# ASIAN THOUGHT AND CULTURE

# A Dream Within a Dream

Studies in Japanese Thought

# Steven Heine



謹 呈

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## A Dream Within a Dream



## **Asian Thought and Culture**

Charles Wei-hsun Fu General Editor

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## **A Dream Within a Dream**

### Studies in Japanese Thought



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#### PREFACE

This book is a collection of my essays dealing with three main areas of Japanese thought: Dôgen's Zen View of Liberation, Japanese Religion and Aesthetics, and Comparative Studies. The first section contains articles highlighting the uniqueness and significance of the creative reading and interpretation by Dôgen (1200-1253, founder of Sôtô Zen in Japan) of earlier Buddhist teachings expressed in the writings of his mentor, Ju-ching, as well as Mahayana sutras. The first article examines the fundamental notion of "casting off body-mind" (shinjin datsuraku) as Dôgen's initial enlightenment experience attained in China under Ju-ching. Here I try to resolve a textualphilological issue raised by leading Japanese scholars as to whether Dôgen creatively altered or adhered to the original saying of Ju-ching through an evaluation of Dôgen's approach to language in philosophy and poetry. The next essay views the doctrine of the "passage of being-time" (uji no kyôryaku) as the basis for Dôgen's hermeneutic method for rewriting traditional Mahayana Buddhist scriptures. Dôgen's originality and license-taking in regard to his philosophical tradition is grounded on a distinctive understanding of the interrelation of the three tenses of time. The third piece offers a new annotated translation, with commentary on the role of dream in Asian thought, of one of the most intriguing Shôbôgenzô fascicles, "Disclosing a Dream Within a Dream" ("Muchûsetsumu").

The second section contains three articles on the relation between religion and aesthetics in Japan. The first essay is an analysis of Dôgen's waka poetry in terms of the influences he received and exerted on the medieval literary tradition. Although Dôgen is known for his criticism of poetry as a distraction from the rigorous meditation required to attain Zen enlightenment, his poetic and prose writings demonstrate a striking affinity with the styles and themes of writers such as Teika, Chômei, Saigyô, and Kenkô. The second article examines the impact of indigenous folk beliefs in cyclical, seasonal fertility upon the holistic view of impermanence expressed by the great Japanese reclusive writers and thinkers-including Dôgen and the literati mentioned above--whose works are based on a subjective realization attained through Buddhist contemplation. This essay also discusses the fundamental difference between the Buddhist affirmation of death as integral with the process of life and folk religion's abhorrence of death as a form of pollution by critically assessing the methodology of "little and great traditions." The final article considers the multiple dimensions of impermanence that are disclosed in the famous opening paragraph of Dôgen's *Shôbôgenzô* fascicle, "Genjôkôan" ("Spontaneous Realization of the Zen Kôan"). It examines various modern Japanese and English translations of the elusive phrasing in the passage in light of Japanese religio-aesthetics. In the final section, there are four articles comparing Japanese and

In the final section, there are four articles comparing Japanese and Western thought, particularly Heideggerian phenomenology. The first article assesses the ethical implications underlying the metaphysical critique of science and technology in the works of Heidegger and Nishitani Keiji, former "dean" of the Kyoto-school of modern Japanese philosophy, when interpreted in terms of an ideological encounter with the parallelist thesis that modern physics has created an holistic paradigm of the "participatory universe." The next essay presents an analysis of the limitations inherent in the "Dialogue on Language" between Heidegger and Kuki Shûzô, an early leader of the Kyotoschool famed for his work on the structure of *iki* (style or chic). Here I propose a reorientation of the East-West dialogue by viewing *iki*, which primarily refers to a Tokugawa era romantic ideal, as an inappropriate starting point and replacing it with an analysis of the contemplative Japanese aesthetic ideal of *yûgen* (naturalist simplicity and depth). The third article examines Dôgen's tripartite understanding of death in relation to absolute reality and in comparison with Freudian duality of life and death instincts, Heidegger's notion of Being-towards-death as a futural possibility, and Sartre's negation of death. The final essay analyzes the role of kôan practice in Dôgen's Sôtô approach to Zen in contrast to Ta-hui's Rinzai approach and in light of Western commentators on religious symbolism, including Kierkegaard, Kafka, and Ricoeur. Here I argue for two main points. First, to correct conventional presentations, I show that Dôgen's view was not antikôan and pro-zazen, for he did use kôans extensively though in a hermeneutic manner rather than according to Ta-hui's iconoclasticism. Also, I maintain that psychological and philosophical models of interpreting the kôan are less effective than viewing its function as a literary and religious symbol.

The central theme running throughout these articles is the problem of impermanence, which seems to be a key to the uniqueness expressed in the traditional and modern, and high and popular aspects of Japanese culture. As Donald Keene observes, "The Japanese were perhaps the first to discover the special pleasure of impermanence, and...believed that impermanence was a necessary element in beauty." I have dealt with Dôgen's view of impermanence in my two previous books from the standpoint of comparative philosophy and Japanese aesthetics. A key source for my studies and reflection has been Karaki Junzô's essay, "Mujô no keijijôgaku: Dôgen" ("Dôgen's Metaphysics of Impermanence") in his monograph *Mujô*  (Impermanence). Karaki provides a fascinating account of intellectual history and literary criticism on the evolution of the Japanese understanding from a naive sense of transiency or fragility to a profound experience of the psychology and philosophy of impermanence. Several essays in this volume expand and elaborate on the themes of the absolute now, the unity of life and death, and the hermeneutics of impermanence in Dôgen's thought as dealt with in my earlier works. The other essays explore the significance of impermanence in various realms of Japanese spirituality and culture, including contemplative  $y\hat{u}gen$  poetry, folk elements in Shinto and Buddhism, and the floating world of class-conscious Tokugawa society.

The title of the book refers to an image that has its roots in early Mahayana Buddhist thought and also appears in the philosophy of Chuang Tzu as well as Japanese poetry. The phrase "a dream within a dream"--as used in the Zen essays of Dôgen, the plays of Chikamatsu, and the poetry of shogun Hideyoshi--plays on the twofold meaning of dream as symbolic of the *illusory* nature of the floating world and of the *nonsubstantial* realm of ultimate reality. Dream, like dew and mist among other images, is a classic metaphor for unceasing evanescence that at once highlights and relativizes the gap between illusion and reality.

#### Acknowledgments

With the exception of "Disclosing a Dream Within a Dream: A Translation of *Shôbôgenzô* "Muchûsetsumu," all of the chapters have been previously published, eight as articles in journals and one in a book. I hereby thank the following parties for permission to reprint those articles in this volume with occasional minor changes:

The Eastern Buddhist for "Dôgen and the Japanese Religio-Aesthetic Tradition" (xxii/1, pp. 71-95); and "The Flower Blossoms 'Without Why': Beyond the Heidegger-Kuki Dialogue on Contemplative Language" (xxiii/2, pp. 60-86);

*History of Religions* for "From Rice Cultivation to Mind Contemplation: The Meaning of Impermanence in Japanese Religion" (xxx/4, in press) [original copyright 1991 by The University of Chicago Press. All rights reserved];

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#### A Dream Within a Dream

Therefore, when those who doubt the Buddhist Way encounter "disclosing a dream within a dream," they foolishly think it has to do with whether or not a dream of grass actually exists, or that it is like illusion mounted on top of illusion. But that is not the case. Even though illusion is compounded within illusion, you must understand that the path to attaining the Way is realized through illusion surpassing illusion.

Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô "Muchûsetsumu"

Farewell to this world, and to the night farewell. We who walk the road to death, to what should we be likened? To the frost by the road that leads to the graveyard, Vanishing with each step we take ahead: How sad is this dream within a dream!

Chikamatsu, Sonezaki Shinjû

Like dew I came, Like dew I go. My life And all I have done at Osaka Is just a dream within a dream.

Hideyoshi

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### PART ONE: DÔGEN'S ZEN VIEW OF LIBERATION



#### DÔGEN CASTS OFF 'WHAT':

#### An Analysis of Shinjin Datsuraku

#### I. Significance of the Doctrine

Perhaps the single most compelling and characteristic doctrine in Dôgen's philosophy of Zen is shinjin datsuraku, or "casting off body-mind." Shinjin datsuraku is significant for two interrelated reasons. First, it is the expression used on the occasion of Dôgen's enlightenment experience, achieved under the guidance of master Ju-ching. According to the major biographical sources, including Kenzeiki, Ju-ching chided the monk sitting next to Dôgen, who had fallen asleep during a prolonged and intensive meditation session, "To study Zen is to cast off body-mind. Why are you engaged in singleminded seated (za) slumber rather than singleminded seated meditation (zazen)?"<sup>1</sup> Upon hearing this reprimand, Dôgen attained a "great awakening" (daigo) from his previous doubts concerning the relation between meditation and enlightenment.<sup>2</sup> He later entered Ju-ching's quarters and burned incense, reporting, "I have come because body-mind is cast off." Ju-Ching responded approvingly, "Body-mind is cast off (shinjin datsuraku); cast off body-mind (datsuraku shinjin)." When Dôgen cautioned, "Do not grant the Seal [of transmission] indiscriminately, Ju-ching replied, "Cast off casting off (datsuraku datsuraku)!" Thus, shinjin datsuraku marks not only Dôgen's personal satori, but constitutes the basis and substance of the transmission of the Dharma between Chinese mentor and Japanese disciple. The phrase is particularly noteworthy in this exchange because it is manipulated by Ju-ching through inversion and tautology to represent command and foreshadowing, description and inquiry, evaluation and challenge.

Shinjin datsuraku is also distinctive in how frequently and pervasively it appears in the major writings by and about Dôgen.<sup>3</sup> Unlike many of Dôgen's other central doctrines, such as genjôkôan (spontaneous realization), uji (being-time), and mujô-busshô (impermanence-Buddha-nature), whose use is generally limited to the fascicle of the Shôbôgenzô in which they are

I

introduced, *shinjin datsuraku* plays a key role throughout much of the *Shôbôgenzô* as well as the admonition of *Fukanzazengi*, the autobiographical reminiscences of *Hôkyôki*, and the sermons of *Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki*, in addition to the biographies of Dôgen.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, each of the terms is often used separately: the nonduality of body and mind is expressed through notions such as *shinjin ichinyo* (oneness of body-mind) and *shinjin o koshite* (unifying the body-mind); *datsuraku* appears in the sense of renunciation (*suteru*) and detachment (*shukke*).

The term *shinjin datsuraku* consists of two compound words linked together as a predicate clause (without a specified subject, even when not used as a command). Each word presents a variety of issues in translation and interpretation. *Datsuraku*, which refers to the moment of spiritual release or liberation, suggests an activity that is at once passive or effortless and purposeful or determined. What role does individual decision play at this occasion? Is *datsuraku* instantaneous or perpetual, brought about by independent resolution or an interdependent illuminative power? Also, how is it related to Dôgen's emphasis on continuous zazen activity (*gyôji*) as the unity of practice and realization?

Although the meaning of *shinjin* seems to be more direct, an intriguing challenge to the authenticity of the term in Dôgen's dialogue with Ju-ching suggested by modern scholarship has raised numerous questions about the significance of this compound word. In the study of Dôgen's spiritual and philosophical background and development, Kobutsu no manebi,<sup>5</sup> Takasaki Jikidô has speculated, on textual, linguistic, and ideological grounds, that Ju-ching did not actually utter "cast off body-mind," but rather "cast off the dust from the mind." The latter phrase, pronounced the same as the first in Japanese though differently in Chinese, may express a dichotomy of subject/object, purity/defilement--and thus a clinging to substantialism--out of character with the way shinjin datsuraku is otherwise portrayed in Dôgen's thought. According to Takasaki, Dôgen either misheard or intentionally and creatively misconstrued--in order to correct--Ju-ching's expression, in a manner consistent with his deliberate rereading and rewriting of Mahayana scriptures and Zen epistles, particularly in the "Busshô" fascicle of the Shôbôgenzô.<sup>6</sup>

Takasaki's findings have been disputed by Sôtô Zen scholar Kurebayashi Kôdô.<sup>7</sup> Yet, his arguments force a reassessment of Dôgen's relation to Ju-ching and of his own approach to Zen theory and practice: What is Dôgen casting off? Is it different than what Ju-ching advises? An examination of different uses of *shinjin datsuraku* in Dôgen's works will be undertaken here to attempt to resolve the controversy, and to uncover the significance of this fundamental doctrine in terms of its essentially nonsubstantive basis.

#### II. The Meaning of Datsuraku

Datsuraku is a compound of datsu (also pronounced nukeru), which means "to remove, escape, extract," and raku (or ochiru), "to fall, scatter, fade." Raku implies a passive occurrence that "happens to" someone or something, as in the scattering of leaves by the breeze or the fading of light at dusk. Datsu seems to be the more outwardly active term, though it refers to the distinctive occasion of the withdrawal from, omission or termination of activity: it is the act of ending activity. Yet, the ceasing of action suggested by datsu is the consequence of a more deliberate decision than the surrender or acquiescence of raku.

In modern Japanese, the compound *datsuraku* means "to molt or shed." Though not generally used in everyday conversation, *datsuraku* frequently appears in technical works as "deciduous." Apparently based on this evidence, T. P. Kasulis translates *shinjin datsuraku* as "the molting of body-mind,"<sup>8</sup> a highly suggestive rendering, though somewhat awkward in the context of Dôgen's creative expressions. The use of "molting" has two distinct advantages. It connotes the spiritual loosening and dissolution of rigid and lifeless material (i.e., the self or ego)--as in the natural process of discarding skin, teeth, or hair--in order to disclose a renegerated and unencumbered layer below (one's original countenance).<sup>9</sup> Also, "molting" is not a singular but perpetually repeated occurrence, which implies that *datsuraku* is to be "renewed and revitalized at each instant; enlightenment is a continuous process, not a single event."<sup>10</sup>

The difficulty with the use of "molting," however, is that it sounds like an event that takes place of its own accord on a seasonal or cyclical basis. The subject participates only as an object that has been acted upon without control or even a genuine contribution of its own. Yet in *Hôkyôki* Dôgen quotes Ju-ching as saying: "To cast off body-mind is to sit in singleminded seated meditation (zazen). When practicing singleminded meditation, the five desires dissolve, and the five defilements are removed."<sup>11</sup> As zazen, *datsuraku* requires determination, resolution, and utmost concentration. It is not an automatic act or an involuntary response to stimuli, but lies at the very ground of decision-making.<sup>12</sup> Thus, molting probably does not capture the appropriate sense of effortlessness or spontaneity. Renderings such as "dropping," "dropping off," "falling," or "falling away" also seem to put too much emphasis on passivity. "Renunciation" and "detachment" may have a negative connotation in the sense of "turning away from," and like "freedom" or "liberation," are too literal, failing to convey the symbolic and poetic quality of the expression. "Shedding" may be a more suitable translation; it retains the naturalist and organic overtones of molting, yet implies a purposeful occurrence, as in the shedding of clothes or tears.

The phrase "casting off" suggests an activity characterized by decisiveness and dedication beyond the automatic nature of molting or the ordinariness of shedding. Yet, even this rendering must be qualified, because the decision of *datsuraku* is one of discarding, its impact is a matter of release, and its immediacy lies in unburdening. As Ju-ching indicates, *datsuraku* does not result in the attainment of a new state (such as enlightenment or Buddhahood), but the removal of ignorance and attachment. It is the act not of maintaining or acquiring but of letting go. Therefore, "letting cast off" may be the most precise, if somewhat stilted translation.

Datsuraku thus recalls Martin Heidegger's notion of Gelassenheit, which literally means "letting-ness," and is generally translated as the "releasement of the will to will as well as the will to not-will." Gelassenheit nonobstructively allows the unfolding of beings in the interplay of their opening and closing, presence and concealment. Similarly, datsuraku is the decision to abandon or forego decision, the meeting point of purposefulness and effortlessness through the mutual reciprocity of one's own power (jiriki) and the power of others (tariki). Datsuraku is not defined in terms of cause and effect, or rather it represents the occasion in which initiation and consequence merge.

To speak of other-power in the context of *datsuraku* does not necessarily imply an act of faith or surrender.<sup>13</sup> As the term *Gelassenheit* suggests, it is possible to release will neither in deference to a greater will nor through the mere negation of will; not-willing is cast aside along with willing. To see *datsuraku* in terms of the convergence of own-power and other-power highlights the inseparability of independent effort and the interdependence of determinative factors at the moment of activity. As Dôgen explains in "Genjôkôan," the "other factors" are not entities external to oneself, but nonobjectifiable conditions always intimately related to the self which compel a relinquishment of fixations or attachments:

> To study the Buddha Way is to study oneself. To study oneself is to forget oneself. To forget oneself is to be authenticated through all experiential factors [or dharmas]. To be authenticated through all experiential factors is to

cast off body-mind of oneself as well as body-mind of others....When one first seeks the Dharma [outside of oneself], one drifts far away from its location. But when the Dharma has been received by authentic transmission, the original person is immediately realized.<sup>14</sup>

According to this passage, the Dharma is based on self-realization, which in turn involves self-forgetfulness or the penetration of all other phenomena. The self discovers what it is only by losing itself to elements which are a reflective manifestation of the self; and as such those elements must be cast off of body-mind by the same effort which lets one's own body-mind fall away. On the one hand, it is delusory to seek the Dharma within because the self must be eradicated. Yet, true realization is nothing other than the emergence of the original person who embraces the illuminative interplay of self and other.

The interrelatedness of own-power and other-power is reinforced by Dôgen's assertion that zazen is not a particular event, but the "supreme activity of continuous practice" (*mujô no gyôji*), "which is neither self-generated nor generated by others...[yet] upholds and sustains myself and all beings throughout the universe."<sup>15</sup> Continuous practice is the eminently creative force, dependent at once upon the selfless yet resolute exertion of the individual, which lies at the basis of and determines the universal context of activity, and upon the influence of all beings, which constitute the integrated collectivity of independent deeds.

Beyond will and not-will, self and other, independence and interdependence, *datsuraku* is the power of the emergence of phenomena and the discarding of purpose or direction, or the abandonment of a causal or teleological perspective. Is it contradictory for an occurrence to be both the basis and the dissolution of creativity, a decisive activity that is effort-free? This apparent dilemma can be resolved by orienting the question of "how" *datsuraku* takes place in terms of "when" it occurs. That is, the conceptual structure of *datsuraku* rests on a temporal foundation encompassing the coexistence of arising and desisting; its nonsubtantive nature is based on the fluidity and dynamism of impermanence.

The continuity (ji) of continuous practice is neither endless time or timelessness, nor an eternity superimposed on the current moment, nor a supratemporal realm arriving in time. Rather, Dôgen writes, "The Way which is called 'now' (*ima*) does not precede continuous practice; 'now' is the spontaneous realization of continuous practice (gyôji genjô)."<sup>16</sup> The continuous practice of *datsuraku* is the perpetual renewal of the impermanent

process of arising-desisting or of the interpenetration of life and death in each nonsubstantive instance of "now." From the standpoint of the here-andnow, aging and dying, destruction and dispersal, rejection and denial--the discarding of casting off--do not indicate a negative condition in contrast to the supposed constancy of a permanent happenstance. The dissolution of creativity is coterminous with the ever-renewable and selfless possibilities of the creative moment. It is by virtue of the spontaneity of "now" that continuity occurs, and because of its perpetual regeneration that the immediacy of emergence and dispersal arises.

To illustrate the interrelation between the occurrence of dissolution and the decision of letting go as manifestations of the impermanent and nonsubstantive moment, Dôgen makes a provocative verbal association or wordplay between "falling" (raku or ochiru) and "casting off" (datsuraku) in his commentary on a statement by Ju-ching. According to Ju-ching's own reinterpretation of the traditional significance of a noted Zen poem, the realization of *datsuraku* is not an elimination of transiency but genuine accord with it. "[Zen master] Reiun," he says, "attained enlightenment when he saw the peach blossoms in bloom, but I attained it when I saw them falling."<sup>17</sup> Dôgen indicates that the actual event of falling is nothing other than a manifestation of casting off, by writing: "Although the spring breeze opposes the peach blossoms, in falling (ochite) they achieve the casting off of the body-mind of the peach blossoms." The scattering blossom is at once a literal display of raku and a symbolic representation of datsuraku. As the flower drops away it sheds itself of life, and spiritually casts aside the distinction of life and death to realize the temporal basis of action.

Datsuraku understood as the continuous practice of zazen is this activity itself, the supreme activity of creative dissolution, which is a movement that always breaks through its boundaries, not as a rupture, but by means of the inexorable dynamism of the self-generating process. The convergence of the decision/dispersal of datsuraku straddles and supersedes the tenuous borders of now and then, present and future, by being rooted in the actuality of life yet simultaneously standing out through anticipation of death. In negating itself, it attains what it is; the subject is lost in the temporal unity of action by letting go of that which the interdependent factors are causing to fall away.

#### III. Questions Concerning Shinjin

An examination of the "how" and "when" of *datsuraku* discloses an impermanent process deliberately chosen yet spontaneously realized through

activity at once independent of and interdependent with the exertions of all phenomena. The next key question concerning the doctrine of *shinjin datsuraku* is, "what" is cast off? Is *shinjin* the object, an entity or combination of entities, that is shed? Or is it, as Ju-ching's inversion of the phrase in the original dialogue with Dôgen suggests, actually the subject which is performing the act? Ju-ching seems to be implying that body-mind both has been cast off and is doing the casting. Perhaps he is pointing to a perspective whereby subject and object, question and answer as well as "is" and "ought," admonition and description, tend to converge.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, if it is understood from most usages of the term that *shinjin* is the object, then where is it cast to, and what is the remainder or substratum left? If *shinjin* is hypostatized as a substantive object ontically disposed of rather than ontologically disclosed, the fundamental dynamism of the doctrine may be defeated.

Shinjin literally signifies "body and mind." But, as Kasulis points out, since Dôgen frequently expresses the nonduality of mind/matter, physical/spiritual, subject/object in notions such as shinjin ichinyo (oneness of body-mind), the rendering "body-mind" better suggests a unified and holistic phenomenon. Dôgen's view of shinjin recalls the basic Buddhist analysis of human existence in terms of a psycho-physical unity of form (rupa) and the designations (nama) of consciousness (vijnana) as a phenomenological field (dhatu) for the interaction of sense organs and sense objects. Yet, if shinjin is generally affirmed by Dôgen as the vehicle of realization, in what sense is it to be cast off; what is the basis and consequence of discarding?

Difficulties in interpreting *shinjin* are compounded by a consideration of Takasaki's claim that Dôgen altered Ju-ching's utterance precisely to rid from it any trace of objectification or hypostatization. If Takasaki is correct, then Dôgen's term "body-mind" must be understood in contrast to Ju-ching's "dust from the mind." An analysis of Takasaki's argument is essential for a clarification of the meaning of *shinjin*.

According to Takasaki, it is highly unlikely that Ju-ching ever used "body-mind" (Chinese, *shen-hsin*), but quite probable that he said "dust from the mind" (Ch., *hsin-ch'en*). Few sources are available for Ju-ching's own thought outside the context of Dôgen's reporting and commentary, but the latter term does appear one time in his recorded sayings (*goroku*). "Dust from the mind" also is used in other Zen texts of the time. On the other hand, "body-mind" is used by no one but Dôgen; no other disciple of Ju-ching or Zen thinker in China or Japan has mentioned this term. Furthermore, when Dôgen's collected sayings, *Eihei Koroku*, was taken to China by his then shared by his followers.

Takasaki conjectures that the discrepancy is due to the fact that Dôgen must have had a "tremendous misconception," substituting "body" for "dust," homophones (*jin*) in Japanese. Dôgen may have misheard the term due to a lack of full comprehension of Chinese, intuitively misrepresented it, or purposefully changed it. In any case, the result is a constructive and meaningful criticism of Ju-ching's approach to Zen training. The original phrase ("dust from the mind") seems to suggest a duality of the purity of the mind and the defilement of dust, and thus a subtle clinging to the notion of a fixated self. For an entity to retain the gathering of dust, it must be stable and therefore substantive. Since this conception is not in accord with impermanence, it prohibits an authentic involvement in the process of casting off. Dôgen's phrasing, however, eliminates any possible separation between nonobjectifiable phenomena, highlighting the integration of practice and realization grounded in the continuing dynamism of *datsuraku*.<sup>19</sup>

Takasaki's textual argument rests on two basic ideological implications concerning the character of Dôgen's Zen:

1. Dôgen's creativity of expression--Dôgen is noted for his creative or innovative use of language in recasting both everyday expressions and Buddhist scriptures through verbal associations, homonym conceit, punning, etc. Examples include: his wordplay on the term uji, which in conversation means "sometimes," but which he interprets as the primordial unity of "being (u)-time (ji)"; and his rewriting of the Nirvana Sutra pronouncement that "all beings have the Buddha-nature" as "whole-being-Buddha-nature," based on the dual meaning of u as "to have" and "to be."

2. His independent spirit--Dôgen has not only revised the sutras, but criticized many of the illustrious Zen masters, including the sixth patriarch, Hui-neng, for the the substantialist overtones in the doctrine of  $kensh\hat{o}$  (seeing into [one's own-] nature), and Rinzai master Ta-hui, for an overreliance on  $k\hat{o}an$ -introspection. Although Dôgen generally seems to be as respectful of Ju-ching as he is of Sakyamuni, it would not be surprising for him to expose and refute what he considers a philosophical misjudgement in the saying of his teacher.

Kurebayashi, however, challenges Takasaki's claim about the authenticity of *shinjin* on philological and philosophical grounds. Although he concedes that initially Takasaki's arguments appear to be persuasive, Kurebayashi contends that on closer examination they begin to unravel. From Takasaki's standpoint, it seems that Dôgen mistook the word "body"--

either naively, intuitively, or deliberately--for "dust" because both are pronounced jin in Japanese. But Kurebayshi points out that this linguistic confusion could not have occurred in the original dialogue with Ju-ching for two reasons. First if an error actually was made it was not the mistake that Takasaki assumes, because "body" is usually pronounced shin. Although the pronunciation of shin is changed to jin when it appears as the second word of a compound, "body" is not second in this instance. Rather, it is "mind," also pronounced shin, that comes second and is changed to jin. Thus, Dôgen could not have substituted "body" for "dust." Second, Dôgen's supposed error was made not in Japanese conversation, but in a Chinese dialogue with Juching, who presumably was not conversant in Japanese. So, Dôgen would not have been mistaking one jin (or shin)--"body"--for another jin--"dust"--but shen ("body") for ch'en ("dust"). These appear in reversed order in the two expressions--shen is first in "body-mind" and ch'en is second in "dust from the mind." The mistake Takasaki describes is even more unlikely when it is considered that the words from the two expressions that sound alike in Chinese are both "mind" (hsin), which Dôgen hears correctly despite the reversal of their order.

The analysis of Takasaki's linguistic claim by Kurebayashi demonstrates that Dôgen probably did not simply undergo a mishearing of whatever Ju-ching said. But the question remains, did Dôgen deliberately misrepresent or alter the expression to suit his view? This issue involves a philosophical evaluation of the relationship between Dôgen and Ju-ching concerning the nature and practice of zazen in the transmission of the Dharma. Whereas Takasaki attempts to highlight the uniqueness or originality of Dôgen's thought, Kurebayashi denies any inconsistency between Dôgen and Ju-ching. On the one hand, Kurebayashi's stance must be viewed somewhat critically because, as a modern sectarian scholar, he is eager to show a continuity of approach taken over by the founder of Sôtô Zen in Japan from his Chinese mentor.

Yet, it must also be recognized that even if one concedes that Juching uttered *hsin-ch'en*, as Takasaki argues, his expression may not have conveyed a standpoint any different than Dôgen's *shen-hsin*. *Hsin-ch'en* does not necessarily imply "dust *from the* mind"--it is not that dust is an obstacle to the purity of mind, but that both mind and dust, if objectified, are removed by zazen. Or, it could mean "mind-dust" as a synonym for the attachments of the five desires and five defilements that Ju-ching asserts must be discarded. Thus, *hsin-ch'en* does not suggest a substantialist standpoint. Conversely, for the sake of argument, even the phrase *shen-hsin* could be interpreted as an hypostatization if "body-mind" represents an entity thrown away. Kurebayashi concludes that, "The issue of whether it is *hsin-ch'en* (minddust) or *shen-hsin* (body-mind) does not pertain to the establishment of the basis of the religious standpoint."<sup>20</sup> The validity or authenticity of either term depends on the nonsubstantive perspective underlying and interpreting the expression, and not on the particular words themselves.

#### IV. "What" is Cast Off: Casting Off "What"

The impact of Kurebayashi's refutation of Takasaki's speculation concerning *shinjin* is to relativize the distinctions between "body-mind" and "mind-dust," and to refocus the significance of the doctrine in terms of *datsuraku*. That is, a clarification of the meaning of *shinjin* seems to result in a non-clarification: it does not matter what is meant by the term *shinjin*, or whether it conflicts with Ju-ching's utterance, if the essential dynamism of *datsuraku* is properly understood. Yet the question now becomes, is half of the expression irrelevant? What, exactly, is being cast off?

One approach to resolving this issue is to evaluate how Dôgen himself might deal with the question of the process or the object determined by the subjective act. A key passage in the "Busshô" fascicle, centering on the use of the term *datsuraku*, sheds light on the topic. Here, Dôgen comments on a traditional Zen dialogue in which the fourth patriarch asks the fifth patriarch, "What is your name?" Dôgen's interpretation of the significance of the word "what" in this context suggests a striking parallel to the question, "What is cast off?" and thus serves as a philosophical guideline for understanding his perspective.

In the beginning of the source dialogue, the fifth patriarch replies to the question, "What is your name?" by saying, "I have (u) a name  $(sh\hat{o})$ , but it is not an ordinary name." Dôgen's commentary is based largely on wordplays made on the homonym u, which means both "to have" and "to be," and the homophone  $sh\hat{o}$ , the identical pronunciation of two different characters which mean "name" and "nature." "That is," Dôgen writes of the dialogue, "being (u) itself is the name  $(sh\hat{o})$  [or nature (also  $sh\hat{o}$ )], which is not an ordinary name. [Having] an ordinary name is not this [sense of] being [as name]."<sup>21</sup>

This dialogue and commentary can be rewritten in light of the question, "What is cast off?" or "What have you cast off?" The answer would be: "I have cast off, but it is not an ordinary casting off." The commentary: "Being itself is casting off, which is not an ordinary casting off (in the sense of discarding or eliminating an entity), and ordinary casting off is not this sense of being as casting off." Thus, casting off is being itself, if not objectified,

though not in the ordinary sense of either having or letting go of a particular entity.

To further explore Dôgen's approach to the matter of "what," the remainder of the passage from "Busshô" will be cited and then followed by a philosophical rewriting. The passage reads:

The fourth patriarch said, "What is this name  $(ze \ ka \ sh\hat{o})$ ?" which means that whatever it is (ka) is this [name], and this [name] is whatever it is...

The fifth patriarch said: "This [name] is Buddha[-nature] (*ze* butsu  $sh\hat{o}$ ),"...Because it is whatever it is, it is [called] Buddha (butsu)...Therefore, although this [name] is whatever it is (ka) and is thus Buddha (butsu), if these [prefixes] are cast off (datsuraku) and fully penetrated, this [name] is nothing other than the name ( $sh\hat{o}$ ).<sup>22</sup>

According to Dôgen's commentary, "What is the name?" as a question becomes its own answer; the name is "what" or whatever it is. To say "what," from one perspective delimits the name, but it also liberates naming from partiality by virtue of its whatness or nature. Similarly, the designation "Buddha" both restricts the name, as a particular word, and releases it to be the equivalent of the unobstructed freedom of Buddha-nature. But question and answer are both relative to the nature of name. When question (ka) and answer (butsu) are cast off in the literal sense of being left out of the dialogue, name is truly cast off to realize its nature beyond the limitations of specific designations.

The passage can now be rewritten to demonstrate the philosophical consistency underlying Dôgen's approach to "what":

What is this casting off, which means that:

Whatever it is is cast off, it is the casting off of whatever it is.

It is casting off body-mind (or mind-dust), that is: Because it is what it is, it is casting off body-mind (or minddust). Although the casting off is whatever it is, and is thus body-mind or mind-dust--an holistic phenomenon corresponding to Buddha-nature)--if these limiting prefixes, that is, "what" as question and "body-mind" (or "mind-dust") as answer, are cast off of objectification and hypostatization, then casting off is nothing other than casting off.

Thus, the resolution of the question, "'What' is cast off?" is its own answer, "Casting off 'what," for which the word "what" has two meanings. On one level, it suggests that whatever the name is, is the name--or the nature of name--as a unity of question and answer. The being of casting off is nothing other than the perpetual process of casting off, which is its own content regardless of whether it happens to be called "body-mind" or "mind-dust." "Casting off 'what'" also means casting off the inquiry. If any name is hypostatized, the essential nonsubstantial dynamism of casting off is lost. While "what" answers "what?" ultimately neither question nor answer pertains to *datsuraku*.

This second level of meaning returns the significance of the doctrine to the tautology pronounced by Ju-ching in the original dialogue with Dôgen: "Cast off casting off (*datsuraku datsuraku*)!" "Casting off 'what'" thus means that even casting off, if objectified, must itself be cast off through the creative dissolution of casting off. The continuous practice of *datsuraku* is a neverending struggle to realize what it is by terminating itself.

The tautologically evoked experience of "casting off casting off" is symbolically expressed in the following waka by Dôgen, which captures the effortless dedication of *datsuraku*. The key phrase is the poem is *sute obune* ("drifting boat"). In Japanese Court poetry, *sute obune* conventionally signifies loneliness or alienation in an impersonal world, but it is transformed here into a symbol for the strength, detachment, and dedication of enlightenment. Because the verb *suteru* (lit. "to be cast out" or "to renounce") is frequently used by Dôgen interchangeably with *datsuraku*, the expression *sute obune* may be interpreted as representing "casting off 'what'":<sup>23</sup>

Shôbôgenzô	Treasury of the true Dharma-eye <sup>24</sup>
Nami mo hiki	In the heart of the night,
Kaze mo tsunaganu	The moonlight framing
Sute obune	A small boat, drifting:
Tsuki koso yawa no	Tossed not by the waves
Sakai nari keri.	Nor swayed by the breeze.

The "drifting boat" (lit., "small boat that has been cast out") is not at the mercy of the elements, but appears thoroughly undisturbed by the "waves" (symbolizing objects of attachment) and the "breeze" (ignorance and desire).

The illumination by the "moon" has both connotations from the poetic tradition, in which it represents an object of longing and the source of comfort in times of turmoil and grief, and Buddhist implications, as the symbol of the universal manifestations of the compassion and wisdom of the Buddha-nature.

The moon deepens the meaning of the resolute detachment or casting off of the boat. The boat is cut off from the harbor, but because it falls within the pervasiveness of the moon's glow, it is not lost, but protected by the compassionate Buddha-nature. Yet, in contrast to the moon, the boat is not totally aloof from the world of variability; it remains involved, at once aimless in its solitude and purposeful in its disciplined response to change. The single phenomenon of the drifting boat--perpetually casting off casting off (*datsuraku datsuraku*)--at once shares the overview and illuminative remoteness of the moonlight, and partakes of the world into which it has been cast out, yet has learned to cast off.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Although the expression *shinjin datsuraku* is universally used in Dôgen's biographies, some controversy surrounds the exact phrasing of the dialogue with Ju-ching at the time of Dôgen's enlightenment. The version presented here appears in the 1538 Meishû edition of the Kenzeiki (written in 1470), which is the oldest text available for what is generally considered the most complete and reliable of the dozen or so traditional biographical sources. The authenticity of the Meishû version is supported in that it corresponds to the version of Eiheiji sanso gyôgo-ki (early 14th century), another early and dependable authority for biographical studies. There is a slight difference, however, with the Menzan text (1738), which is actually the latest edition of the Kenzeiki, though the one frequently followed by modern Japanese scholars until the recent discovery of older manuscripts, including the Meishû and others, has challenged the accuracy of the Menzan. The discrepancy in this case is in the last line, which appears in the Menzan as "cast off bodymind" (shinjin datsuraku) rather than the "cast off casting off" (datsuraku datsuraku) of the Meishû. For the critical edition comparing the different manuscripts of Kenzeiki see Kawamura Kôdô, Eihei kaizan Dôgen zenji gyôjô: Kenzeiki (Tokyo: Daishûkan shoten, 1975). For an English-language discussion of biographical sources for Dôgen see Takashi James Kodera, Dogen's Formative Years in China (Boulder: Praina Press, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Dôgen's "doubt," which according to *Kenzeiki* led to his pilgrimage to China and training with Ju-ching, involved reconciling the Japanese Tendai doctrine of original enlightenment (*hongaku*) with the traditional Buddhist imperative for sustained meditation. The uncertainty is expressed in *Fukanzazengi*, the first work written on Dôgen's return to Japan in 1227: "Originally the Way is complete and all-pervasive. How does it depend on practice and realization?" In Ôkubo Dôshû, ed. *Dôgen zenji zenshû* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1969 and 1970), vol. II, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The centrality of *shinjin datsuraku* is expressed by Ju-ching: "To study Zen is to cast off body-mind. It is not burning incense, worship, recitation of Amida's name, repentance, or reading sutras, but the singleminded practice of zazen-only." Ju-ching's standpoint, recorded by Dôgen in *Hôkyôki* is also repeated by Dôgen in "Bendôwa" and "Gyôji." And, as Hee-jin Kim notes,

"The central religious and philosophical idea of Ju-ching's zazen-only was the 'body-mind cast off'-- the phrase repeated by Dôgen tirelessly throughout his works." See Kim, *Dôgen Kigen--Mystical Realist* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Hôkyôki, Dôgen's account of the teachings of and his conversations with Juching, written in 1226 (but discovered posthumously), marks the first appearance of the term in Dôgen's collected writings. In Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki, the verb suteru ("to be cast out" or "to renounce") is used interchangeably with datsuraku.

<sup>5</sup> Takasaki Jikidô and Umehara Takeshi, *Kobutsu no manebi* (Tokyo: Kodokawa shoten, 1969), pp. 59-62, 190-93. Takasaki's arguments have been reported sympathetically in many Japanese works as well as in at least two of the major English-language accounts of Dôgen's thought: Daigan and Alicia Matsunaga, *Foundations of Japanese Buddhism* (Los Angeles-Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1976), pp. 238-39; Kodera, pp. 106-7.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the temporal foundations of Dôgen's creative rewriting of scripture see chapter 2 below, "Temporality of Hermeneutics in Dôgen's *Shôbôgenzô*."

<sup>7</sup> Kurebayashi Kôdô, *Dôgen zen no honrui* (Tokyo: Shunjûsha, 1978), pp. 58-69.

<sup>8</sup> T. P. Kasulis, Zen Action, Zen Person (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> As Dôgen writes in *Fukanzazengi*, "[In zazen] body-mind are cast off naturally (*jinen*) and the original face (*honrai menunoku*) is realized." *Jinen* literally means "in and of itself"; it can be used in the philosophical sense of the unity and breadth of nature or in the ordinary sense of an automatic reaction to stimulus.

<sup>10</sup> Kasulis, p. 91.

<sup>11</sup> Dôgen, *Hôkyôki*, in Ôkubo, vol. II, p. 337.

<sup>12</sup> Dôgen stresses the efficaciousness of decisive exertion in the "Uji" fascicle: "The being time of every single thing in the [heavenly] world and the [earthly] world are all in all the spontaneous manifestation and the passage of my utmost exertion." In *Shôbôgenzô*, 2 vols., ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972), vol. I, p. 259.

<sup>13</sup> Although a convergence of own-power and other-power seems to be apparent in Dôgen's philosophy of Zen, it is probably far too strong to assert, as Francis Cook does in the chapter, "The Importance of Faith," that "...Dôgen's Zen is not really the Buddhism of self power (*jiriki*), [but] as Pure Land Buddhists say, it is the Buddhism of other power (*tariki*)." Cook's interpretation seems to be based not so much on Dôgen Zen as on the approach of Keizan, affectionately known as the "second patriarch" of the Sôtô sect. Keizan was largely responsible for making Sôtô a mass movement in the medieval period through an eclecticism combining elements of Pure Land worship and Shinto practice. See Cook, *How to Raise an Ox* (Los Angeles: Center Publications, 1978), p. 28.

For further discussion of the role of faith in Dôgen, see Nakamura Hajime, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples (Honolulu: East-West Press, 1964), pp. 452-58. The closest Dôgen seems to come to an other-power standpoint is the following passage from the "Shôji" fascicle, apparently written for a Pure Land audience: "When we let go and forget [synonomous with datsuraku] our bodies and our minds, abandon ourselves to the domain of the Buddha and let the activity come forth from his behalf, yielding to this without expending either effort or thought, that is release from life and death and the attainment of Buddha[hood]." In Ôkubo, vol. I, p. 779.

14 Dôgen, Shôbôgenzo "Genjôkôan," I, p. 36.

15 Ibid., "Gyôji," I, p. 165.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., "Udonge," II, p. 218.

<sup>18</sup> The distinction between subject and object is blurred because the expression is almost always written without the particle o between *shinjin* and *datsuraku*; o is the grammatical signpost that the preceding word is the object of the subsequent verb. The main exception to this--when o is included--is the passage from "Genjôkôan" cited above.

<sup>19</sup> The controversy as presented by Takasaki seems a remarkable parallel to the famous tale of sixth patriarch Hui-neng's poetic critique of Shen-hsiu, whose gatha asserts that the mind is a bright mirror upon which dust collects and is removed. Hui-neng's verse negates both the mirror and the dust in accord with thoroughgoing nonsubstantiality. For a critical approach of the so-called Northern vs. Southern school controversy particularly in regard to these verses, see John C. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986).

<sup>20</sup> Kurebayashi, p. 65.

<sup>21</sup> Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô "Busshô," I, pp. 50-51.

22 Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> According to the main modern commentary on Dôgen's waka collection by Ôba Nanboku, sute obune is a symbol of shinjin datsuraku. See Dôgen zenji waka-shû shin-shaku (Tokyo: Nakayama shobô, 1972), p. 149.

<sup>24</sup> The verse, as part of Dôgen's waka collection originally included in *Kenzeiki*, is in Kawamura, p. 89; for translation and commentary see my *A Blade of Grass: Japanese Poetry and Aesthetics in Dôgen Zen* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), pp. 45-46 and 101. This waka was one of a group of twelve poems written on Buddhist doctrinal topics in 1247 at the request of Hôjô Tokiyori's wife. Because Dôgen had been called by the Hôjô to preach his approach to Zen in Kamakura, then the center of the rival Rinzai Five Mountain (gozan) monastic institution, the image of the "drifting boat" may symbolize Dôgen's personal feelings of solitude beyond loneliness or isolation during this daring mission.

# **TEMPORALITY OF HERMENEUTICS IN DÔGEN'S SHÔBÔGENZÔ**

### I. The Hermeneutics of Temporality

In the first two sections of the fascicle on "Buddha-nature" ("Busshô"), Dôgen critically revises--or, it could be said, deliberately and creatively rewrites--traditionally honored sayings from the Nirvana Sutra and Zen master Huai-hai in order to bring them in accord with his own understanding and expression of impermanence (mujô) as the true basis of reality and direct disclosure of an experience of nonsubstantiality (muga). That is, he challenges, reinterprets and restates, even at the risk of grammatical distortion, previous views of Buddha-nature which convey what he believes to be a misconception of time, however subtle or veiled, in that they overlook or violate the spontaneous moment-to-moment process of arising-desistance, life-death, coming-going. The tendency to misrepresent impermanence by an attachment to Buddha-nature, conceived of either as a futural goal beyond this present moment or as a fixed substratum underlying it, betrays an eternalist clinging which seeks enlightenment outside rather than fully within temporal conditions and the mutability of dharmic factors, and therefore the lack of genuine realization of nonself.

Dôgen insists on eliminating even the slightest doctrinal discrepancy between Buddha-nature and the immediate here-and-now presencing of the multidimensional unity of being-time (uji), such that "time (ji) itself is already none other than all beings (u); beings are none other than time."<sup>1</sup> Because he asserts the efficacy of language, in contrast to the Rinzai view of Zen as a "special transmission outside the teaching" (kyôge betsuden), and is not satisfied with the rationale that Buddhist sayings are provisional and ultimately discardable, Dôgen attempts to correct rather than reject apparently misleading statements. By recasting previous expressions, he shows not only what they omitted or stated incorrectly, but also what they really intended to say, the truth at once embedded in and concealed by the fabric of words; he does not seek to destroy the notion of Buddha-nature but to recover and restore its genuine temporal meaning free of traces of eternalism. According to the passage Dôgen cites from the Nirvana Sutra:

All sentient beings without exception have the Buddhanature. Tathagata abides forever without change.<sup>2</sup>

By playing on the verb "to have" (u) which can also mean "to be," Dôgen rereads the phrase, "All sentient beings have the Buddha-nature" as "wholebeing Buddha-nature" (*shitsu-u-busshô*). The unified being of Buddha-nature is not a static substratum beyond or beneath temporal phenomena. It is neither an entity possessed by all beings nor a greater power which encompasses them; neither an emergent being that began at a certain time nor an original or timeless being. It neither subsists before Zen practice nor is attained at the conclusion of practice.

Thus, whole-being-Buddha-nature must not be conceived of as something hidden that is awaiting realization or as a potential from the past which will come to the fore in the future. The traditional interpretation of the second phrase of the passage implies that Buddha-nature is a constant essence which, when nourished by the Dharma rain, gives forth branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits with new seed-potentials, and it thereby presupposes a gap between being-time and enlightenment. It assumes that past, present, and future are three separable and independent realms through which existence passes, leading inevitably toward some destination beyond time. By reinterpreting the word-order of the final phrase, however, Dôgen takes it to mean, "Tathagata does not abide forever and is change." The significance of Dôgen's reformulations, regardless of whether they are grammatically justifiable, is that Buddha-nature is no longer, he says, "a question of something in the tree or something outside the tree. There is no time of the past or present when the truth is not realized. Therefore. although the unenlightened standpoint may be presupposed, root, stem, branch, and leaf must simultaneously realize Buddha-nature as the very same whole-being."3

On the surface, Huai-hai's Zen injunction does not seem to be problematic concerning time, but Dôgen's critical revision reveals just how insidiously disturbing the permeations and consequences of the eternalist tendency can be. The Zen dictum (which may represent a paraphrase of the *Nirvana Sutra*) is:

If you wish to know the Buddha-nature's meaning, you should watch for temporal conditions. If the time arrives, the Buddha-nature will manifest itself.<sup>4</sup>

Although these words appear successfully to state Buddha-nature as inseparably connected to temporal conditions, Dôgen maintains that unless authentically interpreted, they suggest that Buddha-nature is a realm beyond daily time which somehow comes about as a "matter of natural course." If the time is suitable, the Buddha-nature will arrive whether or not one practices to achieve it. In exposing this common misinterpretation, Dôgen comments that, "if the time does not come, then whether you study with a teacher in search of the Dharma, or practice the Way in relentless pursuit, it is not manifested."<sup>5</sup>

Because being-time is always already manifest as all beings and there is no substratum outside it, Dôgen reinterprets the phrase "if the time arrives" (*jisetsu nyakushi*) to mean "the time already arrived" (*jisetsu kishi*), not in some futural realm to be anticipated but spontaneously and completely this very moment. "There is no time right now that is not a time that has arrived," he writes. "There is no Buddha-nature that is not Buddha-nature fully manifested right here-and-now."<sup>6</sup> Thus, from the standpoint of beingtime, there is no "if" because the time already here is itself the full presencing of Buddha-nature, which does not have to "arrive."

Aside from the passages from the "Busshô" fascicle, another prominent example of Dôgen's interpretive method is his use of the term "being-time" which consists of two Chinese characters, *u* and *ji* (also pronounced *arutoki* in Japanese), that in ordinary discourse means "sometimes" or "at a certain time" in the sense that an entity occurs at a particular point "in" time. At the beginning of the "Uji" fascicle, Dôgen quotes the following Zen poem (by Yüeh-shan Wei-yen):

> Sometimes (*uji*) standing so high up on the mountaintop; Sometimes walking deep down on the bottom of the sea; Sometimes a three-headed eight-armed [demon or Acala]; Sometimes a sixteen- or eight-foot [Buddha]...<sup>7</sup>

He then draws out the deeper philosophical significance of the term highlighting the meaning of each of the two characters separately--being and time--and then illustrating that the everyday word, although it is generally not realized or acknowledged, points to the primordial unity of being-time as absolutely inseparable, twofold aspects of the selfsame reality. Therefore, the apparent opposites of the mountaintop and ocean depths, demon and Buddha--time seen as either useful and fitting or inappropriate and out of season--are not mutually exclusive possibilities, but the ever-varying manifestations of ultimately nondifferentiable being-time. Dôgen comments that spring, for example, does not arrive at a certain chronologically measured time-point, but that all the various expressions of spring--the colors, fragrances, ambience, and vistas--are the immediate realization of the being-time of spring.

