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Kōan and Kenshō in the Rinzai Zen Curriculum

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ACCORDING to a widely accepted model, a kōan is a clever psychological device designed to induce satori or *kenshō*. The kōan is said to pose to the Zen practitioner a paradox unsolvable by the rational, intellectualizing mind. Driven into an ever more desperate corner by his repeated futile attempts to solve what cannot be rationally solved, the practitioner finally breaks through the barrier of rational intellection to the realm of preconceptual and prelinguistic consciousness variously called pure consciousness, no-mind, without-thinking, or emptiness. This breakthrough is called satori or *kenshō*. The cleverness of the kōan consists in the fact that rather than attacking reason and logic from outside, the kōan uses reason to drive itself into a self-contradiction and cause its own destruction. In this picture, the kōan is fundamentally an instrument and has no use except as a means for psychologically inducing *kenshō*. These two notions—the kōan as nonrational, psychological instrument, and *kenshō* as the breakthrough to nonrational, noncognitive, pure consciousness—nicely support each other.¹

However, these conceptions of kōan and *kenshō* were criticized long ago. Dōgen, in the “Sansuikyō” (“Mountains and Waters Sūtra”) fascicle of the *Shōbōgenzō*, writes:

In great Sung China today there are a group of scatterbrained people, whose number is so large that they cannot possibly be scared off by the faithful few. They argue, saying: “Talks such as ‘The east mountain walks over the water,’ Nan-ch’üan’s sickle, and the like are incomprehensible utterances. The idea is that any talk concerned with discriminating thought is not the Ch’an talk of buddha-ancestors; only incomprehensible utterances are the talk of buddha-ancestors. Therefore, Huang-po’s stick and Lin-chi’s shout exceed comprehension and are never concerned with discriminating thought. This is known as the great enlightenment prior to the emergence of any incipient sign. The past mentors often employed as skillful means those phrases which cut off tangling vines,

but [such phrases] were beyond comprehension.” (Translation by Hee-jin Kim [Kim 1985a: 297])

Dōgen attributes to the “scatterbrained” the same two views of kōan and *ken-shō*—that “incomprehensible utterances” are merely skillful means to cut off the tangling vines of discriminating thought in order to bring one to the great enlightenment, and that great enlightenment itself is noncognitive, something “prior to the emergence of any incipient sign.” Dōgen heaps scorn on this view. “People who utter such nonsense have not yet met a true mentor; hence they lack the eye of proper study. They are fools not worthy of mention. . . . What these pseudo-Buddhists regard as ‘incomprehensible utterances’ are incomprehensible only to them, not to buddha-ancestors” (Kim 1985a: 297). For Dōgen, these “pseudo-Buddhists” are merely rationalizing their ignorance. Not wishing to admit they have failed to comprehend enlightenment, they claim that enlightenment itself cannot be comprehended.

Because Dōgen was convinced of the fundamental “reason” or “rationality” (*dōri*) of the Buddha dharma, he took the view that kōan practice is a moment-by-moment total exertion that realizes—makes real (*genjō*)—the fundamental rationality of enlightenment.² Hee-jin Kim has offered the convenient labels “instrumentalist” to denote the concept of the kōan as merely a means to a breakthrough to nonrational consciousness, and “realizational” to refer to Dōgen’s notion of the kōan as moment-by-moment actualization of the rationality of enlightenment (Kim 1985b, 1985c). Even though this chapter is concerned with Rinzai monastic practice, I adopt Dōgen’s term “realization” (*genjō*) because it offers a clear alternative to the instrumental model of the kōan. No doubt there are differences in detail between what Dōgen and what any particular Rinzai monk may have said about enlightenment. These differences are, in my judgment, minor in contrast to what either would have said compared to the instrumentalist idea that a kōan is merely a nonrational instrument for a breakthrough to a noncognitive pure consciousness.

The first section of this chapter, “The Kōan as Irrational Instrument,” discusses some examples of how kōan and *ken-shō* have been depicted in Western literature, and it tries to show some of the internal conceptual difficulties inherent in the instrumental model. The second and third sections, “*Ken-shō* and *Kyōgai*” and “Kōan and *Hōri* (‘Reason’),” examine how kōan and *ken-shō* are understood in the context of Rinzai monastic practice, revealing that although the instrumental model may fit the beginning parts of kōan practice, the realization model gives a more accurate characterization of the total practice. The fourth section, “Realization: Kōan as Performance of *Ken-shō*,” argues for a realizational model of the kōan using the notion of performance. All of these questions are far more complex than as represented here; I regret there is not enough space to deal with all these issues fully.

The Kōan as Irrational Instrument

The Idea of a Pure Consciousness

In recent scholarly discussions of mystical experience in general and of Zen in particular, the acceptance of a distinction between two kinds of consciousness is extremely widespread and appears under a great many labels: pure (unmediated) versus mediated, noncognitive versus cognitive, experiential versus intellectual, intuitive versus intellectual, nonrational versus rational, nondiscursive versus discursive, nonpropositional versus propositional, and so on. The notion of a pure consciousness which is attained in religious or mystical experience has been undergoing sharp criticism in recent years.³ Steven Katz has claimed, "There are no pure (unmediated) experiences" (Katz 1978b: 25; 1983b: 4) and has argued that all experience, including the Buddhist experience of *śūnyatā*, is mediated by intellectual and conceptual activity. Although Katz has made the most public attack on the idea of pure consciousness or pure experience, his argument is not the most persuasive. He does not make clear the logical status of what he is asserting and denying. Is his claim factual or conceptual? Is he saying merely, "No pure experiences have to date been found" (a factual statement), or is he saying, "There cannot be such a thing as a pure experience" (a conceptual claim)? He himself maintains, "I adopted as a working hypothesis the epistemic thesis that there are *no* pure (unmediated) experiences," as if the statement were a scientific or factual hypothesis that later facts would prove true or false (Katz 1983b: 4). Yet elsewhere he writes, "The notion of unmediated experience seems, if not self-contradictory, at best empty" (1978b: 25), as if the idea of a pure experience, like that of a square triangle, were conceptually impossible. Since this question remains unclarified, one is left suspecting that although Katz claims to be offering a "working hypothesis," he is actually legislating a particular concept of experience which, by definition, excludes mystical experience.

Also to support his claim that all cases of mystical experiences are contextually constructed (and are not therefore cases of pure or immediate experience), he takes as examples only those convenient cases of reported mystical experience that have much intellectual content; he systematically ignores those less tractable cases of mystical experience on the other end of the spectrum which, it is claimed, are devoid not only of intellectual content but also of all sensation, all sense of space and time, and all sense of self.⁴

While I too am critical of Zen enlightenment depicted as a breakthrough to a pure consciousness, I do not support Katz's position. The basic difference is that Katz and his opponents both agree in dividing the spectrum of consciousnesses into those with cognitive content and those without, into those that are mediated (not pure) and those that are unmediated (pure). They both assume that these categories are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive of

all possibilities. They disagree only on whether there is or is not experience of pure consciousness. These assumptions lie behind Katz's claim that mystical experience is "reconditioning not deconditioning."⁵ He does not consider the possibility that it could be both. Zen practice, on the other hand, seeks initially to destroy the habit of thinking in terms of mutually exclusive dichotomies like pure and impure in the first place (although later it seeks to reconstitute duality again). I will return to this topic at the end of the chapter.

In scholarly discussions of Zen, again a common view is that first there was an original pure experience and that afterwards thought and language entered and sullied its original purity. Thomas Kasulis in his textbook on Zen says, "Our common understanding of experience is therefore a *reconstruction* in that it imposes categories that were not present in that experience when it originally occurred" (Kasulis 1981, 60). This imposition of distinctions, categories, and conceptual characterizations is not a good thing, it seems. "We accept various distinctions and conceptual characterizations of reality, allowing them to interfere with our ability to be spontaneous and grounded in the present" (ibid. 58). Zen practice aims to free us by returning us to without-thinking, "a non-conceptual or prereflective mode of consciousness" (ibid. 75), "a primordial state of consciousness" (ibid. 59). To avoid falling into the nihilism to which this account seems to lead, Kasulis also offers a relational account of without-thinking which goes some way toward de-reifying the concept (ibid. 128–133). He also emphasizes that the Zen Master is embedded in a historical and cultural context which conditions (but does not determine) his responses (ibid. 134–139). Nevertheless the reader cannot help but come away with the impression that without-thinking is a special state of consciousness identifiable as separate and distinct in space and time from the usual states of consciousness. There is never a recognition that the thinking and not-thinking themselves instantiate without-thinking. To use an apt word which Kasulis has coined, there is no recognition that thinking and not-thinking themselves "presence" without-thinking (ibid. 83).

Is it really possible that there could be a realm of consciousness without cognitive content or intellectual activity?⁶ At least one branch of Western epistemology insists that there cannot be knowledge without concepts to organize sensation into meaningful perception.⁷ This view holds that ordinary perception is saturated with conceptual activity which gives meaning to sensation. For example, I see these flesh-like things as my hands; I see this flat brown surface as my desk; I hear this shrill sound as the ring of the telephone. Each such unsophisticated instance of seeing or hearing is really a "seeing as" or "hearing as" in which sensation is organized according to some concept like "hand" or "desk" or "ring of telephone." Off to the left of my visual field, I see the flash of an object flying past my window and then realize it was just light glinting on my glasses. I hear a sound of someone snoring and then realize that it is the sound of an old bicycle wheel creakily passing by outside. In

these examples we see concepts—“something flying by,” “glint on my glasses,” “someone snoring,” “creaky bicycle wheel”—competing to organize our sensory field into something meaningful. But a pure consciousness without concepts, if there could be such a thing, would be a booming, buzzing confusion, a sensory field of flashes of light, unidentifiable sounds, ambiguous shapes, color patches without significance. This is not the consciousness of the enlightened Zen master. Even he looks at lines on the wall and sees them as a door, hears a shrilling as the ring of a telephone, sniffs an odor and recognizes alcohol on your breath. A pure consciousness without concepts would not have “door,” “telephone,” “alcohol.”

