Chapter Four

Indian and Chinese Heroes: Incarnations of Dharma and Tao

Introduction

Unlike the heroes of Western mythology, heroes in Indian and Chinese mythology do not clearly show their own individualities. Traditionally, in both countries, it is not deemed an aim of life to find self or to define personality. The idea of finding self as ‘der Einzelne’\(^1\) in front of God has developed in the West in which monotheism has a deep root. According to Richard van Dulmaen, the modern individual appeared in the West, after the Age of Enlightenment (18\(^{th}\) century). While Western philosophy has inquired into the problem of ‘subject’ since Descartes, Eastern philosophy has still upheld the problem of ‘relation’. The Orient, at least India and China, continues to follow the tradition where self (ego) is ignored in social life. If establishing self is not self-realization, then what is self-realization in India and China? We will find the answer in the manifestation of self-discipline in both countries.

1. Belittlement of ego in India and China

In the West, people believe that a man should develop his/her own life with free will, because of the influence of individualism. C. G. Jung suggests three different myths\(^2\) according to the stages of obtainment, development, and completion of ego. And this idea of ego becomes the premise of Campbell’s “developed, unique individual”.

“In the European West, on the other hand, where the fundamental doctrine of the freedom of the will essentially dissociates each individual from every other, as well as from both the will in nature and the will of God, there is placed upon each the responsibility of coming intelligently, out of his own experience and

\(^1\) In *The Sickness Upto Death*, Kier Kegaard used this word in the meaning of ‘a man in front of God’, emphasizing one’ own independence.

\(^2\) It will be dealt in the next chapter.
volition, to some sort of relationship with - not identity with or extinction in - the all, the void, the suchness, the absolute, or whatever the proper term may be for that which is beyond terms. And, in the secular sphere likewise, it is normally expected that an educated ego should have developed away from the simple infantile polarity of the pleasure and obedience principles toward a personal, uncompulsive, sensitive relationship to empirical reality, a certain adventurous attitude toward the unpredictable, and a sense of personal responsibility for decisions. Not life as a good soldier, but life as a developed, unique individual, is the ideal.”

On the contrary, India and China have a totally different view about self development. For, ego is not considered a substance in both countries. According to the world view of India and China, each individual is a part of this universe, is dancing to the music of the principle of nature (Dharma and Tao). Campbell criticizes the view, saying that the Oriental “focus of concern is not the individual, but the monad, the reincarnating jiva, to which no individuality whatsoever intrinsically pertains, but which passes on, like a ship through waves, from one personality to the next”. And from the Western point of view, he insists that:

“In the Indian myth the principle of ego, ‘I’ (aham), is identified completely with the pleasure principle, whereas in the psychologies of both Freud and Jung its proper function is to know and relate to external reality (Freud’s ‘reality principle’): not the reality of the metaphysical but that of the physical, empirical sphere of time and space. In other words, spiritual maturity, as understood in the modern Occident, requires a differentiation of ego from id, whereas in the Orient, throughout the history at least of every teaching that has stemmed from India, ego (aham-kāra: the making of the sound ‘I’) is impugned as the principle of libidinous delusion, to be dissolved.”

“[In the Orient,] there the ideal, on the contrary, is the quenching, not

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3 Campbell, Oriental Mythology, 22.
4 Ibid., 242 - 3.
5 Ibid., 15
development, of ego. That is the formula tuned this way and that, up and down the line, throughout the literature: a systematic, steady, continually drumming devaluation of the ‘I’ principle, the reality function - which has remained, consequently, undeveloped, and so, wide open to the seizures of completely uncritical mythic identifications.”

According to Campbell, Oriental people are living a life that society needs, like soldiers without growth “as a developed, unique individual”. And it is also said that in the Orient, identification of individual identity and social identity is reckoned an ideal life. His insistence is underpinned by “mythic identification”, and Sātī ritual of India is a typical example. Sātī, who in the myth jumped into the fire for her husband, Śiva, is regarded as an ideal wife by Hindus. Even today, some Indian women who identify themselves with Sātī, perform the Sātī ritual by jumping into the fire to follow their dead husbands. In the view of Westerners who emphasize an independent individual, this Sātī ritual that transcends one’s own reality, can be seen as a barbarous custom. The following criticism of Campbell, that the development of the sense of identity is stymied and individuality is destroyed in the Orient, rests upon mythic identification.

