THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF MEDITATION: A REASSESSMENT OF MODELS, TEMPLATES AND TRADITIONS

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Theoretical writings and research investigations into meditation have expanded since the 1970s with many different paradigms having been proposed to analyze the nature of meditation. These have included a discussion of different models which range from an analysis of what purportedly occurs as one progresses on a path developmentally to proposals of what constitutes the final state of consciousness or culminating experience associated with a meditative tradition. It is argued here that we have been premature in proposing such models which have been based upon a narrow array of writings derived from a few of the better-known religious traditions as well as writers' limited personal experience in these different traditions and other less well-known systems of practice. It is argued that we need to reassess many of the assumptions which popular writers and researchers have made to date concerning the phenomenology of meditation. A discussion of select topics relating to both conceptual foundations and practices

of several meditative systems will be reviewed which demonstrates this point. The role of individual differences in experience is also addressed in part I: (1) the sudden/gradual debate, (2) *shaktipat* initiation and *kundalini*, and (30 sexual rituals. Part II will address this topic as it relates to martial arts traditions

I. THE SUDDEN/GRADUAL DEBATE

Many books have been written on the subject of what occurs phenomenologically in the practice of meditation. A number of these writings represent major works, classical texts or related commentaries associated with better-known religious traditions. For the most part, however, contemporary writers investigating this subject matter borrow descriptions of personal experience across several different traditions and attempt to integrate these findings into a cartography which outlines the progressive changes in consciousness (e.g., stages, structures) that present through ongoing practice.

By and large, this structured, stage-oriented format permeates virtually all of the contemporary western attempts to elucidate what is the nature of consciousness and enlightenment. Much of this appears to stem from two directives. The first consists of the writer's attempt to integrate and better understand his or her own experience in the context of many experiences reported across diverse

religious traditions which have become available through widespread presentation in the literature. The second direction deals with the nature of research formulations. Conceptual and empirical writings make use of available methods of scientific investigation which often require detail-oriented, structural approaches in formulating any conceptual findings or detailing empirical outcomes. What is overlooked is a historically significant concept, Buddhist in origin, that looks at the way such experiences unfold which has a direct impact on the form of meditative experiences. This is the sudden/gradual debate.

While the meaning of "sudden" vs. "gradual" may be debated (Strenski, 1980), for purposes of our discussion, gradual has both spatial and temporal components and refers to slow, graded, by degrees and in stages. "Suddenness" can refer to the "immediate" experiential breakthrough.

Strenski (1980) provides a brief overview of the use of these terms historically, dating back to discussions which appeared in the *Majjhima Nikaya* and his review bears significant attention. He concludes in part that gradualism for the early Buddhists was a complex concept, involving (1) the description of a graded model of the meditative and cognitive landscape and (2) certain values

or prescriptions as to the proper epistemological attitude of scrutiny and experiential testing needed at all levels of the teaching and learning process to attain release. The meditator was thought to progress through a path of real though impermanent set of mental stages (*jhanas*) until *nirvana* was attained. Another aspect of practice, *vipassana* (insight) involved "critical awareness" of these jhanic attainments by reflecting on the qualities of these experiences. By contrast, "sudden" enlightenment (*dun wu*) as attributed to the Southern school of *Chan*, presupposed that the goal of *prajna* (wisdom) could not be produced by a stepwise process of meditation, but rather asserted an *a priori* nature of enlightenment: *Prajna* was already possessed by all. One must realize the *a priori* nature of enlightenment.1

In the history of Buddhism, the debate between gradual vs. sudden enlightenment was allegedly highlighted by two different debates:(1) the eighth century controversies between the Northern and Southern schools of *Chan* Buddhism in China and (2) the debate between Indian and Chinese proponents in Tibet known as the Council of Lhasa.

During the eighth century, debates arose between the Northern and Southern schools of *Chan* Buddhism in China. The Northern school taught a gradual method of

attaining enlightenment as opposed to the sudden approach proposed by the Southern school. The Southern school's position is best represented by a work attributed to Shen-hui, a disciple of Hui-neng, sixth patriarch of *Chan* Buddhism (see Yampolsky, 1967). A second debat was also proposed to have taken place in Lhasa (Tibet) where the Indian *Madhyamika* logician, Kamalisa, argued a gradualist position against a *Chan* teacher, Mahayana (ch. He-shang Mo-he-yan) (see Demieville, 1952). In the latter's view, thought is the basis of all suffering and can be stopped suddenly, allowing for *a priori* enlightenment to reveal itself (Gomez, 1983), although some researchers have questioned the actual existence of such a debate (Imaeda, 1975).

The point to be made here is that there has been no real attempt made by contemporary writers to map out the phenomenology of sudden realization, particularly across different systems of meditation, as they have done with a conceptual, analytical approach stressing the gradualist paradigm. If the phenomenology was essentially the same, no controversy would have developed. Yet, historically, this was a significant issue for a number of meditative traditions.

For purposes of this review, it is important to emphasize that there exist different schools of meditation

that emphasize the way of "sudden" enlightenment (Blofeld, 1962; Cook, 1983; Galloway, 1981; Lai, 1987; McRae, 1987; Stein, 1971; Yampolsky, 1967); teachings which consist of variations on the theme of sudden versus gradual

enlightenment (e.g., sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation; gradual cultivation followed by sudden enlightenment; sudden cultivation and sudden enlightenment (Broughton, 1982; Buswell, 1983, 1989, 1990; Gregory, 1987a,1987b, 1991; Kamata, 1971, pp. 320,340,341; Park, 1980; Shih, 1971, p.175); teachings seeking to conjoin sudden and gradual teachings and practices (Donner, 1987; Donner & Stevenson, 1993); other traditions which have renounced all methods and dichotomies of sudden versus progressive enlightenment (see review by Dumoulin, 1953), and teachings of the "great perfection" (tibetan, *rdzog'-chen*)(Dowman, 1982; Manjusrimitra. 1986; Norbu, 1986, 1987a, 1987b).2

With these variations on the approach to enlightenment, it is clear that phenomenological models have been baised towards a gradualist, stage-specific approach. It is argued that the experiential unfolding may be distinctly different in other traditions which can significantly change the over-riding paradigm proposed to articulate the nature of meditation experience.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to detail the

subtleties of the "debate" issue, but more to point out the overall omission from most phenomenological investigations conducted to date. Critical at this point is the need for interdisciplinary research where phenomenological descriptions are analyzed by specialists in the history of religions and asian studies familiar with the languages, history and traditions which are being investigated. Specific descriptions of consciousness experiences in meditation have subtle meanings which tend to be overlooked by more popular writers unfamiliar with research tools and languages needed to undertake such a inquiry. To illustrate this example, cross-cultural differences in the term *samadhi* can have radical differences in generating accurate representations of a meditator's actual experience (e.g., see Maliszewski, 1992, pp. 54,55, ftnt. 62). If these issues are not taken into account, the same pitfalls are likely to emerge with "sudden" paradigm analyses as has been the case in the gradualist conceptual models.

II. THE KUNDALINI PHENOMENA AND SHAKTIPAT: AN ANALYSIS

The topic of *kundalini* is a popular subject of discussion in many contemporary writings dealing with the subject of meditation. However, the phenomenon itself is

not as simplistic as one might surmise. An analysis of *kundalini* experience can serve to illustrate the difficulty of drawing any conclusions as to the nature and description of this phenomenon despite its more "concrete" underpinnings associated with the human body and corresponding physiological and energetic-based substrates.

In the more popular literature, inclusive of works associated with transpersonal psychology, theosophy and "new age" writings, the *kundalini* experience is often referenced as a significant aspect of meditation which can lead to exalted states of consciousness, enlightenment, becoming one with God or ultimate reality, etc. Some writers attribute all experiences of meditation practice and "higher" states of consciousness to the trigger or influence of this phenomenon (Krishna, 1972, 1993) while other reviews focus on the description of the phenomena itself and how it leads to a state of consciousness associated with enlightenment (see Avalon, 1964).

Kundalini (skt.) is described in the classical literature as the "serpent power." It is an energy power located proximally to the base of the spine which, when aroused through yogic practices, runs up along the central *nadi* (skt., channel) of the subtle body known as *susumna* (skt.) (located proximally to the spine in the physical body).

When it reaches the top of the head, it effects spiritual power, ecstasy and finally liberation. The ascent of this subtle energy pierces a series of (often) seven *cakra*(s) (skt., wheel, circle), centers situated vertically and which serve as channels of various energies. The ascent is accomplished through the practice of meditation and may include recitation of *mantra*s, concentration and visualization techniques, control of breath and use of various *asana*(s) (skt., posture) and *mudra*(s) (skt., symbolic hand gestures).

Most of the contemporary and classical literature describes the *gradual* process of what experiences unfold as the meditator practices techniques to *slowly* raise the *kundalini* up along the *susumna* (see Avalon, 1964; Eliade, 1969). Autobiographical accounts also mention the *quick* eruption of energy along the spine which can also be a dramatic shift from one's normative state of consciousness (see Krishna, 1972, 1993). What has been overlooked by writings to date (within the discussion of this phenomenon itself) are the *individual differences* in experience as to what state is finally achieved and how it is described. Drawing upon textual descriptors and self-reports, if the raising of the *kundalini* proceeds slowly, there is a slow unfolding of shifts in consciousness experience leading to a state of ecstasy (not unlike the effects of

alcohol as one continues to drink over time}. If the eruption of a *kundalini* experience is dramatic, quick and/or instantaneous, then the shift from normative consciousness to the "altered state" is experienced as much more dramatic, distinct, intense and extreme. In such cases, all thoughts cease where even the process of reflection or "registering " of ecstatic sensations disappears.