After the breakthrough in *kenshō*, one finally “sees things as they are,” and it is tempting to think that “as they are” means “without conceptualization.” (It could also mean, e.g., “without attachment” or “without value judgment,” but these different nuances are not sorted out.) It is tempting to say, “You mistook a branch for a snake because conceptualization got in the way,” as if conceptualization functioned only to distort veridical perception. Not so. Correctly seeing a brown shape as a branch presupposes as much conceptual activity as mistakenly seeing a brown shape as a snake. Sensational perception has meaning or significance only because a concept has first organized and given meaning to it. It is a secondary question whether that concept was applied correctly or incorrectly. Even the veridical “seeing things as they are” comes after conceptualization, not before. This means that “seeing things as they are” is one variation of, not the alternative to, seeing things as thought and language have conditioned us to see them. To state the point in rather radical terms, if conceptual activity were subtracted from experience, whatever remained would not be meaningful; it might not even qualify for the label “experience.”

Dale Wright in his criticism of the notion of transcendence of language in Zen has constructed a *reductio ad absurdum* (Wright 1992). The enlightened Zen master is said to be free in the sense that in addition to being able to see and respond according to the socially determined dualistic categories of conventional thought and language nondualistically (unenlightened consciousness), the master also nondualistically sees things as they are in themselves (enlightened consciousness). But this account ironically entails that the enlightened Zen master’s experience is dualistic while the unenlightened person’s experience is nondual. With every act, the enlightened Zen master must make a dualistic choice whether to respond in a direct, “Zen,” way or in a socially determined conventional way. Unenlightened persons see no distinction between a thing in itself and its socially determined meaning and merely respond without thinking (one is tempted to put a hyphen between “without” and “thinking”).

Let me make two comments on this *reductio*. First, Wright is able to reduce Kasulis’s distinction between dualistic ordinary experience and nondual pri-

mordial experience to absurdity just because the distinction between dual and nondual experience is itself dualistic. Every such attempt to depict a nondual realm that transcends the ordinary realm of dualistic experience itself reinstates duality, because transcendence itself is a dualistic concept. Second, in defense of Kasulis (although it is not obvious that Kasulis would make this defense himself), one can argue that the freedom of the enlightened Zen master does indeed consist in the fact that he has more dualistic choices to make. For the nonduality of *kenshō* never appears as the nonduality of *kenshō*; if it did, that would reinstate the duality that nonduality is supposed to transcend. The nonduality of *kenshō* is always instantiated in or makes a phenomenal appearance as (“presences” itself as), conventional duality. These matters are discussed in more detail below.

To make explicit the instrumental function of the kōan, Henry Rosemont, Jr., has offered a performative analysis. Wittgenstein taught that the meaning of a word is not always the object that the word labels, denotes, or refers to; in many cases the meaning of the word is its use.⁸ J. L. Austin went further and said that many utterances in our language cannot be construed as descriptions of objects, states of affairs, or states of mind; they are instead performances of some act (Austin 1962). A sentence like “I do,” uttered at the appropriate moment in a wedding ceremony, does not describe or denote an action, object, or state of affairs; given the appropriate social, legal, and ritual context, the utterance itself performs an act, an action with real consequences, just as surely as does any physical act. Such utterances do not report information and hence do not have truth-value. Rather they are meaningful as performance; while they cannot be said to be either true or false, they can be said in particular contexts to be either successful or unsuccessful. In similar fashion, Rosemont argued that the kōan is not descriptive but performative.

Questions like “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” or “What was your face like before you were born?” have no cognitive answer whatever, so *a fortiori* they have no answer that might express some principle of Zen Buddhism, transcendent or otherwise.

... *Mondō* and *kōan* sentences have no truth value, nor, except incidentally, do they literary value; they can have, for the Zen apprentices, great shock value. (Rosemont 1970: 118)

The kōan gives the appearance of having rational or cognitive content described in a factual or a metaphorical way deliberately to deceive us in order to perform its true task: to make us “stop intellectualizing” (Rosemont 1970: 118). The performative analysis thus accounts for the seeming madness and the hidden method of the kōan.

To the extent that this performative analysis presupposes that enlightenment is a breakthrough to a noncognitive realm of pure experience, it is open

to the same kinds of criticism as raised above. Nevertheless there is something correct about the performative account, for clearly in many kōan the proponents engage in shouting, bowing, slapping, going out the door, cutting cats in two, putting sandals on one's head, and so on—all performances. If they are not skillful means to attaining a breakthrough to pure consciousness, what are they?

Successive generations of scholars and monks in China, Japan, and now in the West have dissected kōan line by line and added their own commentary. In addition, in the Rinzai monastic training curriculum, the many kōan are categorized and ranked; the monks progressively learn more and more sophisticated ways of seeing them; they learn how to write their own commentary to the kōan. Working full time, a monk can expect to complete the entire Rinzai kōan curriculum in about fifteen years. If it were true that the kōan is nonrational, neither a kōan text tradition nor a monastic kōan curriculum would be possible. There must be a model of the kōan other than as a nonrational means to induce a breakthrough to pure consciousness. For an understanding of that different model, we now move to a more detailed examination of Rinzai kōan practice.

Kenshō and Kyōgai

I use here an old technique, an examination of the uses of certain key words or terms in Rinzai monastic vocabulary. This approach, associated with the philosophical movement called linguistic analysis, deliberately attempts to uncover the philosophical assumptions governing the ordinary use of words in their everyday settings. This approach also happily introduces an ethnographic element, because it examines actual Rinzai monastic use and practice. The headings for the two major divisions in this chapter contain the two terms *kyōgai* and *hōri*, not well known in Western scholarship on Zen but extremely important for kōan practice.

I once heard a Zen *rōshi* say that in kōan training, “Everything is *kyōgai*” (*subete wa kyōgai*).⁹ Many years later I heard another *rōshi* state that one must also learn to grasp a kōan from the standpoint of *hōri*.¹⁰ *Kyōgai* may be tentatively translated “consciousness,” but the word *kyōgai* in Japanese behaves differently from “consciousness” in English, so much so that in some contexts it can be translated as “behavior.” Similarly, although *hōri* can be translated “dharma reason,” “dharma rationality,” it is not the same concept as “rationality” in English. In English the presence of contradiction is a sign of irrationality, whereas the use of contradiction is part of the training in *hōri*. *Kyōgai* and *hōri* denote the two ways of approaching kōan training. The first half of kōan training puts major emphasis on *kyōgai* and a lesser emphasis on *hōri*, whereas the second half reverses these emphases.

What happens in the first half of kōan training? First, monks get *kenshō*.

The Uses of “Kenshō”

The term *kenshō* is now so well known to Western students of Zen that it is commonly used without translation. It is worth noting that though Western students of Zen are fascinated by the notion of *kenshō*, monks in a Japanese Rinzai monastery hardly ever use the word, and when they do, it is often in jest (“The cook finally turned out a good meal. He must have had *kenshō*”). Perhaps their silence about *kenshō* should be taken as a sign of its overwhelming importance to them, as if it were a taboo word; perhaps it merely indicates their lack of interest in Zen practice.

In any case, the term consists of two characters: *ken*, which means “see” or “seeing,” and *shō*, which means “nature,” “character,” “quality.” To “see one’s nature” is the usual translation for *kenshō* (and will be used in this chapter) but the insertion of “one’s” is already an interpretation. There is also the rendering, “It lets one see into nature and thus attain Buddhahood” (Radcliffe 1993: 101), which seems to render the phrase *kenshō jōbutsu*, and I have heard people recommend the translation “to see Buddha nature”—both of which are also interpretations. None of these translations accurately reflects Rinzai monastic usage.

In English, *kenshō* is used exclusively as a noun or an adjective. Here are some representative uses in English.

Kōans can often trigger a *kenshō* experience . . .

Is *kenshō* at all common? Can it happen before one is working on a kōan, in the practice of breath counting, let’s say?

You were talking earlier about how some people had a *kenshō* experience when a plum blossom fell, or when a bamboo was struck by a pebble.¹¹

In English usage, people have *kenshō*; they do not do *kenshō*. In the Rinzai monastery, the word *kenshō* is used as a noun in this way, but in addition it is used as a verb, *kenshō suru*. As a verb, it has two usages: intransitive, where it is equivalent to “to become awakened,” and transitive, where it takes an object. As an example of intransitive use, a *rōshi* may encourage his monks, “If you don’t *kenshō* once, you can’t be called a real monk” (*Ippen kenshō shite kon’ to, honmono no unsui to wa ien*). Of course, instead of the verb construction “If you don’t *kenshō*,” one could translate *kenshō shite kon’ to* using a noun construction: “If you do not have *kenshō* . . .” but such a translation is unfaithful to the grammar of the original and does not capture the important nuance that *kenshō* has a volitional element; “If you do not have *kenshō*” may be a matter of chance, but “If you don’t *kenshō*” is a matter of will.

Kenshō suru is also a transitive verb taking an object. A *rōshi* may very well present a kōan by challenging his monk with “How did you *kenshō* this?” (*Kore dō kenshō shita no ka?*). This question is grammatically similar to, for example, “How did you understand this?” “How did you interpret this?” “How

do you explain this?" If understanding, explanation, and interpretation are intellectual acts with cognitive content, *kenshō* should also be an intellectual act with cognitive content.

What actual practices support these uses of the term?

Narikiru "Become One With"

In most Rinzai monasteries in Japan, as soon as monks enter, they receive their first kōan, usually the "Sound of One Hand" or "Jōshū's (Chao-chou's) Mu." Although there are differences in pace, they usually pass the first kōan within a year. They all receive the usual advice that the kōan is not a question to be answered by intellectual thought. Instead they are told to answer the kōan by "becoming one" with it. "Become one with . . ." (*narikiru*) is an important concept with several variant expressions in language: "to become one piece with) . . ." (*ichi mai to naru*); "to become the thing itself" (*sono mono to naru*); "to wrestle and fuse with . . ." (*torikunde gappei suru*) and so on. The monk penetrates the kōan not through understanding it but through the constant repeated effort to become one with it.¹² He constantly repeats and poses to himself the question of the kōan: "What is the sound of one hand?" At first the monk expects that the answer to the kōan will one day appear before him like the solution to a riddle. That is to say, he thinks it would be an object of consciousness, an object of seeing. This is what would be expected if he were trying to understand it intellectually. But constant repetition of the kōan imprints the kōan into his consciousness so that the kōan no longer is merely an object of seeing, but colors his very seeing. Eventually, without conscious effort the kōan "Sound of One Hand" always rises to consciousness, repeating itself over and over again, whenever attention is not fixed on anything else. This is a recognizable early stage in *narikiru*, in becoming one with the kōan. "Sound of One Hand" has so invaded his consciousness that it is no longer the object of attention in consciousness, but forms the background for whatever else is the object of attention.

