Abstract

Purpose – In the Western world, Carl Jung was the first to posit a theory of synchronicity to explain the startling divinatory power of the *I Ching*. Yet long before his time and unbeknownst to the West, the Chinese had already institutionalized as their tradition, simple practices for enabling decisions grounded on the synchronous concept. The purpose of this paper is to explain the process from within the context of Chinese Buddhist spirituality.

Design/methodology/approach – The approach here is to provide the background of Han Chinese Buddhism in modern China and within it, the wide practices of Kuan Yin spirituality and introducing the tools that the Chinese devised for consulting the Goddess of Mercy, as Kuan Yin is otherwise known. Then a discussion is made, for the first time, of the underlying mechanics as well as the mind and energy aspects. Having so introduced the religious background, spirituality, tools and mechanics, the processes of temple consultations for decisions are then explained. In the discussion, a framework for classifying decisions is outlined along with probability concepts. There is also the requirement for the inquirer to seek a metaphorical interpretation of the poetic imagery as contained in the *Qian* (a slip of paper).

Findings – Through writing this paper, the author wishes readers, both managerial and those in research, to understand what is still the approach (even more widely in China now than before) in how the Chinese – in and outside of China – approach the task of making major, complex decisions. These practices which date from antiquity clearly suggest the Chinese had gone beyond Jungian synchronicity in translating the theory into practice for decision making. In other words, they had long recognized the need for tools, techniques and approaches to help them make complex, difficult decisions: decisions that often go beyond the rational boundaries of the mind.

Practical implications – With the rising impact of the Chinese on the global economy and society, there is clearly a need for works that explain major Chinese processes such as the making of decisions. The art of decision making by the Chinese on the basis of what Jung theorized as synchronicity should become much better understood by researchers and managers.

Originality/value – There are very few academic papers exploring the process of Kuan Yin consultation in decision making by the Chinese. Yet this can be seen across many temples in everyday China and overseas Chinese communities as well as in Japan, Korea and Vietnam. The understanding of such processes is necessary for anyone, who wishes to grasp the minds of the Chinese as regards the process involved in the making of major decisions.

Keywords China, Decision making, Carl Jung, Synchronicity, Kuan Yin, Spirituality, Jungian psychology, Beliefs

Paper type Conceptual paper
the ancient Chinese mind contemplates the cosmos in a way comparable to that of the modern physicist, who cannot deny that his model of the world is a decidedly psychophysical structure [...] Just as causality describes the sequence of events, so synchronicity to the Chinese mind deals with the coincidence of events [...] (Jung, 1978, p. 217).

Background

When writing about synchronicity in *Psychology and the East*, Carl Jung made it abundantly clear:

> I do not know Chinese and have never been in China (p. 214).

His insights into the working of the Chinese had been through the study of the *I Ching* or widely known in the West as the *Book of Changes*. *I Ching* is well known among the Chinese for its divinatory power and is thus not just a text of Chinese philosophy. Ancient Chinese leaders resorted to *I Ching*, when faced with the need to make critical decisions, often those concerning state affairs. If Carl Jung had been to China, he would have no doubt realized it is very much part of the Chinese tradition in decision making besides being an aspect of spirituality. The Chinese approach to religious spirituality (or religion) is truly unique. Since time immemorial, there is among the Chinese, a pluralistic tendency in religious behavior.

From my own experience, my grandfather would on a Sunday take me to a Presbyterian Church (later, my first primary school was a Presbyterian Primary School) and later in the afternoon to a Kuan Yin Temple. In contrast to Tibetan Buddhism which is very known in the West with increasingly more Americans becoming recognized as lamas, Chinese Buddhism although a very much older tradition is, comparatively, much lesser known. Even though there are similarities, there are also differences. The Indian originated but Chinese transformed Buddhism is known as 汉传佛教 (or traditional Chinese, 漢傳佛教) and in pinyin, Han Chuan Fo jiao. The last Chinese character Jiao (教) is significant for emphasizing Buddhism also as education.

In terms of numbers, Buddhism is the largest organized religion in China. The Dharma of Buddha not only affected the ancient Chinese in her religiosity (Buddhism was existent during the Qin dynasty) but did so extensively and is still shaping the mindset of the Chinese. It is impossible now to be Chinese without having imbibed aspects of the philosophy of Gautama Siddharta. According to Hindu beliefs, for example in the *Dasavatara*, the historical Buddha is the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (Ashok, 2002). Latest estimates put the number of Buddhists in China to be proportionately 80 percent, even exceeding 1,000 million (Wikpedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_in_China, accessed November 8, 2009). Perhaps, one reason why China is so fast transforming her economy may lie in the influences of the Buddhist teachings of Pure Land (净土宗) and Ch’an (禪; Zen). This should not be surprising. The early success of capitalism in the West had been attributed to protestant ethics (Weber, 1930). If so, it will be intriguing to research into the role of *Han Chuan Fo jian* in facilitating the world’s fastest ever development of an economy.

