

# *A Symposium on Oriental Philosophy*

## CHINESE PHILOSOPHY AND A FUTURE WORLD PHILOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

**I**N SPITE of the apparent chaos in Chinese social and political affairs, there has been great progress, since the beginning of this century, in the intellectual life of the Chinese, especially in their philosophical thinking. This was to be expected. The chaos in China is one aspect of the transformation of Chinese society from a medieval to a modern character. In the transformation, a vacuum is created between the traditional ways of living, which already have become archaic, and the new ones, which are still to be adopted. Such a vacuum is quite inconvenient for practical daily life but is very good for philosophy, which has always flourished in times when no dogmas or conventions restrained the free movement of the human spirit.

In a period of transformation, all ideas or ideals of the past are equally to be reviewed and revalued, and none of them can claim to have more authority than the others. The man who does the reviewing and revaluing is the philosopher, who thereby reaches a higher point of view than those who confine themselves to a single way of thinking.

In the present transformation going on in China, the Chinese philosophers are especially fortunate, because, since the beginning of this century, they have had as the object of their review and revaluation the ideas or ideals not only of their own past but also of the past and present of the West. Systems proposed by the great minds of both

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