“For a maturation of the personality through intelligent, fresh, individual adjustment to the time-space world round about, creative experimentation with unexplored possibilities, and the assumption of personal responsibility for unprecedented acts performed within the context of the social order.”

Edward Hall, an anthropologist, distinguishes a low context and a high context society. According to him, in a low context society, the individual is not held in bondage and acts independently with free will. But in a high context society, individuals are connected to each other very closely and an individual is influenced by the surrounding context. While nomadic society has a low context, farming society has high context. Therefore, generally, the development of the ego is suppressed and individuality is belittled in an agrarian society. It is

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6 Campbell, *Oriental Mythology*, 22 - 3
7 The Sātī ritual was prohibited legally in 1829.
8 Campbell, *Oriental Mythology*, 22
said that even European farmers in the Middle Ages did not show their own individuality in thought and action. On the other hand, the Orient preserved the high context tradition of farming culture. Thus, it is ignorant to criticize the Orient on the basis on Western values which have only been established in modern era. The individuality of Asians is not so noticeable, because the Orient has been influenced by farming culture. Richard E. Nisbett, one of the outstanding psychologists, explains the natural environment of China: on the whole, the natural environment of China consists of flatlands, low mountains, and rivers which have a good crossing. Thus, it is suitable for cultivation and advantageous to a centralized power. According to him, harmonious relations are important for farmers. Rice farming especially needs more close cooperation, because group work is essential. Harmonious relations between members are very important for having irrigation facilities. The people of India and China, who belong to farming culture, that needs close cooperation, have developed a culture which lays stress on social peace and harmony and suppresses personal desires.

However, Greece, which set up the foundation of Western culture, has a natural environment that is proper for stock farming and trade. The Greeks developed the Western way of thinking that stresses the importance of freedom and individuality, because stock farming and trade needed comparatively less cooperation. When Hellenism was rediscovered in the Renaissance, and democracy and the Enlightenment were developed after the Industrial Revolution, then, at last, an independent individual, such as Campbell extols, could appear. On the other hand, there is no concept referring to ‘individual’ in the Orient where the influence of farming society has continued until now. This can be verified in the use of the word ‘個人(an individual)’. According to Sakuta Keiichi, it appeared for the first time after the Meiji Restoration in Japan. And still, the Chinese do not have a proper word referring to ‘individualism’. It is believed that one person can be a daughter, wife, mother, and grandmother according to functions and relations in the Orient. Therefore, the idea of an individual, with a single identity is strange in the Orient. According to Donald Monroe, Asians apprehend a man in the relation of the whole of family and society. A man, in the context of relationships, cannot act entirely independently, and also, an independent action is not advisable in the Orient. Therefore, harmony in relations is the most important aim in

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9 The Meiji period from 3. 1. 1868. to 30. 7. 1912.
Asian social life. If Asians accept the Western view of ego without criticism, this acceptance becomes the admission that individualistic Western culture is more excellent than the community-centric Oriental culture. The following opinion of Jung on the ego is more balanced than Campbell’s. The original in German, which can be summed up; “Westerners are captivated by ten thousand things and they watch individual things. And also, they cling to ego and objects. Therefore, they do not recognize the deep root of the sum of things. On the contrary, Asians experience the world of individual things, even one’s own self, as a dream.” At any rate, it should be pointed out that ‘weak ego’ has been misunderstood as ‘anattā’ of India by Western scholars who lack appropriate understanding. The Oriental view of the world does not support the effort that tries to harden a person’s identity. Instead, it is aimed at an ego opened towards the world and the universe. The Occident labels the Unconscious as fear, but the Orient tries to transcend the limit of the individual including the Unconscious. The Westerner, who builds a castle of identity, is locked in that castle whether large or small.

2. A hero who does not show his sense of identity

As previously stated, while a strong ego is emphasized in the Occident, functions of ego and development of the sense of identity are not considered as important in the Orient. For, a personal body, feelings, emotions and a sense of identity are not counted as substances. We can find this trend everywhere in Tipiṭaka.