Even more interestingly, within *Han Chuan Fo jiao*, Kuan Yin (simplified Chinese, 观音; pinyin: Guan Yin) is the most widely accepted divinity or in Chinese *Pusa* (pinyin菩萨) or in Buddhist terminology in English, Bodhisattva. Yu (2001) documented her transformation from the original Indian male, Avalokitesvara. The name means, “The Lord who looks down on the world” or alternatively, “Regarder of the Cries of the World” (www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/dharmadata/fdd27.htm, accessed
November 8, 2009). In Indian iconography, Avalokitesvara is identified with Lord Shiva; his other names include blue-throated one and Mahesvara (the Great Lord). Next, we discuss the spirituality of Kuan Yin the context of Buddhism.

**Spirituality of Kuan Yin**

In Buddhism, her name appeared first in Chapter 25 of the *Lotus Sutra* (http://yzzj.fodian.net/World/0262_25.html, accessed November 8, 2009) titled as “The universal door of Avalokitesvara” and here we extract what is most relevant for the later part of this paper:

[...] hear of Guan-shi-yin Bodhisattva [Kuan Yin] and recite his name single-mindedly, Guanshiyin Bodhisattva will immediately hear their voices [...] 

In one sentence, Kuan Yin embodies the compassion of the Buddha. In China, it is not possible for a tourist to miss out on Kuan Yin. Artists, porcelain makers, jade carvers and more depict her imagery and these are found all over China. With her role in the *Lotus Sutra*, is it surprising that the ancient Chinese with their pragmatic outlook devised a Kuan Yin oracle? Utilizing such an innovation, Chinese across the generations have sought her guidance.

Kuan Yin is equally regarded by the Chinese Daoist as a part of their divinity. Consulting the oracle is very much a Daoist practice which is strictly not part of classical Buddhism. Chinese Buddhists often seek a *Qian* (筊) at Daoist, Buddhist or Dao-Buddhist temples especially before a major decision is made. One Chinese may say to one another before embarking on a project, “Let us go to the temple and *wen qian* (問筊).” Literally, it means to “ask the bamboo lot” or rather to “seek an answer in the form of a response of a bamboo Qian”. Figure 1 is shown how the highly popular yet ancient Kuan Yin oracle looks. That it comprises, from left to right, the three key items:

1. twin kidney shaped, wooden pieces (in Cantonese, *Pui*);
2. the thin book containing the words of every one of the 100 Qians; and
3. the Qian cylinder holding the numbered 1 to 100 bamboo Qians.

![Figure 1. Chinese tools for consultation with Kuan Yin](image-url)
What is very important to also realize is that the spiritual practices of Kuan Yin (Avalokitesvara) is one of the most popular practices among Tibetans as well. For example, according to the renowned Venerable Yangthang Rinpoche (揚唐仁波切) (source: http://www.mirrorofwisdomvideo.org/AvalokitesvarabyYRBLUE.htm), he said of Kuan Yin that: “[..] He is also called Chen-re-zig”, which means:

One Who Sees all Sentient Beings
Equally and Simultaneously and is
Always Aware of Them and Their Needs.

Most importantly, the Venerable whose very deportment seems, at least to this author, the embodiment of compassion has this to say of Kuan Yin in his pithy instructions on spiritual accomplishments:

[..] more than accomplishing any other deity, to accomplish Avalokitesvara alone is sufficient, because Avalokitesvara is the essence of the mind of all buddhas and thus the essence of all deities [..].

Interestingly, the reason for the popularity of Kuan Yin (Avalokitesvara) lies in how easy it is to realize one’s spiritual goals:

[..] Avalokitesvara is quite easy to accomplish. It is taught that if one practises Avalokitesvara very well, for six months without interruption, then one will certainly have a sign of accomplishment [..].

In fact, according to the Venerable, he added affirmatively on having a sign of accomplishing spirituality in these terms:

[..] There is no way that there could not be a sign of accomplishment. This means that one will have a direct vision of Chenrezig or some other sign of accomplishment [..].