Ignoring the somatic symptoms as secondary phenomena (e.g. Sanella, 1987; Greyson, 2000), depending upon the way the experience unfolds, the state of consciousness associated with successfully "raising the *kundalini*" may be experienced by various meditators as a different state of consciousness and may further alter one's impressions as to the "completeness, totality, or intensity" of the experience itself. Aside from presenting a new twist to the sudden/gradual analogy, it is clear that seeking a specific "state" assignment of how advanced the state of consciousness is with raising the *kundalini* indeed may become problematic when individual differences are taken into account. Clearly, this warrants a more detailed history of how the entire process unfolded for the meditator (e.g., techniques used, nature of practice, individual responses, etc.)

shaktipat

One variation on the theme of *kundalini* concerns the method of activating, awakening, or "arousing" it in the body. Clearly, there exist a number of methods which can be used and have been described in the literature including concentration, breathing exercises. select ritual practices, etc. However, in the Hindu tradition, an initiation process known as *shaktipat* (skt., *saktipata*, descent of grace) has been used by a *guru* to awaken it in a disciple. The role of energy in this process is critical as it involves the *guru* transmitting his energy to the disciple so as to allow the

disciple to experience directly a state of consciousness associated with the arousal of the *kundalini*. If the question of individual differences arises with respect to the "speed" with which the *kundalini* unfolds, then the issues involved become even more complicated by analyzing the nature/ effects of the phenomena in individuals who transmit the experience of *kundalini*.3 An analysis of this process with respect to the form of transmission, quantity of energy level and experience of consciousness is relevant to under- standing the conscious experience of the transmitter. A comparative analysis of the methods and experience of three meditation teachers is reviewed here, including Swami Muktananada, Swami Rudrananda and Dhayanyogi Shri Madhusundandasji. (For works on/by these

individuals,see Madhusundandasji, 1979a, 1979b; Muktananda, 1978; Mann, 1984; Rudi, 1978). Given the rarity of individuals with this capability, a phenomenological appraisal based upon my own experiences here will be described to highlight questions which arise.

To begin, some 25 years ago, I had undertaken the practice of meditation techniques in order to determine for myself if I could effectively raise the *kundalini.* While successful rather quickly and independently on my own (without the assistance of any *guru*) there was an intellectual curiosity to experience what the three above-mentioned teachers had to offer in terms of increasing my understanding and experiential possibilities with this form of meditation as virtually all western researchers and writers practicing meditation at the time had very limited experiences of any note. To explore this phenomenon, I spent time with each of them and participated directly in the process of *shaktipat* over several sessions. By way of self-report and phenomenological descriptions, I share here my impressions and experiences related to individual differences in consciousness as experienced through the three masters of this process/tradition.

Rudrananda has a specific technique central to raising the *kundalini.* This involved a breathing, concentrative exercise where the individual inhaled air into

his or her lungs to full capacity and concentrated on the heart area (*cakra*). As one came close to reaching the end of breath control, one exhaled about a third of the inhaled air and then inhaled again now bringing the focus of concentration down to the navel area. The breath was held as long as possible and then exhaled. This process was repeated throughout the meditation practice while the *guru* focused on transmitting energy as the student sat in a meditative (lotus) posture. The *guru* could also walk around a group of meditators, occasionally placing his thumb on the disciple's forehead to transmit the energy or even transmitting it at a longer distance (several feet away) without direct physical contact.

Muktananda had a large group of meditators (greater than 100) assembled while *mantra*s were recited. While meditating in a larger group in a seated/lotus position, one experienced being enveloped in a cloud of (felt) energy. One could also be initiated by having the *guru* place his hand on the top of the disciple's head or being struck also on the top of a head by a peacock feather the *guru* was holding.

Dhyanayogi Mudhusundandasji generally had a small group (15 to 20) of people who, while listening to mantras, would engage in seated meditation practice. He would also walk amidst the meditators placing his hands

on their heads as well. Unlike the other two teachers, he was in a trance state while performing this ritual. He had no conscious recollection of what had occurred during this process (when inquiries were made afterwards). Descriptions of techniques and experiences are listed in the table below:

Table 1

"Felt"/presence of energy level ranged from weak (little if any sensation) to high, feeling enveloped in a larger flow of energy/form. Transmission format and techniques practiced were noted previously. Reactions (i.e., ascent of *kundalini)* fall in the sudden(quick, explosive, instantaneous) to gradual (slow, progressive) ranges. As to qualities of kindness, empathy, egolessness, ironically the guru with the "weakest" energy level displayed revealed the most complete experience of these virtues. Hence, what is observed here is the same attained goal or mastery (embodiment of practice) leading to different experiences (personality, expression and verbal statements, manifestation /features of state of consciousness/ presence of egolessness, energy "expression") among the three teachers, again arguing for different experiences of

consciousness within the same "practice" and experience among accepted masters of this practice/tradition. (A prerequisite of *shaktipat* capabilities assumes the individual having experienced the highest level of *samadhi* in this tradition). Other variables may also affect the qualities of experience, such as the length of time the "experience" has been maintained, the aging process, and physical size of and bodily constitution, among other factors. If the "concretized" experience of *kundalini* and teachers possessing mastery of this phenomena raises questions about the universality of shared experiences, similar issues likely exist in other meditative traditions as well where experiential changes are described as being more subtle and lacking any contextual reference to specific bodily processes.

III. SEXUAL PRACTICES

The role of sexuality in meditation and spiritual practice is one area where an understanding of the complexities of body practices and their integration and role within meditation/spiritual practice warrant attention to detail that is generally overlooked by contemporary, popular writers. I will be providing a brief overview of the role that sexual practices had in religious Daoism and Daoist *yoga*, Hindu Tantrism, and Tibetan Buddhism. An outline of

practices will be reviewed, combining information derived from classical sources and knowledgeable translators as well as experiential insights gleaned by practitioners and scholars who have had personal experience in these meditative rituals4. The focus here is not to provide any final pronouncements concerning the nature of these practices but rather to reveal the complexity of analyzing this phenomena. One will observe the variations in range of consciousness experience with similar meditative practices described and arrive at different conclusions regarding the final experience and effects on the individual practitioner.

To begin, there are several features shared in the sexual practices of all three traditions: There exists an esoteric physiology which involves directing an internal energy up along the spinal column to the top of the head through such practices as deep breathing and cultivating air in the navel region. Concentration and visualization exercises are used to accomplish the desired goal. Finally, retention of semen by the male is also deemed to be important. However, a theme underlying the esoteric sexual practice was that it constituted one technique useful in achieving enlightenment. A discussion of sexual rituals and goals for these traditions follows. The earliest dating of these practices traces back to China so our discussion will begin here.

A. Religious Daoism /Daoist Yoga

The term, Daoism, is often used far too loosely in discussions of this topic, even among classical scholars. For purposes of this work, Daoism can be divided into several are.as: religious Daoism, philosophical Daoism (associated with the writings attributed to Laozi and Zhuangzi), and the Daoism of yoga, alchemy and meditation. The early (philosophical) Daoists were concerned with the individual merging with the flow of life in its external flux and becoming one with *Dao*. Adhering to doctrines of purity, stillness and non-action, they were very suspicious of rituals, techniques of "salvation", and against the performance of any sexual practices. Different factions or groups which developed later in time, however, embraced sexual practices.5

Nonetheless, goals of the practitioner could vary, ranging from a householder trying to find a way to satisfy the needs of multiple wives without self-destructing, others simply seeking to achieve a state of superior physical health by arousing and circulating the *qi*, to those seeking "immortality" (chin., *changsheng bulao*). Central to the Daoist practices was the role of *coitus reservatus* and multiple partners. Several themes underlying these

practices are listed here: (1) post-coital enervation was more important than any heights achieved through orgasm; (2) activation of sexual energy (*jing*) fills the body with positive vital energy (*qi*); (3) sexual potency declines with age; (4) ejaculation has the effect of *intensifying* sexual desire; (5) sexual energy can be transferred from one person to another; (6) sexual abstinence can produce physiological and psychological aberrations; (7) man's arousal and passion is faster than woman's; (8) mingling of sexual essences has the power to create new life; and (9) sexual compatibility is the foundation of conjugal harmony (Wile, 1992).

With a strong base in Chinese medicine, it was held that all bodily secretions have an "energetic aspect", and where possible, they should not be released (which would cause the energy to escape). The goals of Chinese medicine also involved a physiological transformation and

not simply mental abstraction. The circulation of *qi* along circuits (meridians) and different centers ("elixir fields", "yellow courts", "three passes", "nine palaces","nine orifices") was the core practice. Mind was directed to the *dantian* ("elixir field") and, with diaphragm relaxed, one intially experienced a sensation of centering a fullness of *qi* in the lower abdomen. Through mental focus in meditation, the *qi* would pass through "three passes" or gates via the

du meridian in the back, beginning at the coccyx and traveling upward through three additional points at the fontanel, perineum and the center of the brain or crown of the head. Deep diaphragmatic breathing, specific postures, visualizations and sphincter control were involved in this process.

Dinstinct from practices in the other religious traditions to follow, the *qi* was then directed down the *ren* meridian (not described until literature of the Sung and Yuan dynasties) beginning between the eyebrows, entering the mouth, and traveling down the throat, past the heart and stomach and back to the *dantian.* Today this practice is generally called the "microcosmic orbit."6 Without the phase of the practice, it was held that medical problems could develop (e.g. headaches).

Also central to these practices were the role of massage, recitation of formulas, prayers, offering of

invocations to the gods, couples interlacing hands in ritual

patterns and gestures with hands and feet relating to the eight trigrams, twelve Earthly Branches and organs; stimulating select acupuncture points to prevent seminal release, and collection of saliva and breath (the former more important than the latter).

The sexual practice itself highlighted the importance of conservation of sexual energy. The goal of microcosmic

orbit meditation was the conversion of *jing* (sexual energy) to *qi.* Later *qi* could be transmuted to spirit (known as the macrocosmic orbit). All the classical texts advised against the use of a single partner. Multiple female partners were used (e.g., wives, concubines, slaves) in a serial fashion so as to delimit depletion of female essences. (There is no know report of a group sexual ritual). The goal here was to engender female orgasms, the partner absorbing the energy released in this process. Some texts describing these sexual practices in detail were egalitarian with respect to both sexes; others were male dominant or even female dominant.7

The goal sought by practitioners involved in these practices was "immortality" (chin., *changsheng bulao*) which was viewed as a transcendent state. The techniques associated with sexual practices developed largely because people were not achieving the desired results through solo practices. Immortality involved the creation of an etheric replica of one's self. The replica was similar to a clone of the original, but it is the product of the union of *yin* and *yang* within the body of the practitioner. It gestates in the middle of the body for a certain period of time. It then begins to exit through the crown of the head. It first tentatively takes a few "astral" steps outside of the body and

gradually with practice it is able to freely roam the universe and become the equivalent of an "astral body". At this point, the practitioner can drop the dense physical body and then become an "immortal." For this school of thought, this constituted realizing the *Dao*. 8

B. Hindu Tantrism

The role of sexual practices in tantric practices (left-handed pracrtices) has been debated by scholars specialiing in asian studies. As example,

"The central *sadhana* of tantrism, Buddhist and Hindu alike, is the exercise of sexual contact under tantric 'laboratory' conditions" (Bharati, 1965, p.228)

"The use of the sexual drive, and the practices arising from there, correspond undoubtedly to something fundamental in [Hindu] Tantrism, but they are by no means its main element." (Padoux, 1981, p. 360).