Finally there comes a moment when the monk realizes that his very seeking the answer to the kōan, and the way he himself is reacting to his inability to penetrate the kōan, are themselves the activity of the kōan working within him. This is the difficult point to explain. The kōan is not merely a static entity, some thing with a fixed self-nature to be apprehended. If anything, it is an activity, the activity of seeking to understand the kōan which uses the monk and his mind as its arena. The kōan is both an object of consciousness and the subjective activity of consciousness seeking to understand the kōan. The monk himself in his seeking is the kōan. Realization of this is the insight, the response to the kōan. At first there was a subject of consciousness trying to penetrate a kōan which was treated merely as an object of consciousness. Subject and object—this is two hands clapping. When the monk realizes that the kōan is

not merely an object of consciousness but is also he himself as the activity of seeking an answer to the kōan, then subject and object are no longer separate and distinct. He has become one with kōan, or perhaps it is more accurate to say, the kōan has become one with him. This is one hand clapping—*narikiru*, “becoming one.” He “realizes” the kōan in both senses of the word “realize.” On the one hand, it is a cognitive recognition, but on the other, it also “makes real,” since the cognitive recognition could not have occurred unless he himself instantiated the unity of subject and object.¹³

Nonduality of Subject and Object

The “identification of opposites” is one of the great themes of Asian thought. But there is more than one kind of nonduality, of identity of opposites. As A. C. Graham has pointed out, some binary distinctions imply a third term, which is the maker of the distinction in the center, such as left/right, before/after, above/below (Graham 1992: 211). By moving the point of reference of the maker of the distinction (e. g., from the top of a hill to the bottom of the hill), the opposites are identified (every downhill is an uphill, or, canceling out the common factors, down is up). Thus is it possible to intellectually conceive the identity of opposites. But some binary distinctions are truly binary and do not have a hidden third term, such as I/you, I/it. For these cases, there is no possibility of moving the point of reference of the hidden maker of the distinction in the center, because the maker of the distinction is part of the distinction. For this reason, it is much harder to conceive the possibility of the identity of I/it, of subject/object. “I” am the center of my awareness and consciousness; the experienced universe spreads out in all directions and in time away from “I”; only “I,” and no one else, is the subject of my experience; everyone else and all things are objects upon which “I” look. What could it possibly mean to say that I and it are one? While the identity of uphills and downhills can be understood intellectually, there is much more warrant for saying that the nonduality of I/it, of subject/object, cannot be understood intellectually but must be experienced.

In the early stages of kōan practice, a monk does not understand the nature of what he has experienced in seeing a kōan. Nevertheless in the regular lectures which monks receive from their *rōshi*, they hear constantly phrases that refer to the nonduality of subject and object: “The well looks at the ass; the ass looks at the well” (*Iro o mi, ro i o miru*); “Look at the flower and the flower also looks” (*Hana o mite, hana mo miru*); “Guest and host interchange” (*Hinju gokan*); and many others. More important, kōan after kōan explores the theme of nonduality. Hakuin’s well-known kōan, “Two hands clap and there is a sound, what is the sound of one hand?” is clearly about two and one. The kōan asks, you know what duality is, now what is nonduality? In “What is your original face before your father and mother were born?” the phrase “father and

mother” alludes to duality. This is obvious to someone versed in the Chinese tradition, where so much philosophical thought is presented in the imagery of paired opposites. The phrase “your original face” alludes to the original nonduality. The famous *Mu (Wu)* kōan is similarly phrased in dualistic terms, although English translations sometimes fail to capture that important point. The original question in Chinese, “Does a dog have Buddha-nature, or does it not?” clearly contrasts “have” (C. *yu*, J. *u*) and “have not” (C. *wu*, J. *mu*) and presents a dichotomized choice.¹⁴

“How Did You Kenshō This?”

The term *kenshō* refers to the realization of nonduality of subject and object in general, but some uses of the term apply *kenshō* to a particular context. In the challenge, “How did you *kenshō* this?” (*Kore dō kenshō shita no ka?*), the term *kenshō* is being used as a transitive verb taking an object. One does *kenshō* and one does it with a particular object, event, or situation. To some people, the very idea of *kenshō* applied to a particular context will seem a self-contradiction, but it does so only because *kenshō* is presumed to be a totally blank state of mind without cognitive content. This is not what *kenshō* means in Rinzai practice. Consistent with the notion that *kenshō* is the breakdown of the dichotomy of subject and object, *kenshō* used as a transitive verb denotes a total pouring of oneself into some particular object, event, or situation. This “becoming one” in particular contexts has two aspects: formal kōan training, and the daily activities of monastic life.

In formal kōan practice, a single kōan usually breaks into parts, the initial “main case” (*honsoku*) and numerous “checking questions” (*sassho*). In the response to the main case, the monk is usually required to demonstrate “Sound of One Hand” itself or “*Mu*” itself or “Original Face” itself. Then in the checking questions, he is asked to demonstrate “One Hand” or “*Mu*” or “Original Face” in many particular situations. Akizuki Ryūmin has published the kōan curriculum used by *Kazan Genku Rōshi* (1837–1917), a *rōshi* in the Myōshinji line who recorded the following *honsoku* and *sassho* for “*Mu*” (Akizuki 1987: 259–264).

1. Jōshū’s *Mu* (*Mumonkan* case 1; *Kattō-shū* case 49): A monk asked Jōshū Oshō, “Does a dog have Buddha-nature or not?” Jōshū answered, “No!” [“*Mu!*”].
2. After seeing *Mu*, what is your proof?
3. The Patriarch Daruma Daishi said, “Point directly at one’s mind, see one’s nature [*kenshō*], and become Buddha.” After seeing *Mu*, how do you *kenshō* this?
4. It is said that one sees *Mu* order to free yourself from life-and-death. Seeing *Mu*, how did you free yourself from life-and-death?

5. Seeing *Mu*, how did you quiet your heart and set your life on a firm basis?
6. How do you answer when asked, “What is *Mu* when you have died, been burned and turned into a pile of ash?”
7. Jōshū at one time said “*U*” [“Yes!”]. What about this?
Or: A monk asked, “Does a dog have Buddha-nature?” Jōshū said “*U!*” [“Yes!”].
8. What is “It is because it has karmic consciousness [*gosshikishō*].”
Or: A monk asked, “All sentient being has Buddha-nature. Why is it that a dog has not?” Jōshū said, “It is because it has karmic consciousness [*gosshikishō*].”
9. What is “To know but still offend?”
A monk asked, “Already there, why jump into that bag of skin?” Jōshū said, “He knows but still offends.”
10. That thing called “*Mu*,” what is it? Or: Why call it “*Mu*”?
11. Stop the sound of the bell. (Right here try to stop the sound of the bell which comes ringing from the faraway mountain temple.)
12. Stop the four sounds. (When the four sounds come at once, how about that?)
13. There is a tree which does not move when a typhoon blows. Go see it.
14. Stop the sailboat. (Right here try to stop the sailboat running on the far open seas.)
15. Stop the rowboat.
16. Place your four limbs on *tōfu*.
17. Coming from over there, is that older sister or younger sister?
18. When he constructed the Raimon Gate at Asakusa, where did the carpenter start in with his handaxe?
19. Try hiding inside a pillar.
20. With an empty hand, get the old monastic to stand up.
(Reference: There was a layman called Ryōtetsu Koji. The nun Eshō asked him, “The nun is so old she cannot stand up by herself. I ask you, without putting forth your hand, get her to stand up.”)
21. Stop the fight on the other side of the river.
22. Emancipate the ghost.

All these *sassho* ask the monk to explore *kenshō* as manifested in some particular circumstance. Unfortunately, we do not have the space in this chapter to discuss the structure of *sassho* questions and other related matters, such as the different *sassho* lineages. A monk in practice is told to become one not only with the *kōan* in meditation but also with all daily acts. The proper way to chant *sūtras*, to chop vegetables, to sit in meditation is to become the *sūtra*-chanting itself, to become totally the act of chopping, to just sit. Again, “become one with” does not imply that one first gets into some state of blank

consciousness without cognitive content and then try to chop vegetables. It means to perform one's work without indulging in subject-object duality. More concretely, it means to work with genuineness, without hesitation, with authority, without reifying self on one side and the work on the other side. Not surprisingly, in the Rinzai monastery daily work (*samu*) is highly valued as a locus of practice. Robert Buswell has implied that the emphasis on work in a Zen monastery is a misleading stereotype. He has described the Korean Sŏn monastery, in which most of the daily work is done by outside help, often paid, while the Korean monks themselves engage in very little work and do not consider it part of their practice (Buswell 1992: 220). This may be so in a Korean monastery, but in a Japanese Rinzai monastery *samu* is an integral part of practice in which every monk participates. Although monks do not engage in precious kōan dialogue while working the fields, as depicted in old kōan cases, nevertheless if a monk is daydreaming and inattentive, it is quite common for an older monk to bark, "Wake up!" (*Bokeru na!* literally "Don't lose focus!"). If one thinks that *kenshō* is a blank state of mind, one should not participate in *samu*.

Although the initial struggle that the monk has with the kōan looks like the process described in the instrumentalist model of the kōan, when one looks at how the term *kenshō* is actually used, one can see that it marks not a breakthrough to a pure consciousness without cognitive content but instead a breakdown of subject and object within the cognitive complexity of ordinary experience. This means that the usual translation for *kenshō* as "see one's nature" (or "see nature" or "see Buddha-nature") is misleading, for "see one's nature" implies both a subject and an object of seeing. It fails to convey just what is unique about this moment, the fact that the seeing subject "realizes" (both comprehends and instantiates the fact) that it is not separate and distinct from the object it is seeing.¹⁵

Kyōgai ("Consciousness" or "Behavior")

How does a *rōshi* judge whether a monk has seen a kōan? He judges by the monk's *kyōgai*. An investigation of this term will show, by contrast, some of the philosophical assumptions that proponents of pure consciousness bring to the examination of Zen.

