodhisattva Difficult Path, while the only emphasis on the Difficult Path with the effect of dismissing the Easy Path would bring difficulties to Buddhism to spread in the modern age.

Yinshun proposed an alternative approach to the topic. Besides being related to the different inner dispositions of the practitioners, as the quotation above says, Easy and Difficult Path may be intended as two steps of the same path of cultivation, so as is written in *Cheng fo zhi dao*:

Alternatively, at first the easy path can be relied on as a skillful means to stabilize their faith and then as a way to lead them into the difficult path. [...] Following this example will lead one from the bodhisattvas' easy and skillful path to the bodhisattvas' difficult and regular path!³²

These two apparently contradictory statements embody the difference between Yinshun's hermeneutics, and the doctrinal interpretation of the previous Pure Land

³¹ Yinshun (1985) 'Dacheng nianfo famen', in *Huayu ji*, vol.3, p.139.

³² Yin-shun, Wing H. Yeung, tr.(1998)*The Way to Buddhahood*, p.247

patriarchs and also of the reformer Taixu. In Yinshun the two paths are not intended as mutually exclusive because belonging to two distinct Chinese Mahāyāna sects (Pure Land and Chan), which was Taixu's argument, but as complementary. In this way, the complementarity that Yinshun proposed was not the same complementarity that the Buddhist monastic and lay communities were following in the Qing and early Republican period. Pure Land master Yinguang did not oppose Chan meditation even if he declared the crucial role played by the oral recitation of Buddha's name. In this way, Yinguang and Yinshun were both proposing a joint cultivation of two practices. However Yinshun was proposing a joint practice that was not based on the integration of Pure Land and Chan, as Yinguang advocated instead, but a combination of the *nian fo* easy path and the Pure Land difficult path, with the latter centred in the practice of wisdom and compassion. The joint practice proposed by Yinguang traced back to the thirteenth century, whereas Yinshun's dual practice was reflecting both Indian and Chinese traditions of Buddhism, so as textual evidences demonstrated. Here is another sign of Yinshun's negotiation position between Indian and Chinese Buddhism.

Through reference to *Shizhu piposha lun* and *Dacheng qixin lun*, Yinshun argued that the easy path should have been intended as the step prior and introductory to the difficult path. Therefore 'complementarity' is intended as 'sequence'. Even here Yinshun adopted Nāgārjuna as an authority for his theory.

IX. 1. 3 Revaluation of the Difficult Path

It is difficult to accomplish the Buddhahood by following the path of the Easy Practice. On the other hand, it is easy to accomplish the Buddhahood by following the path of the

Difficult Practice.³³

Yinshun considered 'difficult path' as emblem of the Bodhisattva (Mahāyāna and Prajñāpāramitā) practice. According to Yinshun: 'The difficult and hard practice of the Bodhisattva Path, i.e. 'Mahāyāna Buddhadharma', developed in these terms in India.'³⁴ The fact that Chinese Buddhists conceived the Mahāyāna (Bodhisattva) practice in form of an 'easy practice' (with 'easy practice' meaning the mere repetition of Amitabha's name) is due to the Chinese misinterpretation of the Indian doctrine, and is also sign of the process of corruption that Buddhism went through in its transmission into China. The need of Chinese Buddhism to follow a difficult path is then in line with the commitment to practice the Bodhisattva Path.

Yinshun based his promotion of the Difficult Path on four Buddhist scriptures: *Da bao ji jing* 大寶積經, *Huayan jing*, *Da zhidu lun* and *Shizhu piposha lun*. He drew a parallel between Easy Path and Difficult Path by outlining a comparison between the forms of cultivation followed by two eminent practitioners: Sakyamuni Buddha and Maitreya Bodhisattva. The efficacy of the Difficult Path on the Easy Path is given by the fact that Maitreya started his 'easy practice' forty kalpas earlier than Sakyamuni, but among them only Sakyamuni achieved the Buddhahood through his 'difficult practice'.