Questions have also been raised as to the specific purpose or focus of the practice:

"By withholding his own orgasm, [the man] directs his sexual drive toward awakening *kundalini* and

dispatching her upon her journey towards *sahasrara*...By using these as 'springboards' for spiritual advancement and for sublimating finite sensations, Laya-yoga recognizes the value of sexual acts." (Gupta et.al., 1979, p.183).

and,

"*Maithuna* serves, in the first place, to make respiration rhythmical and to aid concentration; it is , then, a substitute for *pranayama* and *dharana*, or rather their support (Eliade, 1969, p. 259).

Essentially, the purpose of this ritual (known as *maithuna*) is to hasten the awakening the *kundalini*. Through yogic techniques this energy is raised up along a central channel or *nadi* through six centers (*cakra*s) of the body to the crown of the head, leading to a state of "liberation" and transcendence (Eliade, 1969). A detailed description of the "esoteric physiology" involved in these practices appear in Eliade (1969) and specific features of the *maithuna* ritual appears in Bharati (1965) and Marglin (1980). The discussion which follows highlights features which expand upon these writings and consisted of field research in India with practitioners of these rituals today.9

Many types of rituals are performed by practitioners

of what is described as the "left-hand" path, including *shava sadhana* (corpse), worship of a *kumari* (female child between one and 12 years of age; no sex involved); *yonipuja* or *shaktipuja* worship of a young girl between 16 and 25 (*shodashi*), preferably a virgin. All of these practices are interrelated. As relevant to the ritual *maithuna*, one precondition is that both male and female be celibate for one month before the ritual. It is preferred that the female be a low class woman (it is said they will experience no shame) without any appendages missing and organs all intact. *Mantras* may be given to purify her. It is important to note here that tantric practitioners make use of sex in their worhip to *control* passion, not to have sexual pleasure.

The ritual is performed with a detached attitude. Retention of semen is important for the man. The process is much easier for a woman because she can surrender more easily than a man. For this reason, she may not require initiation. As to the ritual itself, both partners are nude through-out--the idea is to eliminate passion. There is no use of marijuana in the ritual (it clouds awareness). While performing *nyasa* [ritual "projection" of divinities into various parts of the body], on the woman's body, the *sadhak* (practitioner) imagines her to be a *devi*(goddess). The lips of the *yoni* (vagina) are worshipped by the man in three ways: digital stimulation, use of the tongue, and penile/

vaginal stimulation. Secretions are collected in as copper vessel and drunk by the man. With the tongue to the vagina, there is a subtle *nadi* at the tip of the tongue which can absorb the female's vitality and her secretions. The goal here parallels Daoist practices with the seeking of "immortality" (understood here in the context of extending one's life span).

When the man engages with the woman, his thrusts serve as stimulation and control of level of excitation. Eventually, for the woman, divine attributes or grace manifest in her and she speaks to the man. Guidance is offered as to whether or not the ritual should continue. The man is NOT responsible for the woman's contact with the Divine. If the man continues without the woman's permission, she is said to be capable of destroying him. If she does not permit continuation, the man finishes with the worship only. The goal at this stage of practice is to have the woman experience orgasmic release and lubricate. The man then also absorbs her juices or vitality through his own sexual organs and sucking the sides of the woman's nipples (the nipples *per se* are reseved for the child). The woman remains motionless at this point. One does not absorb all the essences or the person will die. So a small portion is taken at one time. Of course, there are techniques designed to prolong sexual intercourse that are

practiced by the man, including *pranayama*, concentration and assorted *hatha yoga* techniques. One can unite *prana* and *apana* (two principle breaths) and raise the *kundalini* up the *sushumna*.

Within this practice, there are a number of interrelated goals which may be achieved. These include raising the *kundalini*, experiencing liberation, experiencing the divinity of the act, etc.

Eventually, there is no need to have sexual intercourse with a physical woman. One can *visualize* having intercourse with a woman, visualize the union of *shiva* and *shakti* in the topmost *cakra*, imagine the *kundalini* rising and piercing the *cakra*s, visualize the union through use of symbolic (geometric) figures, etc. As Woodroffe (1964, p. 295) has mentioned: "What need have I of any outer woman? I have an Inner Woman within myself."

The ritual itself will always begin with a physical woman which may later lead to practices purely on a visual level. One incorporates these experiential changes achieved through practices with a woman into practices that are concentrative/visualized in nature. Eventually, there is no need for an object as focus on concentration in practice. Nonetheless, liberation is only possible with a woman. Accordingly, there are fewer chances of "falling down."

Maithuna is viewed as the most difficult of tantic rituals to master. In most forms of tantric ritual practice, *maithuna* will be incorporated within it.

There are also females who are expert in this sexual practice known as *bhairavi*. In *lingapuja*, (worship of the phallus) they will perform fellatio in order to absorb the man's vital essences. Similar to a man, the woman can also seek to absorb her own essences. When the man is dominant, he is taken as a *siva* or *bhairav*. In this ritual, the man surrenders instead of the woman.

It is possible for both the man and woman to raise their *kundalini* through sexual union, each performing the technique in their own way. However, it will develop more with one person versed in the respective techniques. Generally, one or the other--male or female--is dominant. There is also a gradual series of stages that unfold experientially during this ritual practice.10 *Cakrapuja* is a ritual which is performed with eight women. If you master the ritual with one, you then later try all eight together. Then you become a *siddha.*(perfected being). Each of the eight women have different attributes and vitalities. The *guru* sits in the middle of a circle teaching them. He may even demonstrate with your *sakti*. All inhibitions must be discarded or the process won't work.

According to tantric doctrine, salvation is achieved

through many techniques. Sexual techniques are simply one approach. One cannot say which approach is more suitable to an indivdual; rather, it depends upon one's past *samskara*s (karmic impressions). However, this is a very difficult practice and not meant for everyone.

C.Tibetan Buddhism

Within tibetan scholarship, there has been the question of whether or not the taking of a consort is metaphorical, visualized practice or involves a concrete ritual (Noted Tibetan scholar, Herbert Guenther [personal communication] has described it as purely metaphorical). Further, distinctions between visualized practice and the taking of a physical consort have also been described, as for example by Snellgrove (1959, p. 33) as follows:

"No distinction is made between an imagined and actual physical process because no such distinction is recognized."

There is also the question as to whether or not certain sects within the Tibetan tradition perform these rituals on a physical level while others perform them on a visualized basis. Descriptions of the esoteric physiology appear in Gyatso (1982) and a somewhat disguised description of the sexual process can be found in Mullin

(1981).

Within Tibetan Buddhism, nearly one fifth of the practices involve use of a physical consort. Practices do not vary in use of a physical consort among the sects or tradition; rather, it depends upon whether or not you are a monk. (There is no difference in this practice between Nyingma or Gelukpa sects (the latter being more monastic--both must practice the concrete ritual). If the practitioner is to proceed along the full path of meditation, he must eventually take a physical consort, but in doing so, give up being a monk.

Preconditions for the monk include complete experience of renunciation, no selfish motives, altruistic motivation to attain complete enlightenment and complete understanding of void nature of the world. A monk who pursues this path gives up this role and reverts to lay status (*yogi*). A fully ordained monk who becomes a *yogi* and takes a physical consort without prior, fuller understanding of the Void is viewed as commiting "non-virtuous action" of engaging in ordinary sex. He must find a partner on the same level of development. The ritual is disqualified if the partner is on a lower level. It also represents a degradation

of one's own inner experience.

As to conditions for the female, she does not need to be ordained or be a nun. She must be initiated, observe all

vows of initiation and remain very pure and reach a similar level of experience.

Voidness and compassion must be experienced before the ritual; otherwise it remains on the level of an ordinary couple practicing *yoga*. A monk must *first* practice visualization of a consort (male and female together) alone in meditation. Signifiicantly, it is important to note that the experience emerging from use of a consort is much more advanced than full realization of the Void.

As with Hindu Tantra, there is emphasis placed upon directing energy into the central channel transversing the spine. Directing of the *prana* into the central channel (tib.,*avadhuti*) depends upon internal and external circumstances. The practice of the male and female consort provides the *external* circumstances. When one reaches this level of practice, it is close to the attainment of Buddhahood. However, lay people can begin this practice early (though the experience is different from the monk based upon his prior meditation experience).

The structure is the same for all participants; the pattern of developing experiences is also the same. The unfolding is very gradual, although the time limit may differ. The depth of what unfolds (i.e., how much) will vary. Stages are fixed, although exceptions may emerge based upon influence of past life experiences. The man must

refrain from ejaculation. Seminal fluid is directed up the central channel instead of outward. If the yogi releases, he needs to begin all over again--retake the initiations, purify himself, and perform all the preliminaries.

The state of mind achieved through the ritual is maintained after the practice, the physical union serving as a "boost." The term given to this mind state is the "great union beyond learning (*mislobpai zung' jug*); the learning stage is called *slobpai zung' jug.* (Needless to say,this state is far beyond the sexual excitation experienced by lay individuals).

With respect to experiential components, the experience is *essentially the same* for the man and woman. In the body, *bodhicitta* can be found in specific areas. In the female, red *bodhicitta* predominates in certain areas of the body. With males, white *bodhicitta* is more prevalent. (This is comparable to the red and white *bindu* (seed) described in Hindu Tantra). Main sites for the white are in the forehead--also the "jewel"; for the red, at the navel--also the throat and "secret place". Through use of a physical consort, one reverses the locations of the respective *bodhicitta*s (see Mullin, 1981). This practice is also important in the cycles of death and rebirth (see Gyatso, 1982). According to Tibetan doctrine, the final goal of Buddhahood cannot be achieved without this practice.