One central question emerges in reconstructing and analyzing Dôgen's method of interpretation: If Dôgen maintains that language is not inherently erroneous and irrelevant but rather in need of correction to uncover the true significance hidden within it, on what basis does he take license to alter the expressions of scripture, the testimony of masters, and the conventions of ordinary language? How does he justify the "intentional misreadings" he asserts? If they merely reflect his own views, why not discard previous expressions; if he seeks to salvage these expressions, how can he avoid the charge of solipsism? A related issue is, how can we determine or evaluate the merit or success of Dôgen's approach? Is he being true to the tradition or subverting it, disclosing or concealing its ground?

The examples of revision cited above illustrate what can be termed Dôgen's "hermeneutics of temporality"--his reevaluation and reorientation of the doctrine of the Buddha-nature in order to reflect the fundamental unity of being-time. I will now show that the hermeneutics of temporality is itself grounded on Dôgen's understanding of the temporal foundations of the development of, and interaction within, the Buddhist tradition that allows for--or even demands--a continuing process of self-criticism based on here-andnow enlightenment experience. Because, as Dôgen argues, from the standpoint of being-time there is no temporal gap between past and present, now and then, former and current realizations of Dharma, previous theories must, therefore, be justified in terms of -- and if necessary revised to express-the continuously renewed experience of contemporary practitioners. Dôgen's interpretive license thus rests on a "temporality of hermeneutics" that reflects two inseparable dimensions of being-time: the spontaneity of "right-now" (nikon), and the simultaneity of all temporal phases through "holistic passage or process" (kyôryaku).

## II. The Temporality of Hermeneutics

In the fascicle on "The Record of Transmission" ("Shisho"), Dôgen records a dialogue in which he had asked his Chinese mentor, Zen master Juching, how the Dharma of past accomplishment could be transmitted in the present age; that is, how it was possible right-now to understand, appropriate, and duplicate the experience of enlightenment which was originally accomplished long before. Ju-ching responds that the question itself presupposes a fixation with time viewed as a linear or sequential realm separable from phenomena and moving with an inevitability and inviolability of its own, and thereby reduces the spontaneous transmission of Dharma to the mere coming and going of something "in" time. Ju-ching asserts:

> The transmission from Buddha to Buddha continues right up to this very moment with each and every Buddha preserving the true transmission. It is not like many different things piled up on top of one another or lined up side-by-side. You should realize that the transmission passes from Buddha to Buddha exactly as it is. Do not be concerned with however much time it takes to achieve or perfect this realization.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, past and present experiences, despite their apparent chronological gap, are not independent and unrelated occurrences but simultaneous and overlapping manifestations of being-time. Dôgen takes Ju-ching's view of the continuity of the Dharma tradition as the point of departure to show that just as current experience partakes of and fully emulates prior realization of Dharma, the expression of that former realization must in turn successfully correspond to and reflect present achievement and understanding.

Dôgen thus attempts to analyze the structural unity of past and present in a way that allows for their provisional differentiation without collapsing all experience into monolithic uniformity that blurs rather than clarifies the relation between previous and current expressions. In "Uji" he illustrates the continuity of being-time by the example of someone who lives in a valley, crosses a river, and climbs a mountain to reach a palace at the summit. Dôgen distinguishes between the unenlightened view based on a misconception of the flow of time as only linear, which he feels haunts the expressions of the Nirvana Sutra and Huai-hai, and the enlightened view based on a genuine understanding of temporal passage. From the average or unenlightened standpoint, while the goal of the summit is being sought, there is a tendency to relegate the mountain and river to things of the past which have no relation to living in the present. "Although the mountain and river are indeed here right-now," Dôgen writes, "I [the unenlightened] seem to think that I have left them far behind and I act as if I occupy a vermillion palace, thereby believing that there is a separation between myself and the mountain and river [as great] as that between heaven and earth."9 The palace--a remote pinnacle from which one can idly oversee the landscape he seeks to escape or claims to transcend--symbolizes the self-centered hopes

and expectations which existentially fear or reject and ontologically deny here-and-now activity. Obsessed with the fabricated and romanticized future which may or may not exist or ever be reached, the past is considered to have vanished, and the present is overlooked or discounted.

When the linear conception of time is presupposed, the Dharma is seen as a substantive entity which moves in time from past to present and is to be reached only in the future "if the time is right," a chronological progression of names and dates transferred from time to time, place to place by artifacts such as scripture and documents, images and idols. The unenlightened, Dôgen writes, "tend to think that the Buddhist Way is something outside of which the objective world stands, and the Dharma that makes passage is misunderstood as moving eastward a hundred thousand worlds and a hundred thousand epochs away."<sup>10</sup> Such a view results in the misconception that the "self-same mind to self-same mind transmission" of Zen awakening represented by Bodhidharma's coming to the West was an event that took place at some former time in some other place, as if removed from one's own immediately present temporal existence. Thus, although current experience is considered to be severed from the past, history and tradition take on an authority that overwhelms the present and leaves one longing for the unreachable goal of a futural delusion. Previous expressions of Dharma are either accepted and repeated without full comprehension or internalization, or they are rejected without clarification or justification. Dôgen does not seek to deny the historical reality of any particular event, but to reorient an understanding of its occurrence as one aspect of the multidimensional unity of being-time.

In contrast to the unenlightened standpoint, Dôgen maintains that the act of climbing the mountain manifests the inseparability of past, present, and future. Dôgen points out the twofold identity of being-time in terms of its immediacy or spontaneity and its simultaneity or continuity embracing all temporal phases. First, he argues that the moment of ascent (*nikon*) has priority over the delusory future--it is ontologically more real and existentially more meaningful than the fabricated vermillion palace. "Does or does not the very moment of ascending the mountain and crossing the river chew up and spit out the time of the vermillion palace?"<sup>11</sup> Being-time at once encompasses and underlies, overcomes and refutes conventional fixations and attachments.

The second dimension of being-time--holistic passage (kyôryaku)-refers to the continuously creative and regenerating element which occurs each and every moment. Dôgen writes of kyôryaku: There is [holistic] passage from today to tomorrow, passage from today to yesterday, passage from yesterday to today, passage from today to today, and passage from tomorrow to tomorrow.<sup>12</sup>

Nikon and kyôryaku are two interpenetrating and ultimately self-same-though provisionally distinguishable--standpoints for understanding the structure of being-time. Neither has priority; the difference between them is a matter of viewing either topology (nikon) or the cross-section (kyôrvaku) of a total temporal phenomenon. In the metaphor of the mountain climb, for example, nikon designates the particular and immediate occasion of ascent. Kyôryaku suggests the entire temporal context and background of events of man and universe by which, as Dôgen says in the fascicle on "Complete Activity" ("Zenki"), "life lives through me and I am me because of life."<sup>13</sup> Holistic passage encompasses all personal, social, and natural history, and conditioning and recollection, as well as all futural projection, outlook, and striving that both make possible and are contained within the concrete circumstances invariably and fully manifest here-and-now. At any given moment, the conditions and anticipation that have placed someone in his current position are ever-present. Each occasion is complete because it includes the full range of possibilities and perspectives extending and reverberating simultaneously throughout the three times.

Kyôryaku is the comprehensive asymmetrical process of enlightened projection here-and-now actively engaging passenger and passageway as well as the full context of experiential reality surrounding and permeating the movement. Dôgen iterates five extensive motions of passage to refute the conventional view of serial progression, and to convey the complexity and insubstantiality, intricacy and fluidity, flexibility and multidimensionality of the dynamism of being-time. The first three motions--"passage from today to tomorrow, today to yesterday, and yesterday to today"--indicate that time proceeds backwards as well as forwards, embracing past, present, and future in reflective unity. Dôgen does not simply deny the ordinary perception of linear movement, but reveals the deeper dimensions of time always underlying experience whether or not they are ever realized. Each moment-every decision made or expression uttered--contains the full thrust of vesterday's recollection and tomorrow's outlook. "Passage from today to today" suggests that the total present is neither a static point isolated from the continuity of time nor an indefinite instant in an endless sequence, but constitutes the focus of temporal passage simultaneously advancing and retreating within itself. It also refers not only to internal movement of the

moment, but to the transmission from this day to any other one (whether conventionally labelled "yesterday" or "tomorrow") which, from its vantage point, becomes the current "today." Finally, "passage from tomorrow to tomorrow" shows that although Dôgen is critical of the futural delusions symbolized by the "vermillion palace," he by no means overlooks the future if it is understood in terms of the flexible identity with past and present. The future (which contains "yesterday" and "today") may have priority at any given occasion, but this is not absolute and should be seen as a shifting perspective within the holistic, self-generating and self-renewing moment of being-time.

## III. Conclusions: The Meanings of Kyôryaku

The notion of kyôryaku thus establishes the basis for Dôgen's radical reorientation and reinterpretation of traditional Mahayana and Zen conceptions of Buddha-nature in two interrelated ways. First, as in his revisions of the Nirvana Sutra and Huai-hai, Dôgen seeks to de-structure the view of an eternal Buddha-nature and to disclose the full integration of busshô with nikon and kyôryaku in that it is nothing other than this very moment of the holistic passage of being-time. Buddha-nature is neither an unactualized potentiality awaiting the appropriate time for fulfillment nor something static and eternal that does not require self-effort, but is realized as kyôryaku--a continuously unfolding process which spreads right-now backwards and forwards throughout past and future. Second, because of the simultaneity of temporal phases, Dôgen takes license to alter and revise drastically previous expressions in accord with his current experience of The hermeneutics of temporality is achieved by virtue of the Dharma. temporality of hermeneutics. Just as kyôryaku is the foundation of Buddhanature, it also constitutes the ground which determines the hermeneutic process in the following ways: it is the basis of Dôgen's relation to the tradition, the temporal ground of the continuity of the tradition itself, and the basis for any evaluation--from outside the tradition--of Dôgen's method of and success in reinterpreting it.

Although Dôgen acknowledges the limitations of unedifying or indulgent discourse, he maintains that the simultaneous interrelatedness of past and present enlightenment experience demands that the Dharma be perpetually reexplored and renewed through creative expressions of its inexhaustible meanings. The "passage of being-time from today to yesterday" allows Dôgen to reach back to recover the past, and the "passage from yesterday to today" requires that he justify his own standpoint in terms of previous accomplishments. This historical distance between past and present is not denied but upheld as a positive and productive possibility rather than a negative factor or inherent impediment to understanding. The temporal gap is at once heightened to allow the present--already influenced by the past--to review and restate the past from a new vantage point ("passage from today to tomorrow"), and dissolved in that both phases constitute the flexible unity of here-and-now experience. Dôgen suggests that neither text nor current practice are autonomous entities but continuously challenge one another, and that out of the interdependence and mutuality of their encounter, truth is One should neither submit to the authority of scripture nor disclosed. subvert it to his own perspective, neither simply accept nor reject prior expressions, but partake with them in an ongoing process of dialogue and observation, exploration and examination ("passage from today to today") by which both parties enlighten and enhance each other, and are in turn subject to the critical scrutiny of the future, a gaze which already influences the present ("passage from tomorrow to tomorrow"). Dôgen writes in the fascicle on "Expressing the Way" ("Dôtoku"):

Expressing the Way now contains no doubt. That is why present expression of the Way possesses past observation, and observation of the past possesses present expression of the Way. Therefore, right-now there is expression and observation. Present expression and past observation are [both inseparably] linked and [separated] by thousands of miles. Present practice is brought about by this very expression and observation of the Way.<sup>14</sup>

Dôgen's emphasis on transmission as the renewable experience of what he terms "the reciprocal spiritual communion" (kannô-dôkô) between master and disciple, scripture and practitioner, former and current experience and expression rests, in turn, on the temporal nature of the tradition. Dharma is not an atemporal truth outside of concrete experience and the mutability of phenomena. Nor is it fulfilled unless and until--or more positively, it is fulfilled only *upon*--current realization of *kyôryaku* as the meaning of Buddha-nature. "The truth of Buddha-nature," Dôgen maintains in "Busshô," "is that it is not completed prior to the attainment of Buddhahood. The Buddha-nature is necessarily realized simultaneously with the attainment of Buddhahood."<sup>15</sup> Thus, the continuity of the tradition is a passage which invariably transcends itself, a buoyant, fluid, and self-renewing process whose inherent internal back-and-forth

movement leads beyond its own boundaries. As the tradition seeks to realize itself, it always stands beyond itself and reflects back on its own significance and intentions, expressing an unlimited reservoir of meanings. To overcome the tradition is within the tradition; it is, in fact, the fulfillment of the tradition, the only and essential way it is completed. The process of transmission is an act of transcendence attainable each and every moment.

Finally, kyôryaku is the basis by which those outside the tradition can ask whether or not Dôgen is correct in his assertions of what previous expressions of the tradition really intended to say or should have said. Yet, this question of accuracy becomes irrelevant, not because Dôgen begs us to suspend judgement in sympathy with the tradition, but because the tradition itself--as a continuing process of self-transcendence--is not concerned with such an issue. The criterion of evaluation is not whether Dôgen is true to the tradition--which is already beyond itself--but whether Dôgen's thought as passenger of the tradition is justifiable in terms of its philosophical reasoning and reflection about the temporal structure of experience. The act of reconstructing and interpreting Dôgen's thought is necessarily engaged by and participates with his doctrines in the passage of understanding. We are challenged by his expressions and must reevaluate and rewrite our own conceptions accordingly, even as we seek to analyze and question Dôgen's. In the mutual reciprocity of this dialogical encounter throughout the passage of time, kvôrvaku becomes manifest.

# NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Dôgen, *Shôbôgenzô*, 2 volumes., ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972), vol. I, p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

6 Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 443.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

12 Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

14 Ibid., pp. 384-85.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

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# 'DISCLOSING A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM':

# A Translation of Dôgen's Shôbôgenzô "Muchûsetsumu"

#### I. Introduction

"Disclosing a Dream Within a Dream" ("Muchûsetsumu") is one of several Shôbôgenzô fascicles dealing with the relation between illusion and reality; others include "Painted Rice-cake" ("Gabyô"), "Flowers of Emptiness" ("Kûge"), and "Entangling Vines" ("Kattô"), which explore unreality and deception, and fantasy and hallucination. Dôgen's general strategy is to refute any bifurcation or gap between realms, and to argue for the identity of what has been portrayed in conventional Buddhist writings as false, misleading, or mythical with the ultimate reality of emptiness or nothingness. For example, he maintains that "only a painted rice-cake satisfies hunger," "flowers in the sky" (the literal meaning of kûge) blossom forth as manifestations of universal nonsubstantiality, and the entanglement of vines is a necessary means for disentangling vines. Furthermore, he stresses here that such expressions are not to be taken as metaphors which re-present the truth from a literary distance, but as the true form of reality itself (shohô jissô). As Dôgen writes, "the supreme enlightenment of all Buddhas and all patriarchs only appears as disclosing a dream within a dream."

The title phrase of this fascicle is taken from the Large Prajnaparamita Sutra (no. 596), but Dôgen's examination of dream (mu or yume) seems to draw on the wide usage of this imagery in Asian thought from Hindu and early Buddhist philosophy and mythology in India to the writings of Chuang Tzu and Japanese poetry in the Far East.<sup>1</sup> Mahayana Buddhist "perfection of wisdom" literature often uses dream as a prime symbol of the false and unreal that is generated by "discrimination and false intellection...like a cloud, a ring produced by a firebrand, and a castle of the Gandharvas, a vision, a mirage, the moon as reflected in the ocean, and a dream."<sup>2</sup> A famous gatha in the Diamond Sutra further emphasizes: "All things phenomenal/Are like dreams, maya, bubbles;/Like dew and lightning flashes,/Thus one should regard them." However, it is the very contingency

and ephemerality of dream illustrating the world of appearance that also makes it a key metaphor in the *Prajnaparamita* sutras for the insubstantial and ultimately void or empty nature of true reality: "This perfection is like a dream.... (b)ecause one cannot apprehend the one who sees the dream."<sup>3</sup> That is, "Dream is the activity that most powerfully convinces us that we ourselves are part and parcel of the process of interchange among things....we are one among things that mutually change, influence, co-arise, and co-cause one another."<sup>4</sup>

A brief survey of Asian thought indicates three levels of the meaning of dream: in addition to the two opposites of illusion and reality, or falsity and truth, the experience of dream reflects the relativity or the fragile borderline between realms. Therefore, on the first level dream implies illusion in clear contrast to reality that is seen only in negative terms "just because it is an utterly self-made, self-contained world, a dark cave of reflecting mirrors, where nothing exists but what is fabricated by one's own fears, illusions, and self-conscious self-pity."<sup>5</sup> In addition to the examples from Mahayana sutras cited above, Kûkai's i ro ha verse (introducing the full Japanese syllabary) is one of the main expressions referring to dream in the devalued sense of a state that is thoroughly problematic and that must be conquered for the attainment of truth: "Colors are fragrant, but they fade away. In this world of ours none lasts forever. Today cross the high mountain of life's illusions, and there will be no more shallow dreaming (asaki yume miji), no more drunkenness."<sup>6</sup> Two other examples from Japanese literature using the phrase "dream within a dream" highlight the delusory status of dreaming in a way conveying an atmosphere of uncertainty and sorrow. One is the famous Narrator's speech near the climax of Chikamatsu's play Sonezaki Shiniû (which dramatizes double suicide): "Farewell to this world, and to the night farewell./We who walk the road to death, to what should we be likened?/To the frost by the road that leads to the graveyard, /Vanishing with each step we take ahead:/How sad (aware) is this dream within a dream!"7 In addition, shogun Hideyoshi's death verse reads: "Like dew I came, /Like dew I go./My life/and all I have done at Osaka/Is just a dream [with]in a dream (Yume no mata yume)."8 These uses of the imagery of dream suggest that illusion compounds itself, for just as one is about to awaken from the dream he finds himself that much more lost within it.

Yet, such an implication tends to be one-sided and to overlook the second level of dream. That is, there opens up the "basic ambiguity" raised by the delicate relation between dream and reality "...about whether what occurs [in myth, for example] is transformation (changes that a real person undergoes) or an illusion, a dreamlike situation."<sup>9</sup> Since dream is illusory

precisely because it appears to be so real, this experience causes the boundary lines of conventional dichotomies to break down. From the standpoint of the observer it becomes highly problematic and increasingly questionable as to whether the dream/fantasy or conventional perspective of waking consciousness constitutes the true reality. The Japanese poet Saigyô gives voice to this query: "Since the 'real world' seems/to be less than really real,/why need I suppose/the world of dreams is nothing other than a world of dreams?"<sup>10</sup> According to this verse, when Buddhist philosophical understanding reduces the "real world" (which is actually the world of appearance) to the level of dream, the contrasting result is the elevation of the value of dreams to a "real" state.<sup>11</sup>

Another example from Japanese poetry conveying the relativity suggested by dream is the famous Kokinshû lovers' verse by Narihara, which is "(o)ne of the most remarkable examples of poems exemplifying such a bewildered heightening of normal experience...playling] upon an inability to distinguish [appearance from reality] when the world of appearance is, for some reason, suddenly truer or more forcibly felt than the world of reality": "My mind is dazzled--/Did you come to visit me?/Or I to you?/Was our night a dream? Reality? (yume ka utsutsu ka)/Was I sleeping? Was I awake?"<sup>12</sup> But perhaps the most intriguing instance is Chuang Tzu's famous "butterfly dream." Chuang Tzu dreamt he was a butterfly and "didn't know he was Chuang Chou [or Tzu]. Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Chuang Chou. But he didn't know if he was Chuang Chou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Chuang The passage concludes by insisting "there must be some Chou."13 distinction," but never clarifies what this is so that the assertion might be seen as ironical or rhetorical.

At this point, dream begins to be seen not as mere illusion but as a witness to truth. An awareness of relativity demands that a distinction be made on a deeper level between "illusion" in the sense of empirically verifiable mistakes and "Illusion" as the ontologically groundless ground upon which mental images are projected.<sup>14</sup> In other words, illusion becomes the truth from the nondualistic standpoint. Dôgen expresses this view when he identifies "dream within a dream" and "realization beyond realization." Thus, dream does not refer to a "dreamy state" or "nighttime dream," but a primordial and perpetually self-surpassing process. The view of dream *as* reality or as fully coterminous with awakening is also stressed in medieval Japanese Buddhist works such as Ryôhen's *Kanshin kakumusho* (Notes on Contemplating Dream and Awakening) and Musô's *Muchû mondô* (Dialogue Within a Dream).

Where does Dôgen's Zen Buddhist view of dream stand in relation to Hindu and Taoist philosophies of dream? In his review of Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty's study of Hindu mythology, G. Obeyesekere describes the difference between the typical Hindu and Buddhist approaches to the issue of dream and illusion. In both cases, he writes, "there are receding frames, or dreams within dreams," but Hinduism seeks transcendence in terms of the dreamer," brahman, whereas Buddhism recognizes only the "final metaphysical void, sunyata. "Consequently, the ontology of Nothingness is replaced [in Hindu texts] by the ontology of the Godhead."<sup>15</sup> For Chuang Tzu, however, the issue seems to be to seek not a final dreamer but relativity as an end in itself. According to Kuang-ming Wu, "Chuang Tzu's awakening to uncertainty (are we dreaming or awakened?) amounts to our knowledge of ignorance, affirmation of uncertainty. Buddhists awaken out of dreaming; Chuang Tzu wakes up to dreaming."<sup>16</sup>

Yet, a comparison of Dôgen and Chuang Tzu indicates a greater affinity than that for several reasons. First, Chuang Tzu does recognize and analyze the illusory quality of dream and the need to awaken out of it. For example, just before the butterfly passage he writes in relation to delusion: "While he is dreaming he does not know it is a dream, and in his dream (yume kore naka in Japanese pronunciation) he may even try to interpet a dream. Only after he wakes does he know it was a dream. And someday there will be a great awakening when we know that this is all a great dream."<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, Chuang Tzu seems to suggest a processual or stageby-stage (though not in a strictly dialectical sense) view of awakening in relation to dreaming which is quite similar to Dôgen. As Wu interprets this, "We have three situational stages [in Chuang Tzu]: dreaming, awakening, Great Awakening; or not awakening, awakening from not awakening, awakening from awakening (without awakening)..."18 In a parallel vein Dôgen indicates that the act of explaining dream exposes the illusion for what it is and thus overcomes it resulting in awakening. The phrase "dream within a dream" may represent illusion compounded by itself. But it can also convey a heightening awareness of illusion that leads to realization, which is further deepened by the process of explaining dream.

Since dream can mean two opposite states, the double use of the word in the title phrase suggests four possible stages in the process of awakening, with the middle stages encompassing and pointing beyond relativity. That is, in Dôgen's interpretation, disclosing a dream within a dream represents a single unified reality--there is essentially one dream--that can be explored provisionally from a variety of perspectives depending on the multiple implications of dream as relative (illusion about form) or absolute (realization of the formless). The paradoxical identity and difference of absolute and relative breaks down into four levels of interrelationship:<sup>19</sup>

1. Disclosing the relative (dream as deception) within the relative, or "illusion compounded within illusion"--the self-created and self-perpetuating vicious cycle of the average person preoccupied with ignorance and attachments who either has no glimpse of enlightenment or sees it as a remote and unattainable goal: this corresponds to the notion in "Genjôkôan" that a sentient being is one who has "a great illusion about enlightenment"<sup>20</sup>;

2. Disclosing the relative within the absolute (dream as nonsubstantiality), or "illusion surpassing illusion"--the ability to see beyond deception through the deception itself, so that illusion is self-transcending and self-surpassing, as in the notion of disentangling vines by means of vines  $(katt\hat{o})$ ;

3. Disclosing the absolute within the absolute, or "realization within realization"--when the absolute is first attained as a goal it must be understood as distinct from the relative so that it is not falsely objectified or conceptualized, but this standpoint if not surpassed can harbor a subtle duality between absolute and relative;

4. Disclosing the absolute within the relative, or "realization beyond realization" ("awakening without awakening" in Wu's analysis of Chuang Tzu)--full and complete attainment is the overcoming of the distinction between absolute and relative, as in the notion of "continuous enlightenment beyond Buddha" (*bukkôjôji*); this corresponds to the "Genjôkôan" idea that Buddhas have "great enlightenment about illusion...[and] are not necessarily aware of being Buddhas. Nevertheless, they are realized Buddhas, who perpetually realize Buddha[hood]."<sup>21</sup>

# II. Texts

In preparing the translation I consulted the following Japanese editions and commentaries in addition to English translations:

# Japanese Editions:

Dôgen zenji zenshû, 2 volumes. Ed. Ôkubo Dôshû. Tokyo, Chikuma shobô, 1970, vol. I, pp. 240-47.

Dôgen shû. Tr. (into modern Japanese) Tamaki Kôshirô. Tokyo, Chikuma shobô, 1969, pp. 342-48.

Gendaigoyaku Shôbôgenzô, 8 volumes. Tr. Masutani Fumio. Tokyo, Kodakawa shoten, 1971, vol. I, pp. 155-73.

Shôbôgenzô (published as Dôgen in Nihon shisô taikei, vols. XII and XIII). Ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko. Tokyo, Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972, vol. I, pp. 310-16.

Zenyaku Shôbôgenzô, 4 volumes. Tr. Nakamura Sôichi. Tokyo, Seishin shobô, 1970, vol. II, pp. 18-29.

Commentaries:

Kurebayashi Kôdô, Shôbôgenzô gabei keibaku. Tokyo, Daibôrinkan, 1965, vol. II, pp. 348-88.

Shôbôgenzô chûkai zensho. Ed. Bukkyô taikei kankokai. Tokyo, 1912-38, vol. V, pp. 409-59.

Tamaki Kôshirô, "Dôgen no gendai shisôteki imi," in Gendai shisô to Dôgen. Tokyo, Shunjûsha, 1981, vol. VII, esp. pp. 50-62.

**English Translations:** 

Flowers of Emptiness: Selections from Dôgen's Shôbôgenzô. Tr. Hee-jin Kim. Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1985, pp. 279-86.

Shôbôgenzô (The Eye and Treasury of the True Law). Tr. Kôsen Nishiyama and John Stevens. Tokyo: Nakayama Shobô, 1977, vol. II, pp. 152-57.

*The Shôbô-genzô*. Tr. Yokoi Yûhô. Tokyo, Sankibo Buddhist Bookstore, 1986, pp. 341-48.

## III. Translation of "Muchûsetsumu"

Because the Way in which all the Buddhas and patriarchs appear is without origin, it is not recorded in ancient or conventional writings. The distinctive function of the Buddhas and patriarchs as well as of continuous development beyond Buddha<sup>22</sup> is based on this quality. As [the Way] does not occur at a particular time, you must not resort to ordinary measurement of its length or brevity of duration. Turning the Dharma-wheel is also without origin. That is its immeasurable merit as an eternal guide. Because it manifests realization within realization (shôchûkenshô),<sup>23</sup> it discloses a dream within a dream.

The place of disclosing a dream within a dream is the domain and association of the Buddhas and patriarchs. The domain and association of the Buddhas, and the Way and cushion of the patriarchs, is realization beyond realization (shôjô shô) and disclosing a dream within a dream.<sup>24</sup> You must not believe that we are apart from the association of the Buddhas when we attempt to disclose attainment by expressing the Way (dôtokusetsutoku). This is the way the Buddhas turn the Dharma-wheel. Because the Dharmawheel turns in the ten directions and eight sides, the great oceans, Mt. Sumeru,<sup>25</sup> the lands, and all Buddhas are spontaneously manifested. This itself is disclosing a dream within a dream prior to all dreams (shômuizen).<sup>26</sup> Each and every manifestation of the entire universe is a dream, and this dream itself is the distinctive clarity of a hundred grasses. Doubting this is a dream; even confusion is a dream. At such a moment, grass discloses grass within the dream of grass (muge chûge setsuge).<sup>27</sup> In studying this, roots and stems, branches and leaves, flowers and fruit, lights and colors are all a great dream. But you must not mistake this for a dreamy state (muzen).<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, when those who doubt the Buddhist Way encounter "disclosing a dream within a dream," they foolishly think it has to do with whether or not a dream of grass actually exists, or that it is like illusion mounted on top of illusion (*madoi ni madoi o kasaneru*). But that is not the case. Even though illusion is compounded within illusion (*meichûyômei*), you must understand that the path to attaining the Way is realized through illusion surpassing illusion (*madoi no ue no madoi*).<sup>29</sup>

Disclosing a dream within a dream is all Buddhas, and all Buddhas are the wind, rain, water, and fire. To grasp that name is to grasp this one. Disclosing a dream within a dream is the primordial Buddha (*kobutsu*). Riding this precious vehicle directly reaches the realm of the Way.<sup>30</sup> Directly reaching the realm of the Way occurs while riding the precious vehicle.

Whether a meandering or a straightforward dream, whether bound or free, it is the wind blowing vigorously.<sup>31</sup> The Dharma-wheel is just like this; or, turning the great Dharma-wheel is immeasurable and unlimited. In other words, in turning even a speck of dust, [the Dharma-wheel] ceaselessly permeates within the dust. When the Dharma turns according to this principle, it is like "smiling in the midst of resentment." Because the Dharma turns under such conditions, the wind blows freely. Because of this, the entire unlimited world is perpetually [turning] the Dharma-wheel. The entire universe of the distinctive aspects of dependent origination is the supremacy of all Buddhas. You must realize that proclaiming the Way of all Buddhas, as well as disclosing the Dharma, is perpetually circulating and abiding at any place. Do not look for a limit to its coming or going. There is no place it is not coming, and no place it is not going. Because of this, vines entangled with vines are the nature and form of supreme enlightenment.<sup>32</sup> Like unlimited enlightenment, sentient beings are unlimited and supreme. Although attachments are unlimited, liberation is unlimited. The realization of the kôan will spare you thirty blows:<sup>33</sup> this is the realization of disclosing a dream within a dream.

Therefore, a tree without roots, a land without sun or shade, and a valley without an echo themselves are the realization of disclosing a dream within a dream.<sup>34</sup> This is neither human nor divine, and it cannot be discerned by the average person. Who can doubt the enlightenment of a dream, since it is not something that is subject to doubt? Who can conceptualize it, since it is not a matter of conceptualization? Because supreme enlightenment is supreme enlightenment, a dream is called a dream. It is a dream disclosing a dream within (chûmu ari, mu setsu ari); or, within a dream disclosing a dream (setsumu ari, muchû ari).<sup>35</sup> If there is no within a dream, there is no disclosing a dream. If there is no disclosing a dream, there is no within a dream. If there is no disclosing a dream, there are no Buddhas. If there is no within a dream, the Buddhas do not appear to turn the wondrous Dharma. The Dharma-wheel is [transmitted] only between a Buddha and a Buddha; that is disclosing a dream within a dream. Indeed, the supreme enlightenment of all Buddhas and all patriarchs only appears in disclosing a dream within a dream. Continuous development beyond the Dharmakaya (hôjinkôjôji) itself is disclosing a dream within a dream. It is the resonance only between a Buddha and a Buddha. Do not be attached to the head, eyes, marrow, brains, body, flesh, hands, or feet because they have no attachment.<sup>36</sup> It is like one who "freely gives and receives"--it is the mystery of mysteries,<sup>37</sup> the wonder of wonders, the realization of realizations, and a head resting above a head (tojôanto).38 This itself is the activity of the Buddhas and patriarchs. In studying this, the [average person] thinks of the head only as something on top of a person. If he does not think of the head of Vairocana Buddha,<sup>39</sup> how can he think of the distinctive clarity of the heads of a hundred grasses, or know this very head?

From ancient times, when foolish people have heard the phrase, "a head above a head," they take it to be an admonition to practice the Dharma. They think that it means "thou shalt not," or "why does a head rest above a

head?" But this is really a mistake. The spontaneous manifestation of disclosing [a dream within a dream] is the same for both average people and saints. Because of this, disclosing a dream within a dream for average people and saints alike arises vesterday as well as today. You should realize that disclosing a dream within a dream yesterday recognizes disclosing a dream within a dream as disclosing a dream within a dream. Disclosing a dream within a dream today studies disclosing a dream within a dream as disclosing a dream within a dream. This itself is the joyful merit of the Buddha. It is a pity that although the dreams of a hundred grasses have the distinctive clarity of the Buddhas and patriarchs that is greater than a hundred thousand suns and moons, ignorant people are unable to perceive it. What is called a head in "a head resting above a head" itself is the head of a hundred grasses, the head of a thousand different things, the head of ten thousand things, the head of this body. It is the head of the entire universe without obstruction, or the head of the ten directions of the entire universe. It is "the head which matches a single phrase,"40 or "the head of a hundred foot bamboo pole."41 You must study and realize each and every head that is resting above.

Therefore, "all the supreme and unsurpassable Buddhas appear in this sutra,"<sup>42</sup> and disclose a dream within a dream as a head resting above a head. When "this sutra" itself discloses a dream within a dream, all the Buddhas of supreme enlightenment emerge. All the enlightened Buddhas are disclosing the sutras, and disclosing a dream within a dream is established. If the origin of a dream is hidden, its consequences will remain unclear. It is just like striking one blow and hitting thousands of marks, or striking thousands of blows and hitting one mark. In this way, you should realize that such a thing is disclosing a dream within a dream, such a person is disclosing a dream within a dream, not such a thing is disclosing a dream within a dream.<sup>43</sup> This spontaneous manifestation of truth has long been known. What is called everyday disclosing a dream within a dream itself is disclosing a dream within a dream.<sup>44</sup>

That is why an ancient Buddha<sup>45</sup> said, "For your sake, I am now disclosing a dream within a dream; all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future are disclosing a dream within a dream, and the six patriarchs<sup>46</sup> are disclosing a dream within a dream." You must study and clarify the meaning of this. [The Buddha's] holding up a flower and winking itself is disclosing a dream within a dream. [Hui-k'o's] attaining the marrow through worship itself is disclosing a dream within a dream.

Furthermore, attaining the Way within a single phrase, or even misunderstanding and ignorance are disclosing a dream within a dream.

Because of the function of his thousand hands and eyes, [Avalokitesvara]<sup>47</sup> is able to see sounds as well as forms, and to hear forms as well as sounds. The manifest body is disclosing a dream within a dream, and disclosing the Dharma [by] disclosing a dream is disclosing a dream within a dream. Bondage and freedom are disclosing a dream within a dream. Direct pointing is disclosing a dream within a dream. Hitting the mark is disclosing a dream within a dream. You must learn how to balance the scales whether there is bondage or freedom.48 In learning this, there are necessarily variations in weight which cause disclosing a dream within a dream to appear. As we measure different weights, if we do not attain balance, balance is not realized. If we do attain balance, balance is realized. When we attain balance, it is not based on the object, the scales, or the observer. You must learn that although emptiness is all-pervasive, if we do not attain balance, balance is not realized. Just as emptiness pervades itself, disclosing a dream within a dream grasps objects while allowing them to play in emptiness. This is the manifest body of balance in emptiness, for balance is the great Way of the scales. It pervades emptiness and objects. Whether there is emptiness or form, explaining a dream within a dream realizes balance. It is not the case that there is no disclosing a dream within a dream in liberation. A dream is the entire world, and the entire world is balance. Because of this, when the head turns, so does the brain--it is [a state] without limitations, which itself is an appropriate correspondence to realizing a dream within a dream.

Sakyamuni Buddha said:49

The golden-colored bodies of all Buddhas majestically bear a hundred fortuitous marks. Hearing the Dharma and disclosing it to others is perpetually their sublime dream. The also have a dream of a prince who renounced his palace and relatives as well as objects appealing to the five desires in order to practice to reach the realm of the Way. Seated on the lion's seat under the Bo tree, seven days passed as he pursued the Way until he attained the wisdom of all Buddhas. Having reached the supreme Way, he turned the Dharma-wheel, disclosing the Dharma to beings in all directions for hundreds and thousands of kalpas. After disclosing the pure and wondrous Dharma and saving innumerable sentient beings, he entered parinirvana, like smoke dispersed or a lamp extinguished. If anyone discloses the supreme Dharma in subsequent evil times he will receive great benefits, just like all the virtues mentioned above.

You must thoroughly realize the association of all Buddhas by studying the Buddha's disclosure at this very moment. This [disclosure] is not a metaphor  $(hiy\hat{u})$ .<sup>50</sup> Because the wondrous Dharma of all Buddhas is [transmitted] only between a Buddha and a Buddha, it is the true form of all dharmas in dreaming and awakening. There is resolve, practice, wisdom, and nirvana within awakening (*kakuchû*). There is resolve, practice, wisdom, and nirvana within a dream. Dreaming and awakening respectively are the true form.<sup>51</sup> It is not a matter of being great or small, superior or inferior.

However, there are those of the past and present who hear expressions from earlier or later practitioners of the Way, such as "also having a dream of a prince," and then confuse the power of "disclosing the supreme Dharma" with a nighttime (yomu) dream.<sup>52</sup> People who have such a misunderstanding have not yet awakened to the Buddha's disclosure. Dreaming and awakening are originally a unity as the true form. Even if the Buddha Dharma uses figures of speech and metaphor, these must constitute the true form. Having a dream (musaku) is not a metaphor, but the reality of the Buddha Dharma. Sakyamuni Buddha as well as all Buddhas and patriarchs have resolve, practice, and the attainment of true awakening (shôkaku) all while within a dream. Because of this, proclaiming the Buddha Way in the world of form at this very moment itself is having a dream. "Seven days" is attaining the wisdom of the Buddha. As turning the Dharmawheel and saving sentient beings has already continued for hundreds of thousands of kalpas, what is within a dream cannot be tracked down.

Consider this passage:

The golden-colored bodies of all Buddhas majestically bear a hundred fortuituous marks. Hearing the Dharma and disclosing it to others is perpetually their sublime dream.

It is evident that a "sublime dream" is clearly realized as "all Buddhas." The "perpetual" Way of Tathagata is not just a hundred year-old dream. "Disclosing the Dharma to others" is the manifest body. "Hearing the Dharma" is hearing sounds through the eyes and the mind.<sup>53</sup> It is a primordial hearing of sounds that occurs prior to the great void.

In "the gold-colored bodies of all Buddhas majestically bear[ing] a hundred fortuitous marks," a "sublime dream" is "all Buddha bodies." This cannot be doubted at this very present moment.<sup>54</sup> Although the truth of

ceaselessly proclaiming the Buddha's teaching occurs within awakening, the truth of the spontaneous manifestation of the Buddhas and patriarchs is necessarily having a dream within a dream (*musakumuchû*). You must study [this so as] not to disparage the Buddha Dharma. When you study how not to disparage the Buddha Dharma, the Way of Tathagata is spontaneously manifested right here-and-now.

#### NOTES

# To Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Generally the philosophical traditions of Asia (though not necessarily popular religions) view dream neither in the sense of supernatural revelation (as in Biblical and tribal religion) nor as a roadmap to the unconscious (as in modern psychology), but in terms of examining the contrast with the waking as well as awakened states of mind, that is, to understand the relation of ordinary and transcendent reality.

<sup>2</sup> The Lankavatara Sutra, tr. D. T. Suzuki (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1932), pp. 37-38, cited by Anthony C. Yu, "The Quest for Brother Amor: Buddhist Intimations in *The Story of Stone*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 49/1 (1989), p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom, tr. and ed. Edward Conze (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 313.

<sup>4</sup> Kuang-ming Wu, *The Butterfly as Companion* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), p. 225.

<sup>5</sup> Robert S. Ellwood, "Review Article [of Kokinshû translations]," Religious Studies Review, 14/3, p. 227.

<sup>6</sup> In Andrew Nathaniel Nelson, *Japanese-English Character Dictionary* (Rutland and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1962), p. 1014.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Keene, tr., Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 51. I have changed the last phrase in the final line to "dream within a dream" from "dream of a dream" since the footnote to the Japanese edition interprets the original "yume no yume" as "yume no naka ni mata yume." In Chikamatsu jôruri shû, vol. I (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1959), p. 32.

<sup>8</sup> In Sources of Japanese Tradition, compiled Wm. Theodore de Bary, et. al. (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 316.

<sup>9</sup> Gananath Obeyesekere, "Illusion and Reality in Indian and Western Ontology" [review of Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Dreams, Illusion and Other Realities* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984)], *Religious Studies Review*, 12/3-4, p. 217. O'Flaherty's work is a comprehensive examination of dream in Hindu mythology in relation to Buddhism as well as Greek philosophy and Freudian psychology among other standpoints.

<sup>10</sup> Tr. William R. LaFleur, *The Karma of Words* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> See discussion in Ellwood, p. 227.

<sup>12</sup> Comment and poem in Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner, Japanese Court Poetry (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 160.

<sup>13</sup> The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, tr. Burton Watson (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> See Obeyesekere, p. 217.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>16</sup> Wu, p. 227.

<sup>17</sup> In Watson, p. 47.

<sup>18</sup> Wu, pp. 217-18.

<sup>19</sup> See my A Blade of Grass: Japanese Poetry and Aesthetics in Dôgen Zen (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), pp. 37-38.

<sup>20</sup> In Shôbôgenzô, ed. Terada/Mizuno, I, p. 35.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

# To Translation

22 "Continuous development beyond Buddha" (bukkôjôji), the topic of another Shôbôgenzô fascicle, indicates that genuine enlightenment does not

terminate with the attainment of an apparent goal of Buddhahood but is perpetually renewed through continuous exertion of zazen meditation.

<sup>23</sup> The phrase "manifests realization within realization" is parallel in structure to "disclosing a dream within a dream" and indicates the ever-renewing and self-surpassing quality of enlightenment.

<sup>24</sup> Here Dôgen uses his characteristic wordplay to highlight the identity and contrast between the phrases "realization beyond realization" (or "beyond Buddha") and "realization within realization" as well as "dream within a dream." The theme of the relation between "beyond" and "within" is continued below in regard to illusion with somewhat different results.

 $^{25}$  Mt. Sumeru is a mythical mountain in Indian cosmology which is considered the highest and most central location in the world.

<sup>26</sup> In a number of places here Dôgen contrasts the ontological status of the primordial nature of "dream within a dream" and the contingency of conventional dreaming and dreams. Yet in other writings he acknowledges the revelatory and premonitory quality of ordinary dreams. For example, in "Shisho" he writes of a dream involving plum blossoms prophesying his enlightenment, and concludes that "dreaming (*muchû*) and waking (*kakuchû*, which can also mean "awakening") are both the true form [of reality]." In *Shôbôgenzô*, ed. Terada/Mizuno, I, p. 442. On the other hand, in the "Jinzû" fascicle on "supernatural powers" Dôgen refutes or at least demythologizes the conventional Buddhist belief in supernaturally inspired dreams. See Tamaki, pp. 54-58.

<sup>27</sup> The wordplay continues as this sentence literally means, "there is dreamgrass [perhaps a literary reference to a particular shade of reddish grass], within-grass, explaining grass."

<sup>28</sup> "Dreamy state" again refers to the ordinary dream or daydream (or any foggy state of mind) contrasted with the primordial dream.

 $^{29}$  This is perhaps the most crucial passage in the fascicle in which Dôgen contrasts two levels of illusion: the self-limiting realm of deception in which illusion becomes a bottomless vicious cycle of deceit and ignorance; and the self-surpassing realm whereby illusion is transformed into a vehicle for

realization. Thus "illusion surpassing (or beyond) illusion" is a necessary preparatory stage for insight.

<sup>30</sup> From the Lotus Sutra, chapter 3 ("Parable"), see translation in Leon Hurvitz, Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (The Lotus Sutra): Translated from the Chinese of Kumarajiva (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

<sup>31</sup> From a record of the teachings of Dôgen's Chinese master Nyojô (C. Juching), Nyojô seiryôroku.

<sup>32</sup> From the Nyojô Tendô roku. In the "Kattô" ("Entangled Vines") fascicle, Dôgen in a way based on the teaching of his master Nyojô reinterprets a conventional Zen metaphor for illusion as being coterminous with ultimate reality.

<sup>33</sup> This saying is attributed to Ch'en Tsun-su in Keitoku Dentôroku (C. Chingte ch'üan-teng-lu), chapter 12; also Te-shan Hsüan-chien in Gotô Egen (C. Wu-teng hui-yüan), vol. 7.

<sup>34</sup> Again Dôgen reverses the conventional understanding by equating traditional metaphors for illusion with the primordial nature of dream.

<sup>35</sup> For another example of this kind of reversing the sequence of parallel constructions, see "Sokushinzebutsu" in which Dôgen writes, "Study 'this very mind itself is Buddha' (*sokushinzebutsu*), 'mind is this very Buddha itself' (*shinsokubutsuze*), 'Buddha itself is this very mind' (*butsusokuzeshin*), and 'this very mind Buddha itself is' (*sokushinbutsuze*). In studying this way, this very mind itself is Buddha is authentically transmitted as this very mind itself is Buddha." In *Shôbôgenzô*, I, pp. 84-85. Hee-jin Kim refers to this technique as "The Transposition of Lexical Components" in "The Reason of Words and Letters: Dôgen and Kôan Language," in *Dôgen Studies*, ed. William R. LaFleur (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), pp. 61-62.

<sup>36</sup> From the *Lotus Sutra*, chapter 12 ("Devadatta").

<sup>37</sup> Phrase used in *Tao te ching*, chapter 1.

 $^{38}$  The image of a "head above a head" seems to be a reference to Kannon (Skt. Avalokitesvara) and other *nyorai* and *bosatsu* Mahayana deities

depicted in statues with multiple heads or faces representing infinite vision and mental/spiritual capacity. Here it is a concrete image symbolizing the self-surpassing quality of true realization.

<sup>39</sup> Vairocana (J. Dainichi) is the Buddha who represents the cosmic source or the sun at the center of the spiritual universe.

<sup>40</sup> From Keitoku Dentôroku, chapter 14.

<sup>41</sup> From Keitoku Dentôroku, chapter 10.

<sup>42</sup> A reference to the *Diamond Sutra*.

<sup>43</sup> The last two phrases are typical of negation which does not represent the antithesis of affirmation but points to absolute nothingness as the ground lying beyond any particular examples of affirming or denying an assertion.

<sup>44</sup> Despite other cases of contrast, here Dôgen equates the everyday and primordial dream from a radically nondualistic standpoint.

45 Setchô (C. Hsüeh-tou) as seen in Myôgaku zenji roku, vol. 4.

<sup>46</sup> Bodhidharma, Ta-tsu Hui-ko, Chien-chi Seng-ts'an, Ta-i Tao-hsin, Taman Hung-jen, and Ta-chien Hui-neng.

<sup>47</sup> Or Kannon in Japanese, the topic of another *Shôbôgenzô* fascicle.

<sup>48</sup> Dôgen here introduces an extended metaphor which plays on the literal meaning of scales and weights in relation to measurement as symbolic of the equality or balance between emptiness and form by virtue of the "play" of primordial "dream within a dream."

<sup>49</sup> From the *Lotus Sutra*, chapter 14 ("Comfortable Conduct").

 $^{50}$  Dôgen argues here, as an important ingredient of his overall philosophy of language and religious symbol, that dream is not merely a realm of images and associations. Therefore, the so-called metaphorical does not stand apart from and re-present an idea of reality but fully participates in ultimate reality as a manifestation of its true form.

 $^{51}$  This can refer to dreaming and awakening in the sense of illusion and reality, or to the dreaming and waking states of consciousness (see ftn. 5 above).

<sup>52</sup> Again, the contrast with conventional dreaming.

<sup>53</sup> Note the synesthesia involved in meditation, attributed above to Avalokitesvera, attained through the holistic experience of "seeing sounds."

<sup>54</sup> Here and in the final sentence Dôgen stresses the theme developed especially in the "Uji" fascicle of the direct and immediate manifestation of the unity of being-time.

# PART TWO:

# JAPANESE RELIGION AND AESTHETICS

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# DÔGEN AND THE JAPANESE RELIGIO-AESTHETIC TRADITION

I. The Relation of Religion and Aesthetics

A. Kawabata's Comments on the Waka "Original Face"

At the beginning of his 1968 Nobel Prize acceptance speech, *Japan* the Beautiful and Myself, Kawabata Yasunari somewhat surprisingly cites a waka by Dôgen in the context of commenting on the profound influence of Zen aesthetics on his own writing. In Edward Seidensticker's translation of the speech, the verse reads:<sup>1</sup>

Haru wa hana	In the spring, cherry blossoms,
Natsu hototogisu	In the summer the cuckoo.
Aki wa tsuki	In autumn the moon, and in
Fuyu yuki kiede	winter the snow, clear, cold.
Suzushi kari keri.	

Dôgen's poem is notable, according to Kawabata, because "by a spontaneous though deliberate stringing together of conventional images and words, it transmits the very essence of Japan."<sup>2</sup> Kawabata refers to "conventional images and words" in a special sense expressing a simple connecting of seasonal imagery, evoking the ephemeral yet cyclical quality of the beauty of nature, which springs directly from the deepest sources of the Japanese poetic tradition.