Kyōgai originally translated the Sanskrit term, *visaya*, meaning "world" or "place," the object of the senses and the consciousnesses (Mochizuki vol. 1 1958: 566) but in the Rinzai monastery it now has quite different meanings. In some cases one can translate *kyōgai* as "consciousness" or "experience," for in these cases the concept *kyōgai* does share some of the logical features of the concepts of "experience" or "consciousness" in English. One of those logical features is privacy. Just as consciousness or experience is often said to be private in the sense that one person cannot "really" understand another's per-

son's consciousness or experience, so also *kyōgai* is described in much the same way.

This thing called *kyōgai* is an individual thing. Only a sparrow can understand the *kyōgai* of a sparrow. Only a hen can understand the *kyōgai* of a hen and only another fish can understand the *kyōgai* of a fish. In this cold weather, perhaps you are feeling sorry for the fish, poor thing, for it has to live in the freezing water. But don't make the mistake of thinking it would be better off if you put it in warm water; that would kill it. You are a human and there is no way you can understand the *kyōgai* of a fish. (Yamada 1985: 56)

That experience is private is clearly presupposed by other ideas characteristic of Zen. For example, the idea of "mind-to-mind transmission" of Zen experience is so striking just because it shatters the ordinary notion of privacy.

However, *kyōgai* has other features which make it clear that it cannot be equated with a noncognitive pure consciousness. First of all, *kyōgai* can be said to be good or bad, ripe or unripe, interesting or uninteresting. In a fire drill most monks will go through the motions in the pro forma manner characteristic of people merely practicing a drill. But if a monk acts with great energy and seriousness as if he were really in a fire, an observer might comment, *kyōgai ga ii* ("His *kyōgai* is good"). What is meant by that compliment is that the monk acts without self-consciousness, totally pouring himself into the activity and leaving no remainder of self-consciousness behind. By contrast, anyone who hesitates or is self-conscious or self-reflective or in any way not totally one with the task at hand ("It's just a fire drill. Why bother?") may be criticized as *kyōgai ga warui* ("His *kyōgai* is not good"). Furthermore, *kyōgai* can be said to change and develop, for it is a product of human effort. Thus one can say "His *kyōgai* is still unripe" (*Mada kyōgai ga mijuku*) or "His *kyōgai* is still shallow" (*Mada kyōgai ga asai*), implying that even though the monk has been working at overcoming his indecision, or fear, or pride, he still shows traces of self-consciousness. Finally, *kyōgai* bears the quite personal imprint of the particular individual. One person's way of acting in a fire drill, cooking in the kitchen, carrying on the tasks of daily life may be energetic and impassioned; another may do the same tasks coolly and methodically. Yet each may in his own fashion be *narikitta* in the way he acts. Thus one can say of monk Daijō's way of performing some task, "That is typically Daijō *kyōgai*."¹⁶ Because these uses of the term *kyōgai* emphasize action and behavior, the simple word "consciousness" (much less the more contrived "pure consciousness") would not be an accurate translation. Here, "way of acting" or "style" and even "behavior" are better translations, because they reflect the behavioral component of *kyōgai*.

When a *rōshi* says about kōan training, "All is *kyōgai*," he is denying that a monk can pass a kōan by "intellectualizing," by *rikutsu*, a term that implies

that the intellectual explanation is tedious and misses the point. He may scold the monk, saying that Zen is *kyōge betsuden, furyū monji*, “A separate transmission outside scripture, Not founded on words and letters.” By this, he is not emphasizing that Zen is a realm of blank noncognitive consciousness; although there is certainly a lot of language dealing with emptiness, no-mind, and the like, which gives that impression. Rather by this he means that Zen concerns itself not with labels but with facts, not with description but with the thing described, not with intellectual explanation but with performance. He is not making a move on the spectrum of states of mind from the intellectual, cognitive end to the nonintellectual, noncognitive end, or from mediated consciousness to pure consciousness. Rather he is jumping from the entire spectrum of states of mind to another spectrum altogether of act and behavior. In the context of kōan training, the opposite of intellectual explanation is not noncognitive awareness or pure consciousness; the opposite of intellectual explanation here is the thing itself, the act itself. When the monk demonstrates through performance his oneness in some particular act, there the *rōshi* can judge the authenticity, the genuineness, the flair with which he acts—his *kyōgai*.

Here it is appropriate to say something about so-called “cheating” in kōan practice. Because the responses for kōan have now become standardized, it is possible for a monk who learns the standard answer to play-act his way through a session with the *rōshi* without having had any real insight into the kōan assigned. The kōan curriculum, however, is long. There is always the next kōan and the next kōan, and one cannot fake one’s way through the entire curriculum. It is also worth remembering that the very activity of play-acting is a training in overcoming subject and object duality, of *narikiru*. And a *rōshi* will often demand that a monk repeat and repeat his response to a kōan until he is able to perform it with genuineness, real conviction and personal flair. A *rōshi* can usually spot play-acting, but if play-acting is fakery, then let it be genuine fakery.¹⁷

To many readers this discussion of *kyōgai*—sometimes “consciousness,” sometimes “behavior”—will seem puzzling. I suggest that a sense of being puzzled arises from the fact that *kyōgai* violates the Cartesian assumption that mind and body are separate and distinct. *Kyōgai* is like mind in being private but like body in being instantiated in action and behavior. If one thinks that enlightenment is a private state of pure consciousness, which has no connection with outward behavior, then all the skeptical doubts that gave rise to the private language argument and to the issue of “other minds” will arise again in the context of Zen.¹⁸ One can always doubt, so the skeptic claims, that any outward behavior is absolute proof of an enlightened mind. And if one insists that the *rōshi* has an unerring ability to judge enlightenment, this ability to judge will seem to be a kind of mind reading. These are the conundrums that arise if one attempts to see *kenshō* and kōan training through the lens of “pure

consciousness" and its Cartesian assumptions. It is not possible here to discuss fully the inappropriateness of trying to discuss Zen in a Cartesian framework, but it is worth noting that even the phrase "*kenshō* experience" in Japanese is *kenshō taiken* where *tai* means "body." Similarly a synonym for *kenshō* in the monastery is the term *taikoku*, literally "body-attainment."¹⁹ Here we have prima facie evidence that "experience" is not a matter of mere consciousness but is embodied activity. Unfortunately the English word "experience" is more and more being associated with private states of mind, emphasizing exactly the wrong nuance.²⁰ The fundamental point of misapplication is this: in Cartesianism, mind is dualistically separate and distinct from body, and if one interprets *kenshō* according to Cartesian assumptions, then it becomes a state of pure consciousness separate and distinct from body and behavior. But if one takes *kenshō* to be nonduality in subject and object, then *kenshō* must be realized in some bodily form (this is discussed below) and then a concept like *kyōgai*, which is neither totally mind nor totally body, will be not only possible but necessary.

Kenshō as it is understood in Rinzai practice is at once more prosaic and more mysterious than enlightenment depicted as a featureless state of pure consciousness. On the one hand, it is more prosaic and quotidian, for in *kenshō* in particular contexts, there are mountaintops, older sister and younger sister, travelers met on the road, blinds to be rolled up, old women who serve tea. On the other hand, it is much more mysterious, for *kenshō* is the realization of the nonduality of subject and object. The entire kōan curriculum of the Rinzai monastery is designed to take the monk's original insight into nonduality and generalize it into every facet of life. This training program might justly be called reconditioning, since it proceeds not by intellectual understanding but by the ritualistic repetition of the kōan. But it might also justly be called deconditioning, since it leads to the insight that our daily dualistic distinctions hitherto thought to be absolute are not. The kōan training makes a monk see that indeed all experience is conditional and all experience has a nondual aspect. Even when there is subject and object in ordinary experience, there is also the nonduality of subject and object. Traditional Zen slogans such as *bonnō soku bodai* ("Delusive passions are themselves enlightenment") describe this goal. The notion of a pure consciousness is at least conceivable, although we may disagree on whether such a thing exists. But the very idea of the nonduality of subject and object seems inconceivable, conceptually incomprehensible. This is far more mysterious than enlightenment depicted as a state of pure consciousness.

Kōan and Hōri ("Reason")

The focus on the *kenshō* experience has obscured the fact that traditional Rinzai monastic kōan practice includes many years of literary and intellectual

study. This section will give a rough sketch of the “reason,” the logic behind the kōan curriculum. (In another paper I will describe the second half of kōan practice, the literary study, which includes the appending of capping verses to kōan, the writing of lectures, the composition of Chinese verse, the memorization of large amounts of text, the practice of good calligraphy. This traditional form of scholarship is such an important part of kōan practice that it is fair to say that the true modern descendant of the Confucian literary scholar is the Japanese Zen *rōshi*.)

Hōri means “dharma reason,” “dharma principle,” “dharma rationale.” Some modern dictionaries explain that the word *hōri* is an abbreviation of *buppō no rihō* (Nakamura 1981: 1238), meaning “principles of Buddhist teaching,” or *buppō no shinri*, “true principles of Buddhist teaching” (Morohashi 1984: 6: 1053, Character 17290.335) In kōan collections, such as the *Hekigan-roku* (C. *Pi-yen lu*) or the *Mumonkan* (C. *Wu-men kuan*), each kōan case is followed by a commentary or lecture which expounds the *hōri* of the kōan, the reason or principle or rationale expressed by the kōan.

Kyōge Betsuden (“A Separate Transmission outside of Scripture”)

An introduction to Zen, both in Japan and in the West, will often start with the verse attributed to Bodhidharma.