There are two stages in this practice: the developing stage and completing stage. For the latter, when you reach a stage of "mind isolation", that is the time when a real woman must be taken as an external consort. (This is the third stage of the perfection stage in Tibetan Buddhist meditation (see Mullin, 1981)).

It is appropriate here to offer a comparison of visual vs. physical consort. (The visual consort is known as *ye gya*; the physical or action consort is referred to as *la gya*).

The advantage of the physical consort is that it includes the physical structure of the real consort. Here one has physical contact with another human being who has all the *nadis* open, drops (associated with states of consciousness--waking, dreaming, deep sleep and sexual climax-- and located at four main centers --forehead, throat, heart and navel) and physical structure. For the partners, the physical body intensifies the experience as it consists of both inner and outer aspects (not simply the visualized component). Use of the physical consort slows down the dissolution process which unfolds as one proceeds to experiencing the Void. The subtle experiences taking place are closer in proximity to the coarse body which permits the "slowing down". One holds the subtle mind and the subtle energies in better balance, thereby prolonging the stages of meditation so that one can better master them.

Eventually, there is a stage where meditation cannot proceed any further. If you do not take a consort and engage, you are breaching a tantric commitment. One exception: Tsonkapa, founder of the Gelukpa sect, reportedly didn't take a consort, passed on, and took a consort in the *bardo* realm. (Others would have renounced their vows and gone on to become *siddhas* [perfected beings]).

As to experiential features of the ritual, initially there is some intellectual understanding and information given to the monk; however, the experience becomes spontaneous, the practitioner developing the experience. One is not permitted to perform the sexual ritual as an *individual.* One is required to transform *first* into a diety. (In this process, the couple is not focusing upon one another). The male embodies a male god; the female, a female god. Both perform as the deities coupling. There is no trance state involved. This aspect involves the elimination of ordinary appearance. The deities chosen depend upon one's karmic inclination. It may be selected by sect members or based upon natural affinity. Other criteria noted include the following: Physical appearance is not directly important, but texts do speak of a beautiful consort. Some practitioners know each other socially and practice together; others pick

Table 2

Graphic Representation of Sexual Ritual Within Respective Tradition

	RELIGIOUS DAOISM/ DAOIST YOGA	HINDU TANTRISM	TIBETAN VAJRAYANA
GOAL/PURPOSE	various goals (e.g., physical health, "immortality", etc.); "sexual energy" important component of all goals	one of many techniques which can be used to raise *kundalini,* experience liberation	achieve wisdom; signifies attainment of Buddhahood within Vajrayana
LEVEL OF PRACTICE	dependent on specific group or faction; rejected by some; used as a vehicle to facilitate reaching goals sought by others	intermediate to advanced; physical act *precedes* visual act	found in highest stages of practice physical act *follows* visual act
MALE/FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS	male sexually inferior; practices could be male dominant, female dominant or egalitarian	female used as vehicle for man; female more in touch with the Divine than male	male and female roles balanced; experience essentially the same for both partners
PSYCHOLOGICAL/ PHENOMENOLOGICAL COMPONENTS	no deification of either partner (perform sexual act as individuals) energy circulates up back, along spinal column to head and then down front of body, making a complete circuit (microcosmic orbit) multiple partners used, but no group ritual *per se*	ritual context for sexual practice other rituals/practices may precede sexual ritual of *maithuna* female makes contact with the Divine; male follows (if permitted); male and female roles may be reversed; male and female may seek to dominate opposite sex partner in use of sexual techniques if both have expertise	ritual context for sexual practice precondition of Void and compassion deification of male and female *prior* to sexual union

Table 1

Qualities of Shaktipat Experience

NAME (Guru)	LEVEL OF ENERGY	TRANSMISSION FORM (D) Disciple (G) Guru	TECHNIQUE OF PRACTICE	REACTION	EGOLESS QUALITY (level displayed)
Rudrananda	intermediate	(D): focal, more complex but specific technique used (breathing/concentration) (G): conscious of process/events	specific/strong concentration (exertional effort)	brief/quick explosive (sudden)	intermediate
Muktananda	high	(D): singular, simple technique (G): global/diffuse; conscious of process/events	relaxed/passive focusing, diffuse; breathing, concentration; mantras/chanting	subtle/gradual or sudden (sporadic)	intermediate
Madhusundandas	low	(D): singular, simple technique (G): bifurcated on consciousness: conscious of process; unconsciousness of events (trance)	relaxed/quietude; mantras/chanting	gradual	high

A. India

The origins of martial traditions of India are difficult to trace and verify. Early references to combative situations can be found in such classic epics as the *Rgveda*, the *Ramayana*

and the *Mahabharata*. However, recent research has emerged on the Indian system of *kalarippayattu*, revealing a close association between religious and physical aspects of practice found in Indian culture today. *Kalarippayattu* (malayalam, *kalari*, [idiomatic] fencing school; *payattu*, fencing exercise; *kalarippayattu*, place where martial exercises are performed) is a martial art of Kerala (southwest India). Dating back to the twelfth century A.D., many current techniques in the art remain similar to those found in earlier times. During one's preliminary training, foundations of this physical culture system consist of individual body exercising sequences known collectively as *meyppayattu* and ideally a full body massage (*uliccal*). The physical aspects of the system consist of body poses, steps characterized by low stances and long strides, high kicks and jumps, and extended arm and hand movements. The later introduction of various weapons adds the use of thrusts, cuts, and evasive moves to the complex repertoire of bodily movements that characterize the art (Sreedharan Nair, 1963; Zarrilli, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1984, 1998).

Training in *kalarippayattu* also has an internal (*antaram)* component. In depth knowledge of the *marman* (skt.; *marmmam,* mal.) is required for purposes of knowing vulnerable points of attack on the opponent (in either empty hand or armed combat), protection of one's own body and

treatment of injuries to the vital spots in training or battle. The emphasis placed upon visual concentration, use of breathing exercises (*pranayama*, skt., or *swasam*, mal.), accompanied by special hand-body configurations (*mudra,* skt.), repetition of *mantra*, economy of movement and energy, and performance of special rituals (paying respects to teachers, deities and even one's opponent) all aid in achieving proper mind-body coordination. Regular pursuit of these practices may lead to the development of power (*sakti*) and a state of "accomplishment" (*siddhi*) in which the doer and done are one (Zarrilli, 1998). The flow of *prana-vayu* (vital energy: *prana*, breath of life; *vayu*, vital wind) and the initiation of movement from the lower abdominal region known as the *nabhi* or *nabhi mula* , corresponding to the second yogic *cakra*, *svadhisthana*, play a significant role in this process (Zarrilli, 1998).

A number of similarities emerge when some of the techniques and practices employed in various styles of *kalarippayattu* are compared with those found in *yoga*. Traditionally in India, however, their is little conscious attention on the part of the practitioner directed to personal changes that may occur as the practice unfolds. To this end, the process of spiritual emancipation (*moksa*) has historically been reserved for the discipline of *yoga*. Although there is often an overlap in actual practice among

individuals, an intellectual demarcation separating the two disciplines is common. Therefore, it is not surprising to find some teachers of *kalarippayattu* stating there are few, if any spiritual components within the system, whereas others definitely see *kalarippayattu* practice as involving spiritual aspects. Teachers of *kalarippayattu* (*gurukkal,* mal.) adhering to this latter position make clear distinctions between their art and *yoga*. *Yoga* is held to be the supreme *sadhana* (skt.,practice) whose aim is explicitly spiritual. *Kalarippayattu* is a very physical and active form in which movements performed within the discipline of practice serve to exemplify the dynamic tension between control and release (see Zarrilli, 1998). In contrast, *yoga* is viewed as stationary and "inactive." One point of agreement between the two practices that *kalarippayattu* masters familiar with *yoga* share is that both disciplines develop "single point" concentration (*ekagrata*). Some masters even view the experience of practice as moving even further inward to more subtle, refined, and stationary levels of meditation, i.e., to *dharana* and eventually *dhyana* where the "object" of meditation (e.g., the deity) is transcended and a more complete state of non-duality is experienced. However, both paths are traditionally viewed as having their own defining characteristics and place within the Indian social structure.

Within the practice of *kalarippayattu*, reference is also

made to the subtle body. Here, a discussion of such structural elements as *nadi*, *cakra*, *prana-vayu,* and *kundalini* appear. While formal distinctions between *yoga* and *kalarippayattu* do exist as noted earlier, some *kalarippayattu* master texts do contain descriptions of the conventional seven *cakra*, select *nadi* (e.g., *ida, pingala, susumna*), *prana-vayu,* and *kundalini.* Masters who follow such texts may not explain such elements as *cakra* or *kundalini* to the student, but do observe the effect of raising the *kundalini* that may possibly emerge naturally through correct practice. (It is important to note that the student himself may not be aware of the psychophysical process unfolding.) Other texts and teachers, in contrast, make limited reference to these structural elements and may neither recognize nor use the complete map of the subtle body (for example, limiting discussion to the martial arts practitioner controlling *prana-vayu* and, in turn, the mind). Still other teachers make use of a number of meditative techniques that are not a part of traditional *kalarippayattu* to improve the student's power of concentration and the ability to control the mind consciously. These may include sitting meditation (*dhyana*) in which the mind is concentrated on the image of a particular deity (*murti*) (Zarrilli, 1989).

While these divergent trends illustrate the various degrees to which meditative components of practice are

pursued, it should be noted that strong emphasis is placed upon spiritual training and development by Sufi *kalarippayattu* practitioners of the Cannanore area of northern Kerala. Once the adept has reached higher levels of practice and has gained absolute mastery of the body, oral lessons are provided, including progression through a series of *dhikr* (arabic), which are techniques of remembrance or recollection of God performed silently or aloud. To develop spiritual power collectively, a ritual group practice known as *ratib* may be performed in which *dhikr* are repeated in unison by the Sufi martial arts practitioners. Practice of these techniques is understood to have a practical effect in martial arts performance including increased mental and physical strength, concentration, and breath conrol. Eventually, a state of ecstasy, realization of the internal white light, or union with *Allah* may be among the types of excperiences attained. For such practitioners, the spiritual path constitutes the means by which accomplishment in martial arts practice and union with God are achieved (Zarrilli, 1998).