Although the general discussion of Zen and literature is not unique, Kawabata's citation of Dôgen was considered striking and unusual by specialists in Dôgen studies for several reasons.<sup>3</sup> First, Dôgen is not generally known or analyzed as a poet, and he probably did not consider the composition of poetry an important endeavor. His collections of Japanese waka (often referred to by the title given it in the Edo period, "Sanshôdôei") and of Chinese poetry (or *kanshi*, included as the last two parts of the 10volume *Eihei Koroku*), constitute a relatively minor portion of his complete works. His creative efforts were devoted primarily to the philosophical and religious issues concerning Buddhist theory and practice expressed in the 92fascicle *Shôbôgenzô*. The *Shôbôgenzô* is the subject of voluminous medieval and modern commentaries and translations. The poetry collections, however, have received little attention even from the Sôtô sect.

Also, the poetic tradition has never regarded Dôgen as a significant figure. The verse handled by Kawabata, entitled "Original Face" (*honrai no memmoku*; Seidensticker: "Innate Spirit"), is one of the few well known pieces in "Sanshôdôei." This is largely because it became the source for a variation by the famous Edo period Sôtô Zen poet, Ryôkan, which Kawabata also cites in his lecture.<sup>4</sup> None of Dôgen's waka is included in the major Court anthologies of the Kamakura era.<sup>5</sup> The only commentaries on his waka collection in either medieval or modern times are written by sectarian scholars who analyze its doctrinal, rather than literary, foundations and implications. Dôgen's Japanese poetry is not of the rank of such late Heian/early Kamakura Buddhist poets as Saigyô (also mentioned by Kawabata) and the Tendai abbot Jien, who are the most prolific contributors selected for the leading imperial anthology of the era, the *Shinkokinshû*.

Many commentators have noted that Japanese culture is marked by a profound and direct convergence of religion and aesthetics, so that "artistic form and aesthetic sensibility become synonymous with religious form and religious (or spiritual) sensibility."<sup>6</sup> More specifically with regard to Buddhism, Tagore characterizes aesthetics as the "unique Dharma of Japan."<sup>7</sup> Yet, Dôgen is often considered an exception to the religio-aesthetic mainstream because of his strong criticism of literature. He warns his followers against involvement in literary pursuits by advising a singleminded dedication to sustained zazen practice to achieve the Buddhist Dharma. Dôgen apparently draws a clear and consistent line between religion and art in admonishing his disciples against the pursuit of "style and rhetoric" which may distract or impede their spiritual development. "Impermanence moves swiftly," he says in a frequently cited passage in Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki. "The meaning of life and death is the great problem. In this short life, if you want to practice and study, you must follow the Buddha Way and study the Buddha Dharma. The composition of literature (bumpitsu), [Chinese] poetry (shi) and [Japanese] verse (ka) is worthless, and it must be renounced...."<sup>8</sup> He adds in another passage, "Zen monks are fond of literature these days, finding it an aid to writing verses and tracts. This is a mistake....Yet no matter how elegant their prose or how exquisite their poetry might be, they are merely toying with words and cannot gain the truth."9

The distinction indicated by Dôgen between "art for art's sake" and the search for truth, or between an idle indulgence in literature and an

exclusive determination to fulfill the religious quest, has also been carried out in his personal life. His biography, according to traditional sources (which modern research has shown to be somewhat marred by hagiographical excess),<sup>10</sup> is notable for a renunciation and departure from the aesthete world of the Kyoto Court on three main occasions. First, Dôgen's decision to become a monk at the age of thirteen was an abandonment of the Court career awaiting him. Overwhelmed by grief due to the loss of both parents at the time of the tragic death of his mother when he was eight, he continued to feel a keen sense of the sorrow of impermanence and a profound longing for release from suffering, which led him to join the monkhood. Also, at twentyfour, Dôgen left the dominant Tendai and newly formed Zen monastaries in the Kyoto-Mt. Hiei area to seek the authentic Dharma in Sung China because of what he considered the corruption and secularization of the Japanese Buddhist institutions. Finally, at forty-four, sixteen years after returning to Japan from China where he attained enlightenment under the guidance of Ju-ching, Dôgen again renounced the secularized and politicized atmosphere of Kyoto Buddhism. He established a strictly disciplined monastic order (which later became the Sôtô sect), in the natural splendor of Eiheiji temple (celebrated in many of his poems),<sup>11</sup> situated in the relatively remote and isolated mountains of Echizen province.

The opposition between religion and art that Dôgen's Zuimonki admonitions and biography highlight involves the relation between the relative and absolute, lyricism and didacticism, attachment and realization, and objectivity and subjectivity in the pursuit of the Buddhist Dharma. Dôgen's approach is based on his enlightenment experience of "casting off body-mind" (shinjin datsuraku), or liberation from all volitional attachments and mental constructions concerning objectifiable forms. His writing exemplifies the "compassionate words" (aigo) expressing the truth of Dharma (hôgo) whose sole aim is to convey one's own realization in order to assist others on their path to the attainment of genuine subjectivity. Dôgen criticizes literature for its interest in the external world of relative forms, which are objectified through an inauthentic subjective or emotional reaction to change and instability. Poetry, as an example of "dramatic phrases and flowery words" (kyôgen kigo),<sup>12</sup> attempts to eloquently capture feelings of longing, sorrow, loss, expectation, or uncertainty that reflect a partial awareness of evanescence.<sup>13</sup> Dôgen suggests, however, that poetry may fail to express an authentic, or detached, subjective realization of the absolute truth of impermanent and nonsubstantive existence. Thus, literature deals with an emotional attachment to form and words, while Buddhist impartiality toward the self-nihilating enlightenment concentrates on

foundations of reality beyond the oppositions of life and death, love and hate, and speech and silence.

Yet, Kawabata interprets "Original Face" as an essentially aesthetic utterance which is not Buddhist in contrast to poetic. He sees it divulging the typical religio-aesthetic understanding of man in relation to time, nature, the four seasons and reality. The verse is perhaps comparable to Kenkô's statement in Tsurezuregusa, "The changing of the seasons is deeply moving in its every manifestation."<sup>14</sup> Considered in light of his philosophical writings, Dôgen's poem indicates that the question of absolute and relative is not clear-cut or one-sided. The philosophy of the Shôbôgenzô is based largely on eliminating any subtle sense of duality or discrimination. Dôgen clarified such traditional Mahayana doctrines as the Kegon "interpenetration of form and form" (jiji muge), the Tendai "three thousand worlds in a single instant of thought" (ichinen sanzen) or "the true form of all dharmas (shohô jissô), and Kûkai's "attaining the Buddha in this very body" (sokushin jôbutsu). His innovative notions, including "impermanence-Buddha-nature" (mujô-busshô), "being-time" (uji), and "spontaneous realization" (genjôkôan), stress the thoroughgoing inseparability of absolute and relative, and emptiness and form.<sup>15</sup> From Dôgen's standpoint, each and every form, including the flowers, cuckoo, moon, and snow, neither conceals nor delimits, but is in itself coterminous with the ultimate state of reality if viewed from the contemplative gaze of casting off body-mind.

In addition, Dôgen frequently mentions in Zuimonki and other writings that his deeply personal experience of transiency through the early loss of his parents was a crucial emotional factor in his resolve (hosshin) for enlightenment or the awakening of the Dharma-seeking mind. Although enlightenment lies beyond emotionalism, the inspiration to seek attainment is founded on a special, self-surpassing emotion: the drive and desire to overcome ignorance and attachment because of an awareness of impermanence. Furthermore, Dôgen stresses that language and symbols should be used positively and constructively as revelatory of the absolute. He contrasts his approach with the problematic Zen view stressed in some approaches to the use of the kôan, particularly Ta-hui's kanna-zen, i.e., that speech is an obstacle or barrier to realization that must be abandoned. As he writes in a waka on the topic of "No reliance on words and letters" (furvû monji): "Not limited/By language/[the Dharma] is ceaselessly expressed:/So. too, the way of letters/Can display but not exhaust it."<sup>16</sup>

# B. The Elements of Aesthetics

Thus, a connection between Dôgen and aesthetics can be established in his approach to Zen theory and practice, which seeks to overcome the distinction between absolute and relative by concretizing the former in the latter. That is, Dôgen uncompromisingly situates the "absolute" in the "relative" world of an emotional response to ephemeral phenomena evoked through language. The function of emotions, forms, and language in disclosing the absolute of impermanence-Buddha-nature is conveyed in the following waka by the symbolism of the term *tsuyu* ("dewdrops," also suggesting "tears"):<sup>17</sup>

Asahi matsu	Dewdrops on a blade of grass,
Kusuba no tsuyu no	Having so little time
Hodonaki ni	Before the sun rises;
Isogina tachi so	Let not the autumn wind
Nobe no akikaze.	Blow so quickly on the field.

The dew, a central image in both the Buddhist and poetic traditions, epitomizes the fleeting quality of all things as manifestations of the universal structure of life-death or arising-desistance. Dôgen's aim in expressing the metaphysical understanding of impermanence is to sustain the implicit moral message. Dôgen chides the wind for causing the evaporation of the dew in order to counsel disciples to neither resist nor waste time that flows at an ever-quickening pace. People, who are subject to the same laws that govern the dew, must seize the opportunity to take advantage of the seemingly brief but experientially complete here-and-now moments that recur in the inevitable movement from life to death. But moral practice and metaphysical insight are based on an aesthetic sensitivity to the precariousness and vulnerability of natural phenomena. Dôgen's poem recalls Chômei's introduction to the Hôjôki: "Which will be the first to go, the master or his dwelling? One might just as well ask this of the dew on the morning glory. The dew may fall and the flower remain--remain, only to be withered by the morning sun. The flower may fade before the dew evaporates, but though it does not evaporate, it waits not the evening."<sup>18</sup> An emotional identification with the plight of ephemeral things, and consequent anguish and outrage, awakens the need for release from suffering. Enlightenment is attained as empathetic grief is transformed into a realization of the nonsubstantive basis of existence.

The poem thus expresses an aesthetic awareness that holistically encompasses an understanding of time and nature in a transcendental experience of nonsubstantial reality. The verse indicates that the religious vision incorporates a constellation of factors symbolized by the "dew," including impermanence, nature, emotions, symbolism, and illusion. Dewdrops, a conventional epithet for autumn, represent the transient, impermanent foundation of nature reflected in the changing of the seasons. As Kenkô writes, "If man were never to fade away like the dews of Adashino, never to vanish like the smoke over Toribeyama, but lingered on forever in the world, how things would lose their power to move us! The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty."<sup>19</sup> The multiple implications of *tsuyu* also highlight the importance of poetic symbolism and wordplay in portraying transcendent levels of awareness. Finally, dew represents the *illusory* status of the "floating world." Like dreams, mirages, bubbles, etc., dew is a symbol of the relativity of illusion and truth based on the nonsubstantive or radically impermanent ground of existence. Kenkô again illustrates this theme by writing, "The world is a place of such uncertainty and change that what we imagine we see before our eyes really does not exist....External things are all illusions."20

The crucial role of language in the paradoxical interplay of absolute and relative is expressed in Dôgen's waka entitled, "A special transmission outside the scriptures" (*kyôge betsuden*). Here, Dôgen cites a traditional Zen motto associated with the position on language attributed to Chinese masters Te-shan and Ta-hui that he elsewhere refutes. According to Dôgen's critique, the Ta-hui approach sees enlightenment as outside the world of conceptual discourse, and it uses absurd utterances in kôan cases to create an impasse with language and thought that requires a breakthrough to a nonconceptual and nondiscursive understanding. Ta-hui's standpoint fosters subtle dichotomies between language and Dharma, thought and attainment, and thus the absolute and relative. Dôgen's verse uses a variety of wordplay to reinterpret the motto so that it suggests not a duality but a profound and paradoxical inseparability or creative tension between these realms:<sup>21</sup>

Kyôge	e betsuden	A special transmission outside the teaching
Takay Kaki r	o no mo eyosenu rowa ni no tsukubeki naraba koso.	The Dharma, like an oyster Washed atop a high cliff: Even waves crashing against The reefy coast, like words May reach but cannot wash it away.

On first reading, the poem seems to support the conventional Zen view Dôgen is known to criticize. The "Dharma" (nori) resides on a lofty "peak" (takayowa) above and aloof from the controversy and disputation of the world of discourse, symbolized by the "crashing waves" (nami) of the "reefy [Echizen] coast" (araiso). The Dharma is located "outside the scriptures" and is not accessible to the words of the sutras and recorded sayings. However, the full meaning of the waka revolves around the use of pivot-words (kakekotoba) and a relational word (engo) whose connotations are so complex and interwoven that they cannot be easily translated. The pivot-words involve the phrase kaki mo tsukubeki, which has at least three implications. First, kaki can mean "oyster," which implies that the Dharma is not a remote entity opposed to the waves but finds its place beyond the water precisely because of their perpetual motion. This image plays off the traditional Mahayana analogy of ocean and waves representing universality (absolute) and particularity (relative) respectively. Thus, the oyster has been cast out of the universal background by the movement of a particular wave. but must return to its source for sustenance.

In addition, *kaki* means "writing," suggesting the total phenomenon of language and communication (*kotoba*), modified by the verb *tsukubeki*, which itself is a pivot-word meaning both "must reach" and "must exhaust." The twofold significance of the phrase, "language must reach/must exhaust," heightens the importance of the role of words and accentuates the creative tension between language and Dharma. The Dharma must be expressed. It cannot escape the necessity of discourse, yet the affirmation of the role of language contains the admonition not to use up or exhaust the Dharma through unedifying discussion. The effect of this phrase is enhanced by the relational word, *nori*, which means "seaweed" in addition to Dharma. Seaweed makes an association with waves and, like *kaki* as oyster, highlights the intimate connection between the conceptual discourse of scripture and the realization of Dharma.

In contrast to the Zen view which seems to regard verbal communication as unnecessary or inherently misleading, Dôgen does not reject or seek to abandon language. Rather, he discloses the genuine and multiple implications harbored by discourse though not generally understood or acknowledged. In a sense, this has been the aim of the long history of Chinese Zen poetry which "draws the [unenlightened] reader into the standpoint of casting off body-mind that surpasses conventional knowledge and understanding."<sup>22</sup> But, Dôgen seems more emphatic in viewing language as an inexhaustible reservoir of meaningful ambiguities at once embedded in yet concealed by the words of everyday discourse. He rereads the Zen motto,

kyôge betsuden, to be a sign that verbal expression is a creative resource which reflects and enhances the multifaceted perspectives of realization. In so doing, Dôgen draws inspiration not only from Chinese Zen but from the techniques of the Japanese poetic tradition. These include wordplay, neologism, lyricism, and recasting traditional expressions, all used in his poetic and philosophical writings. The poetic conceit plumbs the depths of discourse from the standpoint of a spiritualized aesthetic intentionality. In a similar vein commenting on the creative process of poetry composition in "Maigetsushô," Fujiwara Teika maintains that "the poetic masterpiece must have...a profundity and sublimity of mind and creativity of expression allowing an eminently graceful poetic configuration to emerge with an aesthetic plenitude that overflows [or is beyond] words (kotoba no hoka made *amareru*).<sup>"23</sup> The poetic ideal of aesthetic plenitude or overtones (*yojô*) "compressing many meanings into a single word"<sup>24</sup> is comparable to Dôgen's view that language serves as an invaluable tool in navigating the paradoxical path linking oyster and wave, cliff and ocean, seaweed and Dharma, as well as the absolute and relative aspects of the religio-aesthetic quest.

Dôgen's poetry also shows the importance of an immediate and holistic experience of natural forms for religious attainment. The verse entitled, "True seeing received at birth," for example, identifies the inner recesses of mountain pathways with Buddhist enlightenment through a pun connecting the isolated retreat or mountain village (*sato*) and sudden awakening (*satori*). The headnote is taken from a passage of the *Lotus Sutra* (chapter 19) concerning the primordial Buddha-nature or original face. Here, one's absolute nature is achieved through a journey into the mountains, which has a resonance with the theme of mountain solitude and the valorization of nature in the "grass-hut literature" (*sôan no bungaku*) of Saigyô and Chômei.<sup>25</sup>

Fubo shoshô no manako True seeing received at birth

Seeking the Way
Amid the deepest mountain paths,
The retreat I find
None other than my
Original abode: satori!

The fulfillment of the travel motif is expressed in that the place found at the end of the journey is none other than the initial home, thus suggesting a unity of original and acquired enlightenment. The pivot-word *miyako* literally means "capital," or, specifically, Kyoto, and implies the comfort and satisfaction of one's true home. The authentic abode is located far from the actual Kyoto, yet is not different than the essential nature of the capital. When the syllables are pronounced separately as *mi ya ko*, however, the phrase signifies "body and child." This wordplay elaborates on the title by implying that genuine insight received as a potentiality at birth is not realized until the body develops, a progression which does not lead beyond or out of but is precisely a return to the initial home. *Mi* (body) also associates with *miyama* or "deep mountains," indicating that the mountains have become the new body which is fundamentally the same as the original home despite the length of the journey. Finally, *sato* as "abode" or village evokes a spontaneous awakening to the knowledge always already present, though not previously attained, of the inseparability of the potentiality and actuality of enlightenment, or the oneness of practice and realization.

The significance of emotions in Dôgen's thought is highlighted by the following waka on the role of grief and sorrow in response to natural change as a source of religious inspiration:<sup>26</sup>

Kokoro naki	Even plants and trees,
Kusaki mo kyô wa	Which have no heart,
Shibomu nari	Wither with the passing days;
Me ni mitaru hito	Beholding this,
Ure-e zarameya.	Can anyone help but feel chagrin?

As all beings are interrelated by virtue of the transiency which invariably undercuts their apparent stability, humans necessarily respond to the demise of plants and trees "which have no heart" (kokoro naki). The latter phrase is used in Court poetry to denote a priest with a subdued heart, or one who has conquered any attachment to feelings through meditation. In this case, the phrase carries at least a double message. The plants can be considered to lack an awareness of their plight due to either a subhuman absence of consciousness or a symbolic suprahuman transcendence of sorrowful emotions based on an innate acceptance of the natural situation. At the same time, the priest implicitly referred to by the phrase cannot avoid feeling chagrin (ure-e) despite his apparent state of liberation. Or. rather, the aesthetic perception--or the awakening of an aesthetically-attuned heart-dislodges an attachment to something objective and apart from one's own existence by highlighting its subjective pervasiveness. Therefore, the refined emotion of sorrow is more conducive than strict detachment to exploring the existential depths of enlightenment.

Dôgen's approach to evoking symbolically the ephemeral quality of man and nature has been compared by Honda Giken to the following Teika poem, an allusive variation of an earlier waka by Tomonori:<sup>27</sup>

Ika ni shite	What reason is there
Shizugokoro naku	That these cherry petals fluttering
Chiru hana no	With unsettled heart
Nodokeki haru no	Should symbolize the essential color
Iro to miyu ran.	Of the soft tranquility of spring?

Honda acknowledges the differences between Teika, the Court poet and critic, and Dôgen, the seeker of the Way. By stressing Teika's commitment to composing waka based on a contemplative realization infused "with-mind" (ushin or kokoro ari) as the basis of yûgen (profound mystery), he argues that both authors penetrate to the fundamental or primordial (rakei, lit. naked or uncovered) level of nature. The understanding of nature and impermanence as rakei is prior to conceptualization and devoid of fabrication--it is an awareness of stark, meaningless reality just as it is (arinomama).<sup>28</sup> On the one hand, the two waka are nearly opposite in that Dôgen sees plants as devoid of feeling, while Teika projects onto the cherry blossoms the all-toohuman sense of a restless heart. Yet, each poem points to the intimate connection and empathetic sensitivity of man in communion with the phenomena of nature, as well as the interrelated feelings of instability and tranquility or grief and transcendence. An aesthetic response to forms through contemplation is essential to the attainment of authentic subjectivity or a creative and self-illuminating awareness that is immersed in nature yet beyond the vacillations of personal emotions.

II. Contemplative View of Nature and Impermanence

# A. Karaki's Analysis

Several scholars in addition to Honda have suggested that the attainment of a contemplative view-of-nature (*shizen-kanshô*) and view-of-impermanence (*mujô-kanshô*) on a primordial and unencumbered level of holistic subjectivity is the central intellectual and cultural theme linking Dôgen's nondualistic philosophy and Japanese aesthetics. The connections between Dôgen and the literary tradition that have been explored by leading philosophers, cultural historians, literary critics, and Dôgen specialists<sup>29</sup> particularly apply to the yûgen poetry of Teika, Saigyô, and Chômei. The

yûgen poets and critics articulate a pure description of nature as a contemplative field fully coterminous with the realization of mind that is quite similar to Dôgen's doctrines of whole-being Buddha-nature (shitsuubusshô) and this very mind itself is Buddha (sokushin-zebutsu). Yûgen expression "involves the bracketing of a poet's individual impressions and drawing near to the very essence of the subject," based on Tendai shikan (cessation-contemplation) meditation.<sup>30</sup> In addition, Dôgen's celebration of the Echizen landscape as a source of preaching the Dharma (i.e., sansuikyô, "mountains and rivers sutras") is comparable to the reclusive "grass-hut" or "mountain retreat" (yamazato) literature that sees mountain solitude as a redemptive and purifying act.<sup>31</sup>

How far do the parallels go? The most systematic and comprehensive analysis of Dôgen in light of the literary tradition is presented by Karaki Junzô in the monograph, Mujô, and other works. Karaki stresses Dôgen's surpassing of aesthetics, and his approach stands in contrast to many commentators who emphasize underlying affinities between Dôgen and On the one hand, Karaki is skeptical of the literary value of literature. Dôgen's poetry, in opposition to Nakamura Hajime, for example, who argues that "Dôgen was a great poet....his [waka] vibrate with warm sympathy for the beauties of nature."<sup>32</sup> More significantly, Karaki maintains that Dôgen's "metaphysics of impermanence" (mujô no keijijôgaku) goes beyond the influences absorbed from literary expressions of transiency and nature. He argues that Dôgen's realization of mujô-kanshô, or clear observation and contemplation of impermanence-as-non-self as the thoroughly nonsubstantive ground for all manifestations of ephemeral phenomena and sensations, supersedes the sentimentality and attachment conveyed in Court literature. Nishida Masayoshi, however, sees Dôgen's "literary critique of literature" (bungei futei no bungei)<sup>33</sup> as respresenting a healthy convergence of traditions that constitutes a vital warning against the decline of both religion and literature when the fields unreflectively intermingle with one another. Karaki's view also stands in contrast to several critics who stress Dôgen's strong influence on Japanese literary giants. These include Nishio Minoru's account of the conceptual link between Dôgen's notion of genjôkôan and Zeami's interpretation of yûgen, and Nakamura Sôichi's assessment of Dôgen's impact on Ryôkan's poetic commentaries on the Shôbôgenzô.

Karaki presents Dôgen's view-of-impermanence in the context of a sustained analysis of a line of progression in the understanding of the meaning of transiency expressed throughout the history of Japanese religious and literary works. He traces several stages in the development of viewing-

impermanence (mujô-kan) based on how the human sees itself in relation to the fleeting aspect of objects. The term aware (or mono no aware), stressed in Genji monogatari and interpreted more fully by Motoori Norinaga centuries later, is often considered the most typically Japanese attitude. Aware means feeling a sense of sympathetic poignancy or pathos as people and events pass by and fade ever so quickly. But Karaki historically frames the expression of aware by analyzing prior and subsequent approaches to impermanence. He argues that the initial literary response was represented by the term hakanashi, fragility or frailty based on the gap created between external things moving too swiftly and one's inner feeling that one cannot match their tempo and is frustrated by their loss. Haka, originally a time unit for planting and cutting rice, came to refer to a measurement of temporal When the negative suffix nashi was applied to haka, the term limits. suggested "past the limits" in the sense of time that has flown by or passed from view. Thus, hakanashi in early literature implied a pace of time with which the individual subject could hardly keep up, creating feelings of doubt, uncertainty and instability about the self. Aware then developed as a more heartfelt and refined attunement to the universality of change and loss from the standpoint of the vulnerable emotions of humans whose destiny is bound with all phenomena. Also referred to as mujô-kan (kan here means feeling and is a homophone for the kan which means contemplative view), this feeling is an exclamatory sigh (eitan) of sorrow in sensing-impermanence as an inexorable motion perpetually undercutting subject and object. Aware thus marks the transition from *hakanashi*, which naively objectifies time, to an internalized view-of-impermanence.

In Karaki's analysis, hakanashi roughly corresponds to the Manyôshû era chôka poetry including Hitomaro's verse on discovering a dead body and Okura's "Lament on the Instability of Things." Aware is expressed in Kokinshû verse and Genji monogatari. The stage of a more genuine and interior approach based on contemplating-impermanence (mujô o kanzuru) encompasses Pure Land thinkers Hônen and Shinran, reclusive priests Chômei and Kenkô, as well as Shinkokinshû and renga poets such as Shinkei and Sôgi. In this period, the feelings of fragility and poignancy are still expressed in literature and religion, though these emotions are sublimated in terms of a more transpersonal view of impermanence. Dissatisfied with the stagnancy and decline of Court society, many medieval writers and thinkers turned to Buddhist meditation as a means of transcending the shifting currents of vicissitude. Karaki maintains that among the contemplatives Kenkô comes closest to Dôgen in viewing transiency as the basis of a "selfrealizational viewing-impermanence" (jikakuteki mujô-kan). Kenkô

admonishes, for example, "In our dreamlike existence, what is there for us to accomplish? All ambitions are vain delusions....Only when you abandon everything without hesitation and turn to the Way will your mind and body, unhindered and unagitated, enjoy lasting peace."<sup>34</sup> Yasuraoka Kôsaku similarly sees a strong parallel between Dôgen and Kenkô in their common emphasis on sustained practice to attain true selfhood in relation to incessant evanescence.<sup>35</sup>

According to Karaki, the notion of fragility continues to influence Dôgen, and it is this attitude deeply rooted in the Japanese literary tradition that inspires his eloquence (yûben) in poetic and prose writings. Yet. Dôgen's metaphysical approach also clearly renounces any lingering attachment to hakanashi by declaring in the Shôbôgenzô, "You must always devote your mind to impermanence and never forget the fragility of the world and the uncertainty of human life. Do not take it that I think of the world merely as fragility. You must discipline your mind, value the Dharma, and overcome the uncertainty of life. For the sake of the Dharma, you must cast aside the uncertainty of existence."<sup>36</sup> Karaki stresses that in Dôgen's view, "Impermanence refers neither to the psychological aspect of 'fragility' (hakanashi) nor the sentiment of 'sensing-impermanence' (mujô-kan). Impermanence is, rather, the reality which encompasses self and other; it is the fundamental reality....not only a subjective[ly experienced] reality, but the one and only category."<sup>37</sup> Dôgen realizes an authentic or holistic subjectivity which overcomes the emotionalism that results in conventional attempts to adorn basic or primordial time with a linear, sequential notion that there is a set beginning (logos) and end (telos). He does not construct images of creationist, evolutionary, teleological, or progressive time that still plague Kenkô, for example. "[Dôgen] repeatedly refutes such attempts to idealize and ascribe false meaning to time," Karaki argues, "and he directly and nonobstructively faces basic time as it is. He encounters spontaneously and effortlessly time that is without beginning or end. He confronts without blinking the stark reality of the moment-to-moment destruction-generation of time. This is a barrier which must be crossed. Without penetrating this barrier, there is no realization of Zen."38

Although Karaki highlights many important aspects of Dôgen's relation to Japanese aesthetics, he seems to overlook several points that would enhance this critical comparison. First, Karaki's conclusions sacrifice the neutrality maintained by Nishida Masayoshi, Yasuraoka and others, who distinguish Dôgen's meditative (*zazenteki*) or liberation-oriented (*gedatsuteki*) approach to impermanence from Kenkô's literary appreciation of the irregular and incomplete which shows that "the most precious thing in life is

its uncertainty." Also, in focusing his comparison on Kenkô, Karaki does not stress the role of subjective attainment through contemplating-impermanence reached in yûgen poetry. Teika asserts, for example, that the mode of composition with-mind (ushin) is one of and yet the basis for all other styles of poetry; therefore, the transpersonal experience of ushin is the foundation of yûgen.<sup>39</sup> Yûgen poets like Teika are not as clear philosophically as Dôgen about the structure of the holistic moment. But their descriptive realism removes almost all traces of personal sentiment in reacting to transient phenomena, and the desolation they often express is a self-surpassing state of mind based on total immersion with the unity of nature and time.<sup>40</sup>

In addition, Karaki tends to criticize Dôgen's lyricism and eloquence as a holdover from the Court tradition without fully assessing the productive and integral role lyricism plays in Dôgen's religious thought. Dôgen's life and writings clearly show that impermanence must be viewed from a variety of perspectives based on the fundamental paradoxicality of absolute and relative, and didacticism and lyricism. Transiency can be interpreted either "negatively" as a source of suffering, grief, despair, and desolation, or "positively" as a celebration of the promise of renewal and symbol of awakening. Although transiency ultimately discloses nonsubstantiality, the variety of subjective attitudes may serve as "illusion surpassing illusion"<sup>41</sup> in the quest for a transcendental standpoint.

#### B. "The Final Journey"

The productive role that emotions, or the authentic subjective response to ephemeral natural forms, plays in the religious quest is expressed in two waka dealing with Dôgen's final journey to Kyoto. These poems, which offer a rare glimpse of Dôgen's attitudes near the end of his life, are perhaps the most moving verses in his Japanese collection. The diction and syntax of the first poem plays off the traditional poetic theme of travel and the imagery of evanescence to convey Dôgen's dual sense of exhiliration and anxiety, and expectation and frailty during the trip:<sup>42</sup>

Go-jôraku no sono hi go-shôka kore ari shô ni iwaku

The [final] journey to Kyoto

Kusa no ha ni	Like a blade of grass,
Kadodeseru mi no	My frail body
Kinobe yama	Treading the path to Kyoto,
Kumo ni oka aru	Seeming to wander
Kokochi koso sure.	Amid the cloudy mist on Kinobe pass.

Kusa no ha ("a blade of grass") is a multidimensional image. First, it connotes travel, a theme used generally in Court poetry to suggest someone's feeling of either dismay or relief in leaving Kyoto but here ironically expresses uneasiness about an imminent return. On a symbolic level, the image indicates the fragility and vulnerability that undercut the existence of each and every being. It also recalls several passages in the *Shôbôgenzô* in which Dôgen asserts the identity of the "radiance of a hundred blades of grass" with the true nature of reality, or maintains that "a single blade of grass and a single tree are both the body-mind of all Buddhas."<sup>43</sup> Kusa no ha therefore expresses a convergence of departure and return, feeling and detachment, as well as particularity and frailty, with the universal nonsubstantiality of phenomena.

Another important image in the poem involves the word oka, which literally means "hill" and makes an association with Kinobe yama ("Kinobe pass" located midway between Eiheiji and Kyoto). The syllable ka (questioning) also conveys Dôgen's deep uncertainty about, yet fleeting moment of liberation from, his current medical condition as his spirit seems to float and feels lost in the clouds. Dôgen at once transcends his physical problems and realizes he can never be free from the travails of impermanence. The alliteration of k's at the beginning of each line adds a solemn or reverent undertone, while the term kokochi (a synonym for kokoro or shin) softens the sentiment, transmuting it into an expression of subjective realization. The mind appears released although the "body" (mi) is bound by suffering. Ôba Nanboku further suggests that the image of clouds recalls the Zen doctrine of enlightenment as "floating like the clouds, flowing like the waters" (unsui).<sup>44</sup> Thus, the poem represents a transformation of personal sentiment or aesthetic perception into an holistic experience of liberation.

The second verse on the final journey is based on an ambiguous reference to the viewing of the harvest moon, a traditional occasion for contemplation and the composition of poetry:<sup>45</sup>

Gyo nyûmetsu no toshi	On the eighth month/fifteenth
hachigatsu jûgoya	day [harvest] moon in the year
go-eika ni iwaku	of Dôgen's death

67

Mata minto	Just when my longing to see
Omoishi toki no	The moon over Kyoto
Aki dani mo	One last time grows deepest,
Koyoi no tsuki ni	The moon I behold this autumn night
Nerare yawa suru.	Leaves me sleepless for its beauty.

The word "moon" (*tsuki*) appears only one time in the original, so that the phrase *mata minto* (lit. "seeing again") makes it unclear to which moon Dôgen's longing refers: is it the Kyoto moon he has missed for the ten years he has been in Echizen, or the harvest moon of the following year which he realizes he may not live to see? In either case, the moon is a haunting image that is used in his other waka to represent either an irresistible attraction to beauty or holistic illumination.<sup>46</sup> Dôgen's anxiety and longing converge and collapse at the sudden understanding that the moon he hopes to see at some time in the future is none other than the one he currently beholds. The irony cannot be missed that Dôgen uses lyricism to admonish himself spiritually. He has almost neglected the message so fundamental to his Zen teaching, that the present moment should be experienced exactly for what it is without recourse to the self-created distractions of expectation and regret. The poem thus concludes with a sense of thankfulness and wonderment based on a personal experience that clarifies the philosophical meaning of time.

Seen in light of the way lyricism enhances didacticism in the waka on "the final journey," the aesthetic configuration of "Original Face" which complements its religious significance is based primarily on the multiple nuances of the adjective suzushi appearing in the final line. Suzushi can be taken to mean, as Seidensticker's translation indicates, either the physical characteristic of the brightness and coldness of the snow or a bodily sensation reacting to this external stimulus. Yet that rendering, which suggests that suzushi merely amplifies kiede (lit. "frozen") in modifying snow, represents but one level of meaning. Suzushi appears in Court poetry to imply the serene and cool outlook--encompassing both objective appearance and subjective response--generated by phenomena that are not literally cold. The term is used by Tamekane, for instance, to describe the purity and coolness of the voice of the cuckoo (hototogisu),<sup>47</sup> a synesthesia that illustrates the underlying and complex interrelatedness of personal reaction and external stimulus, body and mind, and sensation and awareness. Suzushi refers to neither just the snow nor the observer, neither the physical nor the mental. Rather, it suggests a lyricism that is rooted in yet unlimited by the forms previously portrayed in the poem.

Ôba's interpretation argues that Dôgen uses the term in a religioaesthetic way to comment on human involvement in seasonal interpenetration, or the immediate and renewable response to the perpetual rotation of four distinct yet overlapping phenomena. Thus, *suzushi* reflects upon the lyricism of the entire poem to express the primordial unity encompassing infinite diversity and the possibility for momentary change. It modifies each of the seasonal images: the vivid colors and graceful scattering of spring flowers, the sharp cry of the cuckoo at dawn or dusk, the clarity and tranquility of autumn moonlight, and the virgin purity of freshly fallen snow.<sup>48</sup>

Suzushi is not another modifier in a descriptive poem otherwise noted for being nearly devoid of adjectives. On the other hand, it does not imply a conventional feeling of a subject that reacts to an objectified stimulus. Rather suzushi refers to nature in and of itself--or nature "as it is" (arinomama) authenticated by contemplation--in such a way that subjectivity neither interferes with nor is excluded from the holistic and impersonal manifestation of each and every phenomenon. That is, the subject is symbolically removed from the setting as an independent entity to return to or particpate holistically in the cyclical unity of nature. Thus, suzushi expresses the central and consistent transcendental attitude toward the entire array of images, in which a peak moment of nature is perfectly reflected by the quality of human experience. An alternative translation, also supported by the ending word keri, which represents affirmation, reads:

Honrai no memmoku Original Face

Haru wa hana Natsu hototogisu Aki wa tsuki Fuyu yuki kiede Suzushi kari keri. In spring, the cherry blossoms, In summer, the cuckoo's song, In autumn, the moon, shining, In winter, the frozen snow: How pure and clear are the seasons!

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In Kawabata Yasunari, *Japan the Beautiful and Myself (Utsukushii Nihon to Watakushi)*, tr. E. G. Seidensticker (Tokyo, New York, San Francisco: Kôdansha, 1969), p. 76 (original Japanese on p. 6).

Dôgen's waka collection consists of over fifty poems originally included in the biography, Kenzeiki. A critical edition of six versions of Kenzeiki appears in Kawamura Kôdô, ed. Eihei kaizan Dôgen zenji gyôjô: Kenzeiki (Tokyo: Daishûkan shoten, 1975); the collection is on pp. 82-96. The 1589 manuscript is the one considered most reliable by Kawamura, and it is used as the standard text for the translations in this article. Another critical edition of the waka collection is in Ôkubo Dôshû, ed. Dôgen zenji zenshû, vol. II (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1970), pp. 411-16. The translations and interpretations used in this article are also based on the following commentaries on the collection: Ôba Nanboku, Dôgen zenji Sanshôdôei no kenkyû (Tokyo: Nakayama shobô, 1970); Ôba, Dôgen zenji waka shû shinshaku (Tokyo: Nakayama shobô, 1972); Ôyama Kôryû, Kusa no ha: Dôgen zenji waka-shû (Sôtô shû shûmusho, 1971); Sawaki Kôdô, vol. 13, in Sawaki Kôdô zenshû (Tokyo: Daihôrinskaku, 1963); Hata Egyoku, et. al., "Satori o utau: Dôgen zenji no uta," in Zen no kaze, no. 1 (1981), pp. 27-37. Ôba's second volume also surveys the traditional Sôtô commentaries, including Menzan's "Monge," Kakugan's "Sanshôdôei ryakuge," and Kasama's "Sanshôdôei-shû kôjutsu," which originally appear in Sôtô shû zensho (Tokyo: 1979), Shûgen, vol. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Kawabata, p. 13 (my translation).

<sup>3</sup> Ôba, Dôgen zenji Sanshôdôei no kenkyû, p. 231f.

<sup>4</sup> Ryôkan's waka:

Naki ato no Katami tomo kana Haru wa hana Natsu hototogisu Aki wa momijiba. In remembrance After I am gone --In spring, the cherry blossoms, In summer, the cuckoo's song, In autumn, the crimson leaves. Nakamura Hajime discusses the differences in Dôgen's and Ryôkan's verses in Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1964), pp. 356-57. Concentrating on the Shôbôgenzô, Nakamura Sôichi examines Dôgen's impact on Ryôkan's poetry in Ryôkan no ge to Shôbôgenzô (Tokyo: Seishin shobô, 1984).

 $^{5}$  There is a textual controversy surrounding this issue. Ôkubo includes in his critical edition two poems that were taken from Court anthologies, though their authenticity is disputed by Kawamura and Ôba.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Pilgrim, "The artistic way and the religio-aesthetic tradition in Japan," *Philosophy East and West*, 27/3, p. 285. See also Joseph Spae, *Japanese Religiosity* (Tokyo: Oriens Institute for Religious Research, 1971). In contrast to this view, however, Philip Yampolsky maintains, "It might not be too much of an exaggeration to say that when Zen flourishes as a teaching it has little to do with the arts and that when the teaching is in decline its association with the arts increases." In *The Zen Master Hakuin* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Charles A. Moore, ed. *The Japanese Mind: Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1967), p. 296.

<sup>8</sup> Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki, ed. Mizuno Yaoko (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1963), p. 67. For a discussion of the significance of this passage in the context of Dôgen's works see Karaki Junzô, Butsudô shûgyô no yôjin: Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1966), p. 141f. Other criticisms of literary pursuits by Dôgen appear in Zuimonki, p. 203, and in Kichijôzan Eiheiji shûryô shingi, in Dôgen zenji zenshû, vol. II.

Dôgen is not alone in being suspicious of literature. Musô Soseki, famous for his poetic and prose writings, argues that "those minds that are intoxicated by secular literature and engaged in establishing themselves as men of letters...are simply laymen with shaven heads," Quoted in D. T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove, 1960), p. 150. On the other hand, the noted literary critic Konishi Jin'ichi argues that despite Dôgen's stated intentions, a literary interpretation of the *Shôbôgenzô* is appropriate and justifiable based on the reader's response; see his *A History of Japanese Literature*, ed. Earl Miner, vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 7. <sup>9</sup> Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki, p. 113. The translation is taken from Masunaga Reihô, tr., A Primer of Sôtô Zen: A Translation of Dôgen's Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1971), p. 33.

<sup>10</sup> Many modern biographical accounts of Dôgen have been based on the *Teiho Kenzeiki*, the eighteenth century annotated version of *Kenzeiki* by Menzan Zuihô. The recent discovery of old manuscripts of *Kenzeiki*, included in Kawamura's work cited above, has challenged the authenticity and accuracy of the Menzan text on a wide range of issues, from Dôgen's aristocratic heritage, through his journeys to Mt. Hiei and Sung China, to the establishment of Eiheiji and final return to Kyoto. For a reassessment of the biographical sources and issues, see Nakeseko Shôdô, *Dôgen zenji den kenkyû* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankôkai, 1979).

This textual controversy also affects an understanding of the title, number, sequence, and phrasing of the waka collection; see Ôba, *Dôgen zenji* Sanshôdôei no kenkyû; and Kishizawa Ian, Zuishikaian zuihitsu (Tokyo: Daibôinsatsu K.K., 1960). According to Ôba, for example, "Sanshôdôei" ("Poems on the Way from Sanshô Peak") is not the authentic title, and it should be replaced by "Dôgen zenji waka-shû" ("Dôgen's Waka Collection").

<sup>11</sup> For example, the following verse inspired by a Chinese Zen poem cited in the "Keiseisanshoku" fascicle of the *Shôbôgenzô* identifies the Echizen landscape with the attributes of the Buddha (in Kawamura, p. 86):

Mine no iro	Colors of the mountains,
Tani no hibiki mo	Streams in the valleys;
Mina nagara	One in all, all in one
Waga Shakamuni no	The voice and body of
Koe to sugata to.	Our Sakyamuni Buddha.

Another waka expresses Dôgen's mixed feelings toward Kyoto (in Kawamura, p. 93):

Miyako ni wa	All last night and
Momiji shinuran	This morning still,
Okuyama no	Snow falling in the deepest mountains;
Koyoi mo kesa mo	Oh, to see the autumn leaves
Arare furi keri.	Scattering in my home.

<sup>12</sup> For the distinction between *aigo* and *kyôgen kigo* in terms of Dôgen and the literary tradition, see Honda Giken, *Nihonjin no mujôkan* (Tokyo: Nihon hôsô shuppan kyôkai, 1978), p. 167.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of the role of emotions expressed in poetry in terms of seasonal imagery and human affairs, see Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 430f.

<sup>14</sup> Kenkô Yoshida, *Tsurezuregusa*, tr. Donald Keene, *Essays in Idleness* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1981), p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> Dôgen says of *mujô-busshô*, for example, "the very impermanence of grasses and trees, thickets and forests is Buddha-nature," In *Shôbôgenzô*, 2 vols., ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972), I, pp. 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> In Kawamura, p. 88. The original: Ii suteshi/Sono koto no ha no/Hoka nareba/Fude ni mo ato o/Todome zari keri. A literal rendering would be: "Because [the Dharma] is outside of language, words are renounced, and the way of letters also leaves no trace on it." However, the translation given here is based largely on the poem's affinity to the following "Bendôwa" passage, which seems to echo Chuang Tzu: "Let [the Dharma] go and it fills your hands--it is unbound by singularity or multiplicity. Speak and it has already filled your mouth--it is not restricted by lesser or greater." In *Shôbôgenzô*, I, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> In Kawamura, p. 95.

<sup>18</sup> Kamo no Chômei, *Hôjôki*, in Donald Keene, ed. *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, vol. I (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1955), p. 198.

<sup>19</sup> Kenkô, p. 77.

20 Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>21</sup> In Kawamura, p. 87.

<sup>22</sup> Nakamura Sôichi, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> Fujiwara Teika, "Maigetsushô," Nihon kagaku taikei, vol. III, ed. Sasaki N. (Tokyo: 1935), p. 359.

<sup>24</sup> Cited in Brower and Miner, p. 269. See also Hilda Kato, "The Mumyôshô of Kamo no Chômei and its Significance in Japanese Literature," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 23/3-4 (1965), pp. 321-430.

<sup>25</sup> In Kawamura, p. 88.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

27 Honda, p. 164f. The translation of Teika (*Shûi Gusô*, xi, 355) is taken from Brower and Miner, p. 15, which also translates Tomonori's verse. Honda cites both Teika's and Tomonori's waka in his general comparison of the former with Dôgen, but he does not specifically mention any of Dôgen's poems.

<sup>28</sup> The notion of time understood on the *rakei* level is also discussed by Karaki in *Mujô* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1967). For the notion of *arinomama* see Nakamura Sôichi's modern Japanese translation of "Genjôkôan" in *Zenyaku Shôbôgenzô* (Tokyo: Seishin shobô, 1977), vol. I.

29 The major philosophical commentaries dealing with Dôgen in the Japanese context remain the early works by Watsuji Tetsurô, "Shamon Dôgen," Watsuji Tetsurô zenshû (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1977), vol. IV; Tanabe Hajime, Shôbôgenzô no tetsugaku shikan, Tanabe Hajime zenshû (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1967), vol. V. The leading discussions of Dôgen and Japanese cultural history include: Karaki, Mujô; Nakamura Hajime, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples; Nishida Masayoshi, Mujôkan no keifu (Tokyo: Ôfusha, 1970), and Nishida, Nihon bungaku no shizenkan (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1972). Some of the main studies by literary critics are: Nishio Minoru, Dôgen to Zeami (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1965); Yasuraoka Kôsaku, Chûseiteki bungaku no tankyû (Tokyo: Yûseidô, 1970); Murata Nobura, Bukkyô bigaku (Tokyo: Sankibô, 1981); and Imanari Motoaki, et. al., Shûkyô to bungaku (Tokyo: Akiyama shoten, 1977). Konishi Jin'ichi also refers to Dôgen in Michi: Chûsei no rinen (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1975). Studies by Dôgen specialists exploring the role of literature and aesthetics include: Terada Tôru, Dôgen no gengo uchû (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1974); and Nakamura Sôichi, Ryôkan no ge to Shôbôgenzô.

<sup>30</sup> Konishi, "Michi and Medieval Writings," *Principles of Classical Japanese Literature*, ed. Earl Miner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 204; for the significance of *shikan* meditation, see Konishi, "Shunzei no yûgen-fû to shikan," *Bungaku*, 20/2 (February 1950), pp. 108-16.

31 The theme of the *yamazato* as religious symbol is discussed in Ienaga Saburô, Nihon shisô ni okeru shûkyôteki shizenkan no hatten (Tokyo: Sôkansha, 1944). Ienaga's arguments are critically assessed by: Robert Bellah, "Ienaga Saburô and the Search for Meaning in Modern Japan," Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization, pp. 369-424; and William H. LaFleur, "Saigyô and the Buddhist Value of Nature," History of Religions, 13/2. (1973), pp. 93-127 and 13/3, pp. 227-48. See also Mezaki Tokue, "Aesthete Recluses During the Transition from Ancient to Medieval Japan," Principles of Classical Japanese Literature. Although Ienaga does not refer to Dôgen in the context of the yamazato ideal, an affinity beteween Dôgen and vamazato is indicated in that the largest section of Dôgen's waka collection is entitled, "Sôan no gûei" ("Impromptu hermitage poems"). Yet, there are significant differences between Dôgen and the medieval aesthete-recluses; for example, the latter often see the loneliness (sabi) of mountain solitude as a religio-aesthetic end in itself, whereas Dôgen views renunciation through nature only as a means to the realization of Dharma.

<sup>32</sup> Nakamura Hajime, p. 554. Ôkubo also praises Dôgen as a poet in *Dôgen* zenji-den no kenkyû (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1966), p. 358. Yet, Karaki and Ôyama are skeptical of Dôgen's poetry, especially in comparison with his eloquence in the *Shôbôgenzô*. Also Funetsu Yôko questions the originality and/or authenticity of some of Dôgen's waka which are similar to earlier poems in the literary tradition; see "Sanshôdôei no meishô, naritachi, seikaku," Ôtsuma kokubun, vol. 5 (1974), pp. 24-44.

<sup>33</sup> Nishida, *Mujôkan no Keifu*, p. 333.

<sup>34</sup> Kenkô, p. 200.

<sup>35</sup> Yasuraoka, *Chûseiteki bungaku no tankyû*, pp. 112-29.

<sup>36</sup> Cited in Karaki, *Mujô*, p. 296, originally in the "Dôshin" fascicle of the *Shôbôgenzô* (included in Ôkubo's edition of the *Zenshû*, but not in the Iwanami edition).

<sup>37</sup> Karaki, pp. 283-84. Karaki's analysis tends to follow the philosophical distinction made by the Kyoto school thinkers between epistemological subjectivity (*shukan*), which presupposes a duality of subject and object, and holistic subjectivity (*shutai*) of the formless Self.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 304-5.

<sup>39</sup> Teika, p. 349.

 $^{40}$  See the philosophical discussion of yûgen poetry in Toyo and Toshihiko Izutsu, The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981).

<sup>41</sup> In the "Muchûsetsumu" fascicle of the *Shôbôgenzô* (I, p. 311), Dôgen writes: "Even though illusion is compounded with illusion (*meichû-yûmei*), you must understand that the path to attaining the Way is realized through illusion surpassing illusion (*madoi no ue no madoi*)." The latter phrase suggests the ability to see beyond deception through the deception itself, so that illusion is self-surpassing, as in the related notion of disentangling vines by means of vines (*kattô*). [See chapter 3 above.]