From another perspective we can read Yinshun's eulogy for Sakyamuni and the call for his successful practice among the defilements of the Samsara as related to his theory on the dichotomy between *chu shi* 出世 ('escaping the world') and *ru shi* 入世 ('entering the world') practice.

Yinshun argued a parallel between Easy Practice and Difficult Practice that

³³ Yinshun (1970) *Jingtu yu Chan*, p.17

³⁴ Yinshun (1985) 'Dasheng nianfo famen', in *Huayan ji*, vol.3,p.135.

also demonstrates his re-evaluation of the Difficult Practice. According to Yinshun, *yixing* and *nanxing* are both paths of Bodhisattva practice, with the former emphasising Faith (*xin* 信) and the latter giving more relevance to Compassion (*cibei* 慈悲) and Wisdom (*zhahui* 智慧). *Yixing* is the easy and pleasant practice (*anle xing* 安樂行), and *nanxing* is the practice of hardship (*kuxing* 苦行), the former is the path of the expedients (*fangbian dao* 方便道), and the latter is the path of tathāta (*zhengchang dao* 正常道). *Yixing* practice is based on the reliance on Buddha's strength (*tali* 他力) while *nanxing* on the own strength (*zili* 自力). *Yixing* is devoted to the cultivation of the recollection of the Buddha's name and prostrations to the Buddha, while *nanxing* involves the cultivation of the Six Perfections; *yixing* can be compared to a pleasant travelling on a boat by sea, while *nanxing* can be compared to travelling on foot by land, which is full of hardship. The distinct feature of *yixing* is the adornment of the Buddha land, while the characteristic of *nanxing* is rescuing all the sentient beings, and therefore is devoted to the adornment of the sentient beings.³⁵

IX. 2 Yinshun's theory within the history of Chinese Buddhism

Yinshun promoted a Mādhyamika framed Pure Land practice. In doing this, Yinshun's doctrinal position signed a new moment in the history of the Chinese Pure Land, which is partly manifestation of the contemporary cultural and religious atmosphere, and partly due to Yinshun's own programme of establishing a 'new' Mahāyāna.

This section aims to assess Yinshun's theory through a parallel with the early Pure Land masters who had introduced the debate between easy and difficult path in Chinese Buddhism, and to reveal why the emphasis that Yinshun put on Nāgārjuna

³⁵ See especially Yinshun(1970) *Jingtu yu Chan*, pp.64-77.

was innovative and eventually not accepted.

IX. 2. 1 Tanluan, Daochuo and Yinshun: Historical and Hermeneutical

Patterns

A brief account of the history of the Chinese reception and hermeneutics of *Shi zhu piposha lun*, from Tanluan through Daochuo to Yinshun, is preliminary to this segment.

The Pure Land patriarch Tanluan 曇鸞 (476-542)³⁶ was the one who introduced Nāgārjuna's twofold path in China and mentioned *Shi zhu piposha lun* in his most important doctrinal piece entitled *Wangsheng lun zhu* 往生論註 [T40 n1819].³⁷ Tanluan, whose teachings include the 'five gates of *nian fo*' (*nian fo wu men* 念佛五門), was devoted to the Pure Land doctrine but also studied Mādhyamika texts such as *Da zhidu lun* under the guidance of Daochang (520-576).³⁸ Nevertheless, I see important discrepancies between Nāgārjuna's Easy Path and Tanluan's Easy Path, which are due to Tanluan's approach to the Pure Land doctrine. Different from Yinshun, who proposed Pure Land doctrine within a Mādhyamika framework, Tanluan proposed Nāgārjuna's teachings as melded within the mainstream Chinese Pure Land tradition.

The following Pure Land patriarch Daochuo (562-645) signed a different pattern. Tanluan's polarities 'Easy Path (*yi xingdao*) and Difficult Path (*nan xingdao*) turned into Daochuo's dichotomy of 'Path of the Sages' (*sheng dao* 聖道) and 'Path

³⁶ Yanpei, 'Tanluan yu Daochuo', in Zhang Mantao ed. (1979) *Jingtuzong shi lun* 淨土宗史論, v.65, pp.227-238.