As noted earlier, there is a clearly existing connection between Indian martial traditions and religious practices. With additional investigations of this topic, further information on the practices and aims associated with the overlap of martial-meditative techniques and their

underlying philosophies will be likely forthcoming, for other Indian martial arts are still in need of systematic investigation.

B. China

In China, early fighting forms are known to date back to the Zhou dynasty (1122–255 B.C.) and references to archery, wrestling, and various weaponry appear in literature that predates the Christian era. A close association between ritual dances and the martial arts has led to divergent theories concerning the origins of Chinese martial arts; some speculate that they may have emerged as a category of Daoist physical exercises (Needham, 1956) while others believe that they constituted distinct martial arts that later incorporated Daoist principles within their practices (Henning, 1981).

Although lacking in strong documentation, a persistent belief today credits Bodhidharma (ca. 448–527 A.D.) as being a central figure in the development of a systematized martial system. Bodhidharma (skt.; chin., Putidamo; jpn., Bodai-Daruma Daishi) is an obscure figure in the martial arts and *Chan* (jpn., *Zen*), as well as in Indian and Chinese history. Several versions regarding details of his life exist

(see Draeger & Smith, 1969; Faure, 1986a,1986b; Haines,1995; Masunaga, 1972; Pachow, 1972; Wong, 1978). However, he is generally acknowledged as the first patriarch of the *Chan* school in China. A number of sources indicate that he was the third son of King Sugandha of southern India, a member of the *ksatriya* (warrior) caste who later became an *arhat.* His training in Buddhist meditation took place in Kanchipuram, a province south of Madras. Because of the deathbed wish of his master Prajñatara and to the decline of Buddhism outside India, Bodhidharma left for China, first visiting with the emperor at Nanjing, later reportedly traveled on to the Shaolin Temple on Wutai Mountain in Henan Province. Here he is said to have meditated in front of a wall for nine years (chin., *biguan*,"wall gazing"). At the monastery he observed that many monks were unable to remain awake during meditation. To overcome this problem as well as to improve the health of his disciples, Bodhidharma reportedly introduced a systematized set of exercises to strengthen the mind and body, exercises that purportedly marked the beginning of the Shaolin style of temple boxing. According to legend, these exercise forms were transmitted orally and transcribed by later monks as the *Yijin jing* (*Cultivating the Muscles Scripture* or *Sinew Changing Scripture*) and *Xisui jing* (*Marrow Cleansing Scripture*) (Maliszewski, 1987;

Wong, 1978).

Bodhidharma was also said to have played a central role in transmitting the *Lankavatara Sutra* to his disciple Hui K'o, stating that it represented the key to Buddhahood. The central thesis of the *Lankavatara Sutra* focuses upon the content of enlightenment, including specific reference to such doctrines as Mind-only (skt., *vijñaptimatra* or *cittamatra*; chin., *rulaicang)* and all-conserving consciousness (skt., *alayavijñana*; chin., *alaiyeshi* or *cangshi).* It essentially records what was purported to be the Buddha's own inner experience (skt., *pratyatmagata*) concerning the religious teachings of Mahayana Buddhism. In line with the *Chan* tradition, a central theme of the *Lankavatara Sutra* is the importance placed on a transmission of doctrine from mind to mind rather than basing its faith on the use of words or reliance upon written texts (Maliszewski, 1987; Wong, 1978).

Buddhist teachings (including those attributed to Bodhidharma) became assimilated in China, permeating such preexisting philosophical-religious concepts as *Dao*, *yin-yang*, and the principle of dualism and change, the doctrines of "non-action" (*wu wei)* and "natural spontaneity" (*zuran*), and the importance placed upon exercises for cultivating internal energy (*lian qi*) and its relationship to

the goal of longevity or immortality. The Chinese synthesis of Buddhist and Daoist concepts transformed the previous teachings, the early search for *Dao* being later replaced by the goal of *jian xing* (to see the Buddha-nature in one's self) (Maliszewski, 1987).

Practitioners of contemporary martial arts often claim to trace components of their system back to the original Shaolin techniques introduced by Bodhidharma. At the present time, the major styles of *gong fu* are generally divided into two groups—external (*waijia quanfa*) or hard (*gang*) and internal (*neijia quanfa*) or soft (*rou*). The external system stresses power strikes, greater use of kicks, hand conditioning, and physical strength. While the external system advocates regulation of breath, the emphasis lies more on generating quick movements, utilizing force in straight lines, and responding to force with force (Wong, 1978). The internal school stresses not only the importance of Daoist and Buddhist philosophical-experiential principles described earlier, but also emphasizes the importance of vital energy (*qi*), the will *(yi*) and internal strength. Paralleling practices observed in *kalarippayattu*, practitioners seek to collect, cultivate and store *qi* in the *dantian* (field of elixir) (see Cheng, 1985b; Huang, 1974; Maspero, 1937/1981a), a region located

below the navel, through Daoist deep breathing techniques of *qigong* (see Englehardt, 1987; Yang, 1985). *Shaolin* boxing is subsumed within the external classification while styles classified as internal in nature include *taiji quan, xingyi quan* and *bagua quan* (see Maliszewski, 1996).

The three primary internal styles reflect principles of Chinese philosophy and cosmogony. The major style, *taiji quan*(great ultimate boxing), usually consists of smooth, flowing, gentle movements with no hesitation observed between the various postures and combinations being performed. These movements are observed in all five major schools (Chen, Yang, Wu, Hao, and Sun) and are based on philosophical concepts of *Taiji*(Great Ultimate), *Taijitu* (*Diagram of the Great Ultimate*), the *Yijing* (*Book of Changes*), *wuxing*(five elements or phases), and the interplay of the cosmic principles, *yin* and *yang*. *Xingyiquan* (form of mind boxing), a second internal style, consists largely of linear movements and emphasizes the use of vertical strength and the fist. There are five major forms of striking and a dozen other techniques derived from the characteristics of animals and here, too, movements are based on the philosophical concepts of *Taiji,* the *Yijiing* and *yin-yang* . The art of *bagua quan* (Eight Diagrams Boxing) consists of circular movements (often

based on animal movements) and the use of horizontal strength and the open palm. *Bagua* signifies the eight trigrams of traditional Chinese thought (as derived from the *Yijing*) and have correspondence in one designation to areas of the head and torso and, in another classification, to the limbs of the body. The essence of *bagua* is its ever-changing circling movement, reflecting the circular diagram composed of the eight trigrams.

Although the internal styles clearly draw upon the principles of Daoist and *Chan* teachings in the use of specific forms, self-defense techniques, and strategies, there is little emphasis today upon the goals outlined within the classical meditative systems and sought by some of the earlier martial arts practitioners. The importance of health and cultivation of *qi* may still be stressed (see Koh, 1981; Maisel, 1974; Mogul, 1980a, 1980b), but generally remains limited to this aspect of psychophysical development. Meditation in this sense is viewed more as a technique (or self-regulation strategy of cognitive, physical, and psychophysiological activity) useful in achieving psychological well-being and improving physical performance, than a radical psychological transformative process associated with the culmination of a spiritual discipline (see Wong, 1979a).

While some writers do describe classical meditative goals as an integral component of internal Chinese martial system (e.g., experience of the *Dao,* emptiness, the Void, etc.) (see Maliszewski, 1992)—these perspectives remain clear exceptions to the teachings stressed in the United States and China today (Amos, 1983/1984).

C. Japan

Martial tradition holds an important position in Japanese culture and history. However, as late as the eighth century, formal, systematic combat methods for training warriors had yet to be formally developed. Four centuries later, however, the classical professional warrior, known as *bushi* (jap.), had risen to a politically powerful position, playing a significant role in developing the national character of Japan (see Farris, 1993; Friday, 1992). This favorable climate permitted the *bushi* to further develop and refine the combative techniques of *bujutsu* (martial arts) in the years that followed. Some sixty different combat systems organized around hundreds of formal martial traditions (*ryu)* were known to exist by the seventeenth century (Dann, 1978; Draeger, 1973a).

Zen Buddhism was introduced to Japan from China

during the Kamakura period (1185–1333). Two central figures responsible for this introduction were the Japanese Buddhist priests Eisai (1141–1215) and Dogen (1200–53), who had studied *Chan* in China. Through the efforts of their followers Tokiyori (1227–63) and Tokimune (1251–84), *Chan* as *Zen* was introduced into Japanese life and is often acknowledged to have had a distinct impact upon the life of the samurai, one of many ranks of *bushi* . The integration of martial and spiritual teachings (including Shinto, Confucian and Zen Buddhist doctrine) led to the development of *bushido*, the warrior code. Espousing such virtues as justice, courage, loyalty, honor, veracity, benevolence, and politeness, the classical warrior was primarily concerned with experiencing a spiritual awakening by achieving the state of *seishi choetsu*, a frame of mind in which one's thoughts transcended life and death (see Maliszewski, 1996).

With the growing importance and favor given to the warrior class, it is interesting to note that the Edo period (1603–1868) is characterized as an age favored by peace. This is essentially due to the formal founding of the Tokugawa military government commonly known as the *bakufu* (Mass & Hauser, 1985). Originating in the late twelfth century, the Tokugawa consisted of the successors

of various families who supported a dictatorial and aristocratic form of military government. Under the rule of the Tokugawa, Japan was cut off from the outside world and people were segregated into rigid social classes. Fewer wars were fought, which led to a decline in martial skill. To further reduce martial ardor, the military government directed its people's attention (*bushi* and commoner alike) to the grandeur of Japan's past and had *bushi* participate in non-martial activities (e.g., acting, dancing, singing, poetry writing) and conform to a Confucian education. It is this shift in social awareness that led to the development of the *budo* forms. Taking a more pragmatic stance, the Japanese culture took the Confucian interpretation of the *Dao* (chin., Way)—*Do* in Japanese-- and with influences of esoteric Buddhism, Shintoism, and Daoism, modified it so it applied to man in his social relationships and was compatible with Japanese feudal society (Dann, 1978). The transition from *bujutsu* (*bu*, military [martial] affairs; *jutsu*, art; or *bugei* [*gei*, art]) to *budo* (*do*, way) involved a reorientation away from combat training to cultivation of man's awareness of his spiritual nature. The primary goal of early *budo* was enlightenment, similar to what has been described in *Zen* teachings, external perfection of (martial) technique giving way to self-mastery via "spiritual forging" (*seishin tanren)*. In the state

of the "artless art," the experience of the *Do,* the mind was made "pure" (*makoto*, "stainless mind") and "immovable" (*fudoshin*,"immovable mind"), undisturbed by external nonessentials, even the *Do* was forgotten, the *meijin* (master of the *Do* form) acting with the mind "unconscious of itself" (*mushin no shin)*. This state of no-mindness has been compared to and equated with *satori* (illumination) (Draeger, 1973b; Suzuki, 1959). The distinction in classification made between *bujutsu* (martial arts) and *budo* (martial ways) is often applied even today (Dann, 1978; Draeger, 1973a, 1973b; Maliszewski, 1996).