<sup>42</sup> In Kawamura, pp. 81-82.

<sup>43</sup> For example, see "Muchûsetsumu," *Shôbôgenzô* I, p. 310, and "Hotsumujôshin," *Shôbôgenzô* II, p. 209.

44 Ôba, Dôgen zenji waka-shû shinshaku, p. 331.

<sup>45</sup> In Kawamura, pp. 85-86.

<sup>46</sup> For example (in Kawamura, p. 92):

Ôzora ni	Contemplating the clear moon
Kokoro no tsuki o	Reflecting a mind empty as the open sky,
Nagamuru mo	Drawn by its beauty,
Yami ni mayoite	I lose myself
Iro ni medekeri.	In the shadows it casts.

<sup>47</sup> Brower and Miner, p. 359.

<sup>48</sup> Ôba, p. 110.

# FROM RICE CULTIVATION TO MIND CONTEMPLATION:

# The Meaning of Impermanence in Japanese Religion

Are we to look at cherry blossoms only in full bloom, the moon only when it is cloudless?...It does not matter how young or strong you may be, the hour of death comes sooner than you expect.

Kenkô, Tsurezuregusa<sup>1</sup>

If you cut off the limb of a plant, another one comes. So in the forest and planting cultures, there is a sense of death as not death somehow, that death is required for new life.

Joseph Campbell, The Power of Myth<sup>2</sup>

#### I. Introduction: Death and Impermanence

In his discussion of the conceptual and stylistic foundations of Japanese literature Donald Keene observes, "The Japanese were perhaps the first to discover the special pleasure of impermanence, and...believed that impermanence was a necessary element in beauty."<sup>3</sup> There are many examples of an acceptance often coupled with a celebration of impermanence in Japanese religion and literature, especially in the Heian and Kamakura periods. Perhaps the most prominent illustration is the romantic pathos of *mono no aware* (poignant sadness at the passing of things) first expressed in *Genji monogatari* and explored more fully by Tokugawa nativist Motoori Norinaga. The refined sentiment of *aware* evokes a melancholy appreciation of the "beauty in death" symbolized by the withering and fading away of

autumn hues.<sup>4</sup> Other key expressions of impermanence include the yamazato literature of Saigyô and Chômei, who enjoy the isolation and solitude of their mountain hermitages because it enables them to participate without distraction in "feeling touched by the bloom and fall of flowers";<sup>5</sup> the yûgen poetry of Shunzei and Teika which suggests an atmosphere of "profound mystery" through deceptively realistic depictions of seasonal transitions; the reflective essays of Kenkô who pronounces "The changing of the seasons is deeply moving in its every manifestation," and "The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty";6 the epic struggles and intrigue in Heike monogatari, the opening lines of which speak of "The sound of the bell of the Gion temple echoing the impermanence of all things";<sup>7</sup> and the Zen philosophy of Dôgen which maintains that "life and death are equally the manifestation of the total dynamism" of impermanence-Buddha-nature (mujô-busshô).<sup>8</sup> One of the major features of the Japanese approach to impermanence is an affirmation of death as coexistent with or even having a priority over life. This attitude is reflected in social behavior in Japan characterized by various forms of legitimizing voluntary death, including seppuku, junshi, the kamikaze ideal. and shinjû or double suicide arising from the ninjô-giri conflict, all of which exemplify the tragic heroism of the ethic Ivan Morris labels the "nobility of failure."9 The just and honorable suicide is seen as aesthetically pleasing and emotionally satisfying because it clarifies the meaning of the deceased's life and generates a sensitivity to the inevitable passing of all beings. In Japanese writing and society feelings such as sadness, grief, and melancholy become the basis for sympathy and compassion.<sup>10</sup>

Many of these instances of affirming death and impermanence, particularly in medieval literature and religion, are clearly influenced by Buddhist discipline.<sup>11</sup> Buddhism from its inception stresses the transitory or evanescent quality (Skt. anitya, J. mujô) of all phenomena as crucial to an understanding of the doctrine of anatman (nonsubstantiality of self) and the attainment of nirvana. Japanese attitudes no doubt also absorb the impact of the Chinese yin-yang cosmology and dynamic sense of naturalism. But why is the celebration and even a kind of preference or sense of priority of death so important for Japan and its heroes, for whom "death has a particular psychological significance, since it epitomizes the very sense of ... existence?"12 One explanation points to a basic tendency or predisposition in the culture itself. Kishimoto Hideo asserts, for example, "The problem as to how to face death has developed in Japan as a peculiar pattern of culture. It makes the Japanese feel that they must meet death squarely, rather than avoid it. The cultural tradition encourages them to be prepared to accept death with courage and with tranquillity....In that sense, it may well be said that for the

Japanese death is within life."<sup>13</sup> In order to determine the merit of arguing for an underlying cultural tendency giving rise to a distinctive view of impermanence, it is necessary to examine how diverse aspects of the religious tradition ranging from the most sophisticated writings of the intellectual leaders to the agrarian rites of the common folk interpret the meaning of time and death.

# II. Greatest and Littlest Traditions

In the monograph Mujô (Impermanence) and other works,<sup>14</sup> intellectual historian and literary critic Karaki Junzô seeks to demonstrate a connection between fundamental cultural attitudes and the development of refined, religio-aesthetic conceptions of impermanence. For Karaki, the peak experience of impermanence in the history of Japanese thought is portrayed by Kenkô, Dôgen, and others as a "self-realizational contemplatingimpermanence" (jikakuteki-mujôkan) in which the subject attains spiritual awakening by an immersion in the all-pervasive unity of the impermanent essence of reality. Through contemplation impermanence is recognized in its genuine and primordial or "basic" (rakei, lit. naked or unencumbered) form prior to objectification, and all emotions and attitudes concerning the flow of evanescence are emptied and overcome by attaining a supreme state of equilibrium and detachment. Karaki argues that Japanese thought underwent several stages before reaching this culminating view, including the Genji emphasis on the emotion of aware, or an attitude of sensingimpermanence (mujô-kan), which clings to a sense of regret and remorse as the human subject deeply feels the dissolution of life and love all around it. Tracing the conception of impermanence back to its origins, Karaki finds the earliest writings such as the Manvôshû expressing the notion of hakanashi, a frailty or fragility based on the gap created between external things moving too swiftly and man's inner feeling that he cannot match their tempo and is frustrated by their loss. Karaki briefly tries to show that the term hakanashi initially referred to haka, a time unit for planting and cutting rice which came to represent a measurement of temporal limits. When the negative suffix nashi was applied to haka, the word indicated "past the limits" in the sense of time that has flown by or passed from view. Thus Karaki suggests that there is a conceptual thread linking the feelings of uncertainty and instability stemming from the vicissitudes of nature experienced in pre-Buddhist rice cultivation with the refined, contemplative medieval religious and literary realization of impermanence in its essential state.

It is possible to elaborate on Karaki's analysis in order to answer our leading question concerning the reasons for the widespread affirmation of impermanence in Japanese thought. The thesis would be that an awareness of the inevitability of change as well as the unavoidability of death and its integration with life was naively implicit in the original rice culture, and through Buddhist influence this attitude was eventually developed into a thoroughly subjective realization of spiritual freedom. This argument will be critically assessed below, especially in regard to the role of the understanding of death and dying in agrarian rituals in comparison with Buddhist contemplation. However, to explore the argument more fully in terms of Western methodology, one way of restating it is to say that in Japanese religion there always has been a strong, unsevered connection between what anthropologist Robert Redfield has labelled the "little tradition" and the "great tradition."<sup>15</sup> Historical analysis of some religions tends to stress the "filtering down" or absorption of the abstract, universalistic teachings of the great tradition into the immediate, particularistic worldview of the thereby syncretized little tradition. But according to Karaki's study it appears that in Japan the contemplative view of impermanence emerged in the great tradition or "high culture" of the monasteries, hermitages, and court largely because of a "filtering up" and transmutation of beliefs from the popular or folk tradition of the rice paddies.<sup>16</sup>

Such a thesis could be stated even more emphatically by stressing that there has been a strong influence in Japanese religion from the "littlest of the little tradition" continuously exerted though ultimately surpassed in the "greatest of the great tradition." Rice-paddy practices constitute the littlest tradition in that they are the oldest surviving form of prehistoric and preliterate rites based on a view of the sacred intimately related to economic production and life-style. The rice field deities are generally unnamed, or referred to simply as Ta-no-kami (or some variation).<sup>17</sup> The particular village rites are nearly indistinguishable from their social function yet are not officially incorporated into--although they help to create the foundation for-the institution and mythology of the prevailing little tradition, Shinto. The contemplative approach to impermanence, especially of the reclusive poets and monastic thinkers, represents the greatest tradition because it is based on a spiritual discipline of meditation grounded in the capacity of the allinclusive unity of mind to transcend any social convention or ideological restrictions. In expressing the ideal of sabi (solitude or desolation connected with the pursuit of tonsei, escaping the world) or of tôdatsu (liberation based on shukke or Buddhist renunciation),<sup>18</sup> the contemplative view reflects a

radical individualism that even seeks emancipation from the dominant late Heian/early Kamakura great tradition, Tendai Buddhism.<sup>19</sup>

However, the use of the Redfield terminology in regard to Japanese religion is somewhat limited for several reasons. First, the basic distinction between great and little may imply that there are two separate and unrelated traditions, or that folk religion passively receives input from the high culture. Yet the history of the encounter between Buddhism and Shinto in Japan is largely characterized by examples of syncretism in both the great and the little traditions.<sup>20</sup> The assimilative doctrines of shinbutsu-shugô and honjisuijaku, the ascetic and healing practices of the hijiri and yamabushi or shugendô movements, the popular devotions of Amidism and Maitreva worship, and the eclectic elements of many of the "new religions" demonstrate the profound interaction and overlapping concerns of the indigenous cult and foreign doctrine. At the same time, the multitiered nature of the various traditions as previously indicated requires that the terms "great" and "little" be seen as relative and changing rather than fixed That is, some aspects of Buddhist practice, including the and static. magicoreligious, shamanistic, and theurgical elements largely derived from local folk beliefs and incorporated into esoteric Shingon and Tendai, may belong more to the little tradition than an advanced Shinto religious system that seeks a consistent liturgy and institutional structure. For example, medieval Sôtô Zen practice contained many aspects of shugendô-like mountain observances, including worship of Mount Hakusan, that seem quite distanced from Dôgen's puritanical monasticism.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, there appear to be various gradations within the little tradition. First, it is possible to distinguish between "shrine Shinto" as an explicitly religious entity and creed and "folk Shinto" as an amalgam of animistic rituals,<sup>22</sup> although both may appear superstitious and lacking in organization from the standpoint of Buddhist scholasticism. Even beyond that, a distinction can be made between folk Shinto and "folk religion" (minkan shinkô), which "has neither doctrines nor organization....[but] is, rather, something transmitted as a matter of custom among people bound together by community or kinship ties...and [which] puts greatest emphasis not on ideas but rituals."<sup>23</sup> But folk religion itself is a "multilayered phenomenon," and there seems to be a further distinction between quasiinstitutionalized worship of the rice deity Inari, which has a liturgical center in Fushimi but shrines located throughout the countryside and even in major urban settings, and the village round of rice planting and harvest rituals performed for unnamed gods "in conjunction with the actual processes of production."24

Another problem with Redfield's terminology is that it cannot help but convey a hierarchical judgment, and this tendency may be aggravated by the use of the "elevator" (that is, vertical) metaphor of the filtering up and down of the great and little traditions in order to solve the issue of the mutuality and relativity of their interconnection. On what basis can a claim of superiority be presupposed? From the standpoint of organization and doctrinal sophistication of course Buddhism takes priority, yet Shinto and folk religion may elicit greater group participation and identification. In addition to each side having its special strengths, the syncretistic character of Japanese religions indicates that the great and little traditions both seek to assimilate some complementary features from the other, and they are invariably enhanced and diminished by this process. The little tradition tries to legitimate and conceptualize its rites which may become dissociated from their communitas base through contact with the high culture, and the great tradition longs for a popularization and concretization of its abstract ideals that may be compromised by an appeal to folk believers. The impact of folk religion or the littlest tradition on the overall religious climate of Japan appears to be stronger and more enduring than in many other cultures. especially those that have experienced an encounter between Christian doctrines and pre-Christian practices. American folk religion, for example, has been characterized as "involv[ing] an implicit tension...a dialectic between two opposed forces which those who are caught between them attempt to reconcile."<sup>25</sup> It seems that in Japan, however, this "implicit dialectical tension" does not refer one-sidedly to the little tradition alone, but applies as well to the great tradition which has continually been "adopted into the frame of this folk religion."<sup>26</sup> Because of the influence it continues to have, the folk tradition, according to Alicia Matsunaga, is able to maintain its "development and endurance in the modern world. For if the early Japanese faith had been merely a primitive religion, it would have disappeared when Japan advanced from an agrarian country into a highly developed industrial nation."<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, it may be appropriate to replace the elevator metaphor, which has the virtue of highlighting the dynamic interplay between traditions, with a horizontal interpretive model, such as a chess match. The "chess metaphor" presupposes two equally established and significant contestants vying to strengthen their positions by outwitting the rival, yet playing to a perpetual stalemate (that is, continuing to compete without the need for a definitive winner). In a game of chess, each of the opponents is willing to sacrifice its pawns or lesser interests in order to hold onto the king which is the basis of its survival and chances for winning. The great and little traditions can make concessions out of self-interest in order to protect their

ultimate status, but to avoid losing their identity they can never violate or abandon certain fundamental principles at the heart of their vitality. In the match, Buddhism and folk religion exert a kind of magnetic pull on one another, a simultaneous attraction and repulsion that causes a shifting or realignment of their respective standpoints as they both strive for accommodation and independence. The fundamental principles of pre-Buddhist folk religion that cannot be abandoned seem to be natural affirmation and an acceptance of the objective reality of nature spirits. Although there is an intuitive awareness of the beauty and deification of nature suggesting subjectivity at the root of the littlest tradition, folk religion presupposes and celebrates the existence of deities as objects of worship over and beyond the merely human realm. The basic principles of Buddhism are the goal of attaining enlightenment and a negation or denial of the phenomenal world viewed as a relative and evanescent projection that is conditioned by a deluded mind which must realize the truth that the "triple world is [inseparable from the One] Mind-only." Of its two principles folk religion is more willing to abandon objectivism, as seen in the assimilative doctrine honji-suijaku in which the localized tutelary, mythical, and natural kami are considered trace manifestations of the original, universal essence of the Dharmakaya. Similarly, Buddhism concedes and transforms its attitude of life-negation to world affirmation in doctrines such as Kûkai's "attaining the buddha in this very body" (sokushin-jôbutsu) and the Tendai "true form of all dharmas" (shohô jissô). As Nakamura Hajime argues, "On the Asian continent, the word for enlightenment meant the ultimate comprehension of what is beyond the phenomenal world, whereas in Japan the same word was brought down to refer to understanding things within the phenomenal world. In this way, the characteristic feature of Tendai Buddhism in Japan consists in emphasis upon things [especially natural objects] rather than principles."28

With regard to the issue of impermanence, Karaki shows that an understanding of the high culture's view of contemplation depends upon seeing its roots in the rice culture's rites of transplantation. He argues that there is a line of progression from the latter's naive realism culminating in a transmuted form of Buddhist idealism which valorizes the phenomenal world. Karaki highlights the common concern of the great and little traditions with the evanescence of life seen in natural changes and seasonal shifts. However, his analysis tends to overlook a fundamental difference or contradiction in the respective approaches to death that must be taken into account in an evaluation of the Japanese notion of impermanence. All forms of the little tradition, from mythological Shinto to folk religion, stress the importance of fertility and growth accompanied by a denial of death. Death is negated by

the little tradition as a form of contamination or pollution whereas for Buddhism the inevitability and unpredictability of death and dying is firmly accepted. As Morris points out, despite the "remarkable absence of odium theologicum between Shintoism and the advanced continental religion...one could hardly imagine two more different approaches. Buddhism, with its stress on the sorrows of the earthly condition, its rejection of transitory pleasures, its preoccupation with decay and death, and its offer of release by retirement from the world and a modification of the human consciousness, would appear in many ways to be the very antithesis of Shintoism, whose central themes are joyful acceptance of the natural world and gratitude for its bounty, coupled with a horror of illness and death, which are regarded as the source of all pollution."<sup>29</sup> How then can a direct connection be established between the greatest and littlest traditions which are polarized by antithetical conceptions of death and dying? Is there a way of resolving this contradiction concerning death within the larger context of the issue of impermanence? The next section of this article analyzes the views of death and impermanence in mind contemplation and rice cultivation. The concluding section offers some methodological observations on evaluating the connection between traditions concerning death. It suggests amplifying Karaki's approach, which focuses on the relation between subjectivity and objectivity, through a discussion of the roles of affirmation and negation in Buddhist thought and folk religion.

# III. Mind and Rice

# A. Mind Contemplation

Karaki argues that tracing the development of religion and literature shows that the peak view of impermanence of the high culture derives in part from a sensitivity to the transiency of nature and the passing of the seasons in the rice tradition. According to Karaki, the major figures at the culmination of the contemplative view are Kenkô and Dôgen because they determinedly seek an awakening through Buddhist discipline. That is, Kenkô and Dôgen do not simply observe or respond to impermanence with regret; nor do they use their understanding as the basis of an exclamatory (*eitanteki*) literary expression, however heartfelt or eloquent ( $y\hat{u}benteki$ ). Rather, each grasps the genuine significance of the meaning of change as central to the attainment of self-realization. In spite of the seeming irreverence of the title and many of the comments of *Tsurezuregusa* Kenkô writes, "In our dreamlike existence, what is there for us to accomplish? All ambitions are vain

delusions....Only when you abandon everything without hesitation and turn to the Way will your mind and body, unhindered and unagitated, enjoy lasting peace."<sup>30</sup> Yet Karaki considers that Dôgen's more philosophical awakening surpasses Kenkô because the Zen master develops a "metaphysics of impermanence" (mujô no keijijôgaku) that fully captures the bottomless ground of basic time. Dôgen frequently uses the kinds of eloquent expression to depict the flux of time that are indicative of the sensingimpermanence standpoint, such as "the brevity of dew," "meeting death at any moment," or "time passes swiftly like an arrow." But Dôgen fully penetrates to basic time of the moment-to-moment arising-desistance of impermanence which "clearly reflects nothingness and meaninglessness. Impermanence is the stark fact or fundamental reality completely devoid of any relation to the feeling of exclamation or to human emotion."<sup>31</sup> However, Karaki's study could have included two other categories of intellectual seekers, the vamazato recluses Saigyô and Chômei and the yûgen poets Shunzei and Teika, who also fulfill the contemplative approach to impermanence. Although primarily literary figures, they see their craft as a path or "way" (dô or michi) of spiritual attainment based on mental and physical training leading to an awareness of time and nature in terms of a new "depth" (fukami).<sup>32</sup>

The hallmark of the contemplative approach is the use of some method of meditation, such as Tendai shikan or cessation-contemplation (especially in Shunzei), zazen (Dôgen), or nembutsu (Chômei), to achieve a oneness of self and other, subject and object from the standpoint of the holistic subjectivity of an authenticated or purified mind (ushin or kokoro). According to Teika, for example, the creativity of the mind actively experiencing time and nature determines the value of poetic composition. An inauthentic mind vacillating in delusion and confusion as to its intentions produces only deficient verse. But the inner equilibrium and tranquility of the authentic mind gives rise to a verbal manifestation or language (kotoba) that perfectly reflects its serene composure. In that case, the "kokoro and kotoba function harmoniously like the right and left wings of a bird."<sup>33</sup> In a similar vein Dôgen distinguishes between two levels of subjectivity: the inauthentic mind deluded by a sense of individuality and the holistic or universal mind inseparable from each and every phenomenal manifestation. In his interpretation of such doctrines as sangai yuishin ("triple world is mindonly"), sokushin zebutsu ("this very mind itself is Buddha") and shinjingakudô ("learning the Way through body-mind"), Dôgen argues that the universal mind is not an independent possession but is indistinguishable from "walls, fences, tiles, and stones," "mountains, rivers, and earth," or "sun, moon, and sky." The attainment of holistic subjectivity is a transcendental awareness in

which the observer of transiency casts off its status as spectator and becomes fully immersed in the inalterable unfolding of all aspects of impermanent reality.

Holistic subjectivity does not allow any gap between mind and reality, for nature is no longer seen as an objective realm but a "nature-'field' [which] assumes the significance of an externalized form of [one's] inner 'field' of contemplative awareness, in which he is to encounter his own inner self."<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, it is possible to make a provisional distinction between the "subjective" and "objective" components of the universal mind embracing the nature-field. The objective level involves perceiving and describing the impermanence of nature "just as it is in itself" (arinomama) or in its basic state without imposing any personal feeling or attitude upon it. Yûgen poetry is known for its pure and simple nature-description which "eliminated the distance between poetic object or topic and poet, rejecting superficial psychological capturing of a subject."<sup>35</sup> The description of nature in  $y\hat{u}gen$ poetics is at times so simple and direct that it appears to border on realism, as if striving for a vivid and realistic presentation of intriguing aspects of nature experienced by a distant subject. Yet the intended effect is nearly opposite to realism in that nature depicted in its primordial state completely mirrors the realization of authentic subjectivity. "The contemplative expressive approach involves the bracketing of a poet's individual impressions and drawing near to the very essence of the subject. Once the essence has been regained, the poet will recommence grasping forms manifested on a more superficial level of awareness."<sup>36</sup> This manner of writing is fundamentally paradoxical because the less it contains any trace of subjectivity while approximating realism on the surface level the more profound is the degree of contemplative awareness it expresses. Α concluding line used in several noted waka by Teika, Saigyô, and others is aki no yûgure ("autumn dusk descends")<sup>37</sup> which symbolically conveys the ephemerality and insubstantiality of the moment of daily and seasonal Another poetic example of pure nature-description evoking transition. evanescence yet devoid of any reference to personal response is Dôgen's Chinese verse: "Every morning the sun rises in the east/Every night the moon descends in the west/Clouds gathering over the foggy peaks/Rain passes through the surrounding hills and plains."38 In a more conceptual way Kenkô characterizes the basis of change as a natural, inevitable "impetus or budding from underneath" (shita yori kizashi-dazuru ni taezushite) propelling events to transpire rapidly and perpetually: "It is not that when spring draws to a close it becomes summer, or that when summer ends the autumn comes; spring itself urges the summer to show itself;...The impetus for this change being

provided from underneath, the process of shifting from one to the next occurs extremely fast."<sup>39</sup> Here Kenkô identifies a radical moment-tomoment transition in which the past (of spring) and the future (of summer) are at once fully overlapping in the present yet distinguishable and irreversible.

Thus the objective component of the contemplative approach to impermanence refers to the momentary flux of nature encompassing past. present, and future conceived of as a mirror or model perfectly reflecting and redeeming subjective experience. Since both humans and nature are bound by the law of incessant change, nature becomes the ideal symbol to represent the way the human state of mind is affected by time. That is, the sorrow of lost or unrequited love is said to resemble fading blossoms, or loneliness is felt like a chilling autumn wind. But pure nature-description indicates a transcendental move beyond the emotions of sorrow or regret which are indicative of the approach of *aware* or sensing-impermanence. From the contemplative standpoint any trace of sentimentality or resignation must be cast aside in order to realize and express a more profound subjective awareness of a fully integrated immersion in the pervasiveness of impermanence. Nature instructs humanity on the need for an acceptance of the flux through an appropriate preparation for death, which "brings the individual into unity with a larger totality; the human being is not only like the dew and blossom, but in death is united with the totality of the cosmic and natural process."<sup>40</sup> In *Hôjôki* Chômei suggests how the salvific power of nature can transform one's response to impermanence from pathos and melancholy to redemption. First he vividly describes the natural catastrophes and social disasters befalling Japanese society which cause him to understand that "(t)he flow of the river is ceaseless and its water is never the same....[People] die in the morning, they are born in the evening, like foam on the water."<sup>41</sup> Upon his renunciation of the world and residence in a tiny, temporary mountain hermitage, Chômei's contemplative gaze turns to the passing of the seasons: "In the summer I hear the cuckoo call, promising to guide me on the road to death. In the autumn the voice of the evening insects fills my ears with a sound of lamentation for this cracked husk of a world. In winter I look with deep emotion on the snow, piling up and melting away like sins and hindrances to salvation."42 The cuckoo's song, cicada's chirp, and melting snow all demonstrate the inevitability of death regardless of one's attitude toward dying, and this frees the mind to reach a state of purification and detachment in anticipating one's own demise.

An holistic realization of impermanence points to one fundamental lesson that must be learned concerning the unpredictability and inevitability

of death. In the Manyôshû period death is an indicator of the uncertain, unenduring, and unstable quality of objectifiable things (hakanashi) giving rise to an attitude of loneliness and longing in trying to grasp the hollowness and unfulfillment of ephemeral and illusory phenomena, circumstances, or human endeavors. In the era of Genji and Kokinshû poetry, which stress the feelings of aware and kanashimi (sadness), death is the source of an ironic beauty and attraction in the sense of "parting is such sweet sorrow." But the contemplative outlook deepens the understanding of death by focusing on its moral and metaphysical in addition to aesthetic significance. The contemplatives exploit the capacity of death to move people emotionally as an opportunity for existential liberation from attachment and self-deception as well as identification with the ontological principle of nonsubstantiality. Kenkô and Dôgen both repeatedly highlight the imminence and universality of death as an Ecclesiastesean moral admonition to awaken to the need for genuine self-reflection and emancipation from petty ambitions and vain desires. Kenkô warns that "when a man is suddenly taken ill and faced by death, he realizes he has accomplished not one of his plans....Everyone should waste no time in taking this to heart"43 and should therefore turn without hesitation to authentic singleminded pursuit of the Buddhist way. Dôgen argues that "life is the manifestation of the total dynamism of life, and death is the manifestation of the total dynamism of death."44 He stresses that one must neither fear and abhor death nor cling frantically to life because the impermanent process of life-and-death is itself the "life of buddha." Since both life and death are a combination of various conditions manifesting the dynamism of Buddha-nature, life is life itself although it depends upon death and death is death itself although it depends upon life. Therefore, at each and every moment death is at once fully integrated with life and complete and unique unto itself.

# B. Rice Cultivation

In comparing the greatest and littlest traditions in regard to impermanence, there are many affinities in their emphasis on nature and the seasons but a fundamental discrepancy concerning death. The mythology and rites of Shinto and folk religion are known for a denial and even abhorrence of death as something contaminating in favor of an overriding concern for fertility. G. B. Sansom notes, "As might be expected in a religion so concerned with the powers of nature, most of its observances had to do with growth and decay. Growth is good, decay is evil, life is desirable, death is abominable."<sup>45</sup> Japanese folk rituals generally consist either of thanksgiving and gratitude for a good harvest or the washing away of sickness and mortality. Shinto mythology records the primal event of Izanagi who is horrified at the miserable sight of Izanami after she has fallen into yomi no kuni (land of the dead) and who seeks to purify and exorcise himself by bathing in water. On the other hand, Shinto and folk beliefs in Takamagahara (land of the gods), tamashii (embodied spirits), and shirei (spirits of the dead) as well as cosmogony myths concerning the musubi (production) deities indicate that the little tradition does not disregard death altogether. Rather, as in the case of the beliefs of other Pacific rim rice cultures such as the West Ceramese Hainuwele myth, Japanese folk religion tends to see death as a "creative act"<sup>46</sup> or a sign of regeneration and renewal, a view which Campbell points out is typical of agrarian societies. Klaus Antoni observes that, for East and Southeast Asia, "Just as the perishing vegetation carries the seed of life, so does human death give meaning to the necessity to reproduce. Figuratively speaking, this implies nothing other than what the notions of the hereafter tell us: new life emerges from the world of death."47

Seasonal rituals connected with rice cultivation seem to lie at the base of the Japanese little tradition for several reasons. First, rice rites are the oldest surviving religious practices going back two thousand years to the Yayoi period when rice was first introduced into Japanese society. The centerpiece of the ceremenial cycle is the ritual for transplantation, ta-ue, and "the technique of rice transplanting can be traced back to a period earlier than the fifth or sixth century A.D.";48 it is also referred to in Manyôshû verse. Although rice was by no means the only grain grown by Japanese farmers, the difficult, sustained cooperative labor required for a successful crop seems to have given it priority in mythology and festival life.49 Rice rituals have maintained continuity and consistency although there are considerable regional differences in terms of the names of the deities, dates of the festivals, and details of performance. Also, rice culture observances still remain in many parts of modern Japan, and not only in rural villages. For example, Inari is primarily "an agricultural deity...of farmers who pray to her before seed sowing and implore her for good harvests."50 But the goddess is associated more generally with prosperity and good fortune, and is enshrined in offices, parks, shops, hotels, and geisha quarters throughout the urban landscape.

There are four main aspects of rice beliefs that provide a picture of the little tradition's view of impermanence: the *Kojiki* cycle of *musubi* deities responsible for germination and becoming; the *Kojiki-Nihongi* Food Goddess, Opo-ge-tu-pime (or Uke-mochi), who continues to produce food

after being killed by an angered deity and is assisted by a musubi deity; the Inari cult pantheon which includes Uke-mochi as its original and central deity<sup>51</sup>; and the localized village festivals commemorating the time for sowing seed, transplantation, and harvest. First, the term musubi is associated with the creative power and spiritual force by which the kami and all phenomena were brought into existence. This force is considered not constant and abiding in itself but an ever-changing process of appearance/disappearance or coming and going intimately related to the cyclic rotation of the seasons. According to Jean Herbert, "musubi is confirmed as a dialectical process conforming to which the Sun generates all beings, animate and inanimate. The positive movement of musubi deified as Takami-musubi-no-kami, is the forward, expansive, swelling, exhaling, diversifying, ramifying male energy revealed in the exhaling, swelling and diversifying seasons of spring and summer, whereas its passive movement, deified as Kami-musubi-no-kami, is the backward, contractive, absorbing, inhaling, unifying or reintegrating female energy, revealed in the inhaling, withering and unifying seasons of autumn and winter."52 The "coming/going beliefs" (kyorai shinkô) suggested here may underlie and be applied to the dynamic, processual, ephemeral, and changing notion of kami in general, and they seem particularly relevant to understanding the structure and function of the rice "deities [who] are invited to appear at appropriate occasions and are sent off again afterwards, since they do not live continuously with men but emerge from the land of the gods to receive offerings."53

Kami-musubi-no-kami is also cited in relation to Uke-mochi. According to Kojiki, Uke-mochi is the child of Susanô, the rainstorm deity, and the great mountain god's daughter. In each of the many names used for her in Shinto practice, the syllable ke or ge means "food" (but may also be associated with ki which can be taken to mean either "tree" or "air." "vital force," "spirit"). Kojiki relates that in response to the request of her father (in the Nihongi version it is the request of Tsuki-yomi, the moon god) Ukemochi creates food by regurgitating it. But Susanô considers her manner of presenting the food vulgar, and in anger he kills her. In the corpse of the slain deity, however, rice and the other grains as well as silkworms continue to grow, and they are taken to heaven and used as seeds by Kami-musubi. The fertility-through-death theme expressed in this myth is strikingly similar to accounts in Taiwanese, Philippine, and Indonesian mythology, particularly the Hainuwele tale. In the West Ceramese version, the virgin goddess Hainuwele is killed at a festive dance by several men who quickly bury her to conceal the crime. The next day the body is found and disinterred by the goddess' father, who cuts into parts and then reburies the corpse out of which

a variety of crops begin to grow. The purpose of the slain goddess myth is perhaps to explain or justify sacrifices and ritualistic offerings performed to ensure a good harvest, and it also highlights the creative and regenerative effects of cutting down plants.<sup>54</sup> For the Timori, for example, the reaping and eating of rice is a solemn sacrificial event dedicated to the moon, and at the same time the sprouting of the first seed in summer is considered to recreate the cosmic moment when the rice "appeared for the first time."<sup>55</sup> In Kojiki, the death of Uke-mochi is directly related to the germinating power of the *musubi* deities. Death in this understanding is not dying in the conventional sense; it is the giving of life to vegatation which grows, to humans who are sustained by this fertility, and to deities who are reborn with enhanced creative power.

Uke-mochi is the central deity of the Inari pantheon, which also counts among the other eight gods six specifically connected with rice growing and harvest, including two known as Tanaka-ô-kami (great deities within rice paddies). One of the latter is associated with Daikoku (god of wealth) and the other is Toshi-no-kami, the god of the annual harvest. The etymology of Inari suggests "rice" (ina) and "growing" or "becoming" (naru). Inari worship also generally involves two features highlighting life and fertility: phallicism, which is directly connected with the symbolism of five deities in the pantheon; and legends and symbols concerning the fox-sorcerer Kitsune, a servant of Uke-mochi who has the magical power to transform into other creatures including humans either to provide divine protection or as a demonic possession or seduction. The structure of the cult of Inari seems to lie midway between the greater and littler realms of the little tradition. Inari has an institutional form and liturgical consistency that gives it the appearance of a national religion, but although it depends on official Shinto mythology for its symbols and rituals the Inari deity is neither included in Kojiki nor fully sanctioned by Shrine Shinto.

The localized seasonal festivals for the rice-paddy deities constitute the root or the littlest of the little tradition in that these practices antedate the mythology of *musubi* and Uke-mochi and are more consistently linked to agrarian production than many aspects of the Inari cult. Rice rituals reveal an understanding of impermanence that is implicit in the views they represent concerning the origin and nature of the kami during the course of the seasonal festivities and, in particular, the issue of where the rice-paddy gods dwell in the winter between harvest and planting. Folk religion observes dozens of ceremonies throughout the calendar year, many of which directly or indirectly derive from the concerns of farmers.<sup>56</sup> At least half a dozen of these constitute rather natural temporal divisions that correspond with the

annual cycle of rice cultivation: New Year when the rice harvest god (Toshigami) is welcomed at a family altar; spring planting when the field is cleaned and blessed, and water is ritually allowed to enter it through irrigation canals; the strenuous effort of transplanting at the end of which the deity departs from the field; midsummer rites to protect against the vagaries of nature such as warding off noxious insects and begging for an appropriate rainfall; harvest when thanksgiving is celebrated; and postharvest family and communal rites to prepare for the coming year.<sup>57</sup> Most of these occasions are subdivided or extended over a period of several days or weeks. For example, the New Year holdiay includes "greater New Year" and "lesser New Year." During the latter festival in mid-January a ceremonial bonfire is lit in order to toast pounded rice cakes (mochi) as an offering which symbolizes the return to the spirit world of the rice god who reigned during this season. The full moon of the New Year often includes the *ta-asobi* (rice-field play) festival when the entire cycle of rice-cultivation is enacted, and this is sometimes accompanied by dances representing the seeding and harvest process from inception to completion. Transplantation (ta-ue) is divided into the beginning period known as sa-ori, or descent of the deity (Sa) into the rice field usually from a nearby mountain, and sa-nobori or the flight or ascension of the god back up the mountain usually commemorated by a congratulatory feast at the end of the cycle.

One indication of the conception of change and impermanence implicit in rice production rites is the pluralistic quality of the gods,<sup>58</sup> which is a deeper and more significant point than mere regional differences in the naming of the deity or the fact that the field god is intermingled with other popular gods. What is known as Ta-no-kami or Nô-kami (agrarian god) is not a single entity that circulates from field to mountain or from spring to autumn. Rather, these terms represent a designation for a constellation of spiritual forces surrounding the entire physical environment and conceptual context--comprising an holistic ecological fabric--that interact and mutually transmute one another in perpetual cyclic motion. Rice-paddy and mountain forest, water and earth, ritualistic effort and natural transition all form an integral multiplicity by which they complement and sustain one another. Thus in each region the name of the rice deity changes according to the moment and function of the process of cultivation. At New Year the god is referred to as Toshigami, and during transplanting it is Sa apparently in association with the fifth month (sa-tsuki) during which the activity occurs. Beyond the matter of naming the god stands a unique relation of direct participation between symbol and reality reflecting a distinct view of impermanence. When the production shifts to irrigation for spring seeding,

for example, the water is seen not as a symbol for the deity but the location of the deity itself. "It is at this point the god of rice is said to enter the family's plot. The god of rice is here visualized as the now sacred water that is coming in and it is this water that is transformed into the seedlings which result in due time."<sup>59</sup> Similarly, during planting a branch or small knot of rice straw is erected in the rice paddy upon which the deity momentarily dwells. "This branch is neither a mere decoration nor a sign, but serves as a *yorishiro* (an object upon which the deity rests)."<sup>60</sup> That is, the branch itself for this occasion constitutes the ephemeral presence of Ta-no-kami.

Underlying the shifts and changes in the site and name of the god is the pervasive theme of the twofold nature of the coming/going, appearance/disappearance, presence/withdrawal, or descension/ascension that characterizes Ta-no-kami's impermanent motion. This process occurs several times within the planting season when Ta-no-kami is bid welcome as it emerges into manifest reality as well as thanks and farewell as it recedes into a withdrawn domain. As indicated above, the two parts of the rite of transplantation, sa-ori and sa-nobori, specifically refer to the coming into and going out of presence of the rice deity; a parallel development occurs at lesser New Year. Thus, the particular divinity does not abide or linger past the natural temporal or seasonal division when the stage of production which takes place. Beyond the intermediate cycles it. symbolizes of appearance/disappearance during the growing season, when the rice deity's movement remains within the horizon of the field, lies the more fundamental and comprehensive occurrence of the annual cycle of coming and going and the postharvest departure of the god into another realm. Throughout the Japanese and Ryukyu islands there appear to be three beliefs concerning the destiny of the rice god in the period after the harvest and before the following New Year. The most commonly held belief refers to the alternating status of the rice deity and mountain deity (Yama-no-kami); that is, Yama-no-kami transforms itself by descending into the field to take the form of Ta-no-kami for half the year and then returns to the mountain forest. The second view is that the rice god goes off to heaven (tokoyo), and the third is that the "fielddeity who is rather spoken of as the 'rice-soul' living in the paddy-fields during the growing of the rice...com[es] into the house together with the harvest sheaves remaining there in the seed corn until spring ... "61 According to the Yanagita-Origuchi school of folklore studies the first two beliefs--in the mountain deity and in a return to heaven--are interrelated.<sup>62</sup> Despite the physical sense of upward movement they imply, often symbolized by the smoke ascending from the rice straw burned after harvest, both beliefs represent a horizontal cosmology because the deity is seen as withdrawing to

an altogether distant and different otherworld. Origuchi Shinobu maintains that the belief in heaven is connected to the practice that is particularly popular in the Ryukyus of the *marebito* or "mysterious visitors" who are considered to come across the sea from a remote, everlasting land around the turn of the year. In the *marebito* practice, village practitioners dress up with divinity-endowing masks and disguises that appear in order to bring a magical power of fertility to the crop. According to Yanagita Kunio, the *marebito* practice connects the rice deity to ancestor spirits or kin-group gods (Ujigami) who oversee and protect their clan and its territory. On the other hand, the belief in a rice-soul that stays dormant through the winter in the dried rice appears to be shared by other rice cultures from Korea to Indonesia.<sup>63</sup> In either case, however, the implication for understanding death and impermanence is the same: the god and the plant it sacramentally represents do not die but circulate in anticipation of the moment of renewal or regeneration. Death is not death as such but the recreation of life.

#### IV. Conclusions: Life and Death

The basic affinity between the littlest and greatest traditions is their view of cyclic seasonal rotation. Nature manifests impermanence through the transition of the seasons. However, the turning of the seasons means something different for each tradition. For folk religion change is represented by the recurring temporal divisions in the planting-harvesting cycle. Nature is considered objectively real and concrete, and its transient flow is commemorated by the metamorphosis in the name and locale of the rice deity. For the contemplatives change is a radical momentary flux that can only be fully grasped from the standpoint of Buddhist discipline. Nature represents an holistic contemplative field which mirrors the life-and-death, generation-and-extinction evanescence that humans and all other beings continually undergo. Thus, Karaki seems to provide an accurate portrayal of the gradual historical process by which the naive realism of the rice culture that feels futility in not keeping up with the tempo of change is transformed into the contemplative view of selfless unity with the rise and fall of each and every moment beyond emotional response. That is, sensitivity to impermanence remains consistent in both traditions, but the realism and objectivism of rice cultivation become internalized and subjectivized by the great tradition through meditation; practical concern with growing and eating rice turns into metaphorical reflection on the inevitable passing of all forms of life.

It is difficult to pinpoint when the interaction between indigenous and imported beliefs began to take place. But a key Nihongi passage concerning yomi no kuni could be cited as an early instance of Buddhist ideas infiltrating Shinto mythology. Since the Nihongi was written primarily in Chinese and collected several years after Kojiki, it is a Shinto (little tradition) source already reflecting some of the impact of continental Buddhism (great tradition). After recounting Izanagi's flight from the land of the dead in a way that parallels the Kojiki version, the Nihongi makes the following comment: "Some say that the Even Pass of Yomi is not any place in particular, but means only the space of time when the breath fails on the approach of death."<sup>64</sup> This passage represents a new conception of death in relation to time and space. According to Kojiki, previous sections in Nihongi, and other sources such as Izumo fudoki, "the land after death had a ... spatial relationship with the real world since it was believed possible to physically enter this twilight land through an aperture in the vicinity of Izumo."65 That is, the pre-Buddhist view of death was characterized by a sense of spatiality in seeing the land of death as a spatial extension of this world that is accessible by crossing a boundary in an actual place. But the Nihongi passage suggests that death has a temporal quality; it is not an actual place but a psychological state of anticipating a change in and loss of life. Therefore, this passage could signify a key turning point in the process of transforming the mythological worldview into philosophical interpretation, the concrete into the abstract, the actual into the psychological, the external into the subjective, and the spatial into the temporal.66

The Nihongi passage also raises the issue of death, which seems to constitute the central opposition between the great and little traditions. Despite a common concern with cyclical change, the little tradition appears to reject death as a defilement while the great tradition embraces it as revelatory of the brevity of life and the incessancy of flux. The position of the littlest tradition is impermanence without death, and the position of the greatest tradition is impermanence in and through death. On closer examination, however, the polarity in their approaches begins to break down. Folk religion does not simply abhor death but sees past dying to inevitable regeneration; it is not so much concerned with the conflict between life and death as with the continuity of fertility and renewal of the cycle of growth. In the yomi no kuni account, for example, Izanagi places a boulder in front of the entranceway to the land of the dead in order to block an escape by Izanami and her cohorts. The rock is called Chigayeshi no Ôkami, which means the Great Deity "responsible for the resurrection of life."67 In a parallel though inverted way, the great tradition does not merely prefer death

to life, but sees dying in terms of the bottomless ground of the ongoing lifeand-death process that discloses basic time. Kenkô, for instance, admires the branches that are about to blossom just as he praises the scattering of petals already faded. Thus, despite their differences both traditions tend to view death "not as death," but as a reminder and pointer to the link between the continuity from the past and renewal in the future as the underlying meaning of impermanent existence.

The relation between traditions on the matter of death is therefore not a clear-cut and one-sided opposition. But to properly assess how the traditions have interacted, the distinction between the resistance to death in folk religion and the acceptance of death by contemplative thinkers must be clarified. In a chess model of interpretation, we need to determine what each side considers its pawns and king, that is, what the two rivals are willing to sacrifice in the match and what they know they must protect at all costs in order to stay in the game. If we consider the approach to death that is operative at the level of village practice, it appears that the folk tradition has emerged victorious. The main evidence for this is that even in modern Japan where Buddhism continues to perform funerals and memorial services, some of the basic Buddhist terms associated with dving and the afterlife are popularly used but only in a way that shows they have lost altogether their original philosophical meaning. For instance, typical Japanese beliefs in a heavenly reward for a good life represent "a fundamental misunderstanding of the idea of nirvana (Japanese nehan) dating from a very early period in Japanese history"68. In fact, "The belief in nehan as a loss of self and desires is not known in the [Japanese] village."69 Similarly, the term for buddha, hotoke, is taken to refer to the soul of any and all dead persons rather than the enlightened state of those uniquely trained in Buddhist discipline. Also, innen no longer means karmic or moral causation but a sense of fatalism, and higan is understood not as the attainment of the "other-shore" of renunciation but the seasonal shift occurring at the spring and autumn equinox. Yet at the same time, as previously mentioned, Japanese society typically romanticizes voluntary death if properly performed as a redemptive act, and it legitimizes various forms of suicide.

However, our main concern is to clarify the process by which folk views about death have been transformed into the contemplative stance. Do folk beliefs maintain their independence and integrity in this process, or are they subverted by the influx of ideas from the great tradition? Or, is there a sense that the contemplative approach incorporates notions from the rice culture? In other words, can we detect a "filtering (of ideas horizontally) across" the chessboard by which each tradition pulls and repels the other toward a realignment of their respective positions? Although Karaki does not specifically compare folk and contemplative beliefs about death, he does cite an important shift in the Buddhist paradigm that may be taken to reflect the influence of the little tradition. The early Buddhist approach is expressed in the well-known *mujô-ge (gatha* or verse on impermanence):

> All things are impermanent, That is the law of arising-desistance; The end of arising-desistance Is the blissful cessation of nirvana.<sup>70</sup>

Here, death seems to have a twofold meaning. First, it is the flip side of life, the desistance that complements arising in the perpetual flow of impermanence. Since death in this sense is part of the general illusory world of evanescence, it is looked upon somewhat negatively because it must be overcome in order to attain enlightenment. But death is also associated with cessation as the end of the flux. As Karaki writes, "According to this verse, the complete cessation of arising-desistance is the blissful cessation that is nirvana. Thus, 'cessation' is conceived of as the termination of time, the end of the course of arising-desistance, and it is also considered the end of life, which is death."71 Therefore, death signifies both a sequential event within the flux and the end of the flux itself equaling enlightenment. One of the main aims of the contemplative approach, however, is to eliminate or collapse this distinction. From that standpoint, death is identified with nirvana not because it is the termination of the flux but precisely because it is within the flux itself which is now seen, as Nakamura has pointed out, as the phenomenal locus rather than an illusory obstacle to absolute truth. For Karaki, Dôgen's notion that "'birth-and-death itself is nirvana' constitutes the denial of that kind of [dualistic] thinking. It implies that there is no immutable nirvana beyond the birth-and-death process of impermanence. Dôgen maintains that impermanence is none other than nirvana, and arisingdesistance is [inseparable from] cessation."<sup>72</sup> The contemplative approach marks a significant reversal in the Buddhist attitude from world-denial to affirmation.

The question then becomes, has the folk tradition somehow contributed to this paradigm shift within Buddhism? To determine that, it is necessary to review how each tradition approaches *mujô-kan* (view-ofimpermanence) and *shi-kan* (view-of-death). Both issues, impermanence and death, can be subdivided into their two major components: a view-ofimpermanence is a matter of interpreting the relation between mind (subjectivity) and reality (objectivity), and a view-of-death is a matter of interpreting the relation between life (arising) and death (desistance). The folk tradition views the impermanence of mind and reality in terms of objectivism and realism. Yet it harbors a latent subjectivism in its intuitive sense of harmony with the natural world and belief that human effort through ritual contributes to the completion of the fertility cycle.<sup>73</sup> The ritualist cosmology of rice cultivation may be an influence on, though it is at the same time quite altered by, Dôgen's idealist notion of the sustained exertion (gyôji) of zazen-practice as the creative source of the universe: "The sun, moon, and stars exist by virtue of sustained exertion, the great earth and empty sky, the whole world and body-mind, the four elements and the five aggregates all exist by virtue of sustained exertion."<sup>74</sup> Buddhism views mind and reality

from the standpoint of subjectivism authenticated by meditation, yet the Abhidharmic tradition of Buddhism also analyzes the world objectively in terms of the categories of *skandha*, *dhatu*, *vijnana*, *dharmadhatu*, etc. In its view-of-death, the folk tradition affirms life and negates death, though there is a hidden affirmation of death from the vantage point of regeneration. Buddhism tends to negate life as part of illusion and affirm death as the cessation of suffering, but there is an implicit denial of death as the flip side of the illusory status of life.

Is the impact of the folk approach detectable in the contemplative view of death? It seems that the little tradition contributes to the paradigm shift in the great tradition by tilting it toward an affirmation of death as coterminous with enlightenment. Why would the affirmation of death that emerges in contemplative writers be considered to reflect the influence of folk religion, which tends to negate death? As Karaki points out, a negation of death, as well as of life, is also implicit in early Buddhism. The shift occurs when Buddhism begins to affirm life and along with it death, since death was always considered by Buddhists to be coeval with life. Ironically, then, the folk tradition's emphasis on life affirmation results in its influencing Buddhism to affirm death, which folk religion negates. Because the folk approach is not a one-sided negation but a search for regeneration underlying death, it is willing to sacrifice this pawn (negation of death) for the sake of its king (affirmation of life). Thus, the shift in the Buddhist approach to death is twofold: the shift in attitude from negation to affirmation, and the shift in metaphysics from a dualistic separation to a nondualistic identity of arising-desistance and nirvana. "If one wants to negate and reject, then not only death but also life must be negated and rejected; if one wants to affirm and grasp, then not only life but also death must be affirmed and grasped."75 This represents a double level of

nonduality, one of life and death, and the other of life-death-as-reality (ji) and enlightenment-as-principle (ri). Therefore, the contemplatives hold onto their king (subjectivism) while sacrificing the pawn of the denial of (life-and-) death. Since both traditions are abandoning the negation of death and are joining in a kind of affirmation of life, they reinforce rather than polarize one another in this process.