³⁷ Tanluan's *Wuliang shou jing youpotishe yuan sheng jie zhu* 無量壽經優婆提舍願生偈註 [T40 n1819, 826a28-b15]: 'According to what Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva wrote in *Shizhu piposha lun*, Bodhisattvas have two paths to reach the state of not retrogression. One is the path of difficult practice [*nanxing dao* 難行道]. One is the path of easy practice [易行道].' [T40 n1819: 826a28-29]

³⁸ Leo Pruden (1988) 'A Short Essay on the Pure Land', *The Eastern Buddhist*, pp.74-95: 'There is Madhyamaka influence in his writings, but what Madhyamaka references there are, are subordinated to T'an-luan's interest in the Pure Land.' (p.78)

of the Pure Land' (*jingtu men* 淨土門). Daochuo, especially in his *Anle ji* 安樂集 [T47 n1958], stressed the only easy practice and thus reinforced the basis of the devotionalism that still prevails in Chinese Pure Land, and is particularly popular among the laity.³⁹

A first consideration is that even in Tanluan and Daochuo we see association of the text *Shizhu piposha lun* to Pure Land. Yinshun found some discrepancies between Nāgārjuna's doctrine and Tanluan's reading of *Shizhu piposha lun*, and tried to recover the original teachings. As has been stated above, Tanluan intended *nian fo* in terms of devotion to the only Buddha Amitabha, which provoked the rise of the Pure Land devotionalism in China (and then in Japan), while Nāgārjuna preached the calling on the names of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as core of the Easy Path. In line with this, Yinshun proposed a reevaluation of all the Mahāyāna Buddhas. Tanluan became well known for this theory of the five gates of *nian fo*, which shows that for him the Easy Path, and so the *nian fo* practice, was not limited to the oral recitation of Buddha's name.⁴⁰ It was Daochuo who stressed the second of the five gates, and invented the rosary (*nianzhu*), which is still in use in Asia, as tool for the oral recitation.

Second discrepancy between Yinshun and the pre-modern Pure Land patriarch is seen in the relationship between the achievement of the stage of non-retrogression and the rebirth in the Pure Land. In Tanluan the stage of non-retrogression is identified not with the 7th bhumi of a Bodhisattva, but with Amitabha Pure Land. The need of the rebirth in Pure Land (and in specific in Amitabha Pure Land) for reaching the stage of non-retrogression is result of Tanluan's misinterpretation of Nāgārjuna's

³⁹ Chappell, D. W. (1976) *Tao Tch'o (562-645): A Pioneer of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism*, Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University. For Daochuo's understanding of *Shizhu piposha lun*, see pp.133-138.

⁴⁰ The five gates are: (1) *libai men* 禮拜門 (prostrations); (2) *zantan men* 讚歎 (reciting appreciations); (3) *zuoyuan men* 作願門 (making vows); (4) *guan cha men* 觀察門 (insight meditation); (5) *huixiang men* 迴向門 (transfer of merits).

teachings, an interpretation that Yinshun confuted, with the aim to restore the 'original meaning' of Nāgārjuna's words. Nāgārjuna made the difference between Easy and Difficult Path in relation to the stage of non-retrogression in terms of duration of practice, with both the paths leading eventually to the achievement of state of non-retrogression. Furthermore, the state of non-retrogression was to be achieved in the human world, with the rebirth in the Pure Land not necessary for that. On the other hand, Tanluan made the difference between Easy and Difficult path in relation to the attainment of the stage of non-retrogression in terms of place of practice: the rebirth in the Pure Land became a requirement for getting the stage of non-retrogression through the Easy Path. Nāgārjuna never mentioned the rebirth in the Pure Land as *sine qua non* requisite, Tanluan did it in line with his promotion of the Pure Land devotionalism, while Yinshun aimed to recover the 'authority of the past' and returned to Nāgārjuna's version.