At this point, it would be appropriate to formally define what some Western writers have called classical *bujutsu* and classical *budo.* Classical *bujutsu* refer to those combat systems developed systematically from the tenth century onward which were designed for battlefield use by the warrior. These systems focused on the optimal development of fighting skills and, concerned with broad combat utility, made use of a wide spectrum of weapons. Among these disciplines were *kenjutsu* (sword art), *kyujutsu* (archery), *jojutsu* (stick art), *bojutsu* (staff art), and *iaijutsu* (sword-drawing art). Classical *budo* developed from concepts initially identified around the mid1700s. As noted earlier, these were primarily spiritual disciplines.

Hence, in contrast to their *bujutsu* counterpart, they had less of a combative orientation and tended to be more specialized, often confining their effectiveness to a particular weapon or type of combat (Draeger, 1973a, 1973b, 1974).

Draeger (1974) has further remarked that specific *budo* systems first emerged during the early part of the seventeenth century. All of these earlier disciplines evolved from the *bujutsu*: *Ken-jutsu* (sword art) was transformed into *kendo* (sword way); in contrast to the traditional *iai-jutsu* (sword drawing art), the essence of *iaido* (sword drawing technique/way) as a spiritual discipline also emerged. While most of the early *budo ryu* focused on the use of weapons, empty-hand *budo* systems also began to appear. A variety of early *budo* forms continued to evolve until the latter part of the nineteenth century.According to Draeger, with the beginning of the Meiji Era, the aims of what he has called the classical *bujutsu* and classical *budo* systems were redirected by the government to develop a new sense of personal and national spirit, thus leading to the development of the modern disciplines. It should be pointed out that Japanese scholars and practitioners generally do not draw distinctions between classical and modern disciplines. However, for heuristic

purposes, this classification, made by some Western writers (such as Draeger, 1974), can be of assistance in analyzing Japanese martial traditions.

Continuing with the classical-modern distinction, the overthrow of the Tokugawa government in 1868 loosely marks the emergence of modern *bujutsu* and modern *budo.* Differences between these systems and the classical disciplines are described as significant. As a whole, the modern disciplines are generally categorized as methods of self-defense or as tactics for sparring or grappling with an opponent. Many modern *bujutsu* systems consist of officially approved, government-sanctioned methods of hand-to-hand combat that are limited to either practice by law enforcement groups for the purpose of dealing with criminal offenders or use by average citizens as methods of self-defense and spiritual training. While classical *bujutsu* involved battlefield combat, its modern counterpart was applied in civil contexts to restrain assailants rather than to maim them or take their lives.

Modern *budo* systems generally consist of unarmed techniques of grappling or sparring that serve as a means of physical exercise or sport, methods of self-defense, or a form of spiritual training, the goal of which is to bring man into harmony with the values of a peace-seeking

international society . Subsumed within the classification of modern *budo* are such disciplines as *aikido*, modern *judo*, *karatedo, kendo,* modern *kyudo*, and *(nippon) shorinji kempo* (Draeger, 1974; Maliszewski, 1996).

When the modern *budo* are carefully compared to the classical *budo* disciplines, significant differences in orientation can be found. While all *budo* systems address the importance of discipline, moral patterns of behavior, and "spirit," the concept of *Do* in the more contemporary disciplines is often viewed as being largely distorted. Modern exponents have been accused of re-interpreting the *do* to fit their own subjective interpetation of their personal role and needs in the world, rather than focusing upon the classical martial-meditative goals.

This purported disparity between classical *budo* and modern *budo* is not altogether new in Japanese thought. A similar distinction could also be noted in the effect that *Zen* had upon classical *bujutsu*. In general, the *bushi* borrowed those aspects of *Zen* that would improve his abilities and efficiencies as a warrior (Draeger & Smith, 1969; King, 1992). To this end, some writers have legitimately questioned the impact, if any, that *Zen* had upon the warrior's system of ethics (Harrison, 1966; Stacton, 1958; Suzuki, 1959), or as a class, actually relied upon it (Collcutt,

1981). Other exponents who lean toward the broader, less confined version of *budo* believe *Zen* clearly did effect changes in practitioners and their respective discipline (Maliszewski, 1992).

Similarly, both the older *budo* and *bujutsu* traditions often had a close association to Shintoism or esoteric Buddhist doctrines (*mikkyo*) derived from Shingon and Tendai sects (Dann, 1978; Lineberger, 1988). Those warriors adhering to the Buddhist practices often made use of such esoteric devices as *mandara* (skt., *mandala*), *jumon* (skt., mantra), *ketsu-in* (skt. *mudra),* and various ritual implements as a means of achieving protection in battle (see Hall, 1979a, 1979b; Kiyota, 1990). Even within classical and modern *bujutsu*, esoteric religious practices existed (see Maliszewski, 1992).

However, it would be premature to conclude that all of the contemporary *budo* systems that exist today represent empty shells of once-thriving, authentic spiritual disciplines. For example, select schools of modern *kendo* and *kyudo* do stress the goals associated with the classical*budo* disciplines(see Maliszewski, 1992). To this end, an assessment of the individual practitioner within a particular discipline remains the best measure of the degree to which these specific *budo* aims are stressed, exemplified and

realized. It is also important to note that the older *budo* disciplines are still practiced today in Japan, though commitment to these martial ways involves a level of dedication, perseverance, and discipline seldom observed in our contemporary society (see Maliszewski, 1992).

D. Indonesia

Consisting of some 3,000 islands, Indonesia has been subject to impact of both cultural and combative influences from other countries such as China, India, and Indochina throughout its history. Today, Java constitutes not only the cultural and political core of this archipelago, but also remains a center of mysticism and magical-mystical practices, movements that have expanded since independence from the Dutch in 1949 (Mulder, 1983). Migrations between peoples of these many islands have been frequent and of long duration, and the combative and mystical elements that continued to evolve over time developed into highly sophisticated martial arts.

While several major combative forms are presently found in Indonesia, the martial art known as *penjak-silat* is the most popular self-defense discipline and the one with the strongest spiritual roots. It reportedly first developed on the Riouw archipelago in the eleventh century CE. By the 1300s, it had become a highly sophisticated technical art

that was open solely to members of nobility and the ruling classes. Indian, Chinese, Arabic, and later Japanese influences permeated in varying degrees a number of the styles. These developments as well as travel between the different islands further modified its combative form (which was no longer limited exclusively to select social classes) leading to rapid diversification. There are now over 150 different syles (Maliszewski, 1996).

Combatively speaking, the term *pencak* (ind.) generally connotes skillful body movements in variation for self-defense, while *silat* (ind.) refers to the fighting application of *pencak*. While these two components can be demonstrated separately, neither can be said to exist authentically without the other. One of the most eclectic of martial arts, *pencak-silat* styles make use of both armed and unarmed techniques, employing fast, deceptive movements, blending with an opponent's force and directing it along specific channels where it may then be controlled.

As a formal tradition, spiritual components of *pencak-silat* are known to have developed through contact with Hindu and Islamic religious teachings. According to tradition, styles of *pencak-silat* take much from the studies of priests (*pendeta*) who used to study animal movements.

The combination of animal actions with various meditative postures employed in religious practices provided the priests with the necessary skills to protect themselves (Draeger, 1972). Spiritual influences in this part of the world are also derived from Tantric and Sufi traditions (Stange, 1980/1981). However, styles will vary as to the degree to which spiritual elements are stressed.

Most systems begin with physical training, learning various movements and applying various techniques to avoid physical injury at the hands of an assailant. Having mastered this preliminary foundation, the practitioner may proceed to develop his inner power which is expressed in various ways. As examples, within the Silat Setia Hati Terate style of central Java one reportedly employs "hypnosis," to alter an opponent's movements and the practitioner of the Joduk style of Bali is able to enter a mystic, trance-like state that distinguishes the individual as a *guru* (ind., jav., teacher). The designation of *maha guru* (ind., jav., master teacher) can be applied to those who engage even further in internal development within the various styles of *pencak-silat.* Finally, those few practitioners who achieve full mastery of their style may be given the title of *pendekar* (ind.; *pendekar,* malay, fighter; *pandekar,* old jav., skilled duelist) a term that also connotes

spiritualist and leader or champion who has obtained an understanding of true (inner) knowledge. The use of deep breathing techniques (*menarik napas dalam,* ind.) is central to attaining spiritual capacities and insight.

The final stage of training in *pencak-silat* is referred to as *kebatinan* (arabic, integrated into ind., jav.: *batin*, ind., inner, internal, in the heart, hidden and mysterious; *kebatinan*, ind., science of the *batin*). It is important to note that Indonesian mysticism (and in particular Javanese mysticism) generally lacks a systematic theology since the practice of mysticism remains an individual endeavor with great importance placed upon one's own personal revelation and inner emotional experience. For this reason, there is neither dogma nor commonly accepted written sources in Javanese religion. Hence, like the various styles of *pencak-silat*, pursuit of the mystical path incorporates methods and practices that will be different for each sect. Philosophically and experientially speaking, non-martial methods of spiritual development resemble the path of *pencak-silat* in many ways, such as the completion of a series of stages on the mystical path, moving from external concerns in the world to inner development, the importance given to the role of *guru*, and the significance attributed to moral and ethical conduct. The path of *kebatinan* seeks to

develop inner tranquillity and the *rasa* (intuitive inner feeling) through a method known as *sujud* (self-surrender). By ridding himself of bodily desires and other impulses through this self-surrender, one may experience intuitively the divine presence of "God" residing within the heart (*batin*). From another perspective, the inner man is conceived of as a microcosm (*jagat cilik*) of the macrocosm (*jagat gede*) that is Life. The practitioner of *kebatinan* seeks to cultivate the true self (*ingsun sejati*), achieving harmony and ultimately unity with this all-encompassing principle (*manunggaling kawula-gusti)* as well as with his origin and his destination (*sangkan paran*). In this final process, the adept becomes one with ultimate reality (Mulder, 1970, 1982).