Thus. the transformation from rice cultivation mind to contemplation is a multivalent process of shifting away from folk objectivism to contemplative subjectivism, and away from folk and Buddhist negation of death to folk affirmation of life by way of Buddhist nonduality of life and death. One way of illustrating the unfolding of this process is to retrace briefly the historical stages analyzed by Karaki in terms of the issue of the affirmation and negation of life and death.<sup>76</sup> A Karakian analysis finds three stages in Japanese intellectual history: the (1) Manyôshû resistance to death and the (2) Genji-Kokinshû acceptance but sadness about death culminating in the (3) contemplatives' detached embracing of death as the domain of subjective truth. In the first stage, Manyôshû poets such as Hitomaro are known for transmuting the traditional form of the elegy and lament into a lyrical evocation of the passing of time and life. Okura's envoy to his "Lament on the Instability of Human Life" explains how the pressure of time drives home the experience that life is transitory and full of suffering:

Tokiwa nasu	How I yearn to be
Kaku shi mo ga mo to	Unalterably what once I was,
Omoedo mo	Immovable as a rock,
Yo no koto nareba	But because I belong to this world,
Todomikanetsu mo.	There is no stop to time. <sup>77</sup>

Here death is implicitly recognized and bemoaned as an allpervasive and unstoppable force. The poem's emphasis on the matter of death reveals a Buddhist influence, but the longing for everlasting life in contrast to all the changes of time indicates the folk ideal. In the second stage, the authors of such works as *Genji monogatari*, *Kokinshû*, *Kagerô Nikki*, and *Izumi Shikibu Nikki* frequently use the image of dew<sup>78</sup> (*tsuyu*, also often evoked by Dôgen, Kenkô, and other contemplatives) to symbolize the sadness of the transience of life in the face of death. But in the following waka Lady Ise looks upon the inevitability of change and loss as a redemptive and regenerative event in the ongoing cycles of impermanence: Fuyugare noIf I considerNobe to waga mi woMy body like the fieldsOmoisebaWithered by winter,Moede mo haru woCan I hope, though I am burnt,Matashimono wo.That spring will come again?

In the peak period of the contemplative view, death is fully accepted and celebrated as Kenkô writes, "The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty" ("Yo wa sadamenaki koso imiji kere"). Dying seen as fully integrated with living is affirmed as the locus of subjective truth with the same vigor and with some of the same anxiety that the rice culture exerts in affirming the real productivity of life. Therefore, for the little and great, indigenous and imported, folk and contemplative traditions of Japan it can be said, "The Japanese became fully aware of themselves only when they felt their past and the pressure of time upon them."<sup>80</sup>

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kenkô, Essays in Idleness, tr. Donald Keene (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1967), pp. 115, 120; original Japanese is in Murai Jun, Tsurezuregusa: Kaishaku to Kenkyû (Tokyo: Ôfusha, 1967), pp. 259-60.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*, with Bill Moyers (New York: Doubleday, 1988), p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> Donald Keene, *The Pleasures of Japanese Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 20. In the second half of the sentence, Keene cites "Kenkô especially."

<sup>4</sup> Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of 'The Tale of Genji'* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), pp. 123-24.

<sup>5</sup> From Chômei's *Hosshinshû*, quoted in Mezaki Tokue, "Aesthete-Recluses During the Transition from Ancient to Medieval Japan," *Principles of Japanese Literature*, ed. Earl Miner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 154. Similarly Dôgen writes, "Blooming flowers and scattering petals are in and of themselves the true nature [of Dharma]; only fools do not think so..." (*Shôbôgenzô* "Hôsshô," ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko, 2 vols. [Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972], II, p. 85).

<sup>6</sup> Kenkô, pp. 18, 7. For a philosophical discussion of Kenkô and other literary ideals, see Kusanagi Masao, *Yûgenbi no bigaku* (Tokyo: Kanawa shobô, 1973). A comparative examination of Kenkô and Dôgen is in Yasuraoka Kôsaku, *Chûseiteki bungaku no tankyû* (Tokyo: Yûseido, 1970).

<sup>7</sup> Cited by Heinrich Dumoulin, Zen Enlightenment: Origins and Meaning (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1979), p. 78.

<sup>8</sup> Dôgen, especially the Shôbôgenzô "Zenki," Shôji," and "Busshô" fascicles.

<sup>9</sup> See the chapter on "Suicide" in Takie Sugiyama Lebra, *Japanese Patterns of Behavior* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), pp. 190-200; and Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975).

On the importance of death, D.T. Suzuki writes, "The Japanese may not have any specific philosophy of life, but they have decidedly one of death," in *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 85. Also Frank Gibney notes, "Suicide, or the deliberate seeking of death, is the extreme unction, the last sacrament of the religion of *giri-ninjô*," in *Japan: The Fragile Super Power* (New York: Meridian, 1975), p. 110. On the role of suicide in Tokugawa literature, Donald Keene argues, "however strong the claims of giri may be, human feelings always triumph over other considerations. That is why so many of Chikamatsu's plays end with the death of the protagonists; the only lasting victories of ninjô are in the 'other world'" ("Characteristic Responses to Confucianism in Tokugawa Literature," *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, ed. Peter Nosco [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984], p. 123).

<sup>10</sup> According to Ueda Makoto, "A characteristically Japanese variation of lifelikeness is pathos. The Japanese, when they pursued the truths of life to their ultimate, arrived at pathos, as all Buddhists would. Beauty is truth, and truth is pathetic...for any good artist is sadly aware of the limitations of humanity" (*Literary and Art Theories in Japan* [Cleveland: Press of Western Reserve University, 1967], p. 222). To put this another way, "Death-tinged sadness--lovers parting, life ending, cherry blossoms falling--is inseparable from and actually evokes the larger life process as manifested by beauty" (Robert Jay Lifton, Shûichi Katô, and Michael R. Reich, *Six Lives/ Six Deaths* [New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1979], p. 13).

<sup>11</sup> Nose Asaji discusses the importance of impermanence in Buddhism and literary aesthetics in Yûgenron (Tokyo: Kowade shobô, 1944), pp. 3-5. On the other hand, Motoori Norinaga is well known for denying from the nativist (kokugaku) standpoint any Buddhist influence on the ideas associated with aware as expressed in the Genji; see H. D. Harootunian, Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 101-17. A modern philosophical explanation of aware is presented by Watsuji Tetsurô in Nihon seishinshi kenkyû in Watsuji Tetsurô zenshû (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1965), vol. 4, pp. 224-32.

 $^{12}$  Morris, p. 14; here Morris is referring to the Japanese warrior-hero or samurai.

<sup>13</sup> Kishimoto Hideo, "Some Japanese Cultural Traits and Religions," *The Japanese Mind: Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture*, ed. Charles A. Moore (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1967), p. 119.

<sup>14</sup> Karaki Junzô, *Mujô* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1967); see also *Butsudô* shugyô no yôjin: Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1966); and Chûsei no bungaku (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1967). Another historian/critic who develops an interpretation along these lines is Nishida Masayoshi, whose works include *Mujôkan no keifu* (Tokyo: Ôfusha, 1972), and *Nihon bungaku no shizenkan* (Tokyo: Kogansha, 1972). The discussion of the contemplative view of impermanence here and in section III.A below is based on the structure and method of Karaki's study though it uses illustrations and explanations not necessarily mentioned by him. See my A Blade of Grass: Japanese Poetry and Aesthetics in Dôgen Zen (New York: Peter Lang, 1989) for a discussion of Karaki's analysis specifically in regard to Dôgen.

<sup>15</sup> See Robert Redfield, *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 70. For the use of these terms in the study of Japanese folk religion see Hori Ichirô, *Folk Religion in Japan: Continuity and Change*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa and Alan L. Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 49-50. For a critical discussion of Redfield in terms of Chinese religions (particularly Ch'an and Taoism) see Bernard Faure, "Space and Place in Chinese Religious Traditions," *History of Religions*, 26/4 (May 1987), pp. 337-56.

<sup>16</sup> The notion of "filtering up" is discussed by Byron Earhart, Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1982), p. 60. In this article I am using "folk religion" to refer to the field of religious studies within the discipline of folklore studies (minzokugaku) as developed by Yanagita Kunio, Origuchi Shinobu, Hori Ichirô, Byron Earhart, Carmen Blacker, Matthias Eder, Nelly Naumann, and--in regard to agrarian rites--Hayakawa Kôtarô, Kurata Ichirô, Hirayama Toshijirô, Itô Mikiharu, and others. That is, folk religion is to be distinguished from nationalist thought concerning a "folk-soul" of Japan, as expressed in nativism (kokugaku), 'ancient-ism' (kogaku), and 'Japanese-ism' (nihonjinron). On the other hand, it must be pointed out that some scholars (particularly Harootunian, p. 413f) maintain that there is a strong ideological connection between kokugaku and minzokugaku. Yanagita and Origuchi especially can be seen as twentieth-century antimodern nationalists who represent a contemporary revival of Tokugawa nativism. For an outsider's scathing critique of what he considers

the nationalistic illusions at the root of *nihonjinron* thought, see Peter N. Dale, *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986). In terms of the question of the importance of rice cultivation for understanding Japanese religiosity, perhaps modern interpretations cannot be separated from Hirata Atsutane's nativist assertion that "rice had been granted as a gift from heavenly deities, the people partook of it almost as if its consumption represented the ingestion of the divine" (Harootunian, p. 211). Another important issue whose various interpretations may be based on ideology is the controversy concerning the locale for the flight of the rice deity after harvest (see the end of section III below and ftn. 62 below).

<sup>17</sup> "Ta-no-kami" literally means "deity of the rice paddy." For alternative regional names for Ta-no-kami, see Hirayama Toshijirô, "Seasonal Rituals Connected with Rice Culture," *Studies in Japanese Folklore*, ed. Richard M. Dorson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), pp. 58-59.

<sup>18</sup> For the distinction between *tonsei* and *shukke*, see Mezaki, p. 152.

<sup>19</sup> To restate this in Victor Turner's terminology, the great tradition is generally known for providing "structure" (institutional organization and hierarchy) but the greatest tradition is a form of "anti-structure" from the standpoint of radical individualism whereby the qualities of "desolation" and "loneliness" associated with *sabi* become celebrated virtues. On the other hand, the Japanese Tendai doctrine of original enlightenment (*hongaku shisô*) and practice of cessation-contemplation (*shikan*) did remain a crucial influence--even though often criticized or surpassed--on the contemplatives as well as other leading religious thinkers of the day, including Hônen, Shinran, and Nichiren.

<sup>20</sup> For the syncretistic tendencies of Buddhism in Japan see Joseph M. Kitagawa, On Understanding Japanese Religion (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 267-68. For a historical account of the early relation between Buddhism and Shinto, see J. H. Kamstra, *Encounter or Syncretism: The Initial Growth of Japanese Buddhism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967).

<sup>21</sup> Satô Etsujô, "Sôtôshû-kyôdan ni okeru 'Hakusan shinkô' juyô no mondai," *Shûgaku kenkyû*, no. 28 (1987), pp. 157-60.

<sup>22</sup> See Ueda Kenji, "Shinto," *Japanese Religion*, ed. Hori Ichirô (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1972), p. 32.

<sup>23</sup> Miyake Hitoshi, "Folk Religion," Hori, ed., p. 121.

<sup>24</sup> Hirayama, p. 57.

<sup>25</sup> Peter W. Williams, "American Folk Religions and Their Transformations," *Popular Religion in America* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980), p. 60.

<sup>26</sup> J. H. Kamstra quoting Miyake Hitoshi in "The Complexity of Japanese Religion," *Official and Popular Religion*, ed. Pieter Hendrik Vrighof and Jacques Waardenburg (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), p. 428. Kamstra concludes (p. 454): "It is quite natural, therefore, that belief in Buddhism or in Shintoism never implied or could somehow imply the denial or suppression of folk religion. On the contrary, the belief of the average Japanese consists in folk religion embellished and enlarged with Buddhism and Shinto. In other words, folk religion, Buddhism and Shinto therefore constitute Japanese religion on terms of mutually recognised equality."

<sup>27</sup> Alicia Orloff Matsunaga, "The Land of Natural Affirmation: Pre-Buddhist Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica*, xxi/1-2 (1966), p. 205.

<sup>28</sup> Nakamura Hajime, Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1964), p. 351. It could be argued that Nakamura here tends to exaggerate the differences between Japanese and Chinese Buddhism, which similarly emphasized doctrines such as *jiji-muge* (nonobstruction or interpenetration of phenomena and phenomena). On the other hand, it does appear that the *Lotus Sutra* doctrine of *shohô jissô* is applied more uniformly and consistently in Japan to natural objects such as mountains, rivers, trees, grass, and blossoms.

<sup>29</sup> Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan* (New York: Penguin, 1964), p. 106.

<sup>30</sup> Kenkô, p. 200.

<sup>31</sup> Karaki, *Mujô*, p. 302.

<sup>32</sup> On yamazato see Mezaki, and William R. LaFleur, "Saigyô and the Buddhist Value of Nature," *History of Religions*, 13/2 (1973), pp. 93-127 and 13/3, pp. 227-48. On the influence of Buddhist meditation on Shunzei and Teika, see Konishi Jin'ichi, "Shunzei no yûgen-fû to shikan," *Bungaku*, 20/2 (Feb. 1952), pp. 108-16; Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961), pp. 257-58; and LaFleur, *The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 80-106. Also, David Barnhill has pointed out to me that Bashô, particularly reflected in *Oku no hosomichi* where he calls rice rites the "origin of art" (*fûryû no hajime*), could well be included in the contemplative ideal.

<sup>33</sup> Teika, "Maigetsushô" Nihon kagaku taikei, ed. N. Sasaki (Tokyo, 1935), vol. III, p. 359.

<sup>34</sup> Toshihiko and Toyo Izutsu, *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1981), p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> Konishi Jin'ichi, "Michi and Medieval Writing," Miner, Principles, p. 204.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> The following Teika waka is an example of how this final line helps to convey the process of liberating the subject through an evocation of a transpersonal atmosphere of supreme desolation (*sabi*) (*Shinkokinshû* I, 38, in *Nihon koten bungaku zenshû* [Tokyo: Kogakukan, 1971]).

Miwataseba	Looking out,
Hana mo momiji mo	Past where there are
Nakarikere	Cherry blossoms or crimson leaves,
Ura no tomaya no	To the grass-thatched huts by the harbor
Aki no yûgure.	Clustered in the descending autumn dusk.

This line is also used in poems by Saigyô and Jakuren. See Donald Keene, ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, vol. I (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1956), pp. 192-96. However, in "Maigetsushô" Teika warns against mere copying of lines such as this to accommodate conventions of taste.

<sup>38</sup> Dôgen, Eihei Koroku I in vol. II of Dôgen zenji zenshû, ed. Ôkubo Dôshû (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1970). This verse is also discussed in Nishida

Masayoshi, Nihon bungaku no shizenkan (Tokyo: Kogansha, 1972), p. 197. See also Nishitani Keiji, Religion and Nothingness (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 188f for a different translation and discussion.

<sup>39</sup> Kenkô, p. 138. This passage is strikingly similar to Dôgen's explanation of the doctrine of  $j\hat{u}$ -hôi (abiding dharma-stage) "both cut off from and possessed of before and after," in Shôbôgenzô "Genjôkôan."

<sup>40</sup> William R. LaFleur, "Death and Japanese Thought: The Truth and Beauty of Impermanence," *Death and Eastern Thought*, ed. Frederick H. Holck (Nashville and New York: Abingdon, 1974), p. 235.

<sup>41</sup> Chômei, Hôjôki ("An Account of My Hut"), Keene, Anthology, p. 197.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>43</sup> Kenkô, p. 200.

44 Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô "Zenki," vol. I., p. 276.

<sup>45</sup> G. B. Sansom, Japan: A Short Cultural History (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p. 49. Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney notes that traditionally only outcasts were allowed to handle matters considered defiling surrounding death and corpses: "Already clearly delineated in some of the oldest written records of the Kojiki...killing, handling of corpses, and illnesses were all defined not only as impure but as sins....Consequently, many of the occupations of the special status people [outcasts] came to be regarded as defiling" (The Monkey as Mirror: Symbolic Transformations in Japanese History and Ritual [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987], p. 90).

<sup>46</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality* (New York: Harper, 1963), p. 106; see also Adolf E. Jensen, *Das religiose Weltbild einer frühen Kultur* (Stuttgart, 1948).

<sup>47</sup> Klaus Antoni, "Death and Transformation: The Presentation of Death in East and Southeast Asia," *Asian Folklore Studies*, xli/2 (1986) p. 155.

<sup>48</sup> Hirayama, p. 64.

<sup>49</sup> As Tatematsu Wahei states, "producing and eating rice has sustained the life and culture of the Japanese....A culture based on rice farming makes one feel the passage of the seasons" (in "Nippon," *New York Times Sunday Supplement* (March 16, 1989), p. 22). Peter Spry-Leverton and Peter Kornicki report, "Rice has inevitably dictated certain patterns of life in Japan, and the effects of this are still very much apparent today....[with] work still done on a cooperative basis, with the participation of all the villagers in everything from discussions about health care to gathering in the rice" (in *Japan*, [New York: Facts on File, 1988], pp. 134-35).

<sup>50</sup> D.C. Buchanan, "Inari: Its Origin, Development, and Nature," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, vol. xii (1935), p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>52</sup> Jean Herbert, *Shinto: At the Fountainhead of Japan* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 67. For the etymology of *musubi*, see the lengthy footnote in Kamstra, *Encounter or Syncretism*, pp. 105-8.

<sup>53</sup> Hirayama, p. 59. For a discussion of the coming/going motif, see Richard Pilgrim, "Intervals (*Ma*) in Space and Time," *History of Religions* 25/3 (1986), pp. 268-69.

 $^{54}$  In a similar way the corn spirit is believed to be killed at the time of reaping or threshing. See James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1955), part V, vol. I, p. 223. Also, Jonathan Z. Smith is critical of A. E. Jensen's interpretation of the Hainuwele myth, arguing that the mythic structure reflects an economically based "cargo situation" rather than a philosophy of death in relation to fertility; see *Map is Not Territory* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), pp. 304-8. However, Smith's view does not seem applicable to the *Kojiki* myth which explicitly connects dismemberment with regeneration.

<sup>55</sup> Eliade, p. 15. However, myths and rites of rice cultivation in Thailand provide an interesting contrast with Japan because they associate rice directly and intimately with the origin and moral values of Buddhism. There, "(t)he myth links the arrival of rice and its subsequent vicissitudes with religion, in this case Buddhism....[and] betrays a tragic vision of humanity....At the same time, the spirit of rice, reflecting Buddhist moral and ethical values, is fragile and elusive and must be persuaded to stay with man" (see S.J. Tambiah,

Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970], pp. 351-66).

<sup>56</sup> According to Herbert, "Since a very large part of the population of Japan has lived, and still lives by agriculture, it is normal that one of the main objects of prayer to the Kami should be protection against whatever may endanger the crops. I believe it may be said that, with very few exceptions, matsuri all contain something to that effect" (p. 183).

<sup>57</sup> The material on seasonal festivals is taken from the following fieldwork sources: Haga Hideo, *Ta-no-kami: Nihon no inasaku girei* [The Rituals of Rice Production in Japan] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959); Kurata Ichirô, *Nô to minzokugaku* (Tokyo: Kômyôsha, 1969), especially p. 89f; *Hayakawa Kôtarô zenshû* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1972), vols. 4 and 5; Iwazaki Toshio, *Mura to kamigami* (Tokyo: Kômyôsha, 1969).

<sup>58</sup> Itô Mikihara, "Rice Rites in Japan Proper and the Ryukyus: A Comparative Study," in *Folk Cultures of Japan and East Asia* (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1966), pp. 41-42.

 $^{59}$  In Haga, p. 103. On the notion of the Japanese view of the direct participation of symbols in spiritual reality or the "nonsymbolic understanding of symbols," particularly in the *Manyôshû*, see Kitagawa, pp. 45-49.

 $^{60}$  Hirayama, p. 62. For a discussion of the role of *yorishiro* as "the symbolic material objects in which the kami settle," which are divided into specific areas for kami and *hotoke*, see Nakamaki Hirochika, "The 'Separate' Coexistence of Kami and Hotoke: A Look at Yorishiro," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 10/1 (1983), pp. 65-86.

<sup>61</sup> Nelly Naumann, "Yama no Kami--die japanische Berggottheit" (part I) Asian Folklore Studies, xxii (1963), pp. 344-45.

<sup>62</sup> The approach of Yanagita Kunio and Origuchi Shinobu on this issue is critically discussed in Itô and in Hori Ichirô, "Mysterious Visitors from the Harvest to the New Year," Dorson, ed., pp. 76-103. Harootunian (p. 421; see ftn. 16 above) seems to suggest that the Yanagita-Origuchi hypothesis betrays an underlying nationalist or nativist ideology in that it "argue[s] that the native religious system was an irreducibly Japanese inflection because the spirits of the dead always returned to the 'native place' to watch over their descendants from the 'unseen' mountain perspective." It may be coincidence that two Western scholars, Matthias Eder and Nelly Naumann, tend to give more credence to the rice-soul belief.

<sup>63</sup> Matthias Eder, "Die 'Reisseele' in Japan und Korea," *Folklore Studies*, xiv (1955), pp. 215-44. Another parallel is found in the Karens of Burma, who use the following formula to call the soul (*kelah*) of rice: "O come, rice-*kelah*, come! Come to the field. Come to the rice....From the distant kingdoms come. From all granaries come. O rice-*kelah*, come to the rice" (in *The New Golden Bough*, ed. Theodore H. Gaster [New York: Criterion, 1959], p. 417).

<sup>64</sup> W.G. Aston, tr. *Nihongi* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956), p. 26. Motoori's objection to this passage and preference for the theme of spatiality conveyed in the *Kojiki* may be a sign of rejecting the Buddhist influence expressed therein. For a lengthy discussion of the symbolism in this passage, see Nakanishi Susumu, "The Spatial Structure of Japanese Myth: The Contact Point Between Life and Death," in *Principles of Classical Japanese Literature*, pp. 106-50.

<sup>65</sup> Matsunaga, p. 204.

<sup>66</sup> However, the spatial dimension does not die out but is heightened by the emphasis on the temporary quality of grass-hut hermitages (*sôan*) in Chômei and others; see LaFleur, *The Karma of Words*, p. 61.

<sup>67</sup> Nakanishi, p. 110. This is the name of the god found in the *Nihongi* version.

<sup>68</sup> Robert J. Smith, *Ancestor Worship in Contemporary Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 50.

<sup>69</sup> John F. Embree, Suye Mura: A Japanese Village (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 261.

<sup>70</sup> Karaki, p. 301.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Matsunaga discusses the intuitive quality at the heart of pre-Buddhist religion. On the other hand, Tsunetsugu Muraoka stresses the "principle of realism" (or phenomenalism, *genjitsu shugi*) in Shinto in contrast to the otherworldly outlook of Buddhism in *Studies in Shinto Thought* (Tokyo: Ministry of Education, 1964), pp. 21-27. Tamura Yoshirô, a specialist on Tendai Buddhism, is known for emphasizing the "affirmation of the actual (or real)" (*genjitsu kôtei*) as a key for understanding Japanese religion, that is, Buddhism influenced by the indigenous beliefs; see Tamura, *Kamakura shinbukkyô shisô no kenkyû* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1965). For a critical discussion of Tamura and Nakamura Hajime see Royall Tyler, "A Critique of 'Absolute Phenomenalism," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 9/4 (1982), pp. 261-83.

74 Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô "Gyôji," vol. I, p. 165.

<sup>75</sup> Tamura, "Critique of Original Awakening Thought in Shôshin and Dôgen," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 11/2-3 (1984), p. 245.

<sup>76</sup> It is interesting to note that Ienaga Saburô's "logic of negation" (*hitei no ronri*) offers an assessment of Japanese intellectual history in a way that parallels Karaki's analysis in terms of the dialectics of affirmation and negation from the standpoint of seeing Shinran's Pure Land Buddhism as a culminating point. However, Ienaga's use of the notion of negation is quite different than mine, largely because Ienaga is critical of pre-Buddhist realism and affirmation (*kôtei*) in favor of Pure Land negation of the world as sinful, while here I am stressing the affirmative direction to which Buddhism has been led by folk religion. For a critical discussion of Ienaga, see Robert Bellah, "Ienaga Saburô and the Search for Meaning in Modern Japan," *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization*, ed. Marius Jansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 369-423.

<sup>77</sup> Translated by Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 135. Another example along these lines is the famous *i ro ha* (alphabet) verse attributed to Kûkai: "Colors are fragrant/But they fade away/In this world of ours/Nothing lasts forever/ Today cross/The high mountains of illusion/And there will be/ No more dreaming, no more intoxication."

<sup>78</sup> Shirane, p. 127.

<sup>79</sup> Keene, ed., p. 79.

<sup>80</sup> Brower and Miner, p. 152.

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# MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF IMPERMANENCE IN DÔGEN'S "GENJÔKÔAN"

When all dharmas are of the Buddha Dharma, there is delusion and enlightenment, practice, birth and death, Buddhas and sentient beings. When ten thousand dharmas are without self, there is neither delusion nor enlightenment, neither Buddhas nor sentient beings, neither arising nor extinction. Because the Buddha Way originally springs out of abundance and shortage, there is arising and extinction, delusion and enlightenment, beings and Buddhas. And yet, even though this has been said, blossoms scatter in sadness and weeds spring up in dismay.<sup>1</sup>

Dôgen, Shôbôgenzô "Genjôkôan"

#### I. Introduction: Ambiguity of the Passage

One of the most challenging and compelling passages in Dôgen's collected writings is the opening paragraph of "Genjôkôan," which in most editions (apparently according to Dôgen's own editing) is the first fascicle of Shôbôgenzô and thus the central introduction to his work. The first three sentences appear to evoke the Tendai doctrine of "three truths in their perfect harmony": the truth or perspective of the temporary or provisional (ke); the truth of the void or empty of own-being  $(k\hat{u})$ ; and the middle truth  $(ch\hat{u})$  between and beyond the empty and provisional, absolute and relative, being and non-being, transcendental and worldly.

Thus, the first sentence expresses (in light of primordial nondifferentiation--"of the Buddha Dharma") the realm of provisional duality encompassing the concrete ups and downs of religious aspiration (to transform oneself from a sentient being to Buddha) and existential achievement (in the struggle between delusion and enlightenment) while perpetually confronting the ever-present and pervasive reality of impermanence (birth and death). The category of practice, which seems to bind all spheres of existence, is not mentioned in the remaining sentences. The second sentence reveals the more fundamental perspective of the notion of emptiness--not mere negation and denial--underlying the provisionally bifurcated dimensions, which recognizes the relativity and nonsubstantiality of interdependent and contingent polarities. The third sentence (recalling the *Diamond Sutra*'s dictum, "A is not A, therefore A") shows that true nondifferentiation is not opposed to dichotomization, but eliminates the very distinction between difference and nondifference. It equalizes the first two sentences, not only by reversing their order, but by highlighting the creatively dynamic interplay uniting both perspectives. The middle is both provisional and empty, and therefore neither provisional nor empty; only in light of complete equality can the full range and multiplicity of differentiation be conveyed.

The fourth and final sentence of the paragraph clearly illustrates Dôgen's attempt to re-raise the question of impermanence  $(muj\hat{o})$  and of human reaction to transiency as crucial to an understanding of Buddhist Dharma. What does it add to the Tendai doctrine? Is it an afterthought or a challenge? The meaning and significance of the final statement is so rich and ambiguous in its brevity that it can be and has been translated and interpreted (both in *gendaiyaku* or modern Japanese translation<sup>2</sup> and in English) from a variety of perspectives, including two nearly opposite views: either as representing an unenlightened standpoint of attachment, longing and regret which must be negated; or as an absolutism which at once encompasses and transcends human emotions of sorrow and grief concerning incessant change.

According to the first interpretation, the sentence represents a misguided stance in contrast to the Buddhist doctrine preceding it. That is, for those who do not fully comprehend the Dharma, suffering arises due to volitional involvement with uncertain and unstable phenomena that should be altogether attenuated. The other position, however, suggests that the final sentence actually deepens and challenges the first three by stressing personal encounter with impermanence, continuing even beyond enlightenment, as the direct and unavoidable pointer to the truth of nonsubstantiality (*muga*). According to this interpretation, the sentence discloses a new vantage point reversing the eternalist tendency in previous Mahayana and Zen efforts to attain nirvana in terms of an immutable Buddha-nature beyond the ephemeral world. Genuine realization must be found in terms of--rather than by elimination of--one's emotional response to variability and inevitable loss.

What is the source of the controversy, and on what basis can it be resolved? It seems that the key to interpreting the sentence lies in the double-edged quality of the terms "sadness" (*aijaku*) and "dismay" (*kiken*), which can imply either sentimentality and clinging or a deeper religioaesthetic sense of attunement and commitment to the causes of the perpetual flux.<sup>3</sup> Yet, this ambiguity is not necessarily problematically inconclusive. Two or more meanings seen in a single phrase may not imply contradiction, but indicate that in Dôgen's understanding there are multiple and paradoxical dimensions of impermanence.

In order to explicate the ambiguity of the passage, I will first discuss the underlying aims of the "Genjôkôan" fascicle which expresses Dôgen's fundamental religious quest and philosophical project of reconciling and clarifying the Mahayana (particularly Japanese Tendai) notion of original Buddha-nature (busshô) with the transiency and sorrow of existence as he himself experienced it. Second, I will examine alternative translations of the passage by Nakamura Sôichi, Masutani Fumio, Tanahashi Ikkô, and Tamaki Kôshirô (in gendaiyaku) and Waddell/Abe and Maezumi/Cook (in English) to highlight the textual difficulties and variety of possible interpretations. Finally, I will show that the ambiguity of the final sentence is grounded in Dôgen's multidimensional view of impermanence and multiperspectival theory of truth; impermanence at once signifies an unenlightened sense of fragility and uncertainty; an emotional sensitivity to the poignant and heartfelt passing of things, which is essential to awaken the resolve for enlightenment; and the spontaneous and complete manifestation of the realization  $(genj\partial k\partial an)^4$  that existence is thoroughly free of substratum and duration or of a fixated notion of substance in self and world that conceals evanescence.

### II. Aims of the Fascicle: Historical and Doctrinal Background

The composition of "Genjôkôan" in 1233 represents a distinct change in Dôgen's expression of Zen. The fascicle is neither a straightforward admonition or restatement of Buddhist principles nor a deliberately nonsensical utterance, but a cogent, organic, philosophical essay at once disturbing and persuasive, poetic and discursive. "Genjôkôan" is the third fascicle of *Shôbôgenzô* written by Dôgen,<sup>5</sup> but the first of the foremost philosophical pieces which are the foundation and hallmark of his doctrine, preceding by nearly a decade the creative peak in which he composed "Uji," "Busshô," and "Gyôji," among others. This was a significant period of transition for Dôgen after his return to Japan from his training under Chinese master Ju-ching and consequent attainment of satori. Yet it preceded the establishment of his own strictly disciplined Eiheiji temple in relatively remote Echizen province, which fulfilled Ju-ching's exhortation to stay free of any involvement in the political controversy and worldly affairs that seemed to have corrupted Kyoto and the Tendai center on Mt. Hiei. In these years, however, Dôgen occupied several temples in Fukakusa near Kyoto, advocating "liberal positions"--later largely repudiated--such as the involvement of lay men and women disciples in Zen practice. He also may have participated in Court poetry through attending *uta-awase* (poetry contests) and befriending renowned poet and critic, Fujiwara Teika.<sup>6</sup>

An essay written and given to a lay disciple rather than a sermon delivered to (and frequently recorded by) monks, as is typical of many of the subsequent fascicles of *Shôbôgenzô*, "Genjôkôan" marks Dôgen's stylistic liberation from more conventional presentations in his three previous major works: *Hôkyôki* (1226), a fragmentary and posthumously discovered autobiographical account of his practice with Ju-ching and record of the Chinese teacher's central sayings and interpretations of doctrine; *Fukanzazengi* (1227), the first piece Dôgen wrote in Japan recommending the universal merits of zazen and considered his "manifesto" on the theory and practice of meditation; and "Bendôwa" (1231), a pronouncement through the question-answer format of Dôgen's views on key issues in Zen thought, including the role of sutras and language in transmitting the Buddhist Dharma, from the standpoint of the priority of zazen-only and in contrast to many of the positions associated with Rinzai Zen.

"Genjôkôan" is largely thematically consistent with and an amplification of notions expressed in these works, such as the temporal unity of practice and realization fully disclosed here-and-now and perpetually renewed throughout all moments, and the universal equalization of all phenomena as manifestations of Buddha-nature. The innovative element in "Genjôkôan" is its metaphysical and philosophical deepening and enrichment of the impermanent/insubstantial moment as the ground of selfless realization. Dôgen uses an indirect or poetic communication with natural symbolism, as in the final sentence of the opening paragraph, to divulge the essential multidimensional structure of  $muj\hat{o}$ .

The common basis of these writings as well as his collected works is Dôgen's enlightenment experience, achieved under Ju-ching's guidance, of *shinjin datsuraku* (casting off body-mind), which represents a liberation from conceptual and volitional fixations realized in and through one's selfless immersion in ephemeral reality. According to Dôgen's traditional biography, *Kenzeiki*, the tragic early deaths of his parents amidst unpredictable political

upheavals and natural disorders in early Kamakura Japan had aroused in Dôgen a profound awareness of the all-pervasive conditions of transiency beyond particular experiences yet most directly and despairingly realized through them. Dôgen's religious quest began when, even as a youth, he rejected the aristoctratic background and Court literary tradition in which he was raised for the sake of shukke (Buddhist renunciation). Literary classics, he apparently felt, conveyed an emotional attunement to the fleeting beauty of transitory existence symbolized by changing seasons, falling blossoms and the bird's winter flight. Yet they tended to indulge in either a romantic fatalism or an idle and sentimental attachment to the hedonic moment, and thereby perpetuated bondage to a supposedly persistent and enduring self underlying change. The Buddhist conception of karma (moral causation) was frequently inauthentically portrayed as a psychological crutch to rationalize the uncertain and unstable quality of personal and social contingency and consequent loneliness, longing, frustration, and failure. In his pursuit of Dharma, Dôgen was determined to penetate to a genuine understanding of mujô-as-mujô unbound by arbitrary ego-oriented decisions to accept and enjoy or reject and dismiss evanescence, or self-centered attitudes of optimism, nostalgia, and nihilism.

As a monk, Dôgen soon found that the basic Buddhist analysis of the relative, interdependent and nonsubstantial nature of the universal flux was somewhat subverted in then current Tendai and Rinzai Zen centers on Mt. Hiei. He was disturbed by the prevailing conception of an absolute and unvarying Buddha-nature which transcended time and yet manifested itself in time but was achieved only through the *elimination* of time. This problematic standpoint is metaphysically depicted in the "Uji" fascicle by the image of a "vermillion palace" which represents an unreflective and ignorant attempt to be free of the tribulations of impermanence (symbolized by crossing a valley to climb a mountain) by projecting an illusory eternalism -- a tendency he felt plagued Japanese Tendai thought: "Although the mountain and river are indeed here right-now, I [the unenlightened] seem to think that I have left them far behind and I act as if I occupy a vermillion palace, thereby believing that there is a separation between myself and the mountain and river [as great] as that between heaven and earth."<sup>7</sup> Dôgen's pilgrimage to China was motivated by the view that the Japanese literary/aesthetic and Buddhist religious/philosophical traditions tended to weaken rather than strengthen one another, resulting in the heterodoxical notion underlying some forms of Zen practice of a statically-conceived eternal Buddha-nature. The inauthentic view created bifurcations between a supposedly substantive self and the fragile movement it undergoes as well as the contingency of attaining enlightenment and the immutability of Buddha-nature reached at the end of a linear sequence.

The fundamental question Dôgen forced himself and the Buddhist tradition to confront in the quest for a release from suffering was later framed in Fukanzazengi: "Originally the Way is complete and all-pervasive. How does it depend on practice and realization?"<sup>8</sup> Dôgen thereby challenged the conception of Buddha-nature as a potentiality somehow falsely detached from everyday experience, or as an unactualized possibility awaiting the appropriate time for fulfillment. He was wary of any misleading objectification of busshô either as something substantive and unchanging that did not require exertion or effort (jiriki) or as an obtainable goal reached only at the completion of practice. The profound and troubling soteriological dilemma which Dôgen faced--increased by an apparent gap between his existential awareness of mujô and the Tendai notion of an eternal busshô--is intriguingly expressed in the following mondô in "Genjôkôan": A monk approaches Zen master Hôtetsu, who is fanning himself, and asks, "The wind-nature is constant. There is no place it does not circulate. Why do you still use a fan?" The master replies, "You merely know that the wind-nature is constant. You do not yet know the meaning of it circulating every place,"9 and continues fanning himself. That is, the permeation of wind, symbolic of Buddha-nature, seems to render superfluous any contingent human activity, such as waving a fan. But if the fan, which represents full immersion in impermanence actively realized, is not used, the coolness and freshness of the breeze will never be felt.

Dôgen's breakthrough to a new understanding of impermanence occured in China during a prolonged and intensive session of meditation when Ju-ching reprimanded the slumbering monk sitting next to Dôgen, "In zazen it is imperative to cast off body-mind. How could you indulge in sleeping at such a criticial time?" The remark had the effect of liberating Dôgen, whose satori was soon confirmed by Ju-ching, by dissolving the fabricated boundaries he had previously accepted between eternal and instantaneous, nirvanic and contingent, purposeless and directional time. It seems that upon that occasion of awakening, Dôgen no longer viewed impermanence from the standpoint of the spectator self surveying the multiple variations of a continuing process of change moving from one point in time to the next. Rather, he spontaneously penetrated  $muj\hat{o}$  as the selfgenerating and self-renewing nonsubstantive totality of each and every moment without reference to or contrast with any other supposedly stable entity outside it. The task which remained for Dôgen upon his return to Japan was to perfect an expression of impermanence now freed of the bonds of stable eternalism to show that "blooming flowers and falling leaves, such itself is the true nature [of dharmas]. But fools believe that there must be no blooming flowers and falling leaves in the world of the true nature of dharmas (liôsshô)."<sup>10</sup> "Genjôkôan" is his first attempt to reorient and reexplore both the Japanese aesthetic and religious traditions so that they enhance and deepen rather than hinder each other--to use natural imagery and existential sensitivity to transiency to purify the Buddhist conception of interdependence from overly speculative and eternalist tendencies, and similarly to ground poetics in the experience of *shinjin datsuraku* unbound by sentimentality and fully reflective of the nonsubstantiality of all phenomena.

# III. Problematics of Translation and Interpretation of the Text

The aim of this section is to illustrate and analyze how the ambiguity of the final sentence of the opening paragraph of "Genjôkôan" has led to a variety of modern Japanese and English translations. Each of the translations presupposes and conveys a distinctive interpretation concerning two central interrelated issues in Dôgen's thought: the role of human feelings about transiency, and Dôgen's relation to previous Mahayana philosophy, which he seems to evoke in the first three sentences of the passage.

Before examining the various translations, I will discuss the philological basis of the sentence's ambiguity and point out discrepancies in translations which overlook the double-edged quality of Dôgen's literary style or impose an interpretation that may not reflect the text itself. Two linguistic elements are controversial: the use of conjunctions and the terms of emotions. Nishio Minoru in his monograph Dôgen to Zeanti (Dôgen and Zeami) maintains that the conjunctions--for example, "when" (jisetsu) in sentences one and two, and "because" (yulieni) in the third sentence--are especially noteworthy for an understanding of the complex inner unity of the passage. The fourth sentence is interesting for the conjunctive phrases that are included and excluded both by Dôgen and the translators. The lengthy phrase which opens the sentence (shikamo kakuno gotoku nari toihe domo) has a literal meaning which can be and generally is translated more succinctly as "in spite of this" or the one-word conjunction "nevertheless." But Dôgen, having chosen this original expression, probably intended the length itself to serve as a kind of buffer which would offset the sentence from the previous ones and call attention to it.

More significant, however, is the addition of certain conjunctions by some of the translators in the latter part of the sentence. Nakamura and Maezumi/Cook, for example, add that the flowers fall "because" of man's longing; Tamaki's rendering is that "if" flowers fall, then human feeling emerges; Masutani adds that flowers fall "even though" it is regrettable. None of these are actually stated in the original text. Both Tanahashi and Waddell/Abe make note of Dôgen's poem in his *Eihei Koroku* (Eiheiji Temple Recorded Sayings), "Blossoms scatter by [or because of (*yoru*)] sorrow, weeds spring up by [or because of] dismay,"<sup>11</sup> but they do not impose that implication here since the sentence must be interpreted in its own context. Similarly, most of the translations add that the sadness or longing which is felt is "ours." Although it can be argued that the possessive pronoun is naturally implied by the original Japanese, Dôgen's omission of such a pronoun may have been intended to imply an holistic and impersonal context of shared and pervasive sorrow as well as an individual sense of loss.

The central controversy which influences an interpretation of the fourth sentence and perhaps the entire passage concerning Dôgen's view of impermanence pertains to the two terms for emotion, both of which are compound words: the first, composed of *ai* (love, affection, loathing to part), and *jaku* (regret, reluctance); the second, *ki* (abandon, renounce) and *ken* (dislike, hate). Both compounds contain one passive and one active emotive term which tend to moderate and transmute each other, an element of resignation or renunication coloring the active emotion. In the modern Japanese and the Maezumi/Cook translations, however, only one part of each compound is used and they drastically alter the meaning of the entire sentence by suggesting that emotions only play a negative or destructive role in human affairs and religious pursuit.

Furthermore, it should be noted that ai by itself is a technical Buddhist term for desire (Skt., *trsna*) with an obviously negative connotation. Yet, ai used in various compounds is also a Buddhist term that connotes the positive and constructive aspect of love, as in the words aipô (love of Dharma) and aigo (the bodhisattva's beneficent words of edification). *Aijaku* indicates the compassionate caring of a bodhisattva's unwillingnenss to relinquish the struggle for universal release from suffering. Just as ai has the double-edged Budddhist sense of desire and compassion, it is also commonly used in Japanese poetics with a similarly twofold meaning: it can either signify love for a particular person, or a deeper aesthetic sense of care and commitment. It is likely that Dôgen deliberately intended to suggest both the positive and negative connotations of emotions by using these terms, and not merely the latter. I will now cite the various translations with a brief analysis of how each one interprets the role of human emotions and the relation of Dôgen's view of impermanence to earlier Mahayana thought:

1. Nakamura Sôichi's gendaiyaku:<sup>12</sup>

Man knows this, and yet he sees the blossoms scatter because he regrets the scattering blossoms, he is grieved that blossoms scatter when he wants them to keep blooming, and he sees that weeds spring up because he hates the weeds.

By adding the causative element ("because") between feelings and the realm of transiency and the additional clause which is implicitly critical of human attachments, Nakamura takes the strongest stand amongst the translators in deningrating emotions and contrasting what he sees as the desire and ignorance represented by the fourth sentence with the Mahayana truths stated in the first three. For Nakamura, the passage is not ambiguous but a straightforward critique of human folly as opposed to detachment from any involvement in the realm of evanescence.

2. Tanahashi Ikkô's gendaiyaku:13

We know this, and yet if we are attached to enlightenment, enlightenment becomes remote, and if we seek separation from delusion, delusion only becomes greater.

Tanahashi loses the intriguing symbolism of the sentence by equating flowers with enlightenment and weeds with unenlightenment, but heightens (compared to Nakamura) the ambiguity concerning emotive experience. Here the sentence becomes a warning that false detachment is as spiritually deficient as attachment even to a noble end. Thus, emotions are relative and variable depending on the context and timing.

3. Masutani Fumio's gendaiyaku:14

And yet, we know that blossoms scatter even though we regret it, and that weeds grow thick and spread even though we hate it.

Much more direct than the two *gendaiyaku* cited above, Masutani's version stresses man's continual existential confrontation with the pervasive reality of impermanence. That is, in spite of traditionally accepted Tendai doctrine recapitulated in the first three sentences, transiency is not so easily dismissed and must be dealt with emotionally and experientially ever anew. Even though man struggles to attain enlightenment, the effects of impermanence continue to plague him and stir an emotional response.

4. Tamaki Kôshirô's gendaiyaku:15

This is so, and yet if blossoms scatter it is regrettable, and if weeds grow thick it is truly deplorable.

Tamaki is very close to Masutani. Yet, the subtle change of conjunction from "even though" to "if" seems to imply that there may be an eternalized state in contrast to impermanence and in which the effects of transiency are no longer felt.

5. Maezumi/Cook's English translation:<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, flowers fall with our attachment, and weeds spring up with our aversion.

This English sentence, although adhering to the brevity of the original, basically concurs with Nakamura's *gendaiyaku* in castigating the emotions which are translated with "negative" words and contrasted with traditional Buddhist doctrine. (Interestingly, in a book which is nearly entirely a commentary on the "Genjôkôan" fascicle, no further interpretation of this sentence is offered.)

6. Waddell/Abe's English translation:<sup>17</sup>

In spite of this, flowers fall always amid our grudging, and weeds flourish in our chagrin.

The addition of "always," although not literal, accentuates the inevitable and unceasing permeation of impermanence as a continual challenge even--or especially--to the enlightened one, thereby largely agreeing with Masutani and Tamaki. The use of the preposition "amid" and "in" suggests a twofold sense of causation and resolute acceptance in the relation between emotions and transiency. In their introductory comments, however, the translators go even further in elevating the status of emotions by declaring that here "Dôgen clarifies the absolute reality...of man's own feelings of yearning and dislike toward [the flower and weed]...insofar as both are ultimately human reality."<sup>18</sup> Thus, in opposition to Nakamura and Maezumi/Cook, Waddell/Abe proclaim Dôgen's expression to represent a paradoxical standpoint which at once fully recaptures and transforms the significance of emotion in Buddhist realization, although the translation itself does not necessarily convey the perspective espoused in the commentary.

## IV. Conclusions: The Multidimensionality of Impermanence

In this section, I will show that the fundamental ambiguity of the sentence in question--and the controversy in interpretation to which it gives rise--is both grounded and reconciliable in terms of Dôgen's multidimensional understanding of impermanence. The translations previously examined seem to fall into three interpretive models:

1. The position of Nakamura and Maezumi/Cook that the fourth sentence advocates the need for man's thorough negation of his emotions, which egoistically and self-defeatingly *cause* the contingent flux that in turn perpetuates volitional bondage. According to this view, the final sentence repesents an unenlightened perspective in contrast to Dôgen's acceptance and restatement of traditional doctrine in the first three sentences.

2. The view espoused by Masutani, Tamaki, and Tanahashi that in the fourth sentence Dôgen accentuates man's continuing existential confrontation with and aesthetically-attuned sorrow concerning the pervasive reality of impermanence, an emotional response used advantageously to awaken the "Buddha-seeking mind" in pursuit of enlightenment. Dôgen thus deepens previous doctrine by warning that it must not be understood substantively or eternalistically but in terms of incessant vicissitude--despite apparent Buddhist truths, genuine realization is experienced by means of loss and regret, dismay and chagrin.

3. The third interpretation, indicated by the Waddell/Abe commentary (if not necessarily by the translation itself), suggests that Dôgen here challenges and reorients previous Mahayana expressions by disclosing an absolute *equality* of longing and no-longing, regret and no-regret as spontaneous expressions of impermanence. Grounded in the detachment of selfless realization, emotional response is as justifiable and illuminative as the inevitable rise and fall of transient phenomena so long as it overcomes itself and remains free of substance-fixation.

What is the relation between the respective interpretations? Are they complementary or contradictory? Is the third position the opposite of the first or somehow compatible with it? It is possible to show that the ambiguity of the sentence is not hopelessly inconclusive by analyzing two other significant passages from the "Genjôkôan" fascicle, which help clarify the issues of selfhood and momentariness raised by the opening paragraph.

The first passage deals with the role of the self in the quest for enlightenment:

To study the Buddha Way is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be authenticated through all dharmas. To be authenticated through all dharmas is to cast off body-mind of self and others.<sup>19</sup>

Dôgen seems to indicate three levels of self-understanding in this passage. The first level, implicitly conveyed, is that of a separation or barrier between self and Buddhism. From the ordinary or unenlightened standpoint, the Buddha Way is seen as something substantive and objective, an entity to be attained. Second, Dôgen establishes an intimate relation between the Way and selfhood. Not a conceptualizable and acquirable goal, the Way is sought in and through introspection and personal experience. The third level points to the fundamental paradox that self-learning necessarily involves selfforgetfulness, inner evaluation is achieved in terms of outward manifestations. Thus, self and other, subject and object are ultimately identifiable yet allow for infinite differentiation.