<i>Kyōge betsuden</i>	A separate transmission outside of scripture
<i>Furyū monji</i> ²¹	Not founded on words or letters
<i>Jikishi jinshin</i>	Point directly to one’s mind
<i>Kenshō jōbutsu</i>	See one’s nature and become Buddha

These lines “A separate transmission outside of scripture, Not founded on words and letters” are often taken to imply that Zen practice does not include intellectual or literary study, sometimes even taken to imply that intellectual and literary study hinders Zen practice. Rinzai Zen teachers in Japan give the standard lesson that the intellectual understanding of Zen is not Zen itself, that one must have the experience of *kenshō* (*kenshō taiken*). Shibayama Zenkei makes a typical statement: “From earliest times Zen has insisted on ‘not relying on letters,’ stressing that ‘it’ has to be attained by oneself personally, has to be experienced as one’s own actual fact” (Shibayama 1974: 4). But quite contrary to expectations, Rinzai Zen teachers do *not* teach that intellectual understanding has nothing to do with Zen; instead they teach the quite opposite lesson that Zen requires intellectual understanding and literary study. In a typical lecture given to monks, Yamada Mumon *Rōshi* urged his charges:

First, we must study the sūtras and read reverently the records left by the teachers of the past in order to determine where our own nature is. Sometimes you hear it said that Zen monks do not have to read books or to study. When did this misleading idea get started? It's ridiculous to think that this could possibly be true. We say Zen is "a separate transmission outside the teachings," but it is only because there are teachings that there is something transmitted separate from it. If there were no teaching necessary in the first place, you could not speak of a transmission separate from it. If we do not first study the sūtras and ponder the records of the ancients, we will end up going off in the wrong direction altogether.

The ancient teachers engaged in all branches of scholarship and studied all there was to study; but just through scholarship alone, they were not able to settle what was bothering them. It was then that they turned to Zen. That is why their Zen has real power and dynamism. If you have no understanding of Buddhism, no knowledge of the words of the Dharma, it does not matter how many years you sit, your *zazen* will all be futile. (Yamada 1985: 51)

In Western presentations of Zen, the intellectual understanding of Zen and the experience itself are presented as mutually exclusive either/or alternative, but in the Rinzai monastery the intellectual understanding of Zen and the experience itself are presented as standing in a complementary, both/and relationship. The full product of Rinzai monastic training is "The Master of Zen who uses the two swords of the teaching and the power of the way" (*Kyōsō to dōriki no ryōtōzukai no shūshō*) (Akizuki 1987: 14). That is to say, both intellectual training (*kyōsō*, teaching) and experience (*dōriki*, power of the way) are equally necessary. In Rinzai parlance, one who has only intellectual understanding without experience is said to practice *yako-zen*, "wild fox Zen"; one who has only experience without intellectual understanding is a *zen temma*, "Zen devil."

Speech and Silence: The Logical Problem of the Kōan

The kōan is unlike an essay or sūtra commentary or other discursive literature. It deals with the particular problem of how to express what is said to be inexpressible. In the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, the great bodhisattva Mañjuśrī leads a host of lesser bodhisattvas to visit the sick bodhisattva Vimalakīrti, who is residing in the town of Vaisali in the guise of a layman. The dramatic climax of the sūtra comes in chapter 9, in which Vimalakīrti asks the attending bodhisattvas to explain how to enter the Dharma-door of nonduality, the door to the inconceivable liberation. Several of the bodhisattvas, 33 in all, take turns stating that such and such a dualism is fundamentally false and that on realization of this fact, one enters the Dharma-door of nonduality. Mañjuśrī criticizes all the previous replies thus: "Good sirs, you have all spoken well. Nevertheless, all your explanations are themselves dualistic. To know no one teaching, to express nothing, to say nothing, to explain nothing, to announce nothing,

to indicate nothing, and to designate nothing—that is the entrance into nonduality” (Thurman 1976: 77). Mañjuśrī then asks Vimalakīrti to respond. Vimalakīrti responds by sitting in silence. Mañjuśrī applauds, saying, “Excellent! Excellent, noble sir. This is indeed the entrance into the nonduality of the bodhisattvas. Here there is no use for syllables, sounds, and ideas.” This is Vimalakīrti’s “thunderous silence” (Thurman 1976: 77).

This incident, which is cited as an early example of a Zen kōan dialogue,²² presents the logical problem of the kōan. In a kōan dialogue one of the speakers asks about that which is beyond speech and thought; this is referred to in a variety of locutions—“the inconceivable liberation,” “enlightenment,” “the Great Matter,” “the First Ancestor’s Purpose in Coming from the West,” “Buddha,” “the First Principle,” “the Sound of One Hand,” and others. The logical character of the inconceivable liberation, or of enlightenment, or of the Sound of One Hand, and so on, is that it is nondual. The difficulty is that speech and thought represent whatever they describe as dualistic. Whenever we speak in language, we ascribe predicates. Any predicate P defines a logical space which is divided into two, one labeled P and the other labeled not-P, and any entity we are considering must fall into one or the other half but not into both (the law of the excluded middle). Thus the very use of simple ordinary descriptive language seems to involve us in making dichotomies. Now, if it is possible to speak of the inconceivable liberation in language in which we ascribe predicates to it, this very fact would seem to imply that the inconceivable liberation is dualistic in nature. But the inconceivable liberation, says Vimalakīrti, is nondual. How then can one even talk of the nondual inconceivable liberation if the very act of talking about it implies that it is dualistic in nature? It seems then that the only possible response one can make is to remain silent.

But if one takes the logic of nonduality to its inexorable conclusion, one can argue that Vimalakīrti did not really solve the problem of duality by sitting in silence. After all, although Vimalakīrti avoided any dualism within speech, nevertheless speech itself when contrasted with silence presents another duality, though at a higher level. By opting for silence, Vimalakīrti has hung himself on one of the horns of dualism again. In fact, just such a criticism of Vimalakīrti is offered by the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* itself. In chapter 7 the disciple Śāriputra engages in a conversation with a figure called the “goddess” (in Robert Thurman’s translation). In this conversation, the hapless Śāriputra is reduced to silence by the aggressive questions of the goddess. He gives the excuse, “Since liberation is inexpressible, goddess, I do not know what to say.” The goddess scolds Śāriputra for his silence, but her reprimand can also apply to Vimalakīrti:

All the syllables pronounced by the elder have the nature of liberation. Why? Liberation is neither internal nor external, nor can it be apprehended apart from them. Likewise, syllables are neither internal nor external, nor can they be apprehend-

hended anywhere else. Therefore, reverend Śāriputra, do not point to liberation by abandoning speech! Why? The holy liberation is the equality of all things. (Thurman 1976: 59)

Since “the holy liberation is the equality of all things,” then not only do speech and silence both partake of the nature of liberation equally, but also liberation cannot be apprehended apart from syllables and speech. Thus she says, “Do not point to liberation by abandoning speech”—a criticism of both Śāriputra and Vimalakīrti.

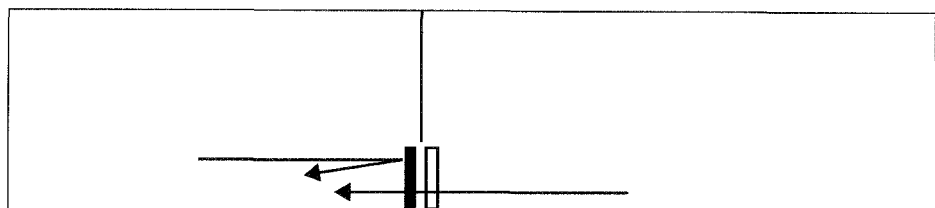
The Nonduality of Duality and Nonduality

The *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* presents us with a quite different logical system. In the conventional realm in which we normally reside, we usually abide by the rules of Either/Or logic, the logic of duality. Here a thing is a thing and not another thing. Here if we make a statement, implying that it is true, we are also implying that its negation is false. But in the inconceivable liberation, this dualistic logic does not work. In this realm it is possible to make contradictory statements. The bodhisattvas Vimalakīrti and Mañjuśrī, both of whom reside in the inconceivable liberation, converse in such contradictions.

“Welcome, Mañjuśrī! You are very welcome. There you are, without any coming. You appear, without any seeing. You are heard, without any hearing.”
Mañjuśrī declared, “Householder, it is as you say. Who comes, finally comes not. Who goes, finally goes not. Why? Who comes is not known to come. Who goes is not known to go. Who appears is finally not to be seen. (Thurman 1976: 43)

In this realm, what we normally take to be opposites are made identical: form is emptiness and emptiness is form; the delusive passions are at once enlightenment; samsāra is nirvāna. These statements appear to conventional understanding as examples of a different kind of logic, the logic of Both/And. *Both* a statement *and* its opposite are true. Also in this realm, we are not forced to categorize anything into either coming or going, seeing or not seeing, good or bad, up or down, left or right. The inconceivable liberation is neither coming nor going, neither seen nor not seen. *Neither* a statement *nor* its opposite need be affirmed. To conventional understanding, this too appears as a different kind of logic, the logic of Neither/Nor. (These categories—Either/Or, Neither/Nor, Both/And—which attempt to characterize nondual logic, are of course themselves taken from dualistic logic. The problem of self-reference here is similar to that in mathematics, where attempts to construct a model of a three-value logic can be done only in two-value logic.)

The logic of nonduality, however, when applied consistently, destroys the very notion of a separate and distinct realm of nonduality. That is, from the



Conventional	Ultimate
Conceptual duality	Inconceivable nonduality
Logic of Either/Or	Logic of Both/And ("Form is emptiness")
	Logic of Neither/Nor ("Not this, not that")
Duality between dual and nondual	No duality between dual and nondual
Reflection	See-through

FIGURE 11.1. *The line between the conventional and inconceivable liberation*

side of conventional understanding where one sees in dualistic terms, there is a distinction between the dual and the nondual, between the conventional realm and the inconceivable liberation. But from the side of inconceivable liberation in the nondual dharma, even the dualism between the dual and the nondual is merely apparent and not real. The line between the conventional and the inconceivable liberation is a very strange line. From the conventional side, there is a distinction between this side and that side; from the side of inconceivable liberation, there is no distinction between this side and that side. The conventional realm and inconceivable liberation are like the two sides of a one-way mirror. From the side of the conventional, one is convinced that there is a duality between the conventional and inconceivable liberation, but unfortunately one can see only one side of the duality; when one tries to conceive of the other side, one imagines the inconceivable liberation according to the dualistic concepts of the conventional. This is like being on the mirror side of a one-way mirror: one is sure there is something on the other side of the glass but one cannot see it. When one looks, one sees only images of oneself. But from the side of inconceivable liberation, one can see that the distinction between duality and nonduality is itself nondual, that there is no fundamental difference between the conventional and inconceivable liberation. This is like being on the see-through side of the mirror. One can see both sides of the glass and the two sides are really the same. Figure 11.1 represents this asymmetry. I have used the terms Conventional and Ultimate because later I link this schema to the notion of twofold truth in Buddhism. (Yes, I know, the chart itself belongs to the Conventional.)