Therefore, different than the later Yinshun, Tanluan and Daochuo both reported the two paths as exclusive and not complementary. Tanluan distinguished between the Easy Path and the Difficult Path, and emphasised the Easy Path as the easier to be followed in the samsara. Daochuo went a step further, and indicated the Pure Land Path (which is the name he gave to the Easy Path), as the only practice that the human beings were able to follow in the contemporary time of decline of the Dharma. Differently from Daochuo, Yinshun highlighted the Difficult Practice and did not indicate any preclusion for its practice because of the supposed Mappo.

I argue that this difference in interpretation is index of the different definition that Daochuo and Yinshun gave to Mappo. On the one hand, Daochuo showed a passive attitude, and promoted the Easy Path as the only practicable in the Mappo, because of the degeneration of the Dharma and the weak mind of the practitioners. On the other hand, Yinshun interpreted Mappo in the opposite way, and concluded

that there is no Mappo until there are 'correct' practitioners of the Dharma. The Bodhisattva path, the practice of the six paramitas (in other words, the cultivation of the Difficult Path of practice) were conceived as able to extinguish the Mappo. Yinshun replied to Daochuo's resignation with a positive plan, and used Nāgārjuna's scriptures as textual fundamentals and authority for his theory.

According to Yinguang, Pure Land should not be ranked among ordinary teachings, and Zhenhua 真華 commented:

'The Dharma of Pure Land must be looked at with different eyes; it cannot be ranked among ordinary teachings. Had Tathagata not opened the way to this dharma, no one would be found to break out of life and death in this age of Decay of the Law.'⁴¹

And the social and political condition of China for most of the twentieth century was not different from Daochuo's period, a fact that can justify such a reliance on the easy Pure Land practice. Yinshun intended to change this traditional view of the role that Pure Land could play in the Mappo time. Neither Tanluan nor Daochuo defined the Easy Path as practice meant to achieve the Buddhahood, they prescribed this practice as in the context of seeking rebirth in the Pure Land, and the final realisation was not their main concern, which demonstrates a difference in perspective with Yinshun.

Tanluan, Daochuo and Yinshun all exploited the scripture, and therefore its author, as authority for legitimating their theories. To return to He Ping's statement, they all used 'the authority of the past as the major symbolic regulator of social, political and cultural change and innovation gave way to the acceptance of

⁴¹ Zhenhua (1992) *In Search of the Dharma*, p.156.

innovation as a cultural orientation.⁴² The voice of Nāgārjuna came then to be adapted to the local and historical demands.

IX. 2. 2 Between Indian Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism: Construing a resolution

The Pure Land doctrine I am talking about, refers mostly to the Indian scriptures, and does not consider the instructions of the Chinese patriarchs as the sacred teachings.⁴³

Yinshun's teachings is based on the criticism to the corrupted Chinese Buddhism and the re-evaluation of the supposed 'pure' and early Indian Buddhism. From a different perspective, the preference of attention to Indian Buddhism is sign of a tendency to an intellectual tradition and practice of Buddhism, which differs from the the popular (non intellectual) form of tradition and practice that followed the mainstream Chinese performance of *nian fo*.

In any rate, Yinshun's appeal did not find a following, and the study of *Shizhu piposha lun* remains subject of courses at the Fuyan Buddhist Institute and the other centres affiliated to the monk.

⁴² See Introduction.

⁴³ Yinshun(1970)*Jingtu yu Chan*, p.120.

CONCLUSION

This research started questioning how Chinese Buddhists in the twentieth-century had pondered tradition, played with shift of authorities and legitimacy. The historical period concerned has involved the discussion on the need to restate Chinese Buddhism as in line with the need to create a new China and planned within a “new” China. We can thus draw a parallel between historical and social renewal and religious reconstruction.