Traditionally, most Asians seem to bear social duties passively, and not to need to grow as independent individuals. Therefore, self-realization in India and China, generally, does not mean the establishment of sense of identity that Westerners seek. However, though individuality is ignored in India and China, it cannot be said that there is not a growth process of sense of identity. In the Orient, self-discipline is essential for social life, and the development of sense of identity is a major premise of self-discipline.

In India and China, one cannot rise in the world (治國平天下) without controlling his/her desires (修身齊家) through self-discipline. Confucianists state that the degree of social success directly depends on one's own accomplishment of self-discipline (修己治人). In Confucianism,
life before 40 (不惑) is regarded as the period for the primary perfection of self. And a period after that until 70 (从心) is regarded as social life.

“At 15 I set my heart on learning; at 30 I firmly took my stand; at 40 I had no delusions; at 50 I knew the Mandate of Heaven; at 60 my ear was attuned; at 70 I followed my heart's desire without overstepping the boundaries of right.”¹⁰

_The Analects of Confucius (2. 4.)_

The age 40 is suggested as a milestone for perfection of self: one should know himself/herself and his/her desires, and he/she should control those desires. In Hinduism, all 4 stages (Āśramas) lay stress on self-discipline and the observing of the Hindu cords (Dharmaśastras, Smṛtis, etc.) through duties like learning of the Vedas, performing sacrifices and giving and accepting of Dāna. But the social life of a Hindu starts at the second stage (Gārhasthṛya), after the Brahmacya stage. Therefore, it can be said that the primary perfection of self which means the control of desires is completed in the first stage (Brahmacarya).

Generally, the heroes of India and China do not show their ego. Therefore, there are a few chances to catch their sense of identity. Rarely, we can see their sense of identity in case of great calamities. Just before a war with his own relatives and teachers, Arjuna reveals his personal sufferings and feelings as an individual.

“29. sīdanti mama gātrāṇi mukhañca pariśuṣyati
vepathuṣca śarīre me romaharṣaśca jāyate
   My limbs quail, my mouth goes dry, my body shakes and my hair stands on end.

30. gāṇḍīvaṃ sraṃsate hastāt tvak caiva paridahyate
na ca šaknomyavasthātuṃ bhramatīva ca me manaḥ
   (The bow) Gāṇḍīva slips from my hand and my skin too is burning all over. I am not able to stand steady. My mind is reeling.

¹⁰ Encyclopaedia Britannica, v.s. “Confucianism.”
31. nimittāni ca paśyāmi viparītāni keśava
da ca śreyo 'nupaśyāmi hatvā svajanamāhave
And I see evil omens, O Keśava (Kṛṣṇa), nor do I foresee any good by slaying my own people in the fight.

32. na kāṅkṣe vijayaṃ kṛṣṇa na ca rājyaṃ sukhāni ca
kiṃ no rājyena govinda kiṃ bhogair jīvitena vā
I do not long for victory, O Kṛṣṇa, nor kingdom nor pleasure. Of what use is kingdom to us, O Kṛṣṇa, or enjoyment or even life?

33. yeṣām arthe kāṅksitaṃ no rājyaṃ bhogāḥ sukhāni ca
ta ime 'vasthitā yuddhe prāṇāṃstyaktvā dhanāni ca
Those for whose sake we desire kingdom, enjoyments and pleasure, they stand here in battle, renouncing their lives and riches.

34. ācāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ
mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ śyālāḥ sambandhinastathā
Teachers, fathers, sons and also grandfathers; uncles and fathers-in-law, grandsons and brothers-in-law and (other) kinsmen.”

The self-abnegating hero who does not show his individuality is more common in India than in China. Most Indian heroes, whoever they are, always mention Hindu Dharma, and their individuality is not so marked. Thus, Indian heroes are typical and depersonalized. In the first chapter of the Rāmāyaṇa, a sage, Nārada, explains Rāma's figure and character, but it could equally be used to describe all ideal Kṣatriya heroes.