The path of *kebatinan* is quite strenuous. One must overcome one's attachment to the outward aspects of existence (*lahir*) through pursuit of such ascetic practices (jav., *tapa*) as sexual abstinence, fasting, prayer, meditation (particularly visual-concentrative techniques), remaining awake throughout the night, *kungkum* (sitting for hours immersed in rivers during the night at auspicious places), or retreating to mountains and into caves. The purification achieved through *tapa* may lead to *semadi*, a state of mind that, in this cultural context, is best described as world-

detached concentration in which one is open to receive divine guidance, knowledge, and ultimately the revelation of the mystery of life, origin, and destiny (Moertono, 1968; Mulder, 1983). Only advanced practitioners make clear distinctions between *tapa* and *semadi* (Maliszewski, 1987; Mulder, 1983). In non-martial writings concerned with such mystical practices, several types of *semadi* meditation have been distinguished on the basis of their purported goals, thus illustrating a wide range of mystical possibilities. *Semadi* meditation may be practiced to (1) achieve a destructive aim by means of magic, (2) attain a specific positive goal for which greatly enhanced power is needed, (3) experience revelation of the mystery of existence, or (4) achieve ultimate deliverance from all earthly desires (Mangkunagara VII of Surakarta, 1957). The martial influence of the first goal is clear, though its practice is relegated to a level of "black magic" (Mulder, 1983). The third and fourth goals, in contrast, constitute the very purpose of mysticism.

While this conceptual framework may prove useful in conveying the distinct cultural imprint associated with mystical-religious practices in this part of the world, it more than likely detracts from providing a clear picture of the unique and variable form that the spiritual practices take

among various practitioners of *pencak-silat*. It may be misleading in seeking specific terms, key words, and concepts of *pencak-silat* as they relate to *kebatinan* insofar as it is unlikely that any two practitioners would hold the same view. Rather, descriptions of specific cases would provide more accurate accounts of what is encompassed within the esoteric practices. Hence, in some circles, use of Indic Javanese terms has diminished, e.g., the Indic Javanese word *semadi* has been replaced by other words such as *sujud* (surrender) and *panembah* (prayer). As noted earlier in regard to other martial arts, the degree to which the mystical practices are pursued and realized will vary from one practitioner to another. Indeed, some *pendekar* today avoid all involvement with magical mysticism and *kebatinan*, while others reportedly test their prowess by practicing the non-corporeal, mystical aspects of their style (Maliszewski, 1987).

E. Review and Analysis

Several factors come to mind with this synopsis of martial arts. First, for many martial traditions, the meditative components are integrally woven into the formal practice. Second, the variety of expression and description of states

of consciousness viewed as the goal of practice remains distinct and highly idiosyncratic. The complexity of analyzing meditative experiences is clearly obvious.

In reality, subsuming phenomenological experiences based on martial and meditative practices within any general classification of models of consciousness may prove to be difficult. To begin, the conscious, repetitive practice of select physical movements over time becomes encoded on an unconscious level within the mind of the practitioner. Response to a physical threat or movement with martial techniques may involve no conscious awareness on the part of the practitioner nor strict rote re-enactment of previously learned movements, i.e., subliminal or unconscious intentions and specific (yet possibly varied) movement patterns bypass the individual's introspective, conscious awareness altogether. While such exercises and responses are actually "meditative" in nature (even if overtly practiced only with an emphasis upon physical performance), the practitioner may not consciously identify them as such. This was illustrated in the review of *kalarippayattu* where the student was described as being unaware of the *kundalini* rising, in contrast to *yoga* where awareness of such changes is encouraged.

Introduction of formally defined meditative or religious

practices further compounds the problem of analyzing purely physical aspects: some martial arts encourage the further development of the subliminal senses, though the way in which this "intuition" is employed will vary. Other practices, in contrast, do not cultivate increased consciousness of such processes (e.g., the trances of Balinese *silat*). To this end, martial-based meditative disciplines can contribute to shifts in psychological functioning that are not observed in similar, non-martial meditative disciplines. The form and degree with which such "unconscious" elements and other characterological changes occur in the practice of formal martial, meditative, or martial-meditative systems will involve an idiographic assessment of the person within the respective tradition or traditions.

Another significant point concerns the way martial arts possessing a meditative component in practice uses traditional sitting and mindfulness techniques in execution of performance. Strict use of traditional concentrative and/or mindfulness meditative techniques to perform martial art movements as form or in the context of combat would limit quality and flow of performance in the former and reaction time in the latter (particularly apparent within advanced practices). In both situations and across all

martial arts, one must act spontaneously, automatically, and instantly without conscious thinking or deliberation--hence, the importance of "no-mindness" as mental process superceding, though possibly momentarily making use of, concentrative and mindfulness techniques for purposes of focusing atttention just prior to martial-meditative execution of movement (see also Caputo & Wong, 1980, p. 5; Kiyota, 1990; and Wong, 1978, pp. 73-78). To this end, it is important to note that the heightened state of "one-point concentration" in martial art may be partial and precarious in contrast to the more sustained form achieved in sitting meditation (for a comprehensive analysis of this topic, see Zarrilli, 1998). The importance of this training may have an impact in specific features characteristic of those states of consciousness experienced or associated with more advanced levels of the martial-meditative disciplines.

Continuing along this line of thought, the martial arts can also be used to complement "static"(sitting, stationary) meditative disciplines. According to legend, techniques associated with the martial arts were reportedly employed by Bodhidharma to offset the austerity of strict contemplative efforts as well as to provide the physical foundations in body development necessary to withstand

the dramatic shift in consciousness that characterizes enlightenment. Today, the same position can be argued as well: the psychophysical exercises of the martial arts can both offset the strict meditative exercises with an alternative form of "moving meditation" (thus complementing one set of practice techniques with an additional group of preparatory exercises) as well as prepare the body physically to support and sustain the dramatic shifts in consciousness that lie ahead. The physical practice can also serve as psychological "grounding" for those practitioners who might lose touch with activities of the external physical world, having become excessively preoccupied with internal mentation activity. Further, though hitherto unrecognized by many serious meditators, careful selection and practice of specific martial techniques and movements can accelerate the progress of the meditator towards his respective goal, regardless of the particular meditative discipline in which one may be involved. To this end, the great Zen master Hakuin (1685–1768) stated that the way of the warrior could serve as a model for the monk:

"In my later years I have come to the conclusion that the advantage in accomplishing true meditation lies distinctly in favor of the warrior class....Mounted on a sturdy horse, the warrior can ride forth to face an uncountable horde of enemies as though he were riding

into a place empty of people. The valiant, undaunted expression on his face reflects his practice of the peerless, true, uninterrrupted meditation sitting. Meditation in this way, the warrior can accomplish in one month what it takes the monk a year to do; in three days he can open up for himself benefits that would take the monk a hundred days" (Yampolsky, 1971, p. 69).

Finally, another complementary role to formal meditation served by the practice of martial arts is that of "balancing" psychophysical and psychophysiological processes. Excessive sitting meditation can lead to somatic problems, such as ulcers and headaches. Utilizing an energy-based and movement-oriented meditative practice can eliminate or prevent these difficulties when the proper "balance" is achieved (see Maliszewski, 1992, 1996). Evaluating these observations, psychophysiological factors may enter into consideration of criteria for a comprehensive "transformation" or concept of enlightenment, a point which has been more dramatically argued by Aurobindo (Ghose, 1971).

V. CONCLUSIONS

Several different topics have been addressed in this paper, arguing for a renewed and vigorous reassessment of our conceptualization and understanding of meditation

experience. Drawing upon information derived from textual descriptions and analyses to self-reports and personal interviews, it can be seen that our understanding of the phenomenology of meditation is still largely undeveloped.

Traditionally, specialists familiar with classical texts as source material often limit their investigations to a particular tradition or small number of traditions. Recognizing the complexity of analyzing meditative experience, they seldom attempt to draw comparisons across disciplines for fear of misinterpreting or having insufficient knowledge of a particular tradition. To this end, this attention to detail, as for example in Asian studies, far exceeds similar professional reviews in the field of psychology dealing with a similar topic where a greater latitude for varying interpretations is mistakenly allowed. Statements addressing direct experiential understanding of the subject matter is also quite rare in Asian studies, coming out of a tradition where it was held "objectivity" in analyzing source material was compromised by direct involve involvement or participation in a spiritual path (Maliszewski et al., 1981).

To avoid the limitations posed by the more simplistic conceptual models existing at this time, it is argued that renewed efforts be made to encourage cross-

disciplinary research and collaboration among specialists in the fields of history or religions, asian studies as well as the efforts of transpersonal psychology. This point was argued nearly 25 years ago (see Maliszewski et al., 1981) and is still a significant issue today (see Andresen, 2000). The outcome of such collaborative efforts will help us to better understand the range of possibilities within the evolving practice of meditation.

FOOTNOTES

(1) Another way of describing this consists of one position which understands enlightenment as a realm of experience which is simple (integral, whole), ineffable and innate (i.e.,not acquired) and the other view which can be recognized by degrees,stages, or parts, requiring personal cultivation, growth and development. The sudden approach may consist of condensing stages or leaping over intermediary stages (Buswell & Gimello, 1992). However, though beyond the scope of this essay, the situation actually becomes more complex . As Gomez (1987) has succinctly pointed out, the debate is more than an issue of speed or abruptness but deals with basic dichotomies that are at the root of Buddhism including the nature of change, the nature of the state of enlightenment (innate or to be attained), the connection between liberation and moral and ritual activity and the primary epistemology over ethics (or cognitive over moral transformation).

(2) Arguments concerning the merits of the respective approaches, sudden vs. gradual enlightenment, were

known historically. A review of the issues can be found in Chinul (1983), Cook (1983), Demieville (1952) Gimello and Gregory (1983), Gomez (1983) and Taylor (1983).