The arrival of Western ideas and ideologies, the introduction of the term and concept of *religion*, the encounter with Western Buddhology and the spread of Christianity challenged Chinese civilization and initiated a process of modernisation and the creation of new epistemologies of identity. On the political level, China in a few decades passed from being an empire to a republican structure and finally to the Communist government, so as Taiwan at the same time passed from the Japanese colonial experience to the ruling of the KMT and the proclaimed independence from the Mainland. On the religious level, the traditions of Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism updated themselves and tried plural attempts to fit the demands of the new social, historical and ideological circumstances. What is important is that on both levels we witness attempts of negotiations between local traditional culture and otherness.

My research and extensive fieldwork in Taiwan led me to focus on the figure of Yinshun and Yinshun's study of *Mādhyamika*, and to analyse the latter as a perspective and a context of convergence of those actions. Previous studies of the field determined the position of Yinshun as a scholar-monk within Chinese Buddhist intellectuals, as a historian and as a reformer in interpreting and proposing Buddhist practice through the so-called *renjian* Buddhism.

While assessing Yinshun's contribution to the development of modern Chinese Buddhology with reference to his attention to *Mādhyamika*, Scott Hurley questioned Yinshun's attempt to reform Buddhist doctrine and asked: '[D]oes Yinshun see himself as advocating innovative interpretations of Buddhist doctrine or does he see himself as simply re-asserting Buddhist tradition?'¹ This dissertation demonstrated

1 Hurley, Scott (2000) 'A Study of Master Yinshun's Hermeneutics: An Interpretation of the

that Yinshun was not 'simply re-asserting Buddhist tradition', but, I would say, re-asserting the Chinese Buddhist idea of tradition.

Yinshun proposed a new interpretation of traditional Chinese scriptures such as *Zhong lun* and *Da zhidu lun*, mainstream Chinese domains like the Pure Land practice and Mahāyāna as a whole (see chapters seven, eight and nine), he did intervene on Chinese Buddhist traditional concepts and terminology (see chapters four and five), with the attempt to preserve tradition in the innovation so to to maintain continuity with the past even in the 'new' forms of socially engaged Buddhism (see chapter six).

Yinshun's background, as well as the contemporary intellectual circumstances and religious atmosphere that provided him with new contexts and interlocutors (chapters one and two) and his legacy (or lineage) in the final decades of the twentieth-century (chapter three) show overlapping of legacy to the past and the coping with new demands.

Challenges from Western scholarship are evident in Yinshun's work as well, not only for the indirect influence through Japanese mediation (and translations), but also directly through engaging with Lamotte on *Da zhidu lun* (chapter eight).

My enquiry then became: are we facing a Buddhism's search for modernity or a Buddhism's reshaping of tradition?

Buddhism's search for a modern tradition or a traditional modernity?

A survey of the literature of the field reveals different arguments that defined Buddhism in China from the end of the nineteenth century throughout the twentieth century, and different, sometimes confusing, adoptions of the terms 'tradition'/'traditional' and 'modernity'/'modern'.

Chen Bing and Deng Zimei commenced their book discussing the destiny of Buddhism and the destiny of China side by side. Buddhism and China are thus seen as facing the 'challenges of the time' (*shidai de tiaojian* 時代的條件), challenges that had affected 'traditional Buddhism' (*chuantong de fojiao* 傳統的佛教) with the main result to plan missions of revival (*fixing* 復興) that implied renewal as well as

Tathagatagarbha Doctrine', pp.196-197

respect for tradition.²

As I have reported in the introduction of this dissertation, the adoption of the term 'revival' has been originally discussed by Holmes Welch in his *The Buddhist Revival in China* (1968), and the argumentation was recalled a few decades later by Xue Yu in *Buddhism, War and Nationalism* (2005) e recently by Francesca Tarocco in *The Cultural Practices of Modern Chinese Buddhism* (2007).