The next passage explains the meaning and structure of the impermanent moment in tems of the doctrine of the "abiding dharma-position"  $(j\hat{u}-h\hat{o}i)$ , and also allows for three levels of interpretation:

Firewood is reduced to ash and cannot become firewood again. So, one should not hold the view that ash is succeeding and firewood is preceding. One must know that firewood abides in the dharma-position of firewood [of which] there is preceding and succeeding. Although there is before and after, it is cut off from before and after.<sup>20</sup>

The first level of momentariness implied by the passage is that before and after, past and future, and life and death are seen as enduring entities in opposition to each other. The next level suggests that before and after are simultaneous and interdependent stages of impermanent phenomena. The third level again represents the paradoxical viewpoint that the dharmaposition possesses and yet is cut off from before and after. Just as the firewood is completely manifest in itself without reference to what precedes and succeeds it, the impermanent moment is spontaneous yet simultaneously inclusive of all possibilities, independent yet interdependent with the temporal phases of the totality of phenomena.

In both cases, Dôgen expresses a threefold understanding which also seems to echo the opening sentences of the first paragraph of the fascicle. The three levels are: a dualistic standpoint: an interdependent and nonsubstantive perspective; and finally a paradoxical identity-in-difference that reveals the middle path unbound by, yet giving rise to, all polarities. The relation among these dimensions seems to be one of sublation rather than negation, and of paradox rather than contradiction. That is, the levels do not contradict but tend to deepen and expand upon one another so that the third is the most comprehensive stance, even while it transcends the previous two. Dôgen suggests such a multiperspectival theory of truth in "Genjôkôan" by the Vasubandhu-influenced example of someone who rides a boat in a mountainless sea and assumes that the ocean is a circle. From this particular vantage point at the time, the ocean may legitimately appear round, but to a fish the ocean looks like a palatial dwelling and to a deva it seems to be a jewelled necklace. None of these viewpoints should be negated as wrong, but each is one-sided, relative and misleading if taken in an isolated context. The truth of the situation can only be appropriated through an holistic outlook that is not limited to any particular perspective. "To understand the variety of perspectives, we must know that the virtue of the mountains and sea is limitlessly extending beyond apparent circularity or angularity, and that there are worlds in every direction."21

Dôgen's multidimensional and multiperspectival vision, expressed in the first three sentences of the opening paragraph and demonstrated in the analyses of self and dharma-position, can now resolve the ambiguity of the sentence in question because the three interpretive models of the sentence are grounded in the multidimensionality of impermanence. The first interpretation suggests the dualistic view of impermanence seen as the human attitude of fragility and uncertainty about the coming and going of unstable things. Just as self is misguidedly severed from the objectified Way and before and after are similarly hypostatized, one considers oneself as a

single entity who must resist the flux of other entities or lose a grasp of one's The limitation of the translation which evaluates this as the only ego. dimension of impermanence is that it interpets emotional response toward transiency as the actual cause of impermanence. Emotions, however, do not create the pervasive and perpetual process of impermanence, although it is true that they may aggravate suffering by not comprehending the nonsubstantive ground of mujô. Yet the distinction between cause and response, evanescence and self-imposed bondage must be highlighted by the translation in order to divulge the multiplicity of dimensions. If the sentence were only intended to imply the unenlightened standpoint it would probably have been more effective at the outset of the paragraph (to illustrate the problem) than at the conclusion (where it suggests a resolution). Nevertheless, that dimension should not be fully discounted; it is just not complete in itself.

The second model of translation is more comprehensive than the first, for it suggests the intimate connection between subjectivity and realization. When self and Way and before and after are understood in terms of their unity, the experience of longing and regret should be interpeted as a necessary and essential stage in the quest for the termination of suffering through awakening to non-self. This viewpoint could, however, create the impression that for Dôgen an aesthetic sensitivity to vicissitude and loss is spiritually sufficient in itself. Emotional response to transiency is only legitimate, however, when it leads beyond itself to realization of nonsubstantiality.

The third interpretation shows the fundamental paradox of the deepest dimension of impermanence--the level at which each and every manifestation (genjô) of natural phenomena and human response are ultimately and paradoxically identifiable in disclosing a realization of the riddle (kôan) of impermanent/nonsubstantial existence. In the "Busshô" fascicle, Dôgen refers to this essential standpoint as mujô-busshô (impermanence-Buddha-nature), another paradoxical doctrinal means of resolving his initial soteriological dilemma. Just as self-learning is fulfilled through self-forgetfulness, and just as the dharma-position encompasses and yet is cut off from before and after, Zen enlightenment includes and is free from longing and regret; it contains both an aversion and a profound resignation to suffering as well as a desire for release without expectation or attachment. Intense emotional attunement spontaneously disturbed by sorrow and simultaneously detached from the tribulations of evanescence, independent of egoistic clinging and interdependently linked to the suffering experienced by all beings, is the basis of the initial and sustained resolve that

seeks to cultivate and renew enlightenment beyond the (statically conceived of) attainment of enlightenment.

If the three dimensions of impermanence<sup>22</sup> conveyed by the final sentence of the paragraph mirror the multiple perspectives expressed in the first three sentences, what does it contribute? In highlighting the pervasiveness of impermanence poetically, the sentence seems at once to undercut traditional Tendai doctrine by warning against and overcoming eternalist or substantive attachments that had plagued Japanese Buddhist practice, and to fulfill and surpass previous notions through a poetic evocation of the contrasting shades and textures of emotional struggle. The sentence does not state a truth that is reducible to formula, but naturalistically conveys the disturbing and inspiring encounters at the basis of the quest for truth. Here Dôgen expresses the religio-aesthetic category of sabi--the paradox of pursuing release yet finding it directly though both ephemeral beauty and lyric melancholy rather than philosophical reflection, from which standpoint the lonelinenss of emotional response is seen as the fulfilled locus of spiritual renewal. When one opposes the flux by wishfully seeking a state of immutability or stagnation, Dôgen points out in the final sentence, the result tends to be just the reverse in that flowers still fall even more painfully than before. The same dilemma confronts both those who claim to have overcome their passions and those who have not yet reflected on their problematic self-centeredness. Dôgen's phrase thus recalls Saigyô's waka: "A heart subdued/Yet poignant sadness (aware)/So deeply felt;/The snipe flies over the marsh/As autumn dusk descends."<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, truly to penetrate impermanence as the manifestation of nonsubstantive reality  $(genj\partial k\partial an)$  terminates neither the perpetual scattering of blossoms nor the haunting and sorrowful atmosphere evanescence generates. Impermanence as  $genj\partial k\partial an$ , which is neither strictly subjective nor objective although it includes the interdependence of both realms, persists regardless of how one feels about it. To accord genuinely with  $genj\partial k\partial an$  is at once to accept uncompromisingly and resign oneself to the flux and to struggle urgently against the grief it causes by seeking realization of non-self. The fundamental paradox of impermanence at the third and deepest level is that even the effort to overcome self must be abandoned through uncompromising renunciation, but self cannot be cast off without continual aesthetic-emotional attunement to the sorrow from which it seeks release.

Therefore, the final sentence of the opening paragraph expresses the issue of Dôgen's "primal question" (as framed in *Fukanzazengi*: what is the need for renewed practice if Buddha-nature is immanent?) but from the

perspective of having resolved--while still remaining deeply disturbed by--that concern. It articulates the initial and naive yet profound longing for release which he and all Buddhist seekers share, suggesting a distinct value judgement about what should be prevented (flowers are preferable to weeds) as well as the sense of futility when this effort falls short in the face of impermanence (weeds still grow). The sentence also conveys a paradoxical equalization of sustained despair in that it stimulates continuing realization and is grounded in universal nonsubstantiality.

The sentence could be rewritten as the following: "Even so, to learn the Dharma is to be sorrowful about transiency. To be sorrowful is to transcend sorrow (as a source of attachment) and to realize impermanence as the nonsubstantiality of all phenomena." But, the complexity and depth of the sentence lies in its utter simplicity. It is literally a kôan because it presents a disturbing and puzzling ambiguity whereby question and answer, problematic and resolution, speech and silence are unified. It also expresses what Dôgen seems to mean by the term genjôkôan as the fundamental dimension of impermanence--the full and unimpeded manifestation of each occasion in which one encounters, is moved by, and seeks to subdue the effects of transiency.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Dôgen, *Shôbôgenzô*, 2 volumes, ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972), I, p. 33. For a complete and generally excellent translation of the "Genjôkôan" fascicle, see Norman Waddell and Abe Masao's version in *The Eastern Buddhist*, vii/1, pp. 129-40. This rendering will be discussed in the course of the essay.

<sup>2</sup> Because of the complexity and difficulty of Dôgen's Sino-Japanese writing, many recent gendaiyaku or translations into modern Japanese have appeared. These are not necessarily intended to be a strict translation, but a combination translation-commentary with additional notes or interpretive materials; generally they are accompanied by the original text sometimes on the same page for easy reference. The translations of the gendaiyaku into English are mine. For a critical examination of the relation between some English translations of Dôgen and the gendaiyaku on which they tend to rely, see Thomas Kasulis, "The Zen Philosopher: A Review article on Dôgen scholarship in English," Philosophy East and East, xviii/3, pp. 353-73.

<sup>3</sup> Two noted commentators on Japanese aesthetics, Nishio Minoru (in *Dôgen to Zeami*, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1967) and Karaki Junzô (*Mujô*, Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1967) have attempted to relate Dôgen's philosophical and religious expressions to the Japanese literary (including Court poetry) tradition in which he was raised and trained, but which he ultimately renounced in order to pursue the Buddhist Dharma. They reach essentially different conclusions. Nishio stresses that Dôgen never fully abandoned aesthetics, which must not be overlooked in interpreting texts such as "Genjôkôan." Karaki maintains that Dôgen's "metaphysics of impermanence" (*mujô no keijijôgaku*) surpasses the sentimentality of the Court tradition. For a fuller discussion see chapter 6 in this volume and my *A Blade of Grass: Japanese Poetry and Aesthetics in Dôgen Zen* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989). My view is that this controversy itself points to the creative tension in Dôgen's thought--he relied on poetics for the power of his writing yet disdained idle or self-indulgent aestheticism.

<sup>4</sup> "Genjôkôan" as used by Dôgen seems to mean "complete and spontaneous manifestation" (genjô) of "Zen realization of true suchness" (kôan), and

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should be contrasted with another possible reading as that which is "readymade" or merely immanent, which suggests the pantheistic heresy Dôgen repeatedly refutes. The term was used by earlier Zen masters who influenced Dôgen including Hung-chih, Yüan-wu, and Ta-hui.

<sup>5</sup> The first two fascicles are "Bendôwa" (not included in some editions of *Shôbôgenzô*) and "Mahakannyaharamitsu." For a chronology of Dôgen's life and writings see Hee-jin Kim, *Dôgen Kigen--Mystical Realist* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), pp. 309-11.

<sup>6</sup> For an examination of Dôgen's poetic production and involvements, see Ôkubo Dôshû, *Dôgen zenji-den no kenkyû* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1966), pp. 358-62.

7 Shôbôgenzô, I, p. 257.

<sup>8</sup> Dôgen, Fukanzazengi, Dôgen zenji zenshû, ed. Ôkubo Dôshû (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1969 and 1970), II, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Shôbôgenzô, II, p. 85.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., I, pp. 35-38.

<sup>11</sup> Dôgen, Eihei Koroku, Dôgen zenji zenshû, II, p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> Nakamura Sôichi, Gendaiyaku Shôbôgenzô, 4 vols. (Tokyo: Seishin shobô, 1970), I, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Tanahashi Ikkô (of Zen bunkagakuin hen), Gendaiyaku Shôbôgenzô (Tokyo: Seishin shobô, 1959), p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Masutani Fumio, Zenyaku Shôbôgenzô, 8 vols. (Tokyo: Kadakawa shoten, 1970) I, p. 74.

<sup>15</sup> Tamaki Kôshirô, *Dôgen shû* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1968), pp. 12-21.

<sup>16</sup> Hakuyu Taizan Maezumi and Francis Cook, *The Way of Everyday Life* (Los Angeles: Center Publications, 1979) (pages unnumbered).

<sup>17</sup> Waddell and Abe, "Genjôkôan," p. 133.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

19 Shôbôgenzô, I, p. 36.

20 Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 37.

<sup>22</sup> The three interpretive levels or dimensions would roughly correspond to the following categories of the religio-aesthetic tradition: *hakanashi* (fleeting and fragile), *mujô-kan* (sense of impermanence), and *mujô-kan* (clear observation of impermanence as nonsubstantiality). [See chapter 4 above.]

<sup>23</sup> For the original Japanese and another translation, see William R. LaFleur, *Mirror for the Moon* (New York: New Directions, 1977), p. 24.

# PART THREE: COMPARATIVE STUDIES



Λ.

### PHILOSOPHY FOR AN 'AGE OF DEATH':

# The Critique of Science and Technology in Heidegger and Nishitani

#### I. The Question of Science and Technology

#### A. Convergence or Criticism?

Responding to what Tanabe Hajime has called the current "age of death,"<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger and Nishitani Keiji present an ontological critique of the origins and deficiencies of science and technology. They analyze and attempt to overcome the apparent global hegemony and potentially catastrophic destructiveness of the scientific era. Heidegger and Nishitani charge that science and technology represent a derivative or objectifying development of primordial truth that partially expresses yet inevitably conceals its source. Both thinkers insist that modern science be transformed or appropriately recovered by the disclosure of an ontology that is nonsubstantive and nonobjectifiable in revealing holistic, contextual events consisting of interrelated, functional components rather than particularized, independent entities. The ontology must also be nonconceptualizable and nondifferentiable by encompassing the conventional oppositions of humans and nature, subject and object, and life and death.

In examining and evaluating the philosophical criticism of science and technology offered by Heidegger and Nishitani, it is helpful to situate their views in relation to the convergence or parallelist thesis, which represents a radically different approach to the dialogue between science and philosophy or religious thought. The parallelist standpoint argues that there is a profound and fundamental convergence of the seemingly disparate fields of science and religion. Many of the conceptual developments of twentieth century science have replaced the conventional mechanistic and materialistic Newtonian-Cartesian model with a dynamic and holistic understanding of reality. These new approaches include the Bohr-Heisenberg quantum physics principles of complementarity and uncertainty; Bell's theorem of instantaneous change in widely separated systems; Prigogine's theory of dissipative structures; the Bohm-Pribham postulation of a holographic macro/microcosm; Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis; and the 'butterfly effect' in the science of Chaos. Furthermore, recent interpretations of scientific methodology, such as the uncertainty principle, Godel's theorem of incomplete systems, Kuhn's analysis of paradigm shifts, and Polanyi's emphasis on the personal role of the knower in science, stress the essential function of consciousness in scientific investigations.

The combined impact of these conceptual and methodological developments, according to the convergence view, is to overcome many of the traditional barriers concerning subjectivity and objectivity that have separated science and religion. Previously, science was seen as striving for objective, universal, and predictable knowledge independent of the subject, while the goal of religion was considered subjective, personal, and variable experience unbound by objectivity. The convergence thesis, however, argues that science necessarily contains a subjective component. That is reflected in what John Wheeler calls "the participatory universe,"<sup>2</sup> or the notion that reality is not something external "out there," but an underlying unity simultaneously involving observer and observed, and mind and matter. Because of such a breakthrough, the structure and function of consciousness as much as of the material world can be examined with reference to the principles of quantum physics.<sup>3</sup>

The convergence theorists find significant resonances and parallels between the holistic paradigm of the participatory universe (and other models) and the doctrines of traditional mysticism and Eastern thought as well as contemporary process theology and phenomenology. Renee Weber, for example, argues that the paradigm shift in modern physics is radical and paradoxical in that "the more nearly physics approaches the twenty-first century, the closer it seems to get to the cosmology of the remote past. Thus, the scientific discoveries of our own time are moving us toward ideas indistinguishable from those held by the sages and seers of India and Greece."<sup>4</sup> In a similar vein, Karl Pribham asserts that the new approaches of science (holography in particular):

> ...represent the first instance since the time of Galileo that a scientific discovery, in and of itself, has led to a closer relationship with man's spiritual nature. In the past, science has been seen as something entirely separate from the spiritual nature of man, which has been taken care of by the esoteric traditions--of religion, not science. Now, with a paradigm shift in our understanding, scientists are face-to

face with the same traditions that have motivated the peoples of the East and have influenced Western philosophy as well.<sup>5</sup>

In marked contrast to the convergence view stands the ontological critique by Heidegger and Nishitani. The problems generated by scientific investigation and technological application cannot be separated for either thinker from the issues of nihilism and subjectivity in relation to temporality and nothingness as keys to understanding the inauthenticity of modern times. Yet the question of how science has arisen so recently in the history of civilization, but spread so rapidly and irresistibly to engulf the entire world, seems to have a special significance and hermeneutic priority for several reasons. First, science is an overriding philosophical issue in that it is considered not merely one factor, but the central problematic of the current era. Heidegger and Nishitani seem to agree with the latter's Kyoto-school senior colleague, Tanabe, who maintains that society now endures "an age of death" due to some of the devastating effects of technological advances.

In an age of death, according to Tanabe, dying is no longer just the unavoidable and imminent possibility of the impossibility of the self, but rather the constant and all-pervasive threat of self-created destruction.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the very fabric and structure of existence appears altered whereby death is not an inherent part of the process and growth of living beings, but an unregulated humanly-created intervention which may deplete or destroy the forms of life. As Jonathan Schell observes, "Seen as a planetary event, the rising tide of human mastery over nature has brought a categorical increase in the power of death on earth."7 In such a light, Heidegger identifies technology as the essential and decisive factor underlying all other dilemmas and conflicts. It constitutes a profound and "supreme danger," he says, in these "needy times" to which "everywhere we remain unfree and chained...whether we passionately affirm or deny it."8 Nishitani stresses that because science has "painted the true portrait of the world as a desert uninhabitable by living beings" by its affirming lifeless matter or death, "the problem of religion [which affirms life] and science is the most fundamental problem facing contemporary man."9

Conversely, science for Heidegger and Nishitani is a potentially selfsurpassing issue. Both thinkers suggest that the ideological encounter with science as the extreme limit of manipulative and distorted ontology may paradoxically lead, through a radical reversal based on meditative thought, to the recovery of a genuine and regenerating experiential philosophy surpassing the deficiencies of metaphysics. Technology challenges us to overcome it by rediscovering the very primordial ground it veils. As Heidegger suggests, it is precisely within the danger of technology that the possibility of a "saving grace" emerges out of a new disclosure of Being. Nishitani argues that the conflict between the approaches of life (religion) and death (science) points to the need for the experience of the Zen realization of absolute nothingness (or what Zen tradition calls the "Great Death" of self-abandonment) beyond these oppositions.

#### B. Philosophy for an 'Age of Death'

Science for Heidegger and Nishitani is thus an eminently concrete and actual concern, a factual as well as factical or ontological matter that demands the vigilant attentiveness of thought to confront its paramount challenge. Like Tanabe, who cites the threat of nuclear holocaust as the inspiration for his "philosophy of death," Heidegger and Nishitani seem to be responding to a variety of environmental and social dilemmas caused by technology. Both thinkers, however, insist that they do not attempt to offer conventional spiritual, moral, or ecological remedies for specific issues. Rather, they focus almost exclusively on the question of uncovering the ontological foundations of the seemingly limitless destructive capacity of technology which is manifested in innumerable particular problems.

It is, therefore, only on the basis of genuine factical disclosure that the factual problems can be understood, analyzed, and resolved. Heidegger emphasizes that "the essence of technology is by no means anything technological. Thus we shall never experience our relationship to the essence of technology so long as we merely conceive and push forward the technological, put up with it, or evade it."<sup>10</sup> Nishitani makes almost the identical assertion in regard to science: "The essence of science is not 'scientific.' The essence of science is something to be brought into question in the same realm where the essence of man becomes a question to man himself."<sup>11</sup> Thus the question of science and technology can only be resolved through a disclosure of the nonsubstantive essence of reality.

Similarly, both thinkers maintain that although the power and conflicts generated by technology have surfaced only in recent times, they are not "modern" in a chronological, or linear, historical perspective. The roots of science and technology are deeply embedded within the origins of the Western metaphysical and theological traditions. The very way that Western thought has been founded and developed on the basis of substantive and objectifying ontology has inevitably and unavoidably led to the technological domination and exploitation of the world. Overcoming technology thus requires what Heidegger calls the "step back" to the long-concealed source of modern conflicts. The currently perceived consequences are resolved by working through the presuppositions that lie hidden within the ontological framework of the problem.

In many ways, the approaches of Heidegger and Nishitani are overlapping. Both thinkers, for example, identify Nietzsche's analysis of the various shades of nihilism as the critical philosophical turn which, in trying to point beyond the entanglements of the Western tradition, reveals its problematic roots. Their views are also somewhat complementary. Heidegger's leading question is the meaning of Being itself and its unfolding destiny. In that regard, he makes an important hermencutic distinction between science and technology. Although Heidegger often uses the terms interchangeably, he argues that technology understood in the early Greek sense of *techne* is not an actual consequence of science, as conventionally assumed, but ontologically precedes and gives rise to science as a particular mode of the revealing of Being which simultaneously conceals this source.<sup>12</sup> Nishitani's primary question is, "What is Religion?" (the title of his major work),<sup>13</sup> which he attempts to clarify by contrasting the teleological worldview of traditional religion with the mechanistic one of science. Thus. Heidegger's method is predominantly phenomenological in relation to ontology, by focusing on the process of the revealing/concealing of Being. Nishitani's concern is existential, in viewing science as springing from a particular mode of human intentionality implicit in the Christian view of subjectivity.

Yet, the standpoints of Heidegger and Nishitani are also in conflict. Nishitani claims to have achieved from the Zen perspective a more thoroughgoing and comprehensive resolution of the question of science and technology that Heidegger, by his own admission, has left unclear and unanswerable. Both thinkers maintain that the problem must be solved from within its Western source. Nishitani proposes to introduce Zen Buddhism not as an outsider's perspective, but as the paradigmatic and quintessential philosophical/religious view of the ontological structure and existential fulfillment of human existence. Because Heidegger and Nishitani apparently influenced one another, this comparison is an unusual example of East-West thought unbound by some of the typical historical and intentional gaps that often separate representative thinkers. Yet it is because of their personal and ideological affinity that the views of Heidegger and Nishitani should be evaluated not in isolation, but in the context of an encounter with the theorists of the convergence view, whose claims seem to represent a significant philosophical response and challenge.

Despite their discussions of science, Heidegger and Nishitani do not deal directly with the conceptual developments of modern physics which, according to the convergence theorists, do express the kind of nonsubstantive and nonobjectifying holistic ontology that Heidegger and Nishitani espouse. Aside from a few pointed references by Heidegger to the writings of Max Planck and Werner Heisenberg, neither thinker confronts the paradigms of science beyond the long-surpassed Newtonian mechanics. Should the convergence view prove accurate, the ontological critique of science by Heidegger and Nishitani would be undermined, if not altogether refuted. On the other hand, their criticism of the arising and effects of technology may constitute a vital corrective to some of the apparently naive assertions of the This paper will first reconstruct and compare the convergence theorists. approaches of Heidegger and Nishitani to what Tanabe has called the "age of death," and then evaluate their critique in light of the convergence view with regard to the relation between subjectivity and objectivity in science and philosophy of religion. The concluding section will offer some suggestions for developing an "ethics of uncertainty" on the basis of this comparison.

#### II. The Critique by Heidegger and Nishitani

# A. Heidegger's Analysis of Technology and Being

The aim of Heidegger's analysis of the origin of technology is to show how the scientific objectification and manipulation of entities in-theworld takes place on the primordially nonsubstantive and nonconceptualizable domain of Being. Originally, Heidegger argues in Being and Time, the world is not an object to be met and used, but the nonobjectifiable and nondifferentiated transcendental condition for the interaction of man and things. "Transcendence does not consist in objectifying," he writes, "but is presupposed by it."<sup>14</sup> The fundamentally unbifurcated state of Being-in-the-world is initially breached, however, by the circumspective concern of Dasein's involvement with equipment, which is based on a specific kind of forgetting the self for the sake of manipulating something. Therefore, the decisive factor in the historical development of physics is neither the observation of facts nor the application of mathematical principles in determining natural processes, but "the way in which Nature herself is mathematically projected."<sup>15</sup> Although Heidegger's approach in Being and Time is somewhat neutral and descriptive, he at least raises the implication that science tends to overshadow the transcendence from which it

arises, and thus veils the true meaning of Being through a fixation with beings that are present-at-hand.

In his later writings, including the essays included in *The Question Concerning Technology*, Heidegger's criticism of science becomes more direct and forceful. Yet, he now maintains that the "prior project" of man's understanding of nature is not based on human intentionality or willfulness, but derives from a particular historical mode of the revelatory interaction of Being and man resulting in an untruth that conceals but remains a part of truth. Thus, Heidegger rejects an instrumental view of technology as a humanly-created means to achieving a certain end. The origin and essence of technology, he argues, lies in certain deeply-rooted tendencies of the Western metaphysical tradition which have been completed and fulfilled in modern times by a representational thinking that causes what he terms the network of Enframing (*Gestell*). Enframing sets up and challenges nature to yield a kind of energy that can be stored and transmitted separately from its source.

Although technology has reached this culminative form just recently, it is the outcome of the initial fateful decision concerning the Greek view of *techne* which determined the course of the onto-theological tradition. In its initial usage, *techne* signified knowledge, not as the accumulation of information through observation, but the active accomplishment or manifesting realization that brings forth the illuminative power (*physis*) of an entity.<sup>16</sup> The genuine meaning of *techne* is closer to art (fine art and handicraft as well as philosophical reflection) than science or technology because it neither passively investigates nor deliberately disrupts beings, but allows them to reside nonobjectively in their true nonsubstantive attunement to Being.

At an early stage in Greek thought, according to Heidegger's interpretation, the original meaning of *techne* was transmuted to the sense of an opposition to the world order (*dike*) that seeks to master and eventually control and dominate it. This first turn at the dawn of thinking inevitably led to the modern development of Cartesian subjectivity and Nietzschean nihilism characterized by representational thinking that holds up (or represents) the world as a image before oneself conceived as the subject in opposition to the object. Representational thinking is two times separated from genuine illumination. Its inevitable consequence is Enframing, which sees nature only as a reservoir of energy at man's disposal.

Heidegger illustrates the difference between *techne* and Enframing by contrasting the traditional windmill or water wheel and the modern hydroelectric plant.<sup>17</sup> Although each seeks to harness the energy of nature to serve human ends, the former remain dependent on and illuminative of nature much as a work of art. The wheel transfers the natural motion of the river. Each wheel is designed in way uniquely suited to the particular site, allowing the ground and water to remain part of an unsullied landscape. The power plant, illustrating Enframing, unlocks and stores up physical energies transformed from the river that are then deposited in another location unrelated to the source. All such plants are built with a uniformity that may be harmful to the natural supply, reflecting a fixation with preserving the quantity of released material rather than a concern for the quality of human participation in nature. Thus, Heidegger suggests that the devastating power of atomic weaponry only brings to light what has already happened since the onset of representational thinking: the destruction of the essential nature of thinghood.<sup>18</sup>

Since technology as Enframing is not the result of man's will, one can neither simply wish it away nor escape from it. The era of Enframing must be painfully endured as a fateful domain that may subside on its own, just as one gets over pain and grief. Heidegger indicates that the only possible relief from the danger is to leave oneself open--through meditative thinking, or poetic releasement (*Gelassenheit*) to the primordial call of Being--to respond to a more fruitful and authentic disclosure that will restore the original aesthetic and nonsubstantive meaning of *techne*. Because any indication of the form the revelation will take or the way to prepare for it lies within concealment, man must be resigned to spontaneously anticipating its advency in a resolute though subdued manner.

#### B. Nishitani's Analysis of Science and Religion

Nishitani seeks to discover the essential nature of religion by establishing a philosophical encounter between the teleological view of traditional religion and the mechanistic view of science. This project is undertaken in light of the ontologically nonobjectifiable and epistemologically nonconceptualizable "groundless ground" of the Zen experience of absolute nothingness.<sup>19</sup> Nishitani argues that of all thought systems in the world Zen constitutes a self-surpassing or excelsior  $(k\hat{o}j\hat{o})$ religio-philosophical standpoint which constantly rises above partiality or particularity, including its own rootedness in traditional Mahayana Buddhist doctrine, to assume a universal and transcendental perspective.<sup>20</sup> In the modern era, which demands an exchange between religions to meet the challenge of science, the ideological flexibility and independence of Zen make it not just another religion, but the paradigmatic experience of

existential rebirth to one's primordial nature or the Formless Self of absolute nothingness that allows the dialogical process to take place.

The aim and purpose of religion, according to Nishitani, has become questionable because of the anti-religious standpoint of science which views religion as obsolete and dysfunctional. Yet, the early twentieth century optimism concerning science, which at first threatened to replace traditional religion as an explanation of the origin and meaning of the world, has since the advent of the nuclear age proven false or misguided. Religion, which may have initially responded by condemning or ignoring science and then reluctantly accepting it as an alternative viewpoint, has begun to face an even deeper challenge: overcoming the inadequacies and potential devastation that science and technology cause. Once challenged, however, traditional religion cannot reclaim its position of moral superiority without undergoing a thoroughly penetrating and transformative self-analysis of its own foundations and relation to science.

The central problem confronting traditional religion is due to the uncertainty and inconsistency of Christianity pertaining to science. Nishitani argues that Christianity is responsible for the arising of science without being able to offer a solution to the dangers science creates because it does not understand its own ontological ground, and cannot do so without an existential transformation to absolute nothingness. The mechanistic worldview of science asserts the lifelessness of the cosmos and thus a preoccupation with death, in contrast to the religious affirmation of life, soul, and spirit. Yet the foundations of science are based on a particular view of self and reality which is paradoxically rooted in the Christian ideology with which science conflicts. That is, science arose because of a fundamental contradiction within Christianity that advocates salvation through the total dependence of man upon God and divine will, thereby suppressing genuine self-realization, and yet--because of the emphasis on such a reliance--does not allow for full freedom from egocentricity. This leads to a sense of restlessness and unfulfillment in the individual subject, creating an underlying shortsightedness of self-interest that continues to haunt both religion and science as an over-valuation of objectivity, or a manipulation and exploitation of the world seen as a collection of objectifiable entities. This tendency arises from yet negates the heart of Christian faith.

Thus, science and religion are a reflection of relative or partial nothingness, or can be seen as fundamentally nihilistic in the Nietzschean sense. Nishitani, however, criticizes both Nietzsche's doctrine of the will to power and Sartre's atheistic humanism as expressions of inauthentic subjectivity which do not surpass relative nothingness. The overcoming of the tension between subject and object requires a breakthrough to a realization of the essential nondifferentiation of self and other, man and nature, consciousness and world that casts off nihilistic willfulness. Nishitani attempts to apply the Zen perspective of absolute nothingness to an overcoming of the ideological limitations in the scientific world-view. He examines several noted Zen kôan or philosophical riddles concerning the mythical eschatology of the great fire, which is symbolically analogous to the imminent possibility of the cosmic conflagration that science and technology can wreak.<sup>21</sup> In the first kôan (originally from the Keitoku Dentôroku), a disciple asks the teacher, "When the great fire flares up and the cosmos is destroyed, I wonder, will 'it' perish or will 'it' not perish?" The teacher replies, "It will perish." According to Nishitani, this response suggests that the "it" refers to the inner dimension of self-realization rather than the external universe, thereby giving an existential interpretation to the myth whereby the scientific and/or apocalyptic possibility is understood as the existential actuality of the here-and-now encounter with nothingness.

In a similar kôan, the teacher responds to the question, "How is it as the time of the all-consuming fire?" by saying, "An unspeakably awesome cold." The paradoxical reply, Nishitani argues, indicates that the standpoint of absolute nothingness may serve as a basis for the unification of the two contradictory elements of teleology and mechanism, objectivity and personal investigation so that they interpenetrate each other as "a wooden man sings and a stone woman dances." Although Nishitani does not offer a specific illustration of a Zen-oriented technology, he stresses that the reconciliation of science and religion requires an existential transformation whose necessary ethical corollary is the bodhisattva's selfless compassion based on the interdependence of self and other by virtue of absolute nothingness.

# III. Comparison and Evaluation

#### A. Heidegger and Nishitani

Heidegger and Nishitani seem to concur in identifying the reasons that science and technology are inherently deficient, but diverge somewhat in their proposals for overcoming the "age of death." The central agreement concerning the roots of the problematic is their analysis of the relation between the scientific investigation and manipulation of existence and the essence or primordial basis of reality. According to both thinkers, the nonsubstantive and nonobjectifiable nature of reality was overlooked in the initial stages of the history of Western philosophy and religion by the ontotheological tendency to objectification. They agree that Nietzschean nihilism and Sartrean atheism are symptoms of, rather than a release from, the entanglements of inauthentic thought.

Thus science, for all its apparent hegemony, stands precariously as an untruth or derivative development that at once rests on but has severed itself from the truth or primordial standpoint. Science is cut off from the essence and riddled with contradictions so that it is incapable of either making assertions about or questioning the foundations of its own development. Because science not only fails to know its own basis, but tends to make the false claim that it alone does comprehend the structure of reality, it causes man's separation from his essential nature. In this light, Heidegger reinterprets Heisenberg's lament that in the current era, "for the first time in the course of history modern man on this earth now confronts According to Heidegger the real contradiction of the himself alone..."22 contemporary human situation reflects a deeper problem. While man. distanced from nature by his objectification of it through technology, seems to encounter only his own will and desires, "In truth, however, precisely nowhere does man today any longer encounter himself, i.e., his essence."23

In attempting to show that science is not an enterprise independent of metaphysical and theological commitments, both thinkers argue that science must step beyond itself or be transformed by a transcendent experience either through Heidegger's acquiescent thinking or Nishitani's realization of absolute nothingness. Humans cannot expect and should not seek to master science since that would not constitute an authentic choice, but only a reaction to an inauthentic decision that had been made long ago in the very existence of science. At the same time, since science is an untruth related to truth as the concealment of the presence of Being in Heidegger, or as the expression of relative nothingness in Nishitani, humans cannot simply hide or run away from science. In order to transform or surpass science, humans must see through its basic claim of providing objectivity as a distorted reflection of objectification by disclosing the nonsubstantive ground without creating another subtle form of obstruction.

The central disagreement between Heidegger and Nishitani concerns the process for initiating and fulfilling this transformation. For Heidegger, release from Enframing will only come through a new disclosure of Being itself whose occurence cannot be predicted. Nishitani, on the other hand, maintains that overcoming science necessarily involves a complete and radical existential metanoesis. From Nishitani's perspective, Heideggerian acquiescent thinking may appear an overly reluctant or partially attained authentic subjective experience of absolute nothingness in which "the center is everywhere," and each individual is "making oneself into a nothingness in the service of all things."<sup>24</sup>

#### B. Encounter with Convergence Theorists

In order to clarify the distinction between Heidegger and Nishitani on the matter of personal realization, as well as to interpret the general significance of their critique of science, it is necessary to draw them into a philosophical encounter with the convergence theorists on the issue of subjectivity and objectivity. The basic opposition seems clear. Heidegger and Nishitani view science skeptically and pessimistically as a process of inherent objectification culminating in the destructiveness of the "age of death" of modern technology. The convergence view, however, sees science as breaking through objectification to an involvement in the participatory universe, which recaptures the essence of wisdom embodied in many of the mystical and philosophical traditions. Which of these approaches represents a more accurate and meaningful assessment of modern science? Is the convergence theory a naive affirmation of superficial parallels, or does it ironically fulfill Heidegger's prophecy of a redemptive turn of thought beyond the entanglements of the current era? On the other hand, do Heidegger and Nishitani overlook the holistic paradigms in post-Einstein physics that surpass Newtonian mechanics on which their criticism is largely focused? Or, do they expose an underlying philosophical deficiency in the convergence view?

An important similarity between Heidegger-Nishitani and the convergence theorists concerns the role of objectivity in science. According to both schools of thought, the conventional understanding of science as objective, or neutral and independent of subjectivity, is a dubious and selfdeceptive misconception that no longer applies. Heidegger and Nishitani attempt to demonstrate the onto-theological commitments underlying science and technology, which are never free of subjective assumptions and projections. The participatory paradigm of modern physics expresses a different interpretation of the new understanding of objectivity. For example, Heisenberg, whose principle of uncertainty was perhaps the initial interpretation of the fundamental connection of subject and object in scientific investigation, sees science as overcoming objectification: "Science no longer confronts nature as an objective observer, but sees itself as an actor in the interplay between man and nature....In other words, method and object can no longer be separated. The scientific world-view has ceased to be a scientific view in the true sense of the word."<sup>25</sup> Fritiof Capra further asserts. "This means that the classical ideal of an objective description is no longer valid."<sup>26</sup> Yet, the two camps evaluate the phenomenon of nonobjectivity from opposite perspectives. The convergence theorists maintain that science is establishing an holistic and nonsubstantive paradigm. Heidegger and Nishitani stress that the lack of objectivity reveals an underlying and inevitable process of objectification of substantive entities.

The key to understanding the divergent interpretations of objectivity is the question of the role of subjectivity. Both camps agree that science is not strictly objective because it contains a fundamental and indispensable subjective component. Yet, as the disparity between Heidegger and Nishitani on existential realization indicates, there are various aspects and levels of subjectivity that must be clearly distinguished in relation to objectivity. What does subjectivity mean in the participatory universe of the convergence view, and does it correspond to what either Heidegger or Nishitani suggest by the concept? In *Physics as Metaphor*, Roger S. Jones presents the following analysis of the role of subjectivity in his philosophical account of modern physics, which seems representative of the convergence theory:

By subjectivity, I am not referring to the effects on scientific thought of the individual tastes, preferences, and prejudices of scientists, which change with time, are influenced by peer pressures, and figure prominently in the formation of scientific paradigms. Rather, I mean the basic role that mind and the self play at some unfathomable level in the workings of the universe. Subjectivity in science has both a personal and impersonal aspect, and fundamentally I mean it to refer to the dependence of the physical world on consciousness. Mind and matter are not separate and distinct, but form an organic whole in my view. To distinguish a subjective from an objective viewpoint is ultimately illusory.<sup>27</sup>

Jones' passage highlights two levels of subjectivity in modern science: the personal and the impersonal. The first, or personal subjectivity, is the role of particular commitments that determine the formation and shifting of scientific paradigms. Jones neither dismisses nor denies the existence of this level, but discounts its importance in looking for what is considered a more significant and fundamental dimension. Heidegger and Nishitani, however, would stress that this personal aspect represents an inauthentic subjectivity, which is the basis of the decisions made individually and epochally that lead to the destructiveness of technology. Jones' tendency to overlook this level is telling because it reflects an unwillingness to come to terms with the basic deficiency in the development of science.

The second aspect of impersonal subjectivity is the interdependence of the object, nature, or matter and the subject, mind, or self--or the indispensable involvement of the subject in the holistic perceptional field. Heidegger and Nishitani would probably concur on the importance of the inseparability of subject and object, but insist that science cannot understand the true meaning of this level so long as it is falsely distinguished from the level of inauthentic subjectivity. If the subject is truly interconnected with the object in the most essential and "unfathomable" way, then subjectivity necessarily involves a personal or collective decision-making that reflects particular preferences and judgements. Jones' suggestion that there is an impersonal, or impartial and value-free, level of subjectivity tends to recreate the ontological deficiency of the earlier scientific paradigm that he and other convergence theorists are criticizing.

The main point from the Heidegger-Nishitani perspective, in contrast to the convergence view, is the existence of a third level of transpersonal or self-authenticating subjectivity. This dimension of existential fulfillment based on the complete realization of nonsubstantive and nonobjectifying ontology is not mentioned in Jones' passage, and with few exceptions (such as David Bohm's philosophy of the implicate order),<sup>28</sup> it remains unconsidered by the convergence theorists. Although Heidegger and Nishitani acknowledge the second level of subjectivity, or interconnectedness, they consider it secondary to and dependent on the first and third levels of inauthenticity and authenticity, respectively. For Heidegger-Nishitani, it is the possibility of authenticity which exposes the deficiency of inauthentic decisions, and allows for the transformation required to resolve the "age of death." Without an awareness of inauthenticity, authenticity can never be achieved. Conversely, unless there is an understanding of the need for and meaning of illumination, deficiency will be left unanalyzed. Nishitani appears clearer, or at least more emphatic, than Heidegger on the question of authentic subjective attainment. Whereas Heidegger counsels awaiting a new disclosure of Being, Nishitani stresses complete existential realization of absolute nothingness.

Thus, the philosophical encounter with the convergence view indicates that the focus of the Heidegger-Nishitani criticism seems to shift from the theory of science to the practice of using technology, or from the question of ontological paradigms to ethical behavior. That is, it appears that Heidegger and Nishitani--though this is not directly acknowledged by them-- are more concerned with uncovering the cause and effects of the ill-fated decisions underlying the applications of science than in debating the conceptual models of the new physics. Many of the leading modern scientists have also expressed concern for the problematics created by technology. For example, Heisenberg's discussion of the "consciousness of the danger of our situation"<sup>29</sup> is a direct influence on Heidegger's attitude toward science. Einstein, Bohr, and Oppenheimer,<sup>30</sup> among others, are well known for their warnings about the damaging impact and abuses of nuclear and other technologies. Capra succinctly highlights this danger: [The parallel between physics and mysticism] shows that the results of modern physics have opened up two very different paths to scientists to pursue. They may lead us--to put it in extreme terms--to the Buddha or to the Bomb, and it is up to each scientist to decide which path to take."<sup>31</sup>

On what basis can such a decision between the Buddha and the Bomb be made? According to Heisenberg, "Even if technology and science could be employed merely as a means to an end, the outcome depends upon whether the goals for whose attainment they are to be used are good ones. But the decision upon goals cannot be made within science and technology; it is made, if we are not to go wholly astray, at a point where our vision is directed upon the whole of man and the whole of reality, not merely on a small segment of this."<sup>32</sup> Heisenberg's concession that *the fundamental decisions about the use of technology must be made not from within science, but only through an holistic or transpersonal subjective vision*--encompassing "the whole of man and the whole of reality"--seems to verify the thrust of the Heidegger-Nishitani criticism of scientific authenticity.<sup>33</sup>

But the question can be raised: How convincing are Heidegger and Nishitani on the purpose and function of ethics in science? Both thinkers show that science lacks the attainment of authenticity as well as an awareness of its own inherent inauthenticity. Science cannot understand or direct itself because it fails to have a basis in existential fulfillment, and therefore approaches issues from a particularizing and objectifying rather than truly holistic standpoint. Yet, neither Heidegger nor Nishitani propose a concrete ethics to guide the actual decision-makers--scientists themselves--in the type of personal transformation necessary to deal with specific ecological and social issues both caused by and confronting technology. Heidegger consistently refuses throughout his career to develop an ethics.<sup>34</sup> But his insistence on resolving the ontological question before approaching ethical concerns may be a self-contradictory avoidance of the underlying meaning of subjectivity. Thus, his discussion of the contrast of the windmill and power plant risks the charge of naive or unrealistic romanticism. Although

Nishitani is somewhat clearer on the importance of authenticity in his evocation of the compassionate bodhisattva model, he does not translate this ideal into the formation of a contemporary ethical code, or provide concrete examples (unlike Heidegger) of how a Zen-oriented technology would function. Furthermore, neither thinker acknowledges the productive or liberating consequences of science and technology. Without a sensitivity to the actual benefits of science, their criticism may appear one-sided and partial.

# C. Conclusions: An "Ethics of Uncertainty"

The above encounter clarifies the significance of the difference between Heidegger and Nishitani concerning subjective realization. Nishitani's uncompromising stress on existential transformation seems crucial to the effectiveness of the overall critique of science. The convergence view of the participatory universe embracing the unity of observer and observed challenges and tends to undermine the Heidegger-Nishitani ontological criticism. It may even appear that Heidegger and Nishitani overlook or are unaware of the nonobjectifying paradigms of modern science. On a deeper level, however, the more persuasive criticism of science they offer is based on the fundamental and all-pervasive role of personal decision, or the choice between authentic and inauthentic subjectivity. This, in turn, seems to point to the priority of ethics over ontology, although that area of philosophical inquiry is not clearly developed by either thinker. While it may be unfair to the projects of Heidegger and Nishitani to expect an ethics in the conventional sense, it is incumbent on them to provide a "trans-ethical" perspective that at once goes beyond the factual level to the nonsubstantive essence of reality and returns to the concrete and specific historical world of decision where the hegemony of technology holds sway.

Since Heidegger and Nishitani do not offer an ethics, it may be necessary to turn to science itself for some ideas for developing an ethical theory in accord with the nonobjectifying paradigm. The fundamental principles of the "participatory universe"--the quantum principles of uncertainty and complementarity in the Bohr-Heisenberg Copenhagen school--could be cited in this regard. Such an approach would not violate the intentions of these philosophical scientists who stressed the far-reaching implications and applications of their notions extending beyond the realm of the atomic laboratory. Bohr, who argued that "so-called 'atomic phenomenona' ...differ in no way *qua* phenomena from any other phenomena,"<sup>35</sup> reflected on applying complementarity to the areas of biology, psychology, and epistemology, and articulated his theory in logical, experiential, and even natural terms in the hope of unveiling a grand "unity of knowledge."<sup>36</sup> Both he and Heisenberg were sensitive to the epistemological and linguistic issues involved in perceiving and articulating the structure of reality. Yet neither scientist has delved significantly into the area of ethics. Pressing their views in that direction is a demanding task outside the scope of this paper. The following comment is a preliminary suggestion in considering the kind of ethical stance that might resolve the issues raised by Heidegger and Nishitani.

The main argument of Heidegger-Nishitani is that science represents a false objectification based on inauthentic subjectivity without being aware of its deficiencies. Thus the first step in overcoming this drawback would be for science to acknowledge and accepts its flaws. This could be achieved by extending the principle of uncertainty. In an ethical context, uncertainty would not only represent the specific sense of indeterminacy and inaccuracy in calculating the motion of subatomic particles. Rather, it implies a general understanding of the fundamental shortcoming or shortsightedness of science which cannot fully determine the consequences (output, by-products, side-effects, etc.) of the technological inventions its theories engender. That is, science does not lead to destructive effects because scientists themselves are immorally intentioned, and to say that science is amoral begs the question of who bears responsibility for the effects of technology. Even to speak of inauthenticity at the root of science falls short of explaining the possibility for positively and productively transforming technology. An ethical reorientation of the principle of uncertainty provides the ontological ground for coming to grips with the meaning of apparent scientific amorality or inauthenticity. It indicates that the destructiveness of science lies in its inability to fully foresee or determine the outcome of its investigations in that the objects observed are constantly affected and altered by the procedure of observation. The participation of the subjective observer in the universe observed necessarily involves the unpredictability of their interaction. Science should not expect to act upon the world and nature freely and without consequence because the supposedly objective order it handles through technology has already been disturbed and perhaps even violated by the manipulative grasp of its investigations. Since science is uncertain about the reactions its methods tend to cause, it must recognize and acknowledge this inherent limitation--that "uncertainty and confusion lie near the very core"37--to eliminate the arrogance and avarice typical of the inauthenticity Heidegger and Nishitani decry.

By accepting the conditions giving rise to its deficiency, science can adopt an outlook that seeks to overcome shortsightedness. The key to this effort is the principle of complementarity. From the ethical standpoint, complementarity is no longer only a description of the interaction of the "particle" and "wave" models of the atom, but a comprehensive vantage point that surveys and surpasses the maze of seeming contradictions which comprise the participatory universe. Warren Weaver has extended the Copenhagen view by maintaining, "The idea of the valid use of two contradictory viewpoints is by no means restricted to physics. As Bohr emphasized, there are numerous pairs of contradictory concepts (love and hate, for example; practical and ideal; intuitive and logical) that, when held jointly and used appropriately, give us a more complete and satisfying description than can be achieved otherwise."38 An ethical reorientation of complementarity allows science to oversee and synthesize all oppositions, such as pragmatism and idealism, utility and beauty, teleology and mechanism, prior to making a decision concerning technological application. The relation between uncertainty and complementarity in this light is to simultaneously restrict and liberate scientific methodology. Science is restricted, or is forced to acknowledge its innate restrictions, in accepting the uncertainty of the consequences of its endeavors. Yet it is liberated by complementary thinking from the partiality of representational horizons so that it can set its sights on maximizing its actual productivity while minimizing the potential for destructiveness due to oversight, neglect, unpredictability, or shortsightedness. The uncertainty at the core of science is ironically a source of strength in providing a built-in criterion of checks and balances, point and counterpoint, inspiring and yet criticizing the creative tension of the investigative procedure. An ethics of uncertainty would fulfill Heidegger's vision that "the saving is, in the midst of the world of the graspable, already there ungraspable."<sup>39</sup> It would also help complete Nishitani's paradoxical ideal of "hearing a wooden man sing and seeing a stone woman dance."