Finally, the authority behind the efficacy of Kuan Yin’s mantra comes directly from the historical Buddha Shakyamuni himself. This is what the Venerable said of reciting Om Mani Peme Hung “[..] Of all practices that are based on recitation, this is the most powerful, the most beneficial [..]”.

Next, we turn to discuss the mechanics of Kuan Yin’s oracle.

Mechanics, mind and energy
The oracle appears simple yet there is a mathematical elegance in the conceptualization and design of the system. Whilst Issac Newton may have beaten Einstein in the Royal Society voting contests by the public and scientists in terms of contributions to science (http://royalsociety.org/news.asp?id=3880, accessed November 8, 2009), he is unlikely to be able to conceive of a simpler, mechanical device. A device enabling randomness as distinguished from discrete choice is to be made.

But, why do we cite Newton? Despite his life-long pursuits of research into religious spirituality, very few people associate him with spirituality. He was a renaissance kind of person that is so rare today, who approached learning holistically. His interests were far ranging including physics, mathematics, astronomy, natural philosophy, theology and even alchemy. Indeed, according to a very recent documentary Newton: The Dark Heretic, he devoted half a century of the 84 years of his life to research into theology. His research into Christianity led to a startling conclusion:
[...] became convinced that both the Catholic and Anglican Church were fully based on a corruption of the word of God [...]

Newton had even in his original manuscripts predicted the end of the world. So in him, you have a very good example of even the very best minds of logic and science embarking on deep research into religious spirituality. In fact, his massive work into spirituality was hidden for fear that its disclosure may diminish his status as a man of science. The truth is exactly the opposite for he was truly, very deeply into research on spirituality. Isaac Newton (Westfall, 1980), authored *Principia* that laid down the classical rules of mechanics. And intriguingly, his laws applied equally to anyone seeking a response from Kuan Yin’s oracle as follows.

The most relevant law is Newton’s second law of mechanics which is defined as follows: force $F$ as applied to a body produces a proportional acceleration $f$ in mass $m$, where $F = mf$. This is shown diagrammatically in Figure 2. Force is applied by the seeker in a rapid jostling of the mass of the cylinder (dimensions; $L$ – length, $R$ – radius and $m$ – mass) within the angle of $\theta$ for one within the 100 Qians (dimensionally; $a$, $b$ and weight, $w$) to emerge and may be denoted by $F^u$ in upward motion and $F^d$ for downward motion.

Beyond the mechanics which may be specified to be within the bounds of Newton’s laws of motion, there is a far less scientifically explored theory of the energy field. One is presented here as a hypothesis and reflected in Figure 2: the mind of the seeker (lower left corner) interacting within the energy field inside the temple of Kuan Yin. In classical Chinese beliefs, *chi* (breath energy) is embedded in religious statutes such as the “Thousand Arms and Thousand Eyes” Kuan Yin. Next, we turn to explain temple consultations for decisions in Chinese temples.

**Temple consultations**

One of the very little explored research areas of Chinese management is in how the Chinese actually take decisions. How the Chinese approach the art of decision making is one area where very little or no serious attempts in research are undertaken. Yet, this is one of the most fascinating facets of Chinese behavior. It is a phenomenon that
integrates Chinese decision making, spirituality and religious fervor. Anyone who has ever been to Singapore or Hong Kong and increasingly to China will realize how crowded temples can be. For example, in Singapore, the most famous is the Kuan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple (in Hokkien transliteration; in simplified Chinese, it is 观音堂佛祖庙) in Waterloo Street. In easy to understand English, it may be rendered as the Kuan Yin Buddhist temple. In Hong Kong, almost every Hong Kong adult will have heard of the Taoist temple of Wong Tai Sin (in traditional Chinese, 黃大仙祠). After my recent visit to Wong Tai Sin Temple, I realized it has all the attributes of Kuan Yin: for example, the reference to Kuan Zi-Zai, 观自在, another of her names. And more often than not many Chinese devotees and surprisingly, also increasingly a growing number of Western visitors, are found inside temples not just praying but seeking advice from the oracle. Before we discuss how the oracle is utilized for decisions, it is necessary that we explore how decisions are made.