"nity'ātmā mahāvīryo dyutimān dhṛtimān vaṣī
buddhimān nītimān vāgmī śrīmān śtrunibarhaṇāḥ
vipul'āṃso mahābāhuḥ kamburgṛvo mahāhanuḥ.
mah"orasko mah"eśvāso gūḍhajatrur arīṇdamaḥ

ājānubāhuh suśirāḥ sulalātaḥ suvikramaḥ.
samaḥ samavibhakt’āṅgah snigdhavārṇah pratāpavān
piṇavakṣā viśāl’ākṣo lakṣmīvān śubhalakṣṇah.
dharmajñah satyasaṃdhaś ca prajānām ca hite rataḥ
yašasvī jñānasampanṇah śucir vaśyah samādhimān.
rakṣitā jāvalokasya dharmasya parirakṣitā
Vedaved’āṅgatattvajño dhanurvede ca niṣṭhitāḥ.
sarvaśāstr’ārthatattvajño smṛtimān pratibhānavān
sarvalokapriyāḥ sādhur adin ātmā vicakṣanaḥ.

All men know of him, for he is self-controlled, mighty, radiant, steadfast and masterful. He is wise and grounded in proper conduct. Eloquent and majestic, he annihilates his enemies. His shoulders are broad and his arms mighty. His neck is like a conch shell and his jaws are powerful. His chest is vast and, a subduer of his enemies, he wields a huge bow. His collarbone is set deep in muscle, his arms reach down to his knees, and his head is finely made. His brow is noble and his gait full of grace. His proportions are perfect and his limes well formed and symmetrical. Dark is his complexion and he is valorous. His chest is fully fleshed; he has large eyes. He is splendid and marked with all auspicious signs. He knows the ways of righteousness and is always true to his word. The welfare of his subjects is his constant concern. He is renowned, learned, pure, disciplined and contemplative. He is the protector of all living things and the guardian of righteousness. Versed in the essence of the Veda and their subsidiary sciences, he is equally expert in the science of arms. He is versed in the essence of every science, learned in traditional lore, and highly intelligent. All the people love him, for he is good, cheerful and clever.

12 Vālmīki, op. cit., 4 - 7.

Chinese heroes are more individual than Indian heroes, but they also could not help escaping from Confucian values. Moreover, an ideal hero, who is defined by social rules according to time and place, is not only typical but also inhuman. For, human feelings are cut
by duties of Dharma and Tao. After rescuing his wife Sītā who had been kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, Rāma spits out cruel words, hiding his love for her, because he doubts her chastity (woman’s Dharma).

“uvāca rāmo vaidehīṃ parāmarśviśaṅkitaḥ
gaccha vaidehi muktā tvam yat kāryam tanmayā kṛtam.

māmāsādyā patiṃ bhadre na tvam rākṣasavesmanī
jarāṃ vrajethā iti me nihato’sau niśācarah.

kathāṃ hyasmadvidho jātu jānan dharmaviniścayam
parahastagatāṃ nārīṃ muhūrtamapi dhāryet.

suvṛttāmasuvṛttāṃ vāpyaḥ tvāmadya Maithili
notsahe paribhogāya śvāvalīḍhaṃ haviryathā.”

“Rāma suspected her of having been touched, and he said to Vaidehī, ‘Go, Vaidehī, You are free. I have done what I had to do. Once you found me as a husband, good woman, you were not to grow old in a Rākṣasa’s house – that is why I killed the Night Stalker. For how would a man like me, who knows the decision of the Law, maintain even for an instant a woman who had been in another man’s hands? Whether you are innocent or guilty, Maithilī, I can no more enjoy you, no more than an oblation that has been licked by a dog.’”

And Droṇa, Arjuna’s teacher, makes Ekalavya cut off his right thumb for gurudakṣinā to keep his word, because he had already announced that Arjuna is the best archer in the world. Ekalavya, a son of a Niṣāda king, wanted to become a student of Droṇa, but Droṇa did not accept him because of his humble station in life. Then having made an idol of Droṇa as his teacher, Ekalavya surpassed Arjuna in archery through intensive training by himself.