(3) Excellent discussions of the role of *guru* and *diksha* (skt., initiation) appear in Gonda (1965). Books of varying quality have appeared on the topic of *shakipat* (e.g., see Josi, 1973; Sivom Tirtha, 1985; Vishnutirtha, 1965). Most contemporary investigations of *kundalini* deal with neurophysiological correlates and somatic reactions associated with the phenomena (e.g. Sanella, 1987; Greyson, 2000). More rigorous and critical reviews of the phenomena are often lacking (though somewhat dated, see the excellent review by Bharati, 1985).

(4) I am indebted to the following people who assisted with dissemination and verification of information regarding these rituals by way of direct practice and/or analyses of textual sources: Doug Wile, Michael Saso, Robert Thurman, Sankar Sengupta, Agehananda Bharati, Lati Rinpochay, V. Mehra, H.H. the Dalai Lama.

(5) While there were detractors who renounced sexual practices, none cast out the importance of sexual energy, where one could awaken the "original *yang*" manifesting in

erection during meditation to set the *qi* in motion. The distinction was also made between (solo) "pure practices" and "paired practices." The argument of the "pure practices" inner elixir school held that the gross postnatal secretions exchanged during male-female intercourse were inferior to the prenatal *yin-yang* essences harmonized in the body of the solo practitioner (Wile, 1992).

(6) A more indepth discussion of this sexual practice can be found in Wile (1992, pp. 25-27+) and Maspero (1981).

(7) Men were innately viewed as sexually inferior to women, leading to the need to equalize this advantage through sexual techniques, evening the odds which in military language was described as the "battle of the sexes." According to Daoist medical view, women's disadvantage lay in the depletion of energy that occurred during childbirth, nurturing children, pregnancy and menopause.

(8) In contrast, for the philosophical Daoists, the focus was to achieve a piece of mind, not fearing death, being free of superstition, the ego and going with the flow.

(9) Field research in Asia for this work was supported by a

grant from The American Institute of Indian Studies/ Smithsonian Institute during 1985.

(10) This contrasts with the description of the ritual as it was practiced in Japan by members of the Tachikawa sect, where the experiential qualities were briefer and more "immediate" in nature (see Van Gulik, 1951).

(11) This experience is similar to what is known as the clear light teachings found in other highest *yoga* tantras.

Glossary of Terms

arhat [Sanskrit]: A saint who is fully liberated, having achieved *nirvana*.

ayurveda [Sanskrit]: (literally, the knowledge [science] of [long] life [or health]) An ancient system of healing of India.

bardo [Tibetan]: a state intermediate between death and a new reincarnation.

bodhicitta [Sanskrit]: (literally, "thought of awakening"; wisdom heart). In tantric yogic practice, *bodhicitta* is understood as "thought of awakening" and *semen virile,* the *yogi* entering a plane where it is understood that semen can be transformed into thought and vice-versa.

Buddhism: A pan-Asian religious tradition dating back some twenty-five hundred years associated with Shakyamuni, the Buddha. His teaching consisted of the Four Noble Truths, the last of which was the affirmation of a new way of deliverance from the endless round of birth and dying.

cakra [Sanskrit]: Centers situated proximal to the spinal column in the subtle body, beginning at its base and generally extending to the top of the head that serve as channels of various energies.

Chan [Chinese]: In Chinese Buddhism, a general term for

meditation. Identifying characteristics of this approach include a special transmission outside of the scriptures, no dependence on words and letters, seeing into one's own nature, and attaining Buddhahood.

Confucianism: A central religious and philosophical tradition of China, also known as the "school of the learned." In this religion, there is no pantheon of gods, creed or official organization. The importance of ancestor worship and morality (harmony, moderation,filial piety) is stressed.

Dao [Chinese]: A fundamental concept of Chinese thought, indicating broadly the "way," path, eternal principle. With the Daoists, it became the unity under the plurality of the universe.

Daoism [Chinese]: A religion of China concerned with a following of *Dao* in a nature mysticism and with retreat from the falsehood and disruption of life. Alchemy, longevity, and immortality are central components of this tradition.

dharma [Sanskrit]: A broad reference to "religion;" also, the essential foundation of something or things in general; it denotes truth, "correctness" (the way things are or should be), knowledge, morality, and duty.

dhyana [Sanskrit]: A current of unified thought; a continuum of mental efforts to assimilate the object of meditation free

from any other effort to assimilate other objects.

Do [Japanese]: "Way;" the path followed in life that, resting upon ethical, philosophical and spiritual foundations, is expressed through training in a prescribed manner, directed towards an ideal of self-perfection (enlightenment).

ida [Sanskrit]: An important *nadi* that plays a role in all yogic techniques, located to the left of the *susumna*.

kundalini [Sanskrit]: Energy located proximally to the base of the spine that, when aroused through yogic practices, runs up the *susumna* and upon reaching the top of the head, effects ecstasy and final liberation.

Mahayana [Sanskrit]: A development of thought and practice within Buddhism from the first century that emphasized the supramundane personality of the Buddha as the essence of phenomena, the *bodhisattva* ideal (one destined to become enlightened, a future Buddha) and the philosophy of *sunyata* (Void).

mandala [Sanskrit]: A symbolic diagram often comprising a circular border and one or more concentric circles enclosing a square divided into four triangles. Here it is used as a support aid in concentrative meditation.

mantra [Sanskrit]: Any combination of letters believed to be of

divine origin and used to evoke divine powers and realize a communion of man with the divine source and essence of the universe.

marman [Sanskrit]: Vulnerable points in the human body.

moksa [Sanskrit]: final or eternal emancipation; release from worldly existence and cycle of death-rebirth in the physical world.

mudra [Sanskrit]: A gesture, finger posture or symbolic position of the hand used in ritual and meditation.

nadi [Sanskrit]: (literally, conduits, vessels, nerves) The channel through which vital energy circulates throughout the subtle body.

pingala [Sanskrit]: An important *nadi* that plays a role in yogic techniques, located to the right of the *susumna.*

pratyahara [Sanskrit]: Emancipation of sensory activity from the domination of exterior objects.

qi [Chinese]: (literally, air, vapor, breath, atmosphere) A central concept in Daoism and Chinese medicine. In the Daoist view *qi* is the vital energy, the life-force, the cosmic spirit that pervades and enlivens all things and is therefore synonymous with primordial energy. Also known as *ch'i.* (Wade-Giles romanization)

samadhi [Sanskrit]: In the context used here, a meditative state of consciousness characterized by ecstasy, alert absorption, and unification.

satori [Japanese]: Zen term for the experience of awakening (enlightenment).

Shingon [Japanese]: A tantric Buddhist sect introduced to Japan by the priest Kukai in the ninth century that emphasizes reciting *mantras*, rituals, and the practice of meditation especially with the aid of *mandalas*.

Shinto [Japanese]: (literally, Way of the Gods) The original religion of Japan. Early Shinto is characterized by belief in a multitude of deities. Every mountain, every river—all forms of nature are associated with a deity (*kami)*. The most important deities are father Heaven and mother Earth, who created the Japanese islands and the rest of the deities.

susumna [Sanskrit]: the central channel or *nadi* of the subtle body located proximal to the spine in the physical body that plays a significant role in yogic techniques.

Tendai [Japanese]: A religious tradition introduced to Japan in the ninth century whose philosophical base is the *Lotus Sutra* and which attributes the Buddha-nature to the ordinary man affirming that enlightenment is aided by moralistic ways and rigorous meditation.

Void: A Buddhist concept/experience referring to phenomena seen as empty of self or anything similar; it can also refer to the realization that phenomena are empty of any substantial existence.

yin-yang [Chinese]: The ancient Chinese theory of the two opposite and complementary forces in nature. Yin is associated with the feminine, earth, darkness, moon, night, cold and passivity. Yang is associated with the masculine, heavens, light, heat, day, sun and activity.

yoga [Sanskrit]: (literally, yoke) In Hinduism this has the sense of harnessing oneself to God, seeking union with Him.

Zen [Japanese]: Meditation in the way of the historic Buddha that appeared as a formal practice in Japan in the ninth century. It emphasizes an independence of texts, experiencing enlightenment (*satori*) and an application of its teachings to daily work and art.

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Table 1

Qualities of Shaktipat Experience

NAME (Guru)	LEVEL OF ENERGY	TRANSMISSION FORM (D) Disciple (G) Guru	TECHNIQUE OF PRACTICE	REACTION	EGOLESS QUALITY (level displayed)
Rudrananda	intermediate	(D): focal, more complex but specific technique used (breathing/concentration) (G): conscious of process/events	specific/strong concentration (exertional effort)	brief/quick explosive (sudden)	intermediate
Muktananda	high	(D): singular, simple technique (G): global/diffuse; conscious of process/events	relaxed/passive focusing, diffuse; breathing, concentration; mantras/chanting	subtle/gradual or sudden (sporadic)	intermediate
Madhusundandas	low	(D): singular, simple technique (G): bifurcated on consciousness: conscious of process; unconsciousness of events (trance)	relaxed/quietude; mantras/chanting	gradual	high

Table 2

Graphic Representation of Sexual Ritual Within Respective Tradition

	RELIGIOUS DAOISM/ DAOIST YOGA	HINDU TANTRISM	TIBETAN VAJRAYANA
GOAL/PURPOSE	various goals (e.g., physical health, "immortality", etc.); "sexual energy" important component of all goals	one of many techniques which can be used to raise *kundalini*, experience liberation	achieve wisdom; signifies attainment of Buddhahood within Vajrayana
LEVEL OF PRACTICE	dependent on specific group or faction; rejected by some; used as a vehicle to facilitate reaching goals sought by others	intermediate to advanced; physical act *precedes* visual act	found in highest stages of practice physical act *follows* visual act
MALE/FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS	male sexually inferior; practices could be male dominant, female dominant or egalitarian	female used as vehicle for man; female more in touch with the Divine than male	male and female roles balanced; experience essentially the same for both partners
PSYCHOLOGICAL/ PHENOMENOLOGICAL COMPONENTS	no deification of either partner (perform sexual act as individuals) energy circulates up back, along spinal column to head and then down front of body, making a complete circuit (microcosmic orbit) multiple partners used, but no group ritual *per se*	ritual context for sexual practice other rituals/practices may precede sexual ritual of *maithuna* female makes contact with the Divine; male follows (if permitted); male and female roles may be reversed; male and female may seek to dominate opposite sex partner in use of sexual techniques if both have expertise	ritual context for sexual practice precondition of Void and compassion deification of male and female *prior* to sexual union