Decision process
Decision making by its very terms implies a key role of the consciousness. Yet as will be seen in the discussion later, the very process of consultation of the Kuan Yin oracle extends beyond consciousness. For this reason, it is helpful to mention in passing, the unconscious. In Western psychology literature, it is Freud (1915) who heavily emphasized the unconscious in the individual whilst establishing psychoanalysis. Carl Jung, his colleague, developed through his writings on archetypes, the theory of the collective unconscious. Why collective? This unconsciousness is shared universally by all human life indeed in Jungian analytical psychology, all lives. The mind in the process of drawing of lots in the presence of Kuan Yin has yet, however, to be explored by Western psychologists. Of possible relevance is Jung’s theory of synchronicity (Jung, 1960): the response of Kuan Yin in the Qian being an event synchronous with the query in the mind of the inquirer. Having discussed aspects of the unconscious, we turn to outline the conscious decision process.

As a scholar of strategy and especially the Chinese art of war strategy (History Channel, Art of War), I have done extensive empirical studies on how critically important strategic decisions are made by CEOs in the top ASEAN listed corporations. The results of an extensive survey of 108 corporations are published in Organizing Strategy: Sun Tzu Business Warcraft. What is especially relevant is the mapping of the minds of CEOs (Figure 3) in their extensive search for information in formulating strategy.

In other words, the behavior of CEOs in decision making within Asia is unlikely to be very different from their western counterparts. Prior to formulating a strategic decision, CEOs tend to search the environment exhaustively in a multi-faceted fashion for information. In other words, there is embedded in the unconscious minds of the CEOs, a range of information from multifarious sources. Only then does a CEO come to decide, say, on the strategic direction for a corporation. Next, we try here to develop a simple typology of decisions.

A typology of decisions
Besides, decisions at the top CEO level, there are many kinds of decisions that management have to make. It is possible to map decision issues into a matrix constructed with the two key variables, continuous yet dichotomous dimensions (see Figure 4:
An example of decisions that are both certain and logically determinable is in the layout of a factory or plant. The choice of technology project, especially if the technology is of the emergent variety, may be less certain and involves less logic and some intuition. As for the choice of strategic partners, this can be even more problematic. Such decisions probably fall within the uncertain and more highly intuitive. Having thus developed a typology of decisions, we turn to discuss the kinds of decisions that are most appropriate for consultation at temples.

**Cognitive limits**
What kinds of decisions (contrasting for example, the certainty-logic, science versus uncertain-intuitive, art) are most appropriate for consultation at temples? Clearly, a person ought not to go to temple to consult on every decision. This is the most crucial point in Qian consultation and the reason why some Buddhists frown on such practices. Yet it can happen. For a beginner after having experienced how Ling a Qian can be, he or she may become too reliant on Kuan Yin Ling Qian. In other words, such a person no longer relies on his or her own mind. There is no thinking through of what is best for him or her self in making decisions. He or she simply follows whatever is the result.
of consultation. Yet the Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha of our age (b. circa 563 BC-d. circa 483 BC), emphasized the human mind as being primary:

All we are is the result of,
what we have thought.
The mind is everything.
What we think, we become.

Clearly, there has to be a reason why the early Indian Buddhist monks embrace such Daoist practices. The consultation of oracles already has a long history in China. It is very Chinese to consult the oracle of I Ching that is believed to be 5,000 years old. One hypothesis is that Buddhist monks found it convenient or expedient to allow such practices inside their temples. Yet, there are specific situations for which Kuan Yin consultations may yield deep insights to enable a decision to be better made. This is where there is a cognitive limit (Figure 5) to the exercise of logic in decision making.

For example, say you are seeking university studies and what if Harvard and MIT both made an offer? Or as in the case of Britain, the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, or in China: Beida or Tsing-hua. In life, there are such situations where either one or the other appears to be equally feasible choices. Certainly, you may utilize the decision tree above for making the right decision. However, there are times when you are at your cognitive limits in weighing how the decision ought to be made.

The decision tool
Let us turn to describe the essential elements of the decision tool, the 100 lots of Kuan Yin Qian (Figure 6). In fact like the other Daoist inspired invention of acupuncture, the tools are remarkably simple. All you need to determine the particular Qian that relates to your inquiry is 100 lots of numbered bamboo sticks. These 100 lots are randomly put in a, often also bamboo, cylinder. The inquirer then draws this out by
a process that gives every single, numbered bamboo slip an equal chance of emerging out of the cylinder. The beginner may require some practice before embarking on the process. Once a bamboo slip has fallen out, then the inquirer next asks by throwing double pieces of fish-like shaped wood into the air. If it is two opposite sides appearing, then the Qian is deemed the right one.