According to Welch, the term 'revival' is 'inappropriate', since there was neither a 'decline' nor a 'decay' beforehand, but 'the most convenient' to depict those circumstances,³ and argued in conclusion of the volume that 'the concept of a "Buddhist revival in China" was broached in Western literature' more than being a statement risen within the Chinese Buddhist community.⁴ Welch also ended his book underlining the distinction between Buddhist institutions and Buddhist people's religiosity, and arguing that all those reforms that animated the first half of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism did not deny 'a new desire to preserve or restore elements of national culture.'⁵ These statements bring back the discourse of nationalism as in engagement with the discourse of tradition that have been analysed in the introduction of the dissertation and recalled throughout the nine chapters. For instance, the importance for Taixu to recover and highlight the essence of *Chinese* Buddhism while defending and promoting local Buddhism; and then the attempt by the post-Yinshun Sangha to enshrine Yinshun as the new authority of Buddhism, because of Taixu's (and then *Chinese* Buddhism) legacy in him, as a way to root *Taiwanese* Buddhism into *Chinese* Buddhism.

Duara stated the instrumental role that tradition was playing in the nationalist discourse, and underlined the significance and value of the past in this context. Duara explicitly reported the case-study of Confucianism in modern China, and eventually argued:

Practices and institutions are often inherited from the past,
but they do not remain of the past in some essential way –
which is what the term traditional implies.⁶

2 Chen Bing and Deng Zimei (2002) *Ershi shiji zhi zhongguo fojiao*, pp.26-42. See also Deng Zimei (1994) *Chuantong fojiao yu zhongguo jindaihua*, Dongchu (1974) *Zhongguo fojiao jindaishi*.

3 Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.1-2.

4 Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, p.254.

5 Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, p.269.

6 Duara, Prasenjit (1995) *Rescuing History from the Nation*, p.89.

These arguments re-examine the dynamics, combination as well as the dichotomy between the concept of “tradition” and the dimension of “the past”, reassessed what is “renewal” and what is “mainstream”, and thus create the multifaceted discourse of “revival.”

Such a theoretical structure of twentieth-century China and Chinese Buddhism formed the premises of Yinshun's intervention in Chinese Buddhist traditions, his coping with the past and the outcome renewal proposed in both the intellectual sphere as well as in the popular religiosity. Yinshun's work is an interaction of two different “past”: Jizang's scholarship (traditional Chinese Buddhism) and the cult of Nāgārjuna (original Indian Buddhism, as well as authority recognized by East Asian Buddhism). In theory, his “new” Buddhism could fit a Chinese audience as well as meet the general concern for early Buddhism as *the* real Buddhism that 'modern' Buddhism (through influence of the recent formed Western Buddhology) seemed to stress. In practice, on the scholarly level part of Yinshun's descendants are preserving and perpetuating such an interpretation of Nāgārjuna, indeed, Yinshun's focus on the school created the basis of a new wave of (especially Taiwanese) scholars of the field (see chapters seven and eight). However, on the level of religious cultivation, Yinshun's focus on the *Āgamas* brought him the accusation of betraying Mahāyāna (chapter seven), so as his re-examination of the history of Pure Land and re-evaluation of the Difficult Path (*nanxing dao*), and the demythologising of Amitabha and the Western Pure Land provoked a public burning of Yinshun's books on Pure Land (chapter nine). Even his *renjian fojiao*, which Yinshun theorised as Nāgārjuna's Bodhisattva Path, was not preserved as originally planned but, as chapter six argued, became a convenient label (and the authoritative basis) of social activism and humanitarian organisations (like Zhengyan's Tzu Chi Foundation).

Convergence of identities and the rise of the twenty-first century

The tension between the new and the past, renewal and conservatism are affected by an overlapping of identities that define China (and thus Chinese Buddhism) starting from the mid-twentieth century.

In the last few decades Taiwan became more than the 'Free China' (*ziyou de zhongguo* 自由的中國) where the refugee monks from Mainland China were

planning the restoration of Chinese Buddhism that Daoan referred to,⁷ and the national claim was labelled with the newly-shaped 'Taiwaneseness'.