Therefore, the importance of the Heidegger-Nishitani existential/ethical--rather than purely ontological--criticism can be explained by the following hypothesis. Suppose the convergence view is correct and that Heidegger and Nishitani are unable to perceive its merit. Does this alone dissolve or refute their critique? Not necessarily, because the criticism is directed toward the destructive tendencies of technology, and not merely at the conceptual models of science. Has the capacity for destructiveness lessened with the development of the convergence view based on the participatory model? Experience seems to indicate the opposite; the more science has moved toward an holistic paradigm in the twentieth century, the

greater the possibility for devastation caused by the "age of death,"<sup>40</sup> largely because science has not self-reflectively or self-critically heeded the ethical implications in its own principles. This suggests that the deficiency remaining in science points to a dimension beyond yet underlying science--that is, the question of authentic subjectivity or trans-ethical choice--which science itself has uncovered. Heidegger and Nishitani may be correct in their aim of exposing and criticizing the deficiency and inauthenticity of science and technology. But their method of focusing on ontology seems to fall short of fulfilling the goal of establishing a cogent philosophical and practical corrective for the false objectification in these endeavors. Therefore, the encounter between the convergence theorists and Heidegger-Nishitani highlights the need for an ethics derived from and faithful to both the structure of the participatory universe and the existential involvement of authentic subjectivity. An ethics of uncertainty could support Oppenheimer's admonition: "We [scientists], like all men, are among those who bring a little light to the vast unending darkness of man's life and world. For us as for all men, change and eternity, specialization and unity, instrument and final purpose, community and individual man alone, complementary each to the other, both require and define our bonds and our freedom."41

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Hajime Tanabe, "Momenti Mori," *Philosophical Studies of Japan*, vol. 1 (1959), pp. 1-12.

<sup>2</sup> John Archibald Wheeler, "Bohr, Einstein, and the Strange Lesson of the Quantum," in *Mind in Nature*, ed. Richard Q. Elvee (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> For a quantum analysis of consciousness, see: Kenneth R. Pelletier, *Toward a Science of Consciousness* (New York: Delacourte Press, 1978); and Ronald S. Valle, "Relativistic Quantum Psychology," in *The Metaphors of Consciousness*, ed. Ronald S. Valle and Rolf von Eckartsberg (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1981), pp. 419-36.

<sup>4</sup> Renee Weber, "Reflections on David Bohm's Holomovement," in *The Metaphors of Consciousness*, pp. 138-39.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Pribham, "The Holographic Hypothesis of Brain Function: The Meeting of Minds," in *Ancient Wisdom and Modern Science*, ed. Stanislav Graf, MD (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984), p. 167.

<sup>6</sup> In *Philosophy as Metanoetics*, Tanabe resolves the historical dilemma in terms of radical other-power religious experience of the absolute mediation of metanoetics or repentance  $(zanged\hat{o})$ ; tr. Valdo Viglielmo and James W. Heisig (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Schell, *The Fate of the Earth* (New York: Avon, 1982), p. 111.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, tr. William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 4. In the translator's introduction (p. xxxii), Lovitt remarks: "Heidegger sees every aspect of contemporary life, not only machine technology and science but also art, religion and culture...as exhibiting clear marks of the ruling essence of technology that holds sway as the dominion of man as self-conscious, representing subject."

<sup>9</sup> Keiji Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, tr. Jan Van Bragt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 46.

<sup>10</sup> Heidegger, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Nishitani, "Science and Zen," in *The Buddha Eye: An Anthology of the Kyoto School*, ed. Frederick Franck (New York: Crossroad, 1982), p. 118.

<sup>12</sup> Heidegger makes this distinction in the essay, "The Question Concerning Technology." In other essays, including "Science and Reflection," however, he seems to use the terms science and technology interchangeably.

<sup>13</sup> The Japanese title of *Religion and Nothingness* (see ftn. 9 above) is *Shûkyô* to wa nanika (What is Religion?). The translator changed the title apparently to highlight the philosophy of absolute nothingness in the thought of Nishitani consistent with other exponents of the Kyoto-school of modern Japanese philosophy.

<sup>14</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 415.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, pp. 413-14.

<sup>16</sup> See Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, tr. Ralph Mannheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).

<sup>17</sup> See Carl Mitcham, "What is the Philosophy of Technology?" in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, xxv/1, pp. 73-89.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of the influence of the philosophy of Nishida Kitarô and the doctrine of absolute nothingness on the development of Nishitani's thought, see Zettai mu to kami: Nishida-Tanabe tetsugaku no dentô to Kiristikyô, ed. Jan Van Bragt (Tokyo: Shunjûsha, 1981). See also my "Postwar Issues in Japanese Buddhism," in Movements and Issues in World Religions, vol. II, ed. Charles W. Fu and Gerhard Spiegler (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989), pp. 245-76.

<sup>20</sup> See especially Nishitani's piece, "Bukkyô ni okeru 'kôjô' no tachiba," Zettai mu to kami, pp. 150-94.

<sup>21</sup> Nishitani, "Science and Zen," p. 135f.

<sup>22</sup> Werner Heisenberg, *The Physicist's Conception of Nature*, tr. Arnold J. Pomerans (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1958), p. 23.

<sup>23</sup> Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> Nishitani, Religion and Nothingness, p. 285.

<sup>25</sup> Heisenberg, p. 29.

<sup>26</sup> Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 57.

<sup>27</sup> Roger S. Jones, *Physics as Metaphor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), p. 10. For a fuller explanation and sociological critique of the convergence or parallelist view, see Sol Restivo, *The Social Relations of Physics, Mysticism, and Mathematics* (Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1983).

<sup>28</sup> For example, in his philosophical and psychological interpretation of Bohm's thought, Renee Weber stresses that "this question [of 'holocosmic ethics'] is the only one that matters to Bohm, because the purification produced by self-transformation reverberates throughout the holocosmic field." See Weber, pp. 138-39.

<sup>29</sup> Heisenberg, p. 29f.

<sup>30</sup> For example J. Robert Oppenheimer is said to have remarked in 1947 after the nuclear attack on Japan, "In some sort of crude sense which no vulgarity, no humor, no over-statement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose." Quoted in John Major, *The Oppenheimer Hearing* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1971), p. 107.

<sup>31</sup> Capra, "Preface to the Second Edition," p. xvii.

<sup>32</sup> Heisenberg, Across the Frontiers, tr. Peter Heath (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 217-18.

<sup>33</sup> In a similarly critical context, Max Wartofsky argues that the paradox of scientific advancement and destructiveness can only be overcome by the rational, or socially liberating, imperative of responsibility for human welfare. See Wartofsky, "Is Science Rational?," in *Science, Technology and Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1974), pp. 202-9.

<sup>34</sup> For Heidegger's unwillingess to be drawn into a discussion of the ethical implications of authenticity and inauthenticity in favor of the priority of the ontological question, see: *Being and Time*, especially p. 211; and "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farell Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 234f.

<sup>35</sup> Henry J. Folse, *The Philosophy of Niels Bohr* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1985), p. 204.

<sup>36</sup> See Ruth Moore, *Niels Bohr* (New York: Knopf, 1966), pp. 406-13. Moore cites as one of Bohr's favorite examples in illustrating complementarity his observation of Mt. Fuji, which appeared cloudy and mist-covered one evening concealing its peak and clear in the glistening snow the next morning. According to Bohr, the "two mountains" did not simply equal one.

<sup>37</sup> Warren Weaver, "The Religion of a Scientist," in *Religions of America*, ed. Leo Rosten (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), p. 303.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>39</sup> Carl Friedrich von Weizsacker, "Heidegger and Natural Science," in *Heidegger Memorial Lectures*, ed. Werner Marx (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1982), p. 98.

<sup>40</sup> To cite some of the numerous examples: acid rain, ozone depletion, the "greenhouse effect," ocean pollution, nuclear and chemical waste disposal, toxic pesticides. For an analysis of issues and possible solutions based on an holistic model, see *Gaia: An Atlas of Planet Management*, ed. Norman Myers (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1984).

<sup>41</sup> Oppenheimer, *Science and the Common Understanding* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 110.

#### THE FLOWER BLOSSOMS 'WITHOUT WHY':

# Beyond The Heidegger-Kuki Dialogue on Contemplative Language

#### I. Introduction: The Japanese Dialogue with a German

Martin Heidegger's apparent fascination and affinity with Japanese Buddhist thought is demonstrated in several ways. For example, he is said to have remarked upon reading D. T. Suzuki's modern exposition of Zen, "If I understand this man correctly, this is what I have been trying to say in all my writings."<sup>1</sup> Heidegger also is reported to have responded when shown the Ten Oxherding Pictures by Tsujimura Kôichi by pointing out the correspondence between the Zen saying in picture nine, "The flowers blossom just as they blossom," and the mystical poem of Angelius Silesius he discussed extensively in Der Satz vom Grund, "The rose is without why/it blossoms/because it blossoms."<sup>2</sup> As Ueda Shizuteru comments, Heidegger's concern, like that of Zen, is to express reality from a contemplative standpoint as a "simple, pure emergence out of itself" or an "infinite openness of nothingness." Reality is thereby directly experienced as it is "without why" in a way prior to the abstraction, speculation, and rationalization of conceptual thinking so that "(t)here is nothing between reality and the words."<sup>3</sup>

In the 1920's Heidegger had close contact with and exerted a tremendous philosophical influence on a number of intellectuals who went on to become the leading thinkers of twentieth-century Japan. Several figures associated with the Kyoto-school, including Watsuji Tetsurô, Tanabe Hajime, Nishitani Keiji, and Kuki Shûzô, studied with Heidegger in Germany and later acknowledged their indebtedness to him even as they criticized his method of hermeneutic phenomenology.<sup>4</sup> Yet, despite his personal familiarity with Japanese thinkers and ideas, Heidegger was very cautious and reluctant about overstating the connections between Eastern and Western thought. Rather, in "A Dialogue on Language, between a Japanese and an Inquirer," he stresses to the Japanese participant the "danger" inherent in East-West dialogue which is based on yet hidden in language

itself. That is, fundamental structural differences in language, though at times inconspicuous, create an insurmountable impasse to any attempt at genuine encounter between two modes of human existence. Heidegger has referred to language as the "house of Being" and notes regretfully, "we Europeans presumably dwell in an entirely different house than Eastasian man....And so, a dialogue from house to house remains nearly impossible."<sup>5</sup> On the one hand, Heidegger's reluctance is due to his commitment to overcoming Western onto-theological thinking on its own terms without resorting to answers superficially gleaned from another tradition. At the same time, he is mindful of the tendency, to which Japanese themselves fall prey, to corrupt Eastasian thought by reducing it to seemingly handy Western metaphysical categories.

Thus Heidegger's attitude is a mixture of approach and avoidance. What is the attraction of Eastasian thought for Heidegger, and what are the factors underlying the danger he considers implicit in dialogue? Does this danger outweigh any benefit of philosophical exchange, or can it be overcome? Aside from a few references to the Chinese notion of Tao. Heidegger's only sustained discussion concerning the East remains "A Dialogue on Language," based on a 1953/54 conversation he held with Tezuka Tomio, noted translator of German literature including Holderlin and Rilke as well as some of Heidegger's works.<sup>6</sup> Heidegger met with Tezuka to commemorate the death of Kuki Shûzô (1888-1941), best known for his monograph 'Iki' no kôzô (The Structure of 'Iki'), a modern hermeneutic presentation of the Tokugawa era literary ideal of iki, generally translated as "chic" or "style," as the key to understanding the true nature of Japanese aesthetics and culture.<sup>7</sup> Kuki was one of the Japanese scholars with whom Heidegger had the most intimate personal association, and he was also a teacher of Tezuka.<sup>8</sup> It seems that Kuki's focus on aesthetics may have been a factor helping inspire Heidegger's famous "turn" (Kehre) from his existentialist concerns in Being and Time to the interpretations in his later writings of poetry and art as conducive to a naturalist disclosure of Being.

The discussion between Heidegger and Tezuka begins with an attempt to uncover the meaning of *iki*, about which Heidegger confesses he "never had more than a distant inkling"<sup>9</sup> from Kuki's own explanations. From this starting point the goal of the dialogue is ultimately directed toward discerning the point of convergence between the non-metaphysical tradition of Japanese thought, which Heidegger assumes was never plagued by the presuppositions of Western substantive ontology, and modern postmetaphysical philosophy, still struggling to overcome the legacy of the Platonic-Christian onto-theological tradition. But the participants are the

first to admit that the dialogue seems to fail in reaching its aims. The Japanese's description of iki as the "sensuous radiance through whose lively delight there breaks the radiance of something suprasensuous"<sup>10</sup> remains unsatisfying to the Inquirer. Heidegger suspects that Kuki and Tezuka have succumbed to the danger by allowing Western metaphysical bifurcations of sensuous (aistheton) and nonsensuous (noeton), real and ideal, material and spiritual reflecting "the complete Europeanization of the earth and of man" to distort the presentation of Eastasian art so that it "is obscured and shunted into a realm that is inappropriate to it."<sup>11</sup> Tezuka attempts to introduce Heidegger to Noh drama, with which the Inquirer is unfamiliar, and Heidegger presses Tezuka to step outside the context of iki and explore the implications of the Japanese understanding of language (kotoba) in philosophy and aesthetics, but this also ends on a tentative and inconclusive note. In this case Heidegger, despite his sensitivity to the problem of violating Eastern thought, may distort the genuine Japanese view when he uses some of his trademark terminology to define koto (words) as "the appropriating occurrence of the lightening message of grace."<sup>12</sup>

For Heidegger, the dialogue must fail because it is undermined at its root by the danger, so that in stepping out of one's own house of being to reach an empathetic appreciation of the other's house, the original viewpoint is lost and yet the new one is not satisfactorily gained. That is, "The language of the dialogue constantly destroy[s] the possibility of saying what the dialogue [is] about."<sup>13</sup> However, Heidegger's conclusion may be somewhat too drastic and misleading because it is based largely on his inability to fathom the meaning of *iki*, and this in turn is due not so much to inherent limitations or discrepancies in language as the inappropriate representation and use of *iki* in the dialogue. Kuki argues that *iki* cannot be translated by a single word into any European language. "Therefore, it is justifiable," he writes, "to consider 'iki' a remarkable self-expression of Eastern culture, indeed, of the distinctive experience of the Japanese people (yamato minzoku).<sup>14</sup> Kuki's analysis is no doubt perceptive, but it is also the case that iki is very much rooted in a particular social-historical context, that is, the Tokugawa "floating world" (ukiyo) which determined literary and artistic values. The ideal of iki is an artistic sensibility with some spiritual overtones incorporated from Buddhism and bushidô. But it is based on the duality or polarity of intersexual relations in a way closely resembling French dandyism, and is derived from the desire to find fulfillment in the demi-monde on the part of rising merchants and fallen samurai in class-conscious Edo society.

Thus Heidegger, though not fully aware of the reasons, is on target in his misgivings concerning the appropriateness of *iki* and his interest in stressing poetic language as a basis for dialogue. Heidegger feels that kotoba "is a wondrous word, and therefore inexhaustible to our thinking,"<sup>15</sup> because it seems to approximate his view of primordial Saying as the essential nature of contemplative language attuned to the relation of Being and beings without why. But the key point that does not emerge in the dialogue is that in Japanese contemplative aesthetics--that is, literature and literary criticism based on some form of Buddhist meditation, including *shikan*, *zazen* and *nembutsu* in Shunzei, Teika, Dôgen, Chômei, Kenkô, Zeami and others--the role of *kotoba* as creative expression is invariably intimately connected to *kokoro* (mind or heart/mind) as authenticated spiritual intentionality. The inseparability of *kotoba* and *kokoro* is particularly stressed in the *yûgen* style of waka poetry and Noh theater (despite important differences in the literary forms). For example, Teika writes of the *yûgen* style of poetry that "*kokoro* and *kotoba* [function] like the two wings of a bird."<sup>16</sup>

Therefore, Buddhist-influenced yûgen poetics may be a more appropriate starting point for the dialogue with Heidegger than "floating world" stylishness. In that case, the problematics of dialogue are at once less dire and more serious than Heidegger assumes. The obstacle is less severe because once the misunderstandings about iki are sorted out and deconstructed the possibility of communication between languages is opened But the dialogue is more demanding because for Heidegger an up. appreciation of *kotoba* to express "the flower blossoms because it blossoms" must involve coming to terms with its inseparability with kokoro, and the need from the Japanese standpoint for spiritual realization through contemplative discipline as the basis for poetic discourse. I will argue that it is this requirement of spiritual training and attainment implicit in Japanese aesthetics that generates the obstacle and danger for Heidegger and not the supposed separation of houses of being. To demonstrate this contention, I will examine the reasons for Heidegger's fascination with Eastasia and the drawbacks in Kuki's study of *iki* as a starting point for dialogue. Then, I will explain the merits of the contemplative yûgen ideal as a substitute basis for genuine philosophical encounter by discussing the relation between word. thing, and mind in Buddhist-oriented aesthetics and Heidegger's thought.

## II. Heidegger Turning East

Heidegger's interest in Japanese Zen and poetry seems connected to the double meaning of English term "turn" in Heidegger's thought. First, Heidegger's own turn (*Kehre*) from his early existential to later naturalist approach to Being heightens his affinity with the holistic view of the unity of

humans and nature prior to the subject-object dichotomy reflected in much of Japanese thought and literature. In this sense Heidegger's concern with Eastasia is an extension of his preoccupation with the pre-Socratics as well as art, poetry, mysticism and Nietzschean philosophy as Western alternatives to the onto-theological mainstream. Heidegger particularly appreciates aesthetics because he views the poet and thinker as "neighbors" who occupy parallel though independent summits in the pursuit of Being by sharing meditative thinking or releasement which is receptive of the disclosure of Being. "Poetry that thinks," he writes, "is in truth the topology of Being" in disclosing the "whereabouts of its actual presence" or the "splendor of the simple."<sup>17</sup> Second, Heidegger values Eastasian thought because the modern turn (Wendung) in the history of Western metaphysics has led to planetary Europeanization and the hegemony of the calculative or representational thinking of technology. Traditional Japanese thinking cannot escape being threatened with extinction, but this grave challenge and danger may also awaken the East to the need to reevaluate its role as a vital source for overcoming the very forces that are corrupting it.

What specifically does Heidegger hope to find in the Eastasian house of Being that will guide him on his woodpath (Holzwege) into exploring and "cutting furrows into the soil of Being"? Heidegger seems to feel that Japanese language and thought, untainted by the history of metaphysical categorization, may provide a more direct and immediate example of primordial Saying than is available in the errancy of the oblivion of Being that characterizes Western thought. True language as "Saying" (die Sage, Sagen) is not a matter of exposition, critique, definition, or explanation but of disclosing the "nearness" (Nahheit) and "stillness" that constitute the "relation of all relations" or the appropriating event of the belonging-together of Being and humans.<sup>18</sup> Thus genuine thinking is intimately connected to poetry because neither endeavor is concerned merely with gaining knowledge or exchanging information. Indeed, poetry may have priority since it captures with unclouded confidence the "wellspring of language" and occupies the "mysterious landscape [which] borders on the fateful source of speech."<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the subtle and suggestive expressions of poetry seem to come closer than thinking, which may lapse into metaphysical conceptualization or suprasensuous abstraction, to reaching Heidegger's avowed aim of speaking not "about" but "from out of [or within] the nature of language."20

The key to authentic Saying is a language of beckoning hints and verbal gestures which convey the stillness of silence and attentive listening. True language as a product of meditative thinking allows beings to come into their unconcealedness or openness while preserving the tendency of Being

itself to remain hidden or concealed as the disclosure takes place. It avoids the onto-theological pitfalls of perceiving beings alone clearly while overlooking the withdrawnness of Being as the veiled source of their coming to presence (realism), or of bypassing beings to gaze upon the speculated realm of the suprasensuous (idealism). Thus, genuine Saying consists of understated words that trail off in an explanation or description [as in George's poem, "Where word breaks off..."]<sup>21</sup> because they are unable to adequately express the depths of experience, and yet they evoke and capture the experience all the more fully since in acknowledging their shortcoming they suggest a hidden dimension beyond the overt and concrete. Saying depicts the splendor of the simple without why. This view of language seems to approach closely the ideal of yûgen which reflects an overabundance or plenitude of meaning (voiô) contained in sparse, suggestive words (kotoba tarazu) conveying a mysterious depth expressed in and through yet hovering over and above the actual diction. Yûgen often offers a simple, seemingly realistic depiction of a veiled, shadowy scene (for example, "autumn dusk descends," aki no yûgure) whose mystery and beauty is preferable to dazzling clarity. Heidegger writes that poetry "sings of the mysterious nearness of the far-tarrying power of the word," and that "Saying is the gathering that joins all appearance of the in itself manifold showing which everywhere lets all that is shown abide within itself."<sup>22</sup> In what appears to be a parallel vein, Shunzei asserts that in a poem of "mystery and depth" (yûgen), "The atmosphere hovers over the poem, as it were, like the haze that trails over the cherry blossoms in spring..."<sup>23</sup> And Chômei argues that the "superiority ...such poems have over mere ordinary prose... is only when many meanings are compressed into a single word, when the depths of feeling are exhausted yet not expressed, when an unseen world hovers in the atmosphere of the poem..."24

One way of understanding Heidegger's view that Saying at once allows for openness and preserves hiddenness is to consider the imagery of the "gift" (*die Schenk*) and "giving" (*es gibt*) he frequently uses in reference to the relation between Being and humans. For example, his notion of thinking as the gift of Being suggests that the bestowal that has been granted by Being must be received by thinkers and poets with a sense of gratitude and thanksgiving. How do they show their appreciation? The difficulty in creating an appropriate response is based on the structure of gift which invariably arrives wrapped in a package. That is, the item that represents the gift per se is contained in wrapping so as to be concealed in order to heighten the curiosity, excitement and mystery surrounding the gift-giving. If beings are portrayed in the analogy as the gift, Being is not symbolized merely by the ornamentation of the packaging. Rather Being signifies the entire process or belonging-together of decorating, sending, opening and responding to the present. Being is hidden in that it is not to be identified with any particular aspect of the event or confused with the way beings are wrapped up--such a view is the errancy into which the metaphysical tradition has consistently fallen--but encompasses the unity of modalities. For genuine Saying to be liberated from onto-theological fixations, it must develop alternative forms of expression that highlight the whole process without reducing Being to any one aspect. That is, Saying unravels the wrapping of the gift while preserving the decoration which at once reveals and conceals its source; or, it allows seeing things not only as they are but, as in the Buddhist notion of the "finger pointing to the moon," as more than that because they bring into view presencing or gift-giving/receiving itself.

How successful is Heidegger himself in accomplishing this? Heidegger's efforts in language are largely directed toward formulating neologisms, tautologies, figura etymologica, and creative (mis)translations that are flexible, openended, and multidimensional savings essentially creative in a way prior to the onto-theological distinctions between abstract and concrete, literal and metaphorical, logical and mythical.<sup>25</sup> Heidegger's novel expressions including "temporality temporalizes," "nothingness nihilates," and "language of being: being of language" seem parallel to Suzuki's comment on Mahayana Buddhist writings on enlightenment: "...when language is forced to be used for things of this [transcendental] world, lokottara, it becomes warped and assumes all kinds of crookedness: oxymora, paradoxes, contradictions, contortions, absurdities, oddities. ambiguities, and irrationalities."<sup>26</sup> Heidegger's primordial Saving and Zen "language of samadhi"<sup>27</sup> both seem odd and distorted from the standpoint of conventional syntax because they consist of a polysemy playfully exercising a transcendental experience without why. Yet Ronald Bruzina argues--and Heidegger, who often admitted the circularity and incompleteness of his thought might agree--that the German philosopher remains trapped between two worldviews, one the burden carried from the past of metaphysical disdain for metaphor and myth and the other a goal of post-metaphysical poetic/mystical Saving glimpsed but never realized:

> Heidegger's thinking, in its attempt to proceed otherwise, nonetheless always begins from within Western rationality, from within the distinction and performances he wishes to negate. Thus it is that Heidegger's writing is thinking and not poetry, while aiming to be simply 'Saying.' Thus it is

that his words are to be taken literally in his rejections of the metaphysical schema he literally affirms as dominating Western mind, while those words work toward a worded thinking that offers nothing of literal explication."<sup>28</sup>

It is the attempt to build a pathway bridging this gap or to find access to discourse on reality without why that compels Heidegger to turn East. But what is the point of departure of genuine dialogue?

### III. Iki an Inappropriate Starting Point

The monograph 'Iki' no kôzô was Kuki's first major work and is still regarded as his classic. Begun in 1926 while he was studying in Paris, it was published in 1930 first in the journal Shisô and later that year in book form. It appears as the introductory piece in the first volume of his collected works, accompanied by an earlier draft, 'Iki' no Honshitsu (The Essence of 'Iki'), and the notes used in preparation of these manuscripts are included in a supplementary volume. 'Iki' no kôzô clearly shows Kuki's strong reaction to his studies in France and Germany during the 1920's in two ways: it reflects the influences he absorbs from European philosophers, including Bergson, Sartre, Husserl, and Heidegger, and it fulfills his desire to identify and explicate the essence of Japanese culture and thought to the West. Kuki maintains that each culture and language has its unique features and words so organically interconnected they cannot be transported or translated into "Therefore," he writes, "the concrete meanings of the any other one. language of a nation express national existence and reflect the distinctive atmosphere of national experience."<sup>29</sup> For example, the English words "spirit," "intelligence," and "wit" approach but do not fully capture the French "esprit." Similarly, though iki is the Japanese translation of "chic," its complete meaning is beyond that or related words such as raffine or the English elegant and coquettish based on French terms. Distinctive national expressions such as *iki* are not abstract concepts but phenomena of consciousness (Husserl's influence) which require explication through hermeneutics rather than formalism (Heidegger) to disclose the priority of existence over essence (Sartre).

To understand Kuki's interpretation of *iki*, it is necessary to situate the term in its original cultural and literary context. *Iki* was a leading aesthetic ideal associated with the writings of *ninjôbon* (romances) and *sharebon* (realistic stories) of the *gesaku* (culture of play) literature of the late Edo floating world. It implies a "discreet elegance, combined with an urban polish in which coquetry is the dominant tone."<sup>30</sup> Iki is related to the ideal behavior of the suijin (man of taste or sui, another pronunciation of iki) or tsûjin (man of polish or tsû) who demonstrates the "nonchalant, urban sophistication of one completely at home in the demi-monde,"<sup>31</sup> or an ability to comport oneself properly in the geisha quarters by dealing objectively with human emotions. The background to the development of iki was the frequency in dramatic literature, particularly Chikamatsu's works, as well as in Tokugawa society of the double-suicide  $(shinj\hat{u})$  resulting from the conflict between giri (social obligations) and ninjô (human passions). The typical pattern involved an aspiring townsman (chônin) or unmoneyed samurai (rônin) who fell in love with a geisha and had no way of reconciling his illicit emotion with his social duty; both parties were doomed and chose a redemptive voluntary death rather than suffer ostracism and other forms of social punishment.<sup>32</sup> Iki to a large extent represented a middle path out of this conflict by allowing the male party in the relationship to remain detached from instead of overwhelmed by his feelings, content with an aloof flirtation and seductiveness not consummated and therefore not subject to scrutiny.<sup>33</sup>

Kuki elaborates on this historical phenomenon by centering iki in a constellation of terms dealing with Japanese aesthetics and forms of behavior. His work consists of four parts: the first two lay the foundation by examining the intensive or connotative (naihôteki) and extensive or denotative (gaienteki) structure of iki, and the final sections discuss examples of physical and artistic expressions. The intensive structure consists of three The spiritual qualities of Buddhist resignation (akirame) or aspects. detachment from the world of evanescence and of noble spirit (ikuji) derived from bushidô loyalty and pluck reflect the two main influences on Japanese civilization and give iki a lofty idealism transcending the mundane world. These factors in turn are based on the fundamental duality that characterizes coquetry (bitai): "[It] is a dualistic situation which forms the possibility of relation between oneself and the opposite sex whereby they mutually experience a sense of contrast with the other."34 The duality of coquetry necessarily involves a constant tension as it seeks to consummate union. "Coquetry has as its fate the fulfillment as well as the termination of the desired aim of conquest of the opposite sex."<sup>35</sup> This paradigm of duality is also the key to the extensive structure of iki, which involves antimonies between the valued and unvalued, and positive and negative factors of general human nature and intersexual particularity. In a tightly argued discussion illustrated by the geometrical metaphor of a cube subdivided into numerous triangles and rectangles, Kuki offsets four oppositions: refinement (*jôhin*) and baseness (gehin), dapperness (hade) and subdued taste (*jimi*),

stylishness (*iki*) and raffishness (*yabo*), and restraint (*shibumi*) and sentimentality (*amami*).<sup>36</sup> *Iki* in a narrow sense is one of the eight terms [used in this context in the sense of noble spirit] but its deeper and broader meaning is the self-regulating principle which keeps each aspect of the polarities from tending to the extreme. It seeks the middle ground between apathy and flamboyance, severity and vulgarity, and is thus related to medieval aesthetic ideals, especially gracefulness (*miyabi*) and purifying solitude and patina (*sabi*). One of the main artistic manifestations of *iki* is the architecture of the traditional teahouse (*chaya*) with its contrast between an exterior wood design and asymmetrical interior in addition to its festive atmosphere and somber, indirect lighting. Another example of duality in art is the discordant rhythms of Japanese song.

The aim of this paper is not to evaluate the significance of Kuki's work as an explanation of the uniqueness of Japanese culture<sup>37</sup> but to consider its relevance for philosophical dialogue with Heidegger, who suspects shortcomings. In that light, there seem to be two main reasons why iki is an inappropriate starting point for such an East-West exchange. The first factor involves the historical background of the development of iki, which was originally intrinsically connected to Tokugawa society as a way of circumventing the shogunate's sumptuary laws aimed at restricting the fleeting pleasures of the floating world. In its broader sense, the kind of tastefulness iki represents helps explain the aesthetic of classical and medieval Japanese poetry and theater as well.<sup>38</sup> Still, its basic ambience is a far cry from Heidegger the Schwarzwalder whose later writings increasingly reflect a fascination with naturalism and a disinterest in human relations as an access to truth. Whereas Heidegger is preoccupied with the Greek impact on German thought and language, Kuki's influences are the urbanitas of Rome and especially the dandyism of early nineteenth century French writers Barbey and Baudelaire who sought through rebellious individuality, sexual ambiguity, and literary flair to escape le spleen of boredom and dejection.<sup>39</sup> A far closer parallel to Heidegger's approach in Japanese aesthetics is the medieval hermitage tradition of poets and monks who attained a contemplative awareness of nature frequently expressed in vigen.

The second and more important limitation of *iki* is metaphysical. Kuki's philosophical methodology is similar to Heidegger's in its examination of concrete experience. But the leading question for Kuki is the character of the Japanese people whereas for Heidegger it is the disclosure of Being itself. More significantly, Kuki's approach is based on duality while Heidegger seeks to uncover what he calls the Same or belonging-together, that is, the splendor of the simple onefold (*Einfalt*) which unites the fourfold (*Geviert*) of

earth, sky, mortals, and gods. Kuki's notion is not a naive duality in that he highlights the creative tension and mutuality made possible by virtue of polarity, but this is not comparable to Heidegger's view of the dynamic. organic, and naturalist interplay of Being and beings, presencing and things present allowing the simultaneity of individuality and universality: "None of the four insists on its own separate particularity. Rather, each is expropriated, within their mutual appropriation, into its own being. This expropriative appropriating is the mirror-play of the fourfold. Out of the fourfold, the simple onefold of the four is ventured."40 In the dialogue with Tezuka, Heidegger expresses misgivings about the way Kuki has presupposed Western metaphysical categories that falsely bifurcate reality. But when Tezuka explains kotoba with the lyrical image of a poet who "sings of the intermingling scent of cherry blossom and plum blossom on the same branch," Heidegger responds, "That's how I think of ... unconcealment ... "41

## IV. Yûgen and the Constellation of Thing-Word-Mind

Because of the participants' sensitivity to the danger of dialogue, the Tezuka-Heidegger conversation is marked more by hesitation, deliberation and disclaimer than by certainty or firm conclusions. In fact, the key turning point is delayed for over twenty pages when the Inquirer asks about the Japanese word for language and Tezuka after "long reflection" at first refuses to utter it. When he feels confident in the assurances that it will not be misrepresented, Tezuka says that the word hints toward the source or wellspring of language and is very near "to us Japanese." However, Tezuka's remark that *kotoba* is "a word to which so far no thought has been given..."<sup>42</sup> is somewhat misleading. There may be no contemporary phenomenological analysis of the term along the lines of Kuki's interpretation of *iki*. But there is a considerable body of material from medieval literary criticism, which shows the link between language and mind in the creative process, as well as in modern scholarship on the relation of word and thing in early Japanese religion.

The original meaning of language in Japanese culture is probably connected to agrarian animistic/shamanistic practices involving *kotodama*, or the belief in the soul or spirit (*tama*) of words (*koto*). According to R. A. Miller, the Old Japanese *koto* (words, speech, language) is related to the verb *katar* (tell, relate) in the same way the English "tale" is related to "tell." This seems comparable to the connection Heidegger draws between Saying and the traditional term saga as a mythopoeic mode of discourse prior to the distinction between *mythos* and *logos*. Like many ancient religions, from Biblical to tribal culture, the Japanese affirmed the power of the word or name to provide mastery over things. Miller shows that in the practice of early Japanese homeopathic magic there was a strong connection between the term *koto* meaning words and another homophonous term *koto* meaning affair, matter, or thing. According to Miller, "the idea that the 'thing' referred to by a given word is coeval as well as coextensive with the 'word' that refers to it is at the heart of the whole matter."<sup>43</sup> *Kotodama* is also connected to *kotoage* (literally "lifting up words"), a ritualistic, liturgical practice based on the metaphoric transference of the identification of word and thing from the terrestrial to the supernatural plane. Thus, it was believed that naming or calling upon a thing desired would cause the "thing" so "named" to materialize.

While animistic sources establish the affinity of word and thing, one of the earliest references to *kotoba* in the sense in which it is used by Tezuka as the "petals" (*ba*) of "words" (*koto*) demonstrates the inseparability of language and the mind as the perceptive organ for things. In his famous preface to the *Kokinshû* imperial poetry collection, Tsurayuki depicts mind (*kokoro*) as an undeniable impulse toward poetic creativity that inevitably flourishes like a natural force in response to the stimuli of the seasons and elements:<sup>44</sup>

The poetry of Japan takes hold in the mind of man and springs forth in the innumerable petals of words. Because of man's intense involvement in the world, [it is poetry] that expresses the inner attitude of his mind upon viewing [the sights of the world] and hearing [its sounds].

According to Tsurayuki, the mind represents the potential of consciousness to perceive phenomena and creatively describe them. When activated by sense impressions generated by external stimuli like the sights and sounds of nature, the *kokoro* responds by expressing *kotoba* that directly record its feelings about the event. Thus, *kotoba* is part of a constellation of thingword-mind, whereby the mind is continually perceiving and responding to things (*koto*) through poetic speech. Nishitani Keiji comments on this connection: "In Japanese, the 'meaning' of a given *koto* (a term signifying either 'matter' or 'affair,' as well as 'word') can also be called its 'mind,' or *kokoro*....the mind of the matter at hand (or the very reality become manifest in the *koto*) reflects into the mind of man, and the mind of man reflects itself onto the mind of the *koto*. This living transmission of minds being projected

onto one another as they are, and the obtaining of mind that this effects, is the elemental mode of the understanding of meaning."<sup>45</sup>

In late Heian/early Kamakura poetry of the Shinkokinshû era influenced by Buddhist meditation, vûgen designates the style of composition in which there is a dynamic integration of the key factors comprising this constellation revolving around a contemplative view of nature. Yûgen, in a manner similar to Heidegger's notion of bringing into unconcealment by preserving concealment, represents a paradoxical disclosure that illuminates precisely by seeming to conceal. Both parts of the compound term suggest indistinctness and inscrutability derived from early Chinese religion:  $y\hat{u}$  (C. yu), which appears in I Ching and Taoist esoteric writings, is that which is hazy or unclear to the senses, a kind of veil which is a hint of loftier realms; and gen (C. hsüan), which appears in the opening chapter of the Tao te ching, is the calm repose of the unfathomable depths of ultimate darkness.<sup>46</sup> The compound, of uncertain origin, indicates that the vague and obscure reveal the positive spiritual quality underlying the negative imagery and the profundity pervading the mundane. But this must not be mistaken for a formal reconciliation of opposites that takes place in a logical process. Rather, the implication of vûgen is to heighten the paradox in that the greater the supposed inability to penetrate a phenomenon, the more dramatic and fundamental the breakthrough that occurs on an intuitive level of awareness. This is exemplified in the following Teika verse, one of three famous waka ending with the image of autumn sunset:47

Miwataseba	Gazing out,
Mana mo momiji mo	Past both the
Nakarikeri	Cherry blossoms and crimson leaves,
Ura no tomaya no	At the straw-thatched huts by the bay
Aki no yûgure.	Clustered in the descending autumn dusk.

The most striking feature of  $y\hat{u}gen$  is the deceptively simple description of nature that borders on realism. Yûgen poems contain landscape imagery frequently of a monochromatic type, such as bayside huts at autumn dusk, a bird flying into the sunset, a cloudy mist, or a forest of dark pines. Yet these scenes are uniquely and profoundly meaningful because they are observed from a distinct contemplative vantage point--as in the opening line above containing the verb *miwatasu* (lit. "to survey" or "to look out beyond"), or as often symbolized by a mountain retreat or hermitage. The settings are not merely external objects but represent an holistic perceptional field encompassing self and other. The images are selected to reflect mind and nature dwelling on the boundary line between day and night, fall and winter, and earth and sky. In highlighting the creative tension and experiential moment of transition between reality and dream, fact and imagination, they draw the reader into the mysterious depth simultaneously revealed and concealed by the purely descriptive phrase. Thus, "vûgen functions as a scrim, haze, or dream through which the numinal is vaguely sensed...point[ing] beyond itself to a sense of Reality veiled by, and not confined to, the phenomenal world."48 It indicates that the natural setting depicted is not a place outside the apprehending subject but the phenomenal locus of genuine subjectivity attained through Buddhist contemplation. As the poet Tamekane says of seasonal poetry, "In order to express the true nature of the natural scene, one must focus one's attention and concentrate deeply upon it .... Therefore, if you try to harmonize your feelings with the sight of cherry blossoms...your work will become one with the very spirit of heaven and earth."49

Furthermore, the simplicity of the language used in yûgen poetry on the semantic level of concrete, linear articulation rests on a syntactic field of trans-temporal wordplay and associations "achieving a polyphonic plenitude of meanings, images and ideas."50 The ideal of yojô implies that the brevity and simplicity of vûgen descriptions of nature is based on having too much to say or reveal about the mind, so that, as Chômei writes, "many meanings are compressed into a single word, [and] the depths of feeling are exhausted yet not expressed..." According to Teika, the "poetic masterpiece must have...a profundity and sublimity of mind and creativity of expression allowing an eminently graceful poetic configuration to emerge with an aesthetic plenitude that overflows [or is outside] of words (kotoba no hoka made amareru)."51 The kokoro consists of two aspects: cogitations (omoi) which lead to semantic articulation; and more importantly in terms of poetic creativity emotions (the jô of yo-jô, also pronounced nasake or kokoro) which operate on a translinguistic or syntactic level of holistic experience.<sup>52</sup> The formula for the function of yojô is, the less that is actually verbalized in terms of omoi the more the composition discloses concerning jô by not saying it. This also seems to be the principle underlying typically terse Zen sayings conveying a contemplative stance, including "willows are green, flowers are red." "the sun rises in the east, the moon sets in the west," "the snow falling in a silver bowl," and "learn of the pine tree from the pine tree,"53 which are deceptively simple linguistic vehicles for spontaneously revealing the realization of suchness. The issue for both the poets and Zen is to find an expression which suggests the depths of the experience while enunciating the fewest words which might obfuscate the true vision. The expression must be a direct manifestation of

the mind's profundity, bypassing false objectification that reflects an inauthentic personal response to nature, thereby creating a language field of multiple nuances that manifests the contemplative field of authenticated subjectivity.

## V. Comparison of Yûgen and Nearness

The yûgen/yojô style of composition appears very close to Heidegger's view of Saying as an expression of the splendor of the simple without why. Heidegger seeks a polysemous language reflecting poetic, acquiescent thinking that allows the presence of Being to unfold without interference. One striking similarity with the Japanese approach involves the way that Heidegger, interpreting Holderlin's poetry, depicts authentic language as the "flower of the mouth... [in which] the earth blossoms toward the bloom of the sky."<sup>54</sup> If words are the flower, then the seed or root is what Heidegger calls meditative thinking or releasement (Gelassenheit) to the open realm or the fourfold. In this context, Heidegger suggests that the intimate connection between thing-word-thought is reflected in the original meaning of logos which in early Greek philosophy implied both Saying as showing and Being as the coming to presence of things present. True logos therefore culminates in poetic Saying: "All essential Saying hearkens back to this veiled mutual belonging of Saying and Being, word and thing. Both poetry and thinking are distinctive Saying in that they remain delivered over to the mystery of the word as that which is most worthy of their thinking..."55

For Heidegger the center of the constellation or the force exerting a gravitational pull that sustains the rotation of the various factors is "nearness." This notion does not refer to a spatial as opposed to a temporal dimension. Nor is it a matter of measuring parameters or the proximity of objectified entities for nearness preserves farness. Nearness, the "true fourthdimension," represents a direct, "face-to-face" encounter with things without why which creates an atmosphere of neighborliness between Being and words, and thinking and poetry regardless of physical distance. Somewhat akin to yûgen, nearness straddles the line and highlights the creative tension between resemblance and remoteness, affinity and separation. It seems best conveyed by the image of a simple, concrete artifact, like a jug, a bridge, or Van Gogh's painting of worn peasant shoes, which harbor mysterious, unfathomable depths of meaning supporting and amplifying the thingness of The dynamic interplay of the fourfold functions by virtue of the thing. nearness as a playful dance which enables each aspect to come into its individual fulfillment. But amidst the intricacy and complexity simple

presencing prevails: "In the gift of the outpouring dwells the simple singlefoldness of the four."<sup>56</sup>

Like the contemplative Japanese thinkers and poets, Heidegger in addition to interpreting the "origin (*Ursprung*) of the work of art" tries to speak from *out of* rather than about language by occasionally creating his own verse. Of these, the sample that comes closest to the naturalist spirit of  $y\hat{u}gen$  appears to be a mere listing of natural images:<sup>57</sup>

Forests spread Brooks plunge Rocks persist Mist diffuses

Meadows wait Springs well Winds dwell Blessing muses

The first and fourth lines especially convey the dark and solitary realm indicative of *yûgen* as experienced from the contemplative standpoint suggested by the final phrase, "blessing muses." The last line of the poem discloses the profound subjectivity at once revealed and concealed by the preceding simple, realistic description of nature.

But to what extent is genuine subjectivity attained in Heidegger's thought, and by what means? Here is the issue that seems to create a stumbling block for Heidegger in his attempted dialogue with the Eastasian house of Being. The main discrepancy is that while Heidegger emphasizes primordial Saving as the arrival of an event obediently received by the human subject, the Japanese contemplatives consistently stress the priority of mind as the creative force in the expression of authentic language. That is, the main writers/critics who theorize on the creative process of yûgen, especially Teika and Zeami, maintain that the cultivation of kokoro through spiritual discipline is the necessary basis of kotoba, and therefore that kotoba is the means to attaining authentic kokoro rather than vice-versa. Teika's "Maigetsushô" and other writings, for example, are largely derived from Tendai meditative practice of cessation-contemplation (shikan) coupled with an emphasis on seated posture resembling zazen. There, he asserts that the basis of composing poems that express yûgen must be the direct and unimpeded effusion from the true or original mind (moto no kokoro) of serene subjectivity (an-shô). He recommends that poetry should be

composed only when "one is fully immersed in the unique realm of the serene composure and concentration of the mind."<sup>58</sup> He also warns against emotional miasmas or delusions, including trying to force either understanding or language in an arbitrary or deliberate way, that inauthentically conceal rather than spontaneously express the *kokoro* of poetic composition.

Thus, Teika articulates a view of the mind as the subjective basis of self-illuminative awareness, and he reinterprets Tsurayuki's Kokinshû commentary on the mind as the root or seed of poetry and words as the blossoms from the standpoint of Buddhist contemplation. For Tsurayuki, the mind is a potentiality for creativity that is essentially receptive in its function. When activated by sense impressions generated by external stimuli like natural sights and sounds presented to the eyes and ears, the mind responds by expressing words that record its feelings about the event. Teika revises Tsurayuki's comments by eliminating any gap between potentiality and actuality, internal and external, and subjectivity and objectivity by virtue of the authentication and purification of the mind through meditative awareness. Therefore, language is not a mere expression or extension of a mind seen as distinct from and reacting to external phenomena. Rather, kotoba spontaneously emerges as an unblocked overflow (voiô) from the selfsurpassing kokoro fully and dynamically engaged in creatively experiencing reality. "In the aesthetic configuration...of the poem created in this way," Teika writes, "the kokoro as well as the kotoba abide tranquilly. But you must not attempt to compose deliberately such a poem. When you attain the proper state of cultivation, it will issue forth effortlessly."59

Nishio Minoru argues that Zeami's approach to  $y\hat{u}gen$  is influenced by Dôgen's interpretation of *genjôkôan* as the spontaneous manifestation of the inseparability of enlightenment mind and reality.<sup>60</sup> In his view of  $y\hat{u}gen$ aesthetics as the subjective attainment of purity and tranquility by both actor and audience engaged in the play's performance, Zeami seems to take the emphasis on *kokoro* a step further than Teika. Nishio shows that Zeami's saying, "The flower is the mind, the seed is the performance" (*hana wa kokoro, tane wa waza narubeshi*) represents the complete reversal of Tsurayuki's understanding. Now the realization of spiritual truth has priority as the goal of artistic training over the verbal demonstration of art as the means to achieving it. That is, Tsurayuki sees *kokoro* as the seed and *kotoba* as the blossom, but for Teika and especially Zeami whose views are based largely on Buddhist meditation the *kokoro* is the flower (*hana*).

The Japanese contemplative approach to mind stands in contrast to Heidegger who tends to view Saying as part of the appropriating event

(Ereignis) or the historical unfolding of Being coming towards the human subject. Humans respond or cor-respond to Saying by listening to its silent call and then speaking. "Saying grants the hearing, and thus the speaking, of language solely to those who belong within it."61 Thus, Saying not only has priority over thinking, but it represents a primordial presence and absence that is ontologically prior to and makes possible the authenticity or inauthenticity of human language. In Heidegger's metaphor of gift-giving discussed above, Being is the giver, humans the receiver, and Saying the gift-the gift of words to address that which bestows it. Based on an image used in Derrida's philosophy, John D. Caputo suggests that a postal principle underlies Heidegger's notion of hermeneutics as the method of interpreting the message sent by Being. "(I)n Heidegger," he argues, "an eschato-logical postal principle is at work: an original letter is sent out, filled with words of primordial power, but it is immediately lost. Only traces of it remain, torn-up fragments, until finally, just when we think it has fallen altogether into oblivion, we awaken to the postal principle, to the eschatological code which tells us about the way that metaphysics writes in reverse, circling back upon itself."<sup>62</sup> Thus words are authentic in that they emulate the power of the original letter rather than because they reflect purified subjectivity. However, it is possible to see Heidegger's view as complementary instead of contradictory of Japanese aesthetics by borrowing terminology used by Kyoto-school thinkers including Takeuchi Yoshinori in his Jodô-shin oriented presentation of fundamental Buddhism. According to Takeuchi, Buddhist enlightenment involves not only a trans-cendence elevating the mind to experience liberation but a trans-descendence or advency (Zu-kunft) of the yonder shore to the hither shore.<sup>63</sup> Seen in this light, Japanese contemplation stresses transcendence or self-elevation of kokoro and Heidegger stresses transdescendence or the coming-toward humans of Saying. But there is also a transdescendent dimension in Zen practice in the sense that, as Abe Masao explains, "There is nothing outside the Buddhanature. Therefore, it is not that I awaken to the Buddha-nature, but that the Buddha-nature awakens to the Buddha-nature. And that it is manifested in me is the true meaning of my awakening to the Buddha-nature."<sup>64</sup>

Even so, a subtle but important difference remains because Heidegger's "postal principle" implies that reflection, correction, and purification of thinking that responds to Saying is determined by Being alone and not by any human effort. To some extent, both Heidegger and Japanese contemplatives are wary of human willfulness or inauthentic intentionality which cannot help but distort the very understanding it tries to grasp. However, Heidegger may be satisfied with the *vertical* model of interpretation implied by the term transdescendence as an arrival of the message from beyond whereas  $y\hat{u}gen$  poetry involves a full and direct *horizontal* participation of subjectivity in the realm of nature. For the Japanese contemplative, nature is not an "other" more or less elevated than the human subject in any literal sense but the externalized form of interior subjective illumination, so that "he recognizes Nature as the external locus where he can get into the most immediate and intimate contact with his own inner Self (the non-articulated), [ $y\hat{u}gen$ ] is no other than a description of Nature as his contemplative 'field'..."<sup>65</sup>

Therefore, the composition of the yûgen style is a "path" (dô, michi) of spiritual discipline (shugyô) to realize the original essence (hon'i) of true mind (ushin). At the culminative point yûgen offers nothing more or less than pure, simple description of reality without why. Attaining this realization involves at least two main stages of inner development that can be illustrated by interpreting the Teika verse on the autumn sunset quoted above. The first three lines imply a contemplative flight beyond delimiting horizons that are historical and perceptual in character. The author seeks a path transcending both the poetic tradition, which has relied so heavily on the conventional seasonal images of blossoms and leaves to symbolize transiency, and the ordinary arena of perception, in which the colorful yet fading natural forms seem so irresistibly attractive. The poem juxtaposes spring flowers and autumn leaves which cannot possibly exist at the same time to show that the contemplative field is truly holistic in embracing and surpassing the opposites of seasonal rotation.