13 Dutt, op. cit., 2:807.
“tamabравित tvayāṅguṣṭho daksिनo diyatāmiti.
He (Drona) said, ‘Give me as Dakshina your right thomb.

ekalavyastu tacchrutvā vaco drosaṣya dāruṇam
pratijñāmātmano rakṣan satye ca niyataḥ sadā.
tathaiva hyaṣṭavadanaṣṭataivādīnāmaṇaṇaṁ
chittvāvicārya taṁ prādād dronāyāṅguṣṭhamātmanaḥ.
Ekalavya ever devoted to truth and desirous of keeping his promise, hearing
the fearful words of Drona, at once cut off his right thumb with a cheerful face
and unruffled heart and gave it to Drona.

tataḥ śaraṁ tu naisādiraṅgulībhirvyakarṣata
na tathā ca sa śīghro ‘bhūd yathā pūrvaṁ narādhipa.
Thereupon, O king, when the help of his other fingers, he found he had lost his
former lightness of hand.

tato ‘rjunah prītamanā babhūva vigatajvarah
drosaṣca satyavāgāśīnāno ‘bhībhavitārjunam.
Arjuna became pleased and his fever (of jealous) was gone. ‘None will equal
Arjuna,’ these words of Drona now became true.”\textsuperscript{15}

There is a long list of inhuman things required to maintain Dharma, and this is also a list of
the personal sacrifices of heroes. However, we still have chances to glance at the sense of
identity in righteous Indian heroes as revealed by their own desires. In the \textit{Mahābhārata},
Yudhiṣṭhira known for his truthfulness, misleads Droṇa into believing that the latter’s son has
been killed. Actually, it was an elephant also called Aśvatthāman (the name same as of
Droṇa’s son) who had died. Dejected, Droṇa raised down his arms and is slain. The
Pāṇḍavas' aim to kill Droṇa is accomplished by Yudhiṣṭhira's trick. Yudhiṣṭhira shows his
compromise between the Dharma of truth and his desire for winning the war.

\textit{“bhīmasenastu savrīḍamabravḍīt pitaram tava

\textsuperscript{15} Dutt, op. cit., 1:391.}
aśvatthāmā hata iti taṃ nābudhyata te pitā.
Then Bhimasena suffused with blushes of shame said to your father-
‘Ashvatthaman has been slain.’ But your father believed him not.

sa śaṅkamānastanmithyā dharmarājājamanprccchata
hatam vāpyahatam vā’jau tvāṃ pitā putравatsaḷaḥ.
Your father affectionate to his son then doubting the veracity of Bhima’s
words, questioned very virtuous king Yudhishthira, whether you were really
slain or not.

tamatathyabhaye magno jaye sakto yudhiṣṭhirāḥ
aśvatthāmānamayodhe hataṃ dṛṣṭvā mahāgajam.
Afraid of tell lies but interested in securing victory, Yudhishthira, then
beholding a mighty elephant by name Ashvatthaman slain in battle.

bhīmena girivarśmāṇam mālavasyendravarmanāṇaḥ.
upasṛtya tadā droṇamucchairidamuvāca ha.
By Bhima an elephant belonging to Indravarman the ruler of the Malavas and
that was huge as a hill, approached Drona and loudly spoke these words-

yasyārthe śastramādatse yamavekṣya ca jīvasi
putraste dayito nityaṃ so’ śvatthāmā nipātitāḥ.
‘He for whom you are wielding your weapons and looking on whom you live,
that dearly-loved son of yours by name Ashvatthaman has been slain.’

śete vinihato bhūmau vane simhaśiśuryathā
jānannapanyarṣasyātha doṣān sa dvijasattamam
avyaktamabravīd rājā hatah kuṇjara ityuta.
Slain he lies prostrate on the field like a lion-calf in the woods. Cognisant of
the evils of falsehood that king clearly spoke these words to the foremost of
Brahmanas, adding indistinctly the word elephant after them. Hearing that you
have been slain and consequently afflicted with great grief.
sa tvāṁ nihatamāktande śrutvā saṃtāpatāpitaḥ
niyamya divyānyastrāṇi nāyudhyata yathā purā.