Assuming the inquirer had obtained the requisite bamboo slip, he or she then in the case of Singapore, approaches the temple staff for the Qian with the same number. Next it is a process of how to map the sayings, often poetic in style, onto the question that was posed. This in itself is an art that may require years of interpreting practice to get it right. It should be emphasized that perhaps consultation is not the right word for the process. The exact translation of the word, Qiu (写) (Figure 7) is really to pray for or to plead for a Qian. Here, is where some understanding of the background and history of Kuan Yin will help. For the very name of Goddess of Mercy, Kuan Yin, is observance (Kuan) of the sounds (Yin) of the world.
That is, she as Goddess (in fact, she according to Lord Buddha, had long ago attained Buddha-hood) takes it upon herself to respond to the cries of the people who are in dire need of help.

**Role for probability**

Now in my travels across Asia, China, Japan, Korea (South), Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand and even Indonesia, I find these decision tools in Kuan Yin Buddhist temples. There are however certain variations in terms of determining if the bamboo slip that is so obtained is the right one or not. In some temples, for example one in Taiwan, you simply select one *Qian* from the 100 in a container. There is no second test of affirmation. In other words, the second step is regarded as redundant. You stick with what you have picked from the lot. If I am to offer any guidance, I will say that it makes good sense for the procedure used in Singapore’s Waterloo Street Kuan Yin temple to be followed strictly. Two aspects for any inquirer are to ensure that there is first, randomness in filtering the bamboo slips so that only one emerges; second, that there is a separate, independently administered confirmation (Figure 8).

My main reason for favoring the approach of Singapore’s Waterloo Street Temple lies in a tighter probability (a chance of 1 in 300 in getting a specific bamboo slip) if the process is adhered to. Probability simply stated is the chance of an event happening. For the event of a bamboo slip numbered *i*, \( B_i \) within the 100 to be randomly selected, the probability \( P(B_i) \) is clearly 1 out of 100 \( \frac{1}{100} = 0.01 \). The other independent event is of getting

---

**Figure 7.**

Pleading for a Qian

“Consult” is not quite accurate. Exactly it is “祈 (qiú)”: to *plead* or *pray* for a 筊 (qian). Why will Kuan Yin respond? She takes upon herself to seek out the sounds (cries) of people and help those in difficulty.

---

**Figure 8.**

Critical aspects of the procedure

Mechanics of randomness

Confirmatory test

“Yes”
a confirmation through two pieces of wooden, kidney shaped *pui* (in Cantonese). This is by each *pui* landing on a different side: one side more darkly shaded (concave) than the other (flat).

The simplest analogy is the throwing of two coins. For a yes, each coin must land on a side different from the other. So if one is head, the other has to be tail. Now to estimate the probability of such an event happening it is one out of three possible combinations (one dark, other light, both dark sides appearing and both light sides appearing). Since the two events are clearly independent of each other, the probability of these two events occurring is given by multiplying $P(Bi) \times P(\text{dark}, \text{light})$ ($0.01 \times 0.333 = 0.00333$ or approximately, 1 out of 300). Using the traditional notations in probability (Figure 9), we can have a more formal presentation as below:

$$P(Bi \text{ and Dark, Light}) = P(Bi \cap \text{Dark, Light}) = P(Bi) \times P(\text{Dark, Light})$$

One of the major hurdles in consulting the Kuan Yin Qian lies in its interpretation. At times this can be a real problem when slightly different views are proffered and yet these advices are on the basis of the very same words contained in the Qian.

**Metaphorical analysis of Qian (筊)**

How do you read a Qian not for its meanings per se but in terms of its metaphorical connotations? This facet of how to deal with the Qian requires a separate paper altogether. Ideally, the person reading the Qian must be able to handle the Chinese characters written in a specific period in history. Next, he or she must put his mind to understanding what the question put by the inquirer to Kuan Yin was. Then through a process of what I call mapping, insights are obtained from the meanings embedded in the Qian in response to the question. Often times, the reader can himself give the interpretation straightaway as one way of going ahead with a decision, as in the Qian below (Figure 10).

Other times, it can be trying to decipher what the exact intent ought to be. The art of interpreting or divining the meanings of a given Qian is not a simple matter. For this reason, in some temples – and it is rare, these days – expert help is around. For example, in a large temple complex on Batam Island, I found an old lady dispensing advice based on a Qian. So, if you sincerely have an inquiry for Kuan Yin and for the complete experience, you may go to Kuan Yin Temple on Indonesia’s Batam Island.