When the concept of nonduality is applied to itself, it becomes clear that any judgment "That's dualistic!" is itself a dualistic act, and that the nonduality of duality and nonduality reaffirms duality rather than obliterates it. In

simple first-order nonduality, one cannot affirm that such and such is true or good and its opposite false or bad, but in second-order nonduality (the nonduality of duality and nonduality), one can affirm that such and such is true or good and its opposite is false or bad (although one can deny it as well).

As Hee-Jin Kim points out, “nondualism does not signify primarily the transcendence of dualism so much as the realization of dualism” (Kim 1975/1987:100). A traditional Zen verse runs, “At first the mountains are mountains and the rivers are rivers. Then the mountains are not mountains and the rivers are not rivers. Then finally the mountains are mountains and the rivers are rivers.” The first negation of the standpoint of duality (the first “the mountains are mountains and the rivers are rivers”) is simple nonduality (“the mountains are not mountains and the rivers are not rivers”). But plain and simple nonduality is itself part of the dualism of dual and nondual. If one takes nonduality to its logical conclusion, one must negate even the standpoint of nonduality and move to a second-order nonduality, the nonduality of duality and nonduality (the second “the mountains are mountains and the rivers are rivers”). When one does this, then the distinctions and differentiations of the ordinary dualistic, conventional standpoint are resurrected. The second appearance of the dualistic conventional standpoint is different from its first appearance. The first appearance of the dualistic conventional standpoint is differentiated from the nondual ultimate standpoint, whereas the second appearance of the dualistic conventional standpoint is identical with the nondual ultimate standpoint. As Kim says about Dōgen’s views on the absolute freedom of the *samādhi* of self-fulfilling activity: “It refers to an absolute freedom of self-realization absent [of] any dualism of antitheses. . . . The absolute freedom in question here is that freedom which realizes itself in duality, not apart from it” (Kim 1975, 52–53).

A corollary of this logic is that nonduality never appears as nonduality; it always appears as duality. For if nonduality appeared as nonduality, it would be dualistically opposed to duality. (For similar reasons, emptiness never appears as emptiness; it always appears as form.) That is why *kenshō* is not to be identified with a noncognitive pure experience dualistically contrasted with conventional experience, and why Dōgen and the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* say thought and language, rather than hindering enlightenment, liberate it. The logic of nonduality introduces a systematic ambiguity into the characterization of all experience, revealing it to be in one sense dual and in one sense nondual. We now proceed to discuss this systematic ambiguity in the context of language.

Twofold Truth and Puns

The idea of higher and lower truths, or sacred and mundane truths, is an ancient idea in many religious traditions. The Buddhist version was the idea

of twofold truth, Conventional Truth (S. *saṃvṛti-satya*) and Ultimate Truth (*paramārtha-satya*). The idea that there were two kinds of truth was given several rebirths as Buddhism traveled from early India to China, Tibet, and Japan.²³ In this chapter I will point to only one set of significant changes in the idea of twofold truth as it applies to present Rinzai kōan practice. Outside of Zen, the distinction between Conventional and Ultimate Truth often amounts to a distinction between two kinds of language with different vocabularies; in the Rinzai monastery, however, the distinction amounts to two different standpoints which use the same language and vocabulary but with different meaning.

In the early Theravada Buddhist tradition, according to Steven Collins's account, Conventional truth was that language whose vocabulary contained words that labeled selves, persons, spirits, gods, and so on. This is the language of ordinary people, the language that presupposes that both the objects of the world and the self have an enduring self-existence (*svabhāva*) in some strong sense. Ultimate language, on the other hand, avoids the use of words that refer to self and objects by using instead a technical vocabulary which refers only to the *skandha*-elements out of which these putative existent entities are compounded. Thus Ultimate truth speaks only in terms of the analytical categories of Buddhist doctrine (Collins 1982: 153–156, 179–182).²⁴ The difference between Conventional and Ultimate languages here is similar to that of the two languages used for talking about computers. Ordinary people often speak as if the computer were a person. We say, "It is thinking" or "It is being uncooperative today," as if the computer possessed a *svabhāva*-like self and engaged in human acts like "thinking" and "being uncooperative." However, the computer engineer's language to describe what is actually going on in the computer merely describes the plus-minus state of the switches on its chips and control board and does not attribute personality or selfhood to the computer.²⁵

In Rinzai Zen kōan practice, the distinction between Conventional and Ultimate truth appears as the distinction between *hen'i* and *shōi*. Here *hen* originally means "crooked," "bent," "inclined" or "partial"; *hen'i* indicates the realm of duality, of *svabhāva*. On the other side, *shō* means "straight," "correct," "true"; *shōi* indicates the realm of nonduality, of absence of *svabhāva*. Miura and Sasaki have translated *hen'i* and *shōi* as "Apparent" and "Real" (Miura and Sasaki 1966: 67ff, 315ff).²⁶

In the Zen context, however, *hen'i* and *shōi* do not distinguish two separate languages with different vocabularies; they distinguish two standpoints which use the same language and the same vocabulary but with different meaning. When the language is being used to indicate some aspect of the differentiated, the manifest, the conditioned, the realm of dualism, then it is expressing the standpoint of *hen'i*. The very same language, the very same sentence, can also be used to express some aspect of the undifferentiated, the unmanifest, the unconditioned, the realm of the nondual. When it does so, it is expressing the

standpoint of *shōi*. This means that Zen kōan and Zen language in general are full of puns in a special sense—words and phrases that are used with both Conventional and Ultimate meaning. To understand the Zen kōan requires one to be sensitive to the pun, to the constant ambiguity between *hen'i* and *shōi* in the usage of words. The punning expression of one meaning inside another is an essential part of the kōan. And accurate translations of Zen language into English should preserve, not eliminate, that ambiguity.

One should not, however, think that one has “solved” the kōan if one can find a nonconventional interpretation of a statement in Zen. D. T. Suzuki remarked that the “utterances of *satori*” are marked by “uncouthness and incomprehensibility” (Suzuki 1953: 110–111). “One doesn’t know the smell of one’s own shit” (*Jishi kusaki o oboezu*) is a typically uncouth Zen phrase. When pressed to explain what it means, beside giving the literal meaning, most people would probably interpret it to mean, “One is unaware of one’s own self-centeredness” or some such. This would be a *hen'i* reading, a Conventional interpretation. But in Zen this statement also expresses: “Sentient being does not realize its own awakening” or “One is unaware of one’s own Buddha-nature,” taking “one’s own shit” as a metaphor for awakening or Buddha-nature. Here it is necessary to be careful. It is not correct to say that “One is unaware of one’s own Buddha-nature” is the Ultimate interpretation as if the difference between Conventional and Ultimate were merely one of different levels of interpretation. One cannot “solve” a kōan just by coming up with an interpretation more profound than the obvious Conventional one. Even “One is unaware of one’s own Buddha-nature” is a statement in the Conventional interpretation whose meaning and truth are taken dualistically. The element of nonduality is the metaphor itself in which the unclean and impure “one’s own shit” indicates the immaculately clean and pure Buddha-nature.²⁷ And even the nonduality of this metaphor can be reduced to the Conventional. One can take the Zen phrase as merely expounding the nonduality of clean and dirty, a nonduality that implies a hidden self in the center making the judgments “clean” or “dirty.” Doing this reduces the nonduality to a mere intellectual nonduality, a variant of “All uphill are downhill.” The mistake here is that every attempt to understand *shō'i* as an interpretation reduces it to *hen'i*. Every attempt to understand nonduality as an interpretation reduces it to duality, since interpretations divide into dualistic categories like true/false. It is at this point that the notion of a performative utterance is useful, for a kōan utterance is better seen as a pun encompassing not two interpretations but two functions, one descriptive and one performative. And in the same vein it helps to remember that Zen monks are often depicted as expressing their *kyōgai* not by making a statement but by performing an action like raising a finger, putting their shoes on their head, or performing a bow.

It is now time to consider a realizational model of the kōan using a revised notion of performance.

Realization: Kōan as Performance of *Kenshō*

Earlier we noted that although Rosemont's performative account of the kōan was open to the same criticisms as other instrumentalist accounts of the kōan, nevertheless he had a useful insight: a kōan is not a description but a performance. Before his account can be used to clarify how language works in a kōan, some modifications have to be made to his formulation. First, we need to distinguish between utterances that cause a performance of an act from utterances that are themselves the performance of an act. Second, we need to recognize that utterances can pun in a special sense; they can be both performative and descriptive at the same time. These modifications transform Rosemont's instrumentalist model of the kōan into a realizational model.

When John Austin first coined the term "performative," he focused on first-person present-tense utterances such as "I apologize," "I promise," "I name," "I guarantee," which typically did not describe, but performed, the actual act of apologizing, promising, and so on. Austin soon saw the necessity for distinguishing numerous kinds of performatives; locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary utterances were recognized with many subspecies. Of all these distinctions, only one kind concerns us here. Different from the original class of "I apologize" kind of performatives were utterances like "Shoot her!" This involves causation; my saying "Shoot her!" causes a gunman to fire a gun whose bullet kills her (Austin 1962: esp. 94–131). The utterance of "I apologize" is itself the performance of the act of apologizing, but the utterance of "Shoot her" is not itself the performance of the act of killing her but rather its cause. Now Rosemont's performative analysis of the kōan assumes that kōan utterances are like "Shoot her!" that is, they are thought to be the causal means to enlightenment. He does not consider the possibility that kōan utterances may be like "I apologize" where the utterance of "I apologize" itself performs the act of apology.