Withdrawing his celestial weapons he ceased to fight. Beholding him greatly anxious and overpowered with grief."^{16}

While Dharma is a strict religious principle, Tao is looser political principle than Dharma. And so in China, there are some heroes who reveal their own individualities, sense of identity, and sometimes feelings. For example, Yi, abandoned by his wife, beats his servants. And Kun steals the self-replacing soil from heaven for controlling water. Because, he really wanted to control water, and it is very easy to make dams with the self-replacing soil which has the property of growing rapidly.

“Gun[Kun] set about his task by building dams, but these collapsed under the weight of the waters before they were strong enough to confine them. A tortoise, some say it was three-footed, and a horned owl appeared, and advised Gun to steal the Swelling Earth [the self-replacing soil] from Huang Di [the Yellow Emperor]. This alone could block the waters and confine them in seemly manner. Gun took their counsel and stole the magic earth, which had the property of growing ceaselessly. With its aid he began to control the waters and thus incurred the wrath of Huang Di. The latter sent Jurong, Spirit of Fire and heavenly executioner, to dispose of Gun, as he had once been sent to punish Gong-gong for causing a flood. Jurong slew Gun on Feather Mountain."^{17}

Most of all, the story of the foolish old man shows the individuality of a man who lays more stress on his own will than provision of nature. Thus goes the story;

“The two mountains T’ai Hsing and Royal House are seven hundred leagues square and eighty thousand feet high and were originally in the south of Chi Province and north of Ho-yang. The Foolish Old Man of North Mount was

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^{16} Dutt, op. cit., 5:671.
^{17} Christie, op. cit., 91.
almost ninety years old, and he lived opposite these mountains. He thought it a painful burden that the northern edge of the mountains should make his journeys back and forth such a long way around. So he gathered his household and put this plan to them: ‘You and I will use our utmost strength to level out a narrow pass, which will go through to Yü in the south and go as far as the south side of Han River. How about it?’ They all agreed with his plan. His wife expressed her doubts, saying, ‘With your strength you couldn’t even destroy the hillock of K’uei-fu, so how could you destroy T’ai Hsing and Royal House mountains? And where would you put the soil and stones?’ They all said, ‘We’ll throw them on the tail end of Po Sea north of Yin-t’u.’ Then leading his son and grandson, the three men carrying poles, he broke up rocks and furrowed the soil, and they transported them in baskets and hods to the tail end of Po Sea. A neighbor, the widow Ching-ch’eng, had a son left to her who was just losing his milk teeth, and he leaped up and went to help them.

The seasons had changed from cold to hot when they all came back home for the first time. The Wise Old Man of the River Bend laughed at the Foolish Old Man and said, ‘Well, you aren’t very smart. How can you, with your last bit of strength and in your declining years, ever break up even one hair of this mountain, let alone the earth on it?’ The Foolish Old Man of North Mount gave a long sigh and said, ‘Your mind is thick, you just can’t understand – you’re not nearly as good as the widow’s weak young boy. Even if I die, there’ll be my son, who will carry on, and my son has had my grandson born to him too, and that grandson will also have a son born to him, and his son will have a son born to him as well, and that son will have his grandson too. Son after son, grandson after grandson forever and ever. This mountain won’t get any bigger, so why do you fret that eventually it won’t be flattened?’ The Wise Old Man of the River Bend was lost for an answer. The snake-holding god heard of this and, feeling concerned that this would never come to an end, reported it to God. God was moved by his faith in his ideal and ordered the two sons of K’ua-o to carry the two mountains on their backs, placing one in Shuo to the east, and placing one in Yung to the south. Ever since then, from south of Chi Province to the south side
of Han River there is not a single bank to interrupt the flat ground."\(^{18}\)

Though we can find some examples that show the individuality of heroes, it is difficult to recognize the whole process of gaining individuality and the integration of the Unconscious. For, the individuality of the heroes of India and China is shadowed behind the sense of duty.