**Deeper spiritual connectivity (有求必应)**

One of the many reasons why early Indian Buddhist monks embraced Daoist practices must have been their deep confidence in Buddhist teachings that people who consult Kuan Yin through the oracle will eventually gain a deep faith in the Bodhisattva...
of compassion. In encountering the sutras of Buddhism, they will begin to realize that the world around them is just not real. That it is by far more beneficial to learn to be unattached to worldly phenomena than to be trapped in the pursuit of dreams. Personally, I find time to be so elusive. Ten years just speed pass without my realizing. Yet, the hour passes slowly enough for you to experience its passing.

Whilst many may be attracted to Kuan Yin temples for the opportunity to consult her, eventually embracing Buddhism, these same people may realize it is far better to be seeking a deeper, spiritual connection. How? By quiet, meditative reflection and it is shown in Plate 1. So, whilst the temple (in Taiwan) is crowded with many people seeking insights from Qian, I found a devotee in deep meditation. She seems to me to be oblivious to what is happening around her.

To experience a deep spiritual communion with Kuan Yin is not at all surprising. One of the most popular phrases associated with her is these four Chinese characters: (you), (qiu), (bi) and (ying). Whilst many see it as referring to the responsiveness of the Qian, I read it to mean much more. For since Kuan Yin originates from Buddhism, she (Avalokitesavara, from which Kuan Yin originates, Yu (2001)) must be responsive in other ways. So, if a devotee requests guidance and instead of seeking the Taoist approach through the divining for a lot, Kuan Yin too will provide a response. Thus, instead of casting for a Qian, it is equally valid if a devotee simply addresses Kuan Yin (Plate 2) directly.

The four characters have very deep meanings, for the phrase assures the devotee that Kuan Yin will definitely respond to any request. Here, unlike the immediacy of a Qian with a poetic evocation of a response, you have to rely on your unconscious. How the unconscious knows is beyond mere words to describe.

**Qian: synthesizing Tao and Buddhism**

Here, I suggest a theory that the ancient Taoist Qian methodology was instrumental in the spreading of Buddhism in China. Whilst astrology is now taught as an astrological science in Indian universities, there is none of this uniquely Chinese approach...
to divination, for its use was allowed within Buddhist temples. The process of how Chinese people are drawn to Buddhism through this process is shown in Figure 11.

Now as before, people living in the material world are often plagued with problems of coping. Thus, when it comes to the making of a very difficult decision, it is only natural for people to seek divine guidance. They seek an affirmation from the divine – going beyond the facts – that their decision is as right as it can be in the given circumstances. Thus, by instituting a system for communicating with a divinity and in our case, Kuan Yin, a Buddhist temple is facilitating such a possibility. Does such a practice go strictly against Buddhist doctrine? Here it is perhaps timely to highlight the [source: www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/dharmadata/fdd45.htm]:

[...] The Buddha taught that one’s future is conditioned primarily by one’s kamma, not by the stars and he condemned astrology and expressly forbid his monks and nuns to practise it. One story in the Jataka pokes fun at those foolish enough to make decisions based upon astrological predictions [...] 

However, it is also fully recognized that despite such an express prohibition illustrated by a narrative in the Jataka tales, the reality of Buddhism as practised among monks, today:

[...] Despite this astrology is widely believed and practiced in most Buddhist countries and not uncommonly monks act as astrologers [...] 

For Gautama Buddha, nothing is more critical than having as a foundation, a strong, vigorous, focused mind. It is this philosophy that drew me as an author to Indian Bodhidharma’s C’han or Zen Buddhism. Unlike the time of the Buddha, not everyone who comes to Buddhism is seeking for the absolute truth, the ultimate goal of enlightenment of the mind. Thus, the Buddha’s prohibition is strictly applicable if you are striving
Plate 2.
Kuan Yin in Long Shan Temple, Taipei

Figure 11.
Synthesis of Tao and Buddhism

有 (you) 求 (qiu) 必 (bi) 应 (ying)

Let Goddess of Mercy know what
You have to decide and be patient
let Her respond to you intuitively.

直觉的方式：首先求，后等待一些时间

People mundane world → Problems requiring advice → Taoist divining lots → Buddha’s teachings: buddhist sutras → Spiritual life
for Buddhahood. If you are already on the path of self-cultivation, meditating on Kuan Yin, then you are likely to discover for yourself, intuitive responses. That is very much a part of old Chinese traditional culture.

References

Further reading

Corresponding author
Check Teck Foo can be contacted at: cfoo@suntzuartofwar.org

To purchase reprints of this article please e-mail: reprints@emeraldinsight.com
Or visit our web site for further details: www.emeraldinsight.com/reprints