This created a new discourse within the multivocal reality of East Asia, and inspired the formation of a new field of scholarship on Chinese Buddhism that focused on researching Taiwan and eventually became a considerable and consistent field per se.⁸

As asking what is the future of Buddhism in China Welch argued:

[W]e have to ask what is meant by "Buddhism," and this is part of the larger problem of what is meant by "religion." Only when we have decided can we set up the criteria by which to judge the past and future prosperity of Buddhism in China, or of any religion in any country.⁹

And he continued asserting that terms such as 'tradition' and 'religiousness' should have been adopted to better define the reality that the problematic word 'religion' was addressing. Such a portrait becomes more complicated when the reality of China overlaps and contends with the new domain of Taiwan, wherein the ideals of tradition, conservatism and renewal, the concepts of revival and the consciousness of the past are products of a different history and assume distinct values.

This dissertation explored these theorems through Yinshun and his study of the school of Nāgārjuna, and explained the different role that Yinshun's negotiation of traditions played in Taiwan, especially in the creation of Yinshunness as a new discourse in the field.

Yinshun and Yinshunness

This dissertation researched Yinshun as a case-study of Buddhist figure who lived throughout the twentieth and saw the dawn of the twenty-first century, intervened in the 'tradition' of Chinese Buddhism and created the grounds for the formation of a 'tradition' of Taiwanese Buddhism (see chapters three and eight).

7 Daoan (1980) *Daoan fashi yiji*, v.7, p.1023 [17 January 1953]

8 Scholars like Charles B. Jones, Jiang Canteng and Kai Zhenzong are leading the field.

9 Welch, Holmes (1968) *Buddhism under Mao*, p.364.

Yinshun had to cope with the past, a fact that his affiliation to Nagarjuna and Jizang and the emphasis on a number of few classical canonical scriptures (such as *Zhong lun* and *Da zhidu lun*) proved, and to propose a new identity of Mādhyamika and then Mahāyāna that shaked the Chinese Buddhist community, so as the nationalistic new voice in China dictated new ground values for the region.

The figure of Yinshun himself became eventually tradition and the concept of Yinshunian and Yinshunness came into existence as names for the dimension of twentieth and early twenty-first China and Taiwan.

The controversy on Pure Land practice, the new edition of *Da zhidu lun*, the restatement of the *Āgama*'s legacy in Nāgārjuna's *Zhong lun*, the revision of the methodology in Buddhist research and of the monastic education became all foundational elements of Yinshunness and signed new directions for Chinese and Taiwanese Buddhism. However, being Yinshunness a new tradition, as such it is going through processes of updating and transformation thanks to the activities of Yinshun's descendants. Thinking about Yinshun's scholarly heritage on the one hand, and the different social activism that claims legacy to Yinshun on the other, we have seen how Yinshunness has already plural identities.

What is next?

Daoan's plans and expectations, which were shared by a certain part of the Chinese Buddhist community including Yinshun, transformed with the foundation of local identities and the generational-historical shift. In line with this, if Yinshun's background and the bases of Yinshunness are rooted in the early twentieth-century Mainland China, the maturity of Yinshun's thought was also result of the interaction with the formation of Taiwanese Buddhism and took place in Taiwan.

The next step in the research on epistemologies of identity and construction of tradition would be assessing how the post-Yinshun community exported Yinshunness in Mainland China and a more global, more than regional, context of the Yinshunian dimension, and see if or how much of the the restatement of Mādhyamika planned by Yinshun is being perpetuated in Mainland China. Chinese Buddhists in Taiwan did not neglect the original concern for the state of Buddhism in Mainland China, and recently engaged in visits to China and scholarly exchanges with the local institutions. Besides conferences on Yinshun's thought and *renjian* Buddhism held in Hong Kong and Mainland China in 2005 and 2006, the monk

Houguan started regular visits to the Minnan Buddhist Institute in China, the same institution where Yinshun has started his Buddhist career.

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