3. Restraint of sensual desires

Brahmacarya, the first of the Āśramas clearly has the aim of controlling sensual desires. In this period, one should learn the control of the senses under the rule of celibacy.

\[\text{\textit{indriyāṇāṃ vicaratāṃ viṣayeśvapahāriṣu}}\]
\[\text{saṃyame yatnamātiṣṭhedvidvān yanteva vājinām.}}\(^{19}\)

\[\text{\textit{The wise man should put forth an effort to restrain his organs roaming alluring objects; just as the driver restrains the horses.}}\]
\[\text{Manusmṛti (2. 88.)}\]

\[\text{\textit{indriyāṇāṃ tu sarvesāṃ yadyekam kṣaratīndriyam}}\]
\[\text{tenāsya kṣarati prajñā dṛteḥ pādādivodkam.}}\(^{21}\)

\[\text{\textit{From among all the organs, if one happens to ooze out, then thereby his wisdom oozes out, just like water form one part of the leathern bag.}}\]
\[\text{Manusmṛti (2. 99.)}\]

The control of sensual desires is most significant for self-discipline. In Confucianism also, the control of desires is the main aim of self-discipline. Confucius regards the age of forty as

\(^{18}\) Birrell, op. cit., 218-9.


\(^{20}\) Ibid., 3:354.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 1:126.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 3:362.
'the unshakable age (不惑)', because he is not tempted by worldly desires anymore at 40. In both countries, the control of desires is emphasized as the most important part of self-discipline. We may find its reason in the tradition of agrarian society. A ‘high context’ society, which looks upon harmony as important avoids breaking its social stability by conflicts of personal desires and interests. Thus, the aim of moral education is to teach control of individual desires according to social rules. In other words, it means the internalization of social rules. Moderation, that harmonizes individual desires with social rules which is expressed as the providence of Dharma and Tao is considered as primary self-realization in India and China. The entrance qualification that is described in the beginning of the Śāstras and other texts is for checking this power of moderation as a basic qualification. Thus it is explained in the Vedāntasāra.

"praśāntacittāya jītendriyāya ca
prahīṇadosāya yathoktakārīṇe,
Juñānvitāyānugatāya sarvadā
pradwyametat satata mumukṣave iti.

Such an aspirant is a qualified student; for it is said in the Śruti passage, 'quiet, subdued'. It is further said, 'This is always to be taught to one who is of tranquil mind, who has subjugated his senses, who is free from faults, obedient, endowed with virtues, always submissive, and who is constantly eager for liberation.'

On the basis of the power of moderation, the final aim of self-realization is achieved, which is Mokṣa in Hinduism, and 'the age of following desire without overstepping the boundaries of right (從心)' in Confucianism. This point will be dealt with in detail, in the next chapter.

Conclusion

In the West, growth and completion of a person is regarded as self-realization. But in India and China, the perfect power of moderation, which controls individual desires and the noble character that never transgresses social rules is regarded as the primary self-realization (whereas Mokṣa is final self-realization). In conclusion, the purpose of self-discipline as already mentioned above is the internalization of social rules (Dharma and Tao). Therefore, in both countries, one who subdues his desires and is ready to follow social rules wins respect as a man of fine character. It can be verified by the use of two terms, ‘Chun-tzu’ and Dharma. In China, ‘Chun-tzu’ originally referred to a member of ruling class, but towards the end of the Spring and Autumn period, it became an honorific term which means a man of fine character. In India also, there are a lot of Sanskrit adjectival compounds having the word Dharma which indicate an outstanding man; dharmātman, dharmajña, dharmottama, etc. In these countries, a noble character means a person who has the perfect internalization of social rules. In other words, the more the ego is erased, the more the public confidence is won. Therefore, an ideal individual who has internalized Dharma and Tao through self-discipline is considered as a hero in India and China. Of course, the more the social rules are internalized, the more the individuality is erased. This is why it is difficult to find individuality in a hero. In conclusion, Indian and Chinese hero can be said to be an incarnation of Dharma and Tao respectively. In India and China, a hero is a model of life that one should follow. He is an exemplary character to teach what to do in life, and not at all an independent person. Thus, the main difference between the Oriental hero and the Occidental hero which is suggested by Campbell can be put in simple words in following way:

"Whereas the typical Occidental hero is a personality, and therefore necessarily tragic, doomed to be implicated seriously in the agony and mystery of temporality, Oriental hero is the monad: in essence without character but an image of eternity."\(^{24}\)

\(^{24}\) Campbell, *Primitive Mythology*, 281.