In addition, Rosemont seems to think that an utterance is either descriptive or performative but not both. However, there is no reason why the same language cannot be both descriptive and performative. The difference between descriptive and performative is a matter not of the words that compose the utterance—the content, so to speak—but of the context of their utterance on a particular occasion. Father and son, sorting out their laundry, pass socks and underwear to each other saying, "This is yours, this is mine." Here "This is yours" is a descriptive utterance because in this context it merely classifies objects under descriptions. But when father hands over a deed of property or a family heirloom passed down through several generations to his son and says, "This is yours," the utterance "This is yours" is a performative, for by so saying he transfers the right of possession for that property or heirloom from himself to his son. "This is yours" as descriptive merely classifies which objects

are yours and which are mine; but “This is yours” as performative *makes* these objects yours.

How is it possible for an utterance to be both descriptive and performative at the same? To show how these possibilities work in more easily recognizable contexts, look at these examples.

1. A: “What is the difference between ignorance and apathy?”
B: “I don’t know and I don’t care.”
2. A: “People today don’t listen to what other people have to say.”
B: “Were you saying something?”
A: “What?”
3. LINGUISTICS PROFESSOR: “In the English language, you can combine an affirmative with a negative to express a negative, a negative and a negative to express a negative, an affirmative with an affirmative to express an affirmative, but you can never combine an affirmative with an affirmative to express a negative.”

VOICE FROM THE BACK OF THE HALL: “Yes! Yes!”

These are puns but not in the ordinary sense in which one statement has two descriptive meanings. They are puns in the sense that each statement can be taken both descriptively and performatively. In example (1) above, “I don’t know and I don’t care” is not only descriptive of the speaker’s state of mind but also an expression of, a performance of, the speaker’s own ignorance and apathy. Just as “I apologize” is a performance of apologizing, so also “I don’t know and I don’t care” is a performance of ignorance and apathy, though perhaps inadvertent. “I don’t know and I don’t care” as descriptive refuses to answer the question but as performative gives a very good answer to the question by providing a real example of ignorance and apathy itself.

Kōan dialogues do not all fit into one pattern. Nevertheless it is always useful to look for the performative dimension. In *Hekiganroku* case 1, Bodhidharma’s answer “Not know!” to the emperor’s question, “Who is it that stands before me?” is to be understood as both a description and a performance. As a descriptive, “Not know” refuses to answer the question. As performance, Bodhidharma presents nonduality itself. In *Mumonkan* case 7, a monk asked Jōshū, “I have just entered the monastery. Please teach me.” Jōshū asked, “Have you finished eating your rice gruel?” The monk said, “I have finished.” Jōshū said, “Go wash your bowl.” This answer, “Go wash your bowl,” is not a description but a performance. But it can be taken as performance at more than one level. If one thinks that the new monk is merely

asking for instruction in monastery regulations, then “Go wash your bowl” is a concrete performance of one such regulation. But if we take the monk’s question as a direct request to Jōshū, “Show me your nonduality” in the guise of the question “Please teach me,” then Jōshū’s “Go wash your bowl” is a performance of nonduality dressed up as a performance of monastery regulation and a fitting answer to the monk’s question.

Zen students early catch on to the fact that they must perform in front of the *rōshi*, and at first they assume that any kind of physical movement will do. After a few rounds with the *rōshi*, they learn that nonsense action is just as wide of the mark as purely intellectual explanation. Their response must be a performance but one that is appropriate to the context of the kōan. This two-sided response reflects the double sense of “realize.” One realizes, in two senses of “realize,” the nonduality of subject and object. It is important to understand the sequence of the two kinds of “realize.” One does not first decipher the allusive language into ordinary language and then treat the decoded language as a script for some performance. As is described above, one understands a kōan not intellectually but through the process of constantly repeating it to oneself, constantly asking what it means, until eventually one realizes that one’s own seeking to answer the kōan is itself the activity of the kōan. This realization takes place within the particular context of the kōan. The monk’s nondual realization of the kōan is at first expressed in terms of hands if one is asked about the sound of one hand, in terms of a young woman if one is asked about “Senjo and Her Soul” (*Mumonkan* case 35), in terms of causality and karma if one is asked about “Hyakujō (C. Pai-chang) and the Fox” (*Mumonkan* case 2), in terms of a bath if one is asked about “Bodhisattvas Take a Bath” (*Hekiganroku* case 78), in terms of flowers if one is asked about “Nansen (C. Nan-ch’uan) and the Flower” (*Hekiganroku* case 40). When one has experienced the nonduality of subject and object in each particular context, then one starts to understand what kōan language alludes to. After a while one starts to see common patterns, but in the beginning, cognitive realization, the analytical understanding and interpretation of kōan language, originally follows and does not precede experiential realization.

To an outside observer, nothing much seems to be taking place. Even granted that a kōan dialogue involves a performance of nonduality, what more is going beyond the utterance “Not know” or “Go wash your bowl”? What is merely descriptive to one person may be performative to another. Consider an earlier example: “One does not know the smell of one’s own shit.” We have already discussed different descriptive interpretations (“One is unaware of one’s self-centeredness,” “One is unaware of one’s own Buddha-nature”), but how is it performative? All practitioners at first seek to penetrate the kōan thinking that it is some object, that it is some thing. Finally they come to realize that their own seeking after the kōan is the kōan itself at work within them, and also that this seeking both hindered their realization and yet made

it possible at the same time. For them indeed the seeking that hindered their realization (their “shit”) is identical with their Buddha-nature (the identity of subject seeking for the kōan and the object as kōan). “It hurts” for a person without pain is a description, but for a person wincing in pain, “It hurts!” is an expression of, a performance of, pain and does not describe it. For one without experience of nonduality “One does not know the smell of one’s shit” is only a metaphorical or allusive description, but for one who experiences the nonduality of subject and object, of shit and Buddha-nature, the utterance “One does not know the smell of one’s shit” is an expression of, a performance of, nonduality.

In a realizational model, *kenshō* and kōan are depicted quite differently from the way they are depicted in the instrumental model. *Kenshō* is not a state of noncognitive consciousness awaiting the monk on the other side of the limits of rationality. In the context of the Rinzai kōan curriculum, *kenshō* is the realization of nonduality within ordinary conventional experience. If *kenshō* is to be described as a breakthrough, then it is a breakthrough not out of, but into, conventional consciousness. This is in the nature of the case, in the nature of the logic, or *hōri*, of nonduality itself. If *kenshō* is the realization of nonduality, then it itself cannot be separate and distinct from ordinary dualistic experience. Thus the original nonduality of subject and object at first obliterates duality and then resurrects it. Furthermore, a kōan is not merely a blunt psychological instrument, an irrational puzzle designed to push the monk beyond the limits of rationality. A kōan is a test case, one part of a long sophisticated curriculum of kōan cases built upon the *hōri*, the logic of, nonduality. The early part of the kōan curriculum ritually trains the monk at performance of nonduality until his *kyōgai* matures. The latter part of the kōan curriculum leads the monk through the *hōri*, of *hen'i* and *shōi*, of the Five Ranks, and so on. The final product of the kōan curriculum is a monk trained, on the one hand, to realize the many expressions of nonduality depicted in kōan and, on the other hand, to expound the “reason” (*dōri*, *hōri*) of Zen as expressed in the language and philosophy of kōan.

Reflections

The idea of a pure consciousness functions in the study of religion very much like the idea of a state of nature functions in political philosophy. Both model philosophical assumptions but they do not depict an actual state of affairs. Just as the state of nature is said to exist prior to the development of society and state, so also the state of pure consciousness is said to exist prior to the development of thought and language. In Rousseau’s romantic version of the original state of nature, primitive individuals lived freely and happily without the artificiality, class inequalities, and vanity of social life. In Hobbes’s version, equally romantic, the state of nature was a realm of savage incivility which

eventually forced individuals to create society because only some authority stronger than the individual could guarantee security. Accounts of such states of nature contain bad logic, for the individuals residing in the state of nature before the development of society behave in ways possible only after the development of society. For example, state-of-nature individuals get together in political meetings and draw up social contracts, but strictly speaking, political meetings and drawing up social contracts are activities possible only after society has gotten started. Descriptions of a state of nature can be instructive even if they contain faulty logic because they model an author's fundamental beliefs about human nature, but it is a serious confusion to take such a model as factual description. It is reassuring to know that neither Rousseau nor Hobbes thought of the state of nature as an actual stage in the historical development of human societies.

What the state of nature is to political philosophy, pure consciousness is to the study of Zen. Theories that describe *kenshō* as the breakthrough of thought and language to pure consciousness contain the same sort of bad logic. For example, in pure consciousness without conceptual activity, we "see things as they are" but "seeing things as they are" is possible only after conceptual activity gets started; it arises epistemologically at the same level as "seeing things as they are not." Just as we distinguish between model and fact when talking about the state of nature in political philosophy, we should do the same in the study of Zen. The belief in a pure consciousness models the believer's views of human nature and society but we should leave open the question of whether that description of pure experience describes an actual state.

In Buddhism, however, there is the state of meditation, called *samādhi*, which does indeed seem to be a state of pure consciousness, a state without self-consciousness, awareness of space or time, or even sensory input. But *samādhi* is not pure consciousness because pure consciousness is really a political concept.

What fundamental beliefs about human nature and society are reflected in the idea that *kenshō* is a breakthrough to a pure consciousness? Why do people want to believe in enlightenment as a breakthrough to pure consciousness? The belief in pure consciousness is often an expression of a vision of human freedom. Society has conditioned us, so it is said, so that the very concepts and vocabulary we use encapsulate society's stereotypes and prejudices. Ultimately we learn to see even ourselves in terms of society's concepts and norms, thus becoming alienated from ourselves. Society is thus depicted as the source of suffering to the individual. To the extent that this is so, the breakthrough to pure consciousness labeled *kenshō* is the psychological version of a return to the innocence of the state of nature before dehumanizing society got started.²⁸ Not only is this account of the origin of human problems proffered by modern Western apologists for Buddhism, it is also the standard diagnosis offered by most students in the university classroom. This account seems self-evident

because it is given within a society much dominated by modern notions of individualism, but it is not Buddhism. In Buddhism, the source of suffering is not society; in Buddhism, the source of human suffering is one's own ignorance and attachments. That ignorance and those attachments have long karmic roots for which one is also responsible. *Samādhi* gets its meaning from being imbedded inside that picture of the human condition. Pure consciousness, by contrast, is a political concept which wants to affirm the original purity of the individual against the demeaning influence of society.

At one time, humans imagined that if they could free themselves of gravity, they would be free, able to fly like the birds. Now that we have rockets that can actually put us in space beyond the reach of gravity, we find that humans free-floating beyond gravity are not free at all. Instead they float helpless and out of control. Gravity, we find, does not deprive us of freedom, but on the contrary gravity is what gives human beings control over their movements and thus freedom. The lesson here is that one should put aside dreams of escaping gravity and learn instead the discipline of how to handle the body in gravity. Just as there is no free flying above the reach of gravity, there is no Zen enlightenment beyond thought and language in a realm of pure consciousness. Instead of blaming thought and language for defiling a primordial consciousness, one should recognize that only in thought and language can enlightenment be realized.

NOTES

1. Some samples:

The essence of the kōan is to be rationally unresolvable and thus point to what is arational. The kōan urges us to abandon our rational thought structures and step beyond our usual state of consciousness in order to press into new and unknown dimensions. (Dumoulin 1988: vol. 1, 246)

The kōan is thus like the demand for a description of a four-sided triangle. The explicit purpose is to confuse and frustrate until, in desperation, one is forced to abandon all conceptual thinking. When finally taken to such a point, one has "solved" the kōan by learning to let go of the artificial and restraining framework of conventional thought. (Radcliffe 1993: 7)

These two notions—*kenshō* as the breakthrough to pure consciousness and the kōan as nonrational, psychological instrument—nicely support each other, but they are not conceptually tied together. It is possible to conceive of the kōan as instrument to another form of consciousness and assume that the other form of consciousness is still a form of conventional consciousness. This is, in fact, Steven Katz's position in Katz 1992b: 6–7.

2. I follow Hee-Jin Kim in translating *dōri* as "reason" (Kim 1987: 104) or "rationality" (Kim 1985b, 2) and *genjō* as "realization" (Kim 1985b: 4; Kim 1987: 61, 76ff). As an indication of the importance of the notion of rationality for Dōgen, Kim cites Katō Shūkō's finding that the term *dōri* appears 272 times in the *Shōbōgenzō* and the

term *kotowari* (which also means reason) 12 times for a total of 284 occurrences. See Katō Shūkō, *Shōbōgenzō yōgo-sakuin*, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Risōsha, 1962–63) cited in Kim 1987: 271 n7.

3. For this debate, see the several books edited by Steven T. Katz (Katz 1978a, 1983a, 1992a) and the criticism by Robert K. C. Forman (Forman 1986, 1990, 1993). See also Proudfoot 1985.

4. Forman takes the opposite tack of never discussing reported cases of mystical experience that have much cognitive content and detail.

5. “Properly understood, yoga, for example, is *not* an *unconditioning* or *deconditioning* of consciousness, but rather it is a *reconditioning* of consciousness, i.e., a substituting of one form of conditioned and/or contextual consciousness for another, albeit a new, unusual, and perhaps altogether more interesting form of conditioned-contextual consciousness.” (Katz 1978b: 57)

6. In this paragraph, I adapt an argument taken from Wright 1992.

7. “Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind.” “The understanding can intuit nothing, the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise.” Kant 1963: A 51; B 75.

8. “For a *large* class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word ‘meaning’ it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.” (Wittgenstein 1963: ¶ 43)

9. Nakamura Kan’un Shitsu, former Rōshi of the Daitokuji Sōdō, Kyoto. Conversation April 1981.

10. Asai Gisen, Rōshi of the Nagaoka Zenjuku, Nagaoka. Lectures 1987.

11. These examples are all extracts from recorded conversations in Looi 1994: “kōans can often trigger a *kenshō* . . .” 309; “Is *kenshō* at all common?” 314; “You were talking . . .” 330.

12. I have described the relationship between ritual formalism and insight in Rinzai monastic life in “Teaching and Learning in the Rinzaï Zen Monastery” (Hori 1994).

13. Nishitani Keiji uses the English word “realize” precisely because it has these two uses. See his discussion in Nishitani 1982: 5–6.

14. A quick look through the standard kōan collections shows quite a large number of kōan built around some problem of duality or nonduality, although the words “duality” and “nonduality” are never used. In the *Mumonkan* (C. *Wumen-kuan*), the following cases all deal with the theme of one and two: case 5, “Kyōgen (C. Hsiang-yen) Up a Tree”; case 11, “Jōshū (C. Chao-chou) and the Hermits”; case 14, “Nansen (C. Nanch’üan) Cuts a Cat”; case 23, “Think Neither Good Nor Evil”; case 24, “Separate from Words and Language”; case 26, “Two Monks Roll Up Blinds”; case 35, “Senjo (C. Ch’ien-nü) Separated from Her Soul”; case 36, “On the Road Meet an Adept of the Way”; case 43, “Shuzan’s (C. Shou-shan’s) Bamboo Rod”; case 44, “Basho’s (C. Pa-chiao’s) Staff.”

15. D. T. Suzuki pointed out that “seeing one’s nature” was a misleading translation for *kenshō* because it presupposed a nature to be seen. Rather, “in the satori seeing there is neither subject nor object; it is at once seeing and not seeing; that which is seen is that which sees, and vice versa. This idea has led many superficially minded people to imagine that Zen’s seeing is seeing into the Void, being absorbed in contemplation, and not productive of anything useful for our practical life.” (Suzuki 1950: 72; see also Suzuki 1956: 160ff and a discussion in Hsueh-Li Cheng 1986b)

16. Furuta Shōkin has a short discussion of “individual character” (*kobessei*) in satori (Furuta 1983: 28).

17. Cheating is not a serious problem but *sudōri* is—the tendency of some *rōshi* to pass a student on to the next kōan even though the student has not seen the kōan for himself.

18. See the entries for “Other Minds” (Vol. VI, 7–13) and “Private Language Argument” (Vol. VI, 458–464) in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edwards 1967. Wittgenstein attacked the assumptions upon which the skeptic’s argument was based, but unfortunately Wittgenstein’s own remarks are so cryptic that there is disagreement about what he said. More relevant for our purposes is the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who, in *The Phenomenology of Perception*, systematically attacked the Cartesian assumptions behind contemporary psychological theory and attempted to construct an alternate phenomenology. He was one of the first to use the notion of the body as a subject of consciousness not present to ordinary awareness, and many of his comments about perception and judgment can be applied without difficulty to the notion of *kyōgai*. See Merleau-Ponty 1962.

19. Sasaki Jōshū Rōshi has said that before World War II, the common word for enlightenment in the monastery was *taikoku*, but after the war, because of the writings of D. T. Suzuki and Nishida Kitarō, the younger generation of Zen *rōshi* now sometimes use the terminology of *junsui keiken* “pure experience.” (Sasaki Jōshū, personal communication, Dec. 23, 1993)

20. Wayne Proudfoot’s book *Religious Experience* (Proudfoot 1985) analyzes the way “experience” has been used in ideological defense of religious positions. See the discussion of this issue in Sharf 1995.

21. Also read *furu moji*.

22. D. T. Suzuki makes it the frontispiece of his *Manual of Zen Buddhism*. The incident appears as case 84 of the *Hekiganroku*.

23. Nagao 1989, Swanson 1989.

24. Robert Gimello gives an example of translating from one to the other. The Conventional language, “I hear beautiful music,” is misleading for it seems to imply the existence of *svabhava* like “I,” “hear,” “beautiful,” and “music.” Ultimate language would replace such misleading words and substitute technical language, which implied no *svabhava*. Thus “I hear beautiful music” in Ultimate language would be something like this.

These arises as aural perception (*saṃjñā*), an impulse of auditory consciousness (*vijñāna*) which is produced in dependence upon contact (*sparśa*) between the auditory faculty (*indriya*) and certain palpable vibrations emanating from a material (*rūpa*) instrument; this impulse of consciousness, in concert with certain morally conditioned mental predispositions (*samskāra*), occasions a feeling or hedonic tone (*vedanā*) of pleasure which in turn can produce attachment (*upādāna*), and so on. (Gimello 1983, 74–5)

25. I am indebted to Bhante Vimala of Toronto for this useful analogy.

26. The terms *hen'i* and *shōi* are taken from Tung-shan’s (J. Tōzan) Five Ranks and are used in Rinzai Zen as analytical categories for organizing the many kōan into an integrated system. The Five Ranks constitute one of the last categories of kōan in the kōan curriculum (see Akizuki 1987, Asahina 1941, Ito 1970, Itō and Hayashiya 1952).

Tōzan’s Five Ranks are presented in a work authored by Hakuin called *Tōjō goi henshō kuketsu* (The Five Ranks of the Apparent and the Real: The Orally Transmitted Secret Teachings of the [Monk] Who Lived on Mount Tō). This has been translated in Miura and Sasaki 1966, 63–72. The original character text can be found in the Zen

monk's handbook called *Zudokko* (*The Poison-Painted Drum*, Fujita Genro 1922). The Five Ranks are:

<i>Shōchūhen</i>	The Apparent within the Real
<i>Henchūshō</i>	The Real within the Apparent
<i>Shōchūrai</i>	The Coming from within the Real
<i>Kenchūshi</i>	The Arrival at Mutual Integration
<i>Kenchūtō</i>	Unity Attained

So far as I know, there is no complete study of the Five Ranks, but there are several brief explanations including Miura and Sasaki 1966, 309–312, 379–381; Dumoulin 1988, Vol. 1 222–230; “Interfusion of University and Particularity” in Chang 1969; Lai 1983; Powell 1986, and the entry under “*Goi*” in the *Zengaku daijiten* (Komazawa 1977). Tokiwa Gishin has a short discussion of the Five Ranks in connection with Hakuin's Sound of One Hand (Tokiwa 1991).

27. Scatological reference in general is often used this way. There are many other examples. The best-known is probably *Mumonkan* case 21, where in reply to a monk's question, “What is Buddha?” Ummon replies “A dried up turd of shit.” I follow the ZGJT (Iriya 1991:66) reading here: the usual reading of *kanshiketsu* as “A stick for wiping shit” is mistaken; Buddha is the turd of shit itself. For more on scatological references in Zen, see my paper on Ritual Vulgarity, Hori 1995.

28. Wright discusses this point in greater deal in his examination of Erich Fromm's critique of society in Wright 1992.

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