The final lines of the poem reflect an experiential structure consisting of a negation of the subject through an affirmation of the object of perception. The description of nature here and in other examples of yûgen appears as if striving for a vivid and realistic presentation of intriguing aspects of nature perceived by a distant subject. Yet the intended effect is nearly opposite to realism in that nature depicted in its primordial state completely mirrors the realization of the authentic subjectivity of kokoro. The aim of yûgen is to overcome the gap between poet or subject and poetic object or topic in order to encounter and capture the essentially unified experience of reality without why. As Konishi Jin'ichi suggests, "The contemplative expressive approach involves the bracketing of a poet's individual impressions and drawing near to the very essence of the subject. Once the essence has been regained, the poet will recommence grasping forms manifested on a more superficial level of awareness...[leaving the reader with] a sense of profound mystery and difficulty."66 Thus, the less the kotoba stemming from an overflow of kokoro (or yojô) says about the mind,

the more profound the awakening for this indicates that the mind is bracketed because it is so fully and redemptively absorbed in the contemplative field of nature.

In conclusion, a dialogue between Heidegger and Buddhist-oriented aesthetics highlights the tension inherent in Heidegger's philosophical project. As indicated above, Bruzina argues that Heidegger is torn between metaphysical and post-metaphysical language, or between philosophy and poetry. However, the encounter with Japanese contemplatives locates this crossroads not in terms of the type of language used by Heidegger or the separation of different language-houses, but in terms of the relation between language and mind as the necessary foundation for discourse. That is not to suggest that Japanese poetry provides the solution to Heidegger's search for Kuki's emphasis on the cultural determination of primordial Saying. experiential truths shows that certain words and phrases probably cannot be transported between houses of being; perhaps "autumn dusk descending" would not have the resonance or ambience Heidegger seeks. On the other hand, the notion of spiritual cultivation underlying language that can speak directly of reality without why is universalizable, and it can also be found in the Western contemplative tradition. For example, the anonymous author of The Cloud of Unknowing counsels practitioners not to think of how or what existence is but simply that it is.<sup>67</sup> Ueda argues that while Heidegger attempts to speak of reality without why he still looks for the principle (Satz) of the ground or reason (Grund) of things. Thus passing from the "what" to the "that" is the impasse for Heidegger, the "gateless gate" (mumonkan) Bruzina tries to clarify that cannot be penetrated without authentication of kokoro.

But what is *that*? How is it disclosed without obstructing it? One path to revealing *that* (or thus as it is, *tathatâ*, *nyo-nyo*) indirectly by concealing it is reflected in Bodhidharma's response to the question of his identity. According to the first case of *Hekiganroku*, Bodhidharma's answer is simply, "I don't know," which is not a matter of ignorance in the ordinary sense but a Cusanus-like *docta ignorantia* in which why and not-why, reason and no-reason have been abandoned altogether. Another approach expresses the mysterious, solitary, monochromatic atmosphere of *yûgen* nature-description as conveyed by the apparent realism in Dôgen's Chinese verse: "Every morning, the sun rises in the east,/Every night, the moon sets in the west;/Clouds gathering over the foggy peaks,/Rain passes through the surrounding hills and plains."<sup>68</sup>

# NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Reported by William Barrett in "Zen for the West," an Introduction to Zen Buddhism: Selected Writings of D. T. Suzuki, ed. William Barrett (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956), p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> Noted by Ueda Shizuteru, "The Zen Buddhist Experience of the Truly Beautiful," *The Eastern Buddhist*, xxii/1, p. 4. As Ueda points out, Heidegger reads "because" (*weil*) as "while." Also, as indicated in the conclusions below, Ueda argues that from the Zen perspective Heidegger never fully abandons his search for the reason or ground of why.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. 12-15.

<sup>4</sup> In particular Watsuji is known for his critique of what he consider's Heidegger's overemphasis on temporality while overlooking the function of spatiality including geography and climate, in *Fudô ningengakuteki kôsatsu* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1939).

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, tr. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 3. In another context Heidegger uses the term "danger" in a different sense to refer to the deficiencies of the technological era of "enframing" (*Gestell*).

<sup>6</sup> A list of Tezuka's works appears in *Tezuka Tomio zenshû* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1981), volume 7, pp. 435-57. Tezuka discusses his conversation with Heidegger in "Haideggâ tono ichijikan" as part of his translation of the dialogue, *Kotoba ni tsuite no taiwa* (Tokyo: Risôsha, 1968), pp. 159-66.

<sup>7</sup> Kuki's monograph appears as the first work in volume 1 of *Kuki Shûzô* zenshû (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1981), pp. 7-85.

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed discussion of Kuki's travels and studies in Europe in the 1920's including his meetings with Heidegger, Sartre, and others, see Stephen Light, *Shûzô Kuki and Jean-Paul Sartre: Influence and Counter-Influence in the Early History of Existential Phenomenology* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois

University Press, 1987). Light examines the "legend" that it was Kuki who first introduced Sartre to Heidegger.

<sup>9</sup> Heidegger, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Kuki, p. 12. Peter N. Dale argues that Kuki's philosophy reflecting *nihonjinron* ("Japanese-ism") theory betrays a nationalistic tendency parallel to and influenced by Heidegger's nationalist mysticism, in *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), pp. 70-73.

<sup>15</sup> Heidegger, p. 47.

<sup>16</sup> Fujiwara Teika, "Maigetsushô," in *Nihon kagaku taikei*, ed. N. Sasaki (Tokyo: 1935 and reprinted), volume III, p. 349.

<sup>17</sup> Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 7-12.

<sup>18</sup> See Ronald Bruzina, "Heidegger on the Metaphor and Philosophy," in *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy: Critical Essays*, ed. Michael Murray (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978), p. 198.

<sup>19</sup> Heidegger, On the Way to Language, p. 67.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, pp. 51 and 85.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, pp. 57-108 ("The Nature of Language").

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pp. 87 and 126.

<sup>23</sup> Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 266.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 269.

<sup>25</sup> Erasmus Schöfer, "Heidegger's Language: Metalogical Forms of Thought and Grammatical Specialities," in *On Heidegger and Language*, ed. and tr. Joseph J. Kockelmans (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), pp. 281-301.

<sup>26</sup> D. T. Suzuki, *On Indian Mahayana Buddhism*, ed. Edward Conze (New York: Harper, 1968), p. 243.

<sup>27</sup> Sekida Katsuki, Zen Training: Methods and Philosophy (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1975), p. 99.

<sup>28</sup> Bruzina, p. 199.

<sup>29</sup> Kuki, p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Hisamatsu Sen'ichi, *The Vocabulary of Japanese Literary Aesthetics* (Tokyo: Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1964), p. 104. See also Donald Keene, *World Within Walls: Japanese Literature of the Pre-Modern Era, 1600-1867* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), pp. 398-437.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 109.

<sup>32</sup> The redemptive dimension of *shinjû* is a combination of *nembutsu* Amidism and *bushidô* ethics. On the one hand, the lovers represent a protest and counterpoint to the oppressive dominance of the shogunate and samurai class (constituting *giri*). But their willingness to die for the sake of personal feelings (*ninjô*) displays an implicit acceptance of the *bushidô*'s self-sacrificing embracing of death (as in works like *Hagakure*) that is also based on the millenarian hope for a perfect, eternal union attained through rebirth in the Pure Land. See Minamoto Ryôen, *Giri to ninjô* (Tokyo: Chûô Kôronsha, 1969), pp. 98-153.

<sup>33</sup> On the social-historical implications of *iki* in the context of individual freedom and democratic pursuit see Kawahara Hiroshi, *Tenkanki no shisô:* Nihon kindaika wo megutte (Tokyo: Waseda daigaku shuppansha, 1963), pp. 203-38.

<sup>34</sup> Kuki, p. 17.

35 Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 37.

<sup>37</sup> For example, Kuki is an important influence on Doi Takeo's psychological account of *amae* (dependence) as the basis of Japanese society, in 'Amae' no  $k\hat{o}z\hat{o}$  (Tokyo: Kôbundô, 1971).

<sup>38</sup> See Takie Sugiyama Lebra, *Japanese Patterns of Behavior* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), pp. 19-21; and Kawakita Michiaki, "The World of *Shibui*," *Japan Quarterly*, 8, pp. 33-42.

<sup>39</sup> Kuki acknowledges his indebtedness to the writings of Barbey d'Aurevilly who frequently commented on Baudelaire. For an account of the nineteenthcentury literary/aesthetic phenomenon of dandyism beginning in England and migrating to France, see Ellen Moers, *The Dandy: Brummell to Beerbohm* (New York: The Viking Press, 1960). In his study of *ukiyo* literature, Howard Hibbett describes the  $ts\hat{u}jin$ : "On a spring afternoon in Kyoto a dandy strolls along the river...his parasol tilted exquisitely; another at a Gion tea-house, lies propped on one elbow near a tobacco tray and a small lacquer table, in a cluster of attentive courtesans, and listens indifferently as one of them sings to the accompaniment of her *samisen*..." In *The Floating World in Japanese Fiction* (Rutland, VT and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1975), p. 32.

<sup>40</sup> Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 179.

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger, On the Way to Language, p. 53.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 48.

<sup>43</sup> R. A. Miller, "The 'Spirit' of the Japanese Language," in *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 3/2, p. 264. See also the article on Japanese Religion in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), volume 7, pp. 555-56.

<sup>44</sup> Ki no Tsurayuki, in Nihon koten bungaku zenshû (Tokyo: Kogakukan, 1971), volume 7.

<sup>45</sup> Nishitani Keiji, *Religion and Nothingness*, tr. Jan Van Bragt (Berkeley: University of California, 1982), p. 178.

<sup>46</sup> See Joseph Spae, *Japanese Religiosity* (Tokyo: Oriens Institute for Religious Research, 1971), p. 184; and Toshihiko and Toyo Izutsu, *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), p. 27. Also Nose Asaji, *Yûgenron* (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1944).

<sup>47</sup> Teika in *Shinkokinshû* I, 38 in *Nihon koten bungaku zenshû*, volume 26. For the other poems by Saigyô and Jakuren see Donald Keene, ed. *Anthology* of Japanese Literature (Rutland, VT and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1955), p. 195.

<sup>48</sup> Richard B. Pilgrim, "The artistic way and the religio-aesthetic tradition in Japan," in *Philosophy East and West*, 27/3, p. 294.

<sup>49</sup> Cited in Earl Miner, An Introduction to Japanese Court Poetry (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), p. 127. For the influence of shikan (cessation-contemplation) on Shunzei in particular see Konishi Jin'ichi, "Shunzei no yûgen-fû to shikan," Bungaku 20/2, pp. 108-16. For the ideological connection between Buddhist meditation and poetic inspiration see also the discussion by William R. LaFleur in the chapter, "Symbol and Yûgen," in The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 80-106.

<sup>50</sup> Izutsu and Izutsu, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Teika, "Maigetsushô," p. 349.

<sup>52</sup> There is an interesting parallel to Heidegger's analysis of Dasein's constitution in terms of state-of-mind or mood (*Befindlichkeit*) and understanding (*Verstehen*) which "characterize the primordial disclosedness of Being-in-the-world. By way of having a mood Dasein 'sees' possibilities, in terms of which it is." In *Being and Time*, tr. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 188.

<sup>53</sup> The first example appears in the Zenrin kush $\hat{u}$  collection, the second in Dôgen's Chinese poetry, the third in Zeami's writings on Noh (and elsewhere), and the last in a Bashô haiku.

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54 Heidegger, On the Way to Language, p. 99.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, pp. 155-56.

<sup>56</sup> Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, p. 173.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

58 Teika, "Maigetsushô," p. 347.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, pp. 349-50.

60 Nishio Minoru, Dôgen to Zeami (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1965), p. 115f.

<sup>61</sup> Heidegger, On the Way to Language, p. 124.

<sup>62</sup> John D. Caputo, *Radical Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 169.

<sup>63</sup> Takeuchi Yoshinori, *The Heart of Buddhism: In Search of the Timeless Spirit of Primitive Buddhism*, tr. James W. Heisig (New York: Crossroad, 1983). This terminology is also used in Nishitani, pp. 174-75 especially.

<sup>64</sup> Abe Masao, A Study of Dôgen: His Philosophy and Religion, ed. Steven Heine (Albany: SUNY Press, forthcoming).

<sup>65</sup> Izutsu and Izutsu, p. 22; for example, a waka bearing the subjectivist title, "At no time are delusory thoughts to arise in mind," paradoxically refers not to the mind but only to nature: "About the mountain crest/A brush of cloud floating/Wild geese fly in files passing/As the moon is hiding behind/A pinetree on the ridge." See also Nishida Masayoshi, *Nihon bungaku no shizenkan* (Tokyo: Kogansha, 1972).

<sup>66</sup> Konishi, "Michi and Medieval Writing," in *Principles of Classical Japanese Literature*, ed. Earl Miner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 204.

<sup>67</sup> In the second volume of William Johnston, ed. *The Cloud of Unknowing* and *The Book of Privy Counseling* (Garden City, NY: Image, 1973), p. 152. However, these works clearly have a theistic foundation as when the author says, "Yet a radical distinction remains: [God] alone is his own cause and his own being (p. 152).

 $^{68}$  Dôgen, first volume of *Eihei Koroku*, in *Dôgen zenji zenshû*, ed. Ôkubo Dôshû (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1970), vol. II. This verse is also discussed in Nishida, p. 197; and in Nishitani, p. 188f (the translation here is somewhat different).

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# THE MEANING OF DEATH IN PSYCHOANLYSIS, EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY AND DÔGEN ZEN

#### I. Introduction

The central concern of Buddhism, according to Dôgen, is "the great matter of life and death (*daiji shôji*)...for the changes of impermanence pass swiftly and time waits for no man."<sup>1</sup> Clarification of the meaning of death in its interrelationship with life provides essential access to an understanding of the nature and structure of impermanence (mujô) and to genuine realization of nonself (muga). Death is significant existentially as the extreme yet all-pervasive and unavoidable possibility of one's own impossibility which, if resolutely encountered, liberates man from egocentric fixations and attachments by directly pointing, ontologically, to the perpetual process of arising-desistance, generation-destruction that characterizes nonsubstantive reality unbound by static substratum or duration.

The twofold interaction between life and death paradoxically encompasses two seemingly contradictory dimensions: (1) the interpenetration of life and death, being (u) and nothingness (mu) as inseparable and interdependent phenomena comprising the totality of each and every moment of being-time (uji); (2) the independence or absolute difference between life and death as discrete and complete phenomena in and of themselves without reference to passage from one state to the other. On the one hand, Dôgen stresses that the here-and-now manifestations of life and death together constitute nirvana. Yet he also maintains that birth alone and death alone are the full disclosure of being-time. Furthermore, Dôgen adds that from a third and perhaps deeper perspective, life itself is no-life and death itself is no-death; life and death each are thoroughly self-negating and nonsubstantial.

Despite the profundity and uniqueness of Dôgen's reflections on death, his thoughts are generally expressed cryptically and ambiguously, and frequently in a theoretically fragmentary form, although they seem to convey the culmination of Zen spiritual emancipation. Therefore, it is helpful to clarify and amplify, highlight and illustrate Dôgen's views by reference to three conceptions of death in psychoanalysis and existential phenomenology: Freud's notion of the ongoing battle of "life against death," or of the instinctual tendency toward unity, preservation, and proliferation in opposition to the instinct for destruction and dissolution; Heidegger's phenomenological disclosure of "Being-towards-death" as Dasein's ownmost and uttermost potential grounded in the primordial and inalterable finitude of its Being; and Sartre's view of the distinction between life and death as separable and fundamentally unrelated phenomena.

The aim of using these three modern Western standpoints to examine and evaluate Dôgen's thought is not strictly comparison; rather, this study is prior to and sets the stage for comparative analysis. The central focus here is the uncovering of the subtlety of Dôgen's understanding. Any contemporary explication of Dôgen, however, presupposes an interpretive perspective and framework that relies on Western scholarship and theory. Acknowledging that, I will critically expose three hermeneutic stances to clarify the multiple and paradoxical dimensions of Dôgen's thought, thereby laying the groundwork for possibly returning, in an admittedly circular fashion, to a more direct and straightforward comparison between Dôgen and any of these modern thinkers. Therefore, I will first reconstruct how Freud, Heidegger, and Sartre have interpreted death as well as the ideological connections between them, then examine Dôgen's understanding in light of their respective views as expressed in passages of his Shôbôgenzô "Genjôkôan" fascicle, and finally point out the hermeneutic significance of this study for comparative philosophical psychology.

## II. Freud on the Death Instinct

Freud's discovery of the significance of death for the formulation of his psychoanalytic theory--in addition to the more conspicuous and accessible phenomena of ego, libido, and sexuality--marks the transition from his scientific-clinical approach to his speculative-mythological quest for the unifying and universal conception underlying biological and cultural as well as psychological behavior. Confronting the various meanings of death revealed during psychanalysis, he is forced to revise, expand, and deepen his previous theoretical outlook by seeking its metaphysical foundations. He resolves this problem in terms of the duality of fundamental instincts at the basis of all personal concerns and attitudes and intersubjective relations: the "battle of the giants" of life and death, which can never be fully appeased or subdued. waged in every id, and projected violently by the development of civilization onto a worldwide scale.

Freud is led to his postulation of the death instinct--along with and equal to the life instinct--through the observation of two distinct and seemingly contrary human tendencies, which he maintains have a unified source: repetition-compulsion and sadism-masochism. First, in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud is perplexed by the compulsion of his patients to unconsciously resist psychoanalytic treatment in that they "repeat the repressed material as contemporary experience instead of, as the physician would prefer, remembering it as something belonging to the past."<sup>2</sup> The infantile vet "demonic" need to recreate even the most unpleasurable experiences and responses with the directness of the immediate present is an obstacle to treatment because the patient, rather than recognizing what is repeated as a forgotten remnant of the past, clings to it as if it were current reality, thereby never overcoming or becoming detached from it. This compulsion is reflected psychologically by the child's insistence on the identical reenactment of a game or retelling of a story, refusing the introduction or addition of different elements which would upset the uniformity of the ritual. It is also reflected biologically by the migration of certain fish and birds to former localities of the species and the embryo's recapitulation of earlier stages of life.

On the basis of such examples of the repetition-compulsion, Freud concludes that there is a wishful and inevitable urge in life to recede to and restore "an earlier state of things"<sup>3</sup>--by which phrase Freud seems to suggest an inert and inanimate realm ontologically (rather than logically or chronologically) prior to the existence of living substances. He finds that there is a necessity internal to life itself to see death. Thus, "the aim of all life is death,"<sup>4</sup> and the developing complexities and proliferating varieties of living organisms represent life's ever more complicated detours in pursuing and reaching its ultimate goal of returning to the inorganic state; life struggling paradoxically and most energetically against threats to itself which would aid the rapid attainment of its innermost aim.

In *The Ego and the Id*, Freud relates the psychological-biological tendency to remove tension and reestablish the primordial state of constancy and nondisturbance to human hostility, hatred and aggression directed (frequently simultaneously) both outwardly at the external world and inwardly at oneself. The drive to actively destroy and dissolve life, reflected in sadism and masochism which aim at the destruction of the sexual partner or one's own ego, he claims, has the same instinctual basis as the tendency to passively recede from life. The result of this speculative synthesis is the full-

fledged doctrine of two instincts, which are present together in every particle of living substance, though in unequal proportions, so that any given substance might be the principal representative of one over the other: Eros, consisting not only of uninhibited and sublimated sexual instincts, but all energies for self-preservation and unification; and Thanatos, which strives not only for the termination of life, but for the inanimate state before the emergence of life. According to Freud:

The emergence of life would thus be the cause of the continuance of life and also at the same time of the striving towards death....The problem of the origin of life would remain a cosmological one and the problem of the goal and purpose of life would be answered dualistically.<sup>5</sup>

Although, as Freud acknowledges, most impulses would seem traceable back to the "clamor" of Eros in its diverse and overlapping manifestations, the "mute" yet omnipresent energies of death suggest that there is an undercurrent and ongoing struggle against life, in which life itself is ironically and tragically the tool as well as the victim.

Human existence is thus a perpetual conflict and compromise between the two cosmic trends that control it, which are fused, blended and other in every possible instance, and are alloved with each metapsychologically related to guilt and anxiety manifest in the complex interaction of the tripartite structure of id, ego, and superego. The battle between life and death waged in the id leaves the ego vulnerable to and afraid of the threat to its existence whose aim it is to protect. Internal anxiety about the possibility of its ultimate negation and nonexistence, which it paradoxically seeks as the partial representative of the death instinct, and which is compounded by dangers from the outside world, is both encouraged and repressed by the ego. The ego at once serves the death instinct and attempts to stifle it (repetition-compulsion), eventually becoming its victim. Inner aggressiveness is first displaced and partially defused by being projected against others (sadism), and then harnessed by the superego and cruelly turned back inwardly (masochism). "The fact remains," Freud reports, "as we have stated it: the more a man controls his aggressiveness, the more intense becomes his ideal's inclination to aggressiveness against his ego. It is like a displacement, a turning round upon his own ego."<sup>6</sup>

Aggression is objectified to remove the ego's anxious tension concerning the life-death struggle, and then internalized to pacify his own guilt. The ego's participation in the battle for and against life exposes it to self-imposed punishment. To avoid this tragedy, aggressiveness is again in circular fashion turned outwards--destroying some other thing instead of itself, a vicious process which constitutes the history and evolution of civilization. The intolerable yet ever-regenerating sense of guilt reflected in the tension between the superego and ego is the discontent of culture, carried out in and between societies through continuing conflict and violent interaction. Just as death attempts to destroy life by using life, life attempts to subdue death by causing its own death rather than another one's, and thereby achieves its true aim, which in fact is death. Life must attempt to repress death, yet this very act of repression does not stifle, but rather aggravates the destructive drive.

Despite the profound interrelatedness between life and death on every level and stage of existence, which suggests that neither instinct can be separated from nor analyzed without its dependence on the other, Freud insists on a dualistic interpretation of the instincts. The question arises, however, that if the aim of life is the recreation of the equilibrium before the actual dichotomy of life and death, then are not death and life ultimately united in terms of a dynamic dialectical interplay which allows for apparent and provisional differences between them? Also, can there be a way of life that does not repress death but accepts and affirms its inevitability without invariably wreaking chaos and random destructiveness? Norman O. Brown has maintained that Freud really intended such a conclusion beyond dualism, although he was never able to fully develop or articulate it because of a stubborn pessimism that inhibited his methodology:

> Freud is thus moving toward a structural analysis of organic life as being constituted by a dialectic between unification or interdependence and separation or independence. The principle of unification or interdependence sustains the immortal life of the species and the mortal life of the individual; the principle of separation or independence gives the individual his individuality and ensures his death.<sup>7</sup>

The formulation of a view not simply of life against death but of the full interdependence between them as the basis of their apparent discord, a notion which collapses the provisional duality into fundamental ontological belonging-together is the task of Heidegger's analysis of Dasein's Beingtowards-the-end.

## III. Heidegger on Dasein's End

Heidegger's implicit phenomenologico-ontological critique of the Freudian psychoanalytic approach to the meaning of death functions in two interrelated aspects:<sup>8</sup> methodological, in terms of Heidegger's hermeneutic distinction between the *existenziell* (everyday factual decisions) and *existenzial* (underlying factical structure) levels of inquiry; and metaphysical, by his disclosure of the unified yet multidimensional totality of Dasein whose encounters with the boundary-situations (*Grenzsituationen*) of death, anxiety, and guilt reflect the finite and nonsubstantial basis as an integral and dynamic temporal presence, rather than an objective entity present-at-hand (*vorhanden*).

Freud seems to admit his methodological shortcomings when he writes in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, "what follows is speculation, often farfetched speculation, which the reader will consider or dismiss according to his individual predilections."<sup>9</sup> Heidegger challenges the Freudian and other scientific (biology, medicine), social-scientific (psychology, biography), and quasi-scientific (theology, theodicy) stances which either gather information and data about death as the objectifiable demise of a living substance or take off on speculative flights about the cosmological origins and importance of death. These approaches never recognize or question the central methodological presupposition that they are dealing with constantly abiding entities which happen at one time to reach an endpoint.

Heidegger's means of overcoming such a pitfall in *Being and Time* is through (1) a phenomenological separation of the particular *existenziell* ways Dasein does or has reacted to death as an actual event in its life, and the impartial and invariable *existenzial* basis and constitutive meaning of its finite being; and by (2) simultaneously acknowledging the hermeneutic circularity or interpenetration between these investigative levels in that Dasein always factically possesses a view and grasp of its Being beyond its factual circumstances, and can proceed back and forth between the concrete decisions it makes and the genuinely founded self-understanding it seeks and is already involved in disclosing. Heidegger's approach, in contrast to the Freudian, is neither a strictly rigorous scientific procedure nor an unjustifiable speculative flight out of touch with its concrete sources because it is based on the transcendent possibilities of Dasein's hermeneutic circle, and it avoids the dichotomies of dualism/monism, realism/idealism which reflect a fixation with substance ontology.

The metaphysical consequence of Heidegger's exposing the methodological limitations of social science is to ontologically reveal Dasein

not as a substance which undergoes death as its termination, but as the perpetual process of dying-as-nothingness (Dasein's thoroughly nonsubstantial ground without substratum or self-constancy). Heidegger interprets death not merely in opposition to life but fully integrated with all dimensions of the finite totality of Dasein. Perhaps, as Brown suggests, this was the direction in which Freud was headed when he says that the aim of life is death. For Freud, however, the repression of death is problematic and inevitable, tending to destroy life as much as the unrestricted death instinct.

According to Heidegger, it is the Freudian viewpoint which is problematic rather than death itself because it reflects an effort to resist death due to an attachment to existence seen as constant actuality. Heidegger maintains that anxiety and guilt are not based on a death instinct; instead all three contingencies arise from primordial nothingness or nullity-the nonsubstantive, unified, and dynamic structural basis of Dasein.

Death, along with the interrelated phenomena of guilt and anxiety, reveals the undercurrent powerlessness and precariousness of Dasein which occupies an open and bounded realm defined and delineated by inherent limitations and intrinsic constraints. Dasein has not been granted absolute presence but exists on an always tenuous borderline; the ultimate conditions under which it can act are not at its disposal and are continuously being taken away from it. Its potential for self-illumination and self-understanding is perpetually clouded by the lurking and perplexing unknowable and unforeseeable, that which is concealed and not brought forth by any amount of decisive volition.

Born into the world of definite circumstances and environment, Dasein projects itself upon possibilities largely determined by the conditions of its facticity, including its imminent and inevitable end as the final and unmistakable factor. The totality of Dasein is always permeated by the possibility of its ultimate and unavoidable impossibility. Even inauthentic Dasein concedes a sense of uncertainty about the fact that it is forever passing away, although it considers death an actual state when man will nolonger-be-there--something which will invariably happen in the future but has not yet taken place, to be fearfully awaited rather than resolutely anticipated. Certainty of the end is objectified on empirical grounds alone: death has been observed, and there is ample and undeniable evidence of its occurrence.

The transformation to an authentic conception takes place when death is no longer misrepresented as a one-time event which happens to Dasein as a culmination or even conclusion. Rather, dying is the way to be which Dasein authentically takes over as soon and so long as it dwells anticipatively *toward* (not expectantly *at*) its end: In death, Dasein has not been fulfilled nor has it simply disappeared: it has not become finished nor it is wholly at one's disposal as something ready-to-hand. On the contrary, just as Dasein *is* already its 'not-yet,' and is its 'not-yet' constantly as long as it is, it *is* already its end too. The 'ending' which we have in view when we speak of death does not signify Dasein's Being-at-an-end, but a *Beingtowards-the-end* of this entity.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, death is the ownmost and nonrelational possibility which is in each case individually interiorized as mine (*je meines*) never to be taken over and experienced by anyone else. Death is also the uttermost possibility of existence because it is the inescapable, ultimate, and unsurpassable impossibility of Dasein, and therefore the possibility which is purest and furthest removed from actuality.

Anxiety continually pursues and threatens everyday Dasein, for the most part submissive to the interpretation of self and world as two interacting yet basically separable substantive entities of subject and object. The uncanny feeling of not-being-at-home forces Dasein to confront the "nothing and nowhere" at its very basis--to realize that it is not present-at-hand--which is so disturbing to the obstinate self-assurance and seemingly obvious conception of constancy. Anxiety, so close and potentially oppressive that it stifles the breath and creates an overwhelming claustrophobia, does not come from a definite direction; nor does it result from an absence, denial, or elimination of entities. Rather, it suddenly reveals the pervasive finite dependence of nonsubstantial Dasein on a nonobjectifiable world no longer represented as a random gathering of vorhanden entities. Authentic guilt, more fundamental than any notion of indebtedness, moral or legal failure and omission or unfulfilled responsibility, discloses nothingness in that the choice of any specific possibility means that countless others must be overlooked, discounted or left unknown, unacknowledged, and unexplored.

The true meaning of nullity, Heidegger concludes from his analysis of Dasein's contingency, is neither mere privation in the sense of a lack, flaw, or imperfection nor a state which Dasein had at one time but since lost or surrendered or has not yet had but could still achieve. It is neither a condition that happens once or occasionally and from which there is reprieve nor an obscure quality that attaches itself to Dasein and might eventually be eliminated. Heidegger calls into question the entire Western metaphysical (or onto-theological) tradition and its derivative standpoints (including the Freudian) which have misconceived the genuine significance of negation revealed by death because of a fixation with constant actuality which confuses the multiple and profound dimensions of nothingness with privation. "Has anyone," he asks rhetorically, "ever made a problem of the *ontological source* of notness, or, *prior to that*, ever sought the mere notness and the possibility of that notness can be raised?"<sup>11</sup> Heidegger maintains that the clearest resolution of this disturbing philosophical oversight is to interpret nothingness factically as the perpetually encountered borders, the eerie and indefinite yet forbidding and overbearing horizons of Dasein's intrinsic confinements that strip bare any attachment to substance and/or eternalism. From the Heideggerian standpoint, the primordial significance of nothingness is the unthought and unspoken meaning embedded in Freud's phrase, "an earlier state of things."

In examining Heidegger's view of Being-towards-death-asnothingness, however, a question arises concerning his initial point that death individualizes Dasein if it is authentically anticipated: under what circumstances can the arrival of death ever be foreknown since it is in every case sudden and unexpected; and why is death above all "mine" when it is nothing other than my ultimate loss? Such a challenge to Heidegger's conception is taken up in Sartre's uncompromising distinction between life and death.

# *IV. Sartre on the Negation of Death*

Sartre concurs with Heidegger's focus on disclosing the pervasiveness of nothingness and the possibilities for freedom inherent to existence. He also agrees that phenomenology must seek to uncover man as an ontological totality rather than a mere collection of random parts. Yet, in contrast to Heidegger's emphasis on unveiling the Being of man rather than prescribing a way for him to act, Sartre asserts that phenomenological ontology must serve an existentially therapeutic function. Sartre also distinguishes the existential psychoanalysis he attempts to formulate at the conclusion of *Being and Nothingness*, which reveals the *original* human choice prior to and manifested in every particular action, from Freudian psychoanalysis which he maintains gathers empirical evidence about man's psychic complexes.

Furthermore, Sartre attempts to refute Heidegger's notion that death provides the best clue as to the fundamental meaning and structural basis of existence. He argues that death is neither the individual's ownmost possibility to be anticipated nor the boundary or "final chord" which permeates and underlies the entire melody of life. Rather, death is an absurdity which is the absolute cessation and dispossession of life that ultimately undermines and negates--without contributing anything to--its meaning:

Thus we must conclude in opposition to Heidegger that death, far from being my peculiar possibility, is a *contingent* fact which as such on principle escapes me and originally belongs to my facticity. I can neither discover my death nor wait for it nor adopt an attitude toward it, for it is that which is revealed as undiscoverable, that which disarms all waiting....<sup>12</sup>

Sartre argues that death cannot be anticipated at every moment precisely because it can occur at any unknown moment without forewarning. Awaiting death does not lessen the suddenness or surprise of its advency, or alleviate the finality of its effect. To engage in a wait for death is selfdestructive because it negates justifiable and worthwhile waiting and takes on, in retrospect, an absurd character in its hopelessness and futility. One can only expect a specific death and not the entire dying process. Nor can death, when it does arrive, be interiorized by the individual as a particular possibility and unique responsibility for freedom. To say that my death is irreplaceable and unique is a truism; so are all experiences, responses, attitudes, decisions, and emotions I have without exception, from the mundane to the tragic. "Thus death is not my possibility of no longer realizing a presence in the world but rather an always possible nihilation of my possibles which is outside my possibilities."<sup>13</sup> Death does not authenticate the person; only if one is already free does one approach death authentically.

Therefore, death does not bestow meaning on life for its only function is to remove all meaning from existence, to which nothing more can happen inwardly or outwardly. Sartre does not maintain that there is no meaning whatsoever associated with death, but that this is always ascribed after the fact by the Other, who makes your death supposedly meaningful by whatever ideas he attributes to it in hindsight based solely on the needs of one's life. Life alone decides its own meaning, though it may be founded on an interpretation of another's death.

In his challenge, however, Sartre seems to misunderstand Heidegger's subtle hermeneutic distinction between anticipation and expectation, facticity and factuality. Heidegger would indeed agree with Sartre that idle awaiting of death is inauthentic and fruitless, and that is by no means the position he espouses. It is the openness to futural factical possibilities grounded in finitude, of which death is the most fundamental and peculiar factual example, which Heidegger stresses. Furthermore, Sartre's own standpoint seems problematic in that he asserts that death does not reveal finitude, which is already apparent "because [the for-itself or human reality] makes itself finite by choosing itself as human,"<sup>14</sup> yet also asserts that freedom is total and infinite. But if freedom is complete, why is there a sense of lack and a desire (recalling Heidegger's notion of primordial Being-guilty-of-finitude) to choose and achieve it? Does not Sartre need to clarify the relation between death, nothingness, and finitude?

Sartre's innovation is that he rediscovers the Freudian dichotomy of life and death and restates it without the apparent inconsistency whereby Freud points to the dialectical interplay between both phenomena--the position more fully developed by Heidegger free of Freudian ambivalence. Are these approaches to death themselves completely separable, or is there an underlying ideological unity which resolves their discrepancies? All three standpoints will be useful in interpreting Dôgen's multidimensional and paradoxical conception of death.

#### V. Dôgen on No-life/No-death

Dôgen stresses that the permeation of death through the aspects and phases of life must not be overlooked, denied, or inauthentically transcended. He challenges previous Buddhist philosophical or metapsychological conceptions that reflect either substantialism in analyzing the structure of phenomena (including the notion in Abhidharma literature of actual entities or *dharmas* dichotomized in terms of conditioned and unconditioned realms) or eternalism in depicting enlightenment (such as the Japanese Tendai doctrine of absolute original Buddha-nature beyond yet manifested in time). Such notions, Dôgen maintains, betray an attachment to self-constancy in failing to penetrate, clarify, and find freedom in terms of rather than by fleeing perpetual encounter with death each and every moment, which discloses the impermanent and nonsubstantial basis of human and natural existence. Death is the urgent, immediate, and unavoidable signpost of nonself which disavows any attempt to separate impermanence from existence and betrays claims of eternity that bypass this fundamental interrelatedness.

Dôgen's dissatisfaction with traditional views that discount the full ontological significance of existentially realized transiency is poetically expressed in the opening paragraph of "Genjôkôan." Dôgen notes that although the Buddhist Way is originally unbound by such bifurcations as life/death (ontological), delusion/enlightenment (existential), sentient beings/Buddhas (soteriological), abundance/shortage (axiological), the continual unfolding of birth and demise, generation and extinction is pervasive and irreversible. "Even though this [ultimate nondifferentation] has been spoken," he writes, "blossoms scatter in sadness, and weeds spring up in dismay."<sup>15</sup> The subjectively experienced reality of impermanence generates a twofold sense of dejection and despair or of longing and aspiration in the pursuit of liberation, attitudes which themselves must be either uprooted or cultivated even while they cannot alter the course or resist the incessancy of Any attempt to stifle contingency is ontologically untenable, change. existentially deficient, and soteriologically unsatisfactory. Dôgen does not propose a final "solution" to death, but demands genuine realization which penetrates to the true meaning of death-as-impermanence prior to a fixation with substantiality. It is the tendency to deny impermanence in the thought that there are no blooming flowers or falling leaves in the world of the "true nature of dharmas" (hôsshô) that must be abated, and not the temporal vicissitudes themselves.

In emphasizing the open and unrestricted encounter with death as a pointer to primordial nothingness, Dôgen appears to be in accord with Heidegger's analysis of Being-towards-the-end. For both thinkers, nullity revealed by dying, vicissitude, sorrow, and loss leads away from the habitually ingrained and traditionally accepted preoccupation with constant actuality and toward the unity, dynamism, and nonsubstantiality of existence. The contingency of death is neither a mere human condition in contrast to an Eternal Power, nor a partial and temporary drawback of man or an unfortunate yet correctible flaw, nor a psychological or factual emotional problem, but the universal and ultimate nature and structure of reality.

Dôgen would probably agree with the Heideggerian critique of Freud which argues that while resistance to death is problematic, the recognition and acceptance of dying is not. It is not a death instinct which is destructive, but the refusal to confront one's death; death itself is not a cause for nihilism, despair, or fatalism, but a unique affirmation beyond relative attitudes of optimism, satisfaction, and discontent. Yet, Dôgen does not fail to express the Freudian point that life is generally a struggle to eliminate certain (unenlightened and self-destructive) tendencies and manifestations which would devour the unifying and harmonizing qualities of life if left unchallenged. The complexity and ambiguity of human reactions to death-asdestruction, captured by Freud's theory of instincts, is suggested by Dôgen's reference to the continual arising of weeds--symbolizing destructiveness which itself must be dissolved--*despite* the apparent attainment of enlightenment. Like Heidegger, however, Dôgen seeks to uncover the primordial basis of this one dimension of death, without resorting to the view that it is an impulse embedded in living substances.

Dôgen diverges from Heidegger in his naturalist orientation. represented by the falling flowers, which stresses that subjective response is awakened equally by the transiency of all phenomena, free of distinction between personal and natural, human and nonhuman, or between the temporal and spatial dimensions of existence. He also highlights a more existentially positive or affirmative view of the possibilities for renewal and regeneration which death, itself transient and shifting, represents when he quotes Zen master Ju-ching's words, "Reiun attained enlightenment when he saw the peach blossom in bloom, but I attained it when I saw them falling."<sup>16</sup> Dôgen notes, for example, that a withered plum tree (baige) withstands and endures harsh and variable conditions, and invariably returns anew, reflecting the total detachment and selfless imperturbability of the vigorous and nonsubstantial activity manifest in both living and dying. Dôgen also seems to agree with Sartre and Freud, in contrast to Heidegger, that an analysis of death must have practical (therapeutic or soteriological) intentions and implications. Although Heidegger's distinction between the existenziell and existenzial levels may be ontologically fruitful and significant, Dôgen's emphasis is on radical transformation of the concrete everyday (existenziell) world through full (existenzial) awareness of the meaning and structure of death--a task Heidegger considers outside his disciplinary framework. study the Buddha Way," Dôgen writes, "is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self."<sup>17</sup> Learning the Way of nonsubstantiality necessarily involves self-forgetfulness (renouncing a notion of self as a constant entity), which is nothing other than cultivating the transient, unenduring self.

A deeper divergence, however, is that Dôgen maintains, almost in direct opposition to Heidegger and in affinity with Sartre, that a clearcut distinction between life and death must be recognized and portrayed in addition to their dialectical unity. Dôgen points out that to say life becomes or turns into death, just as firewood is reduced to ash and winter turns to spring, implies a subtle clinging to the notion of a substratum underlying change. "It is a mistake to think you pass from life to death."<sup>18</sup> Certainly a transformation from life to death takes place, but it is the impermanent process itself--and not any enduring or substantive entity which supposedly undergoes change--that Dôgen seeks to expose. Furthermore, he cautions that if the identity between life and death is simply or onesidedly asserted, however flexibly or dialectically, then it would be necessary to claim that death again becomes life, that man is reborn after his demise, or that ash returns to firewood and spring to winter in reverse sequence, a position which is factually inaccurate and factically misleading and inappropriate. Yet, in exploring the difference of life and death, Dôgen does not merely accept the Sartrean view that death is completely irrelevant for understanding and interpreting life.

#### VI. The 'Abiding Dharma-Position'

In Dôgen's doctrine of the "abiding dharma-position"  $(j\hat{u}-h\hat{o}i)$ , paradoxically encompassing "before and after...[and] cut off from before and after," the difference and nondifference of life and death are at once integrated and set off against one another in terms of a step-by-step deepening of perspectives:

> Firewood is reduced to ash, and cannot become firewood So, one should not hold the view that ash is again. succeeding and firewood is preceding. One must know that firewood abides in the dharma-position (hôi) of firewood [in which] there is succeeding and preceding. Although there is before and after, it is cut off from before and after. Ash is in the dharma-position of ash [in which] there is succeeding and preceding. Like the firewood which does not become firewood again after having been reduced to ash, so man is not born anew after his death. Because it is established by Buddhist Dharma not to say that life becomes death [the Dharmal speaks of non-arising. Because the Buddhist tradition has established the doctrine that death does not become life, [the Dharma] speaks of non-cessation. Life is a position of time and death is a position of time. For example, in regard to winter and spring, it is not said that winter becomes spring or that spring becomes summer.<sup>19</sup>

In this and related passages, Dôgen maintains first of all that life and death are not separable but occur simultaneously and instantaneously within each moment. At the transformative occasion between firewood and ash or between winter and spring, life and death, before and after, past and future, actuality and potentiality emerge as the holistic present moment, consisting in unison of the total dynamic activity (*zenki*) of the dharma-position. There is no existence without its inevitable and immediate extinction. Consequently, life should not be clung to and affirmed nor death feared and negated. Also, life and death together should not be rejected and escaped from nor should nirvana, conceived of as the resolution to the problem of life and death, be sought outside of impermanence itself. In the "Shôji" fascicle Dôgen asserts, "This present life and death itself is the life of Buddha."<sup>20</sup> If life and death (shôji) is either despised or abided in with attachment, the Buddha Way is lost and one is left only with the appearance of Buddha. At this stage, Dôgen concurs with Heidegger's insistence that death-as-nothingness rooted within the conditions of life is not a mere hindrance or gap to be surpassed to attain a supratemporal, suprahistorical truth. "Realizing that both life and death are a combination of various conditions being manifested before your very eyes, you utilize a way of complete and unrestricted freedom."<sup>21</sup>

The first dimension of  $j\hat{u}$ - $h\hat{o}i$  refers to the aspect encompassing the totality of simultaneous and interpenetrating manifestations of life and death. The second dimension--its apparent opposite--is the directness and spontaneity "cut off from before and after," without duration or substratum. Dôgen emphasizes that there is no substantive "it" which is first firewood and then ash. There is neither a reversal of sequence from ash back again to firewood nor a forward sequential movement of an underlying objective entity. Because no orderly motion from t1 to t2 or vice versa of an entity can be asserted, the immediate manifestation of death must be different from the immediate manifestation of life--they are not consecutive changes of an essentially constant being.

Does this standpoint contradict the first dimension of the dharmaposition? Dôgen seems to express a Sartrean view of the independence of life and death in order to avoid a possible pitfall that the Heideggerian view of interdependence may have in positing an actuality including its potentiality, which represents a reversal of the substantialist approach but not the refutation and surpassing of it. A conception of life-death as sequentiallyrelated occurrences of a time span stretching from beginning toward the end implies that the entity which contains them consists of a stable or enduring substratum. This idea is not necessarily liberated from the average view of contingency which, Dôgen notes, holds that life is like a tree that begins with a seed, grows and finally perishes, and that death is the tree itself no longer alive, as if life were the first activity and death the second. Such a notion tends to fabricate a bifurcation between life and death as well as between the object and the life-death it undergoes.

To eliminate that misleading duality, Dôgen turns to a Sartrean distinction between life and death as a corrective to the Heideggerian stance, not simply to contradict it but to deepen and enhance that dimension. Life and death, he argues, each possess before and after and are harmoniously interdependent in that they are determined by the influences they simultaneously receive and project. Yet they are also unbound by past and future because they manifest absolute and nonsubstantial presence without reference to any other tense or relative phase of time, or even to each other. "Life is neither coming [along] or going away, neither already here nor becoming. Rather, life is the manifestation of total dynamic activity, and death is the manifestation of total dynamic activity."<sup>22</sup> Examining impermanence from the perspective of impermanence itself--not as a spectator overlooking change--directly discloses the vigorous dynamism of nouself, of which death is a unique and complete manifestation in itself, just as is life.

Dôgen's concurrence with Sartre, however, would be limited in that Dôgen does not only reject, but attempts to include and surpass the Heideggerian view; he does not negate death as meaningless for life, but emphasizes that from the standpoint of each element, life and death are unimpeding, nonsequential stages which manifest the totality and nonsubstantiality of temporal events. "Life is not obstructed by death, and death is not obstructed by life."<sup>23</sup> In contrast to Sartre, and because he has already shown that death is integral with life, Dôgen discloses death as separable from life, but by no means wholly outside the living process. In contrast to Freud, death is not the return to a constant state in opposition to life, but complete dynamism in itself here-and-now.

Furthermore, Dôgen seems to avoid a contradiction between the views of interdependence (Heideggerian) and independence (Sartrean) by pointing to a third and more fundamental dimension of the dharma-position: the activity of  $j\hat{u}$ - $h\hat{o}i$  is neither life nor death. This dimension does not indicate that neither phenomenon occurs or that reality is essentially static. Rather, the time of no-life and of no-death is the spontaneously durationless and perpetually renewed impermanent/nonsubstantial regeneration of existence unbound by categorization in terms of eternity and transiency, now and then, presence and absence, being and nothingness, life and death. Freedom from life-death ("no-life, no-death") is to flexibly maneuver through the shifting perspectives of "life is death" (which is nirvana) and "life itself, death itself" without attachment to any one standpoint as referring to constancy or fixated actuality. The third dimension points beyond any particular standpoint, thus allowing for multiple and interacting perspectives so long as they are seen as partial and springing from a nonsubstantial basis.

To summarize Dôgen's view of death, when man is struggling against the "weeds" of unenlightenment and to preserve the scattering blossoms of illumination--even after the so-called attainment of enlightenment or through continuing development beyond Buddha (*bukkôjôji*)--he is using death to destroy death. However, the Freudian awareness and attempted overcoming of death-as-destructiveness is surpassed by the Heideggerian realization that both enlightenment and unenlightenment are evanescent and without substratum, and therefore essentially null. Yet, this stage of realization is itself one-sided and to be surpassed by the Sartrean insight into the durationless moment in which life (encompassing death) does not pass to death nor death (encompassing life) to life; at that impermanent occasion, life is total and complete and death is total and complete. The relativity of life and death on this level ultimately reveals the truly groundless and meaningless experience from which all conceptions of death in their partiality are derived.

#### VII. Conclusions

Heidegger's attempted overcoming of Freudian speculation on the death instinct, and Sartre's challenge to Heidegger's notion of Being-towardsdeath seem to highlight the multiple layers and central paradox of Dôgen's conception of the meaning of death. If some modern methodology or terminology is to be used in analyzing Dôgen, then it is imperative to clarify pre-comparatively which ones are appropriate and for what reasons as well as the shortcoming each has. The fact that no single Western standpoint is adequate in examining Dôgen suggests the need for exploring a variety of interpretive models to uncover his view without obfuscating its complexity, reducing it to or identifying it with any particular framework, or unacknowledgingly superimposing that stance on his. Dôgen's understanding of death is above all not a collection of viewpoints, but these models can be used to show the essential and integral meaning underlying and giving coherence to shifting and paradoxical perspectives.

That the combination of these three Western standpoints also falls short of conveying the full depth of Dôgen's thought--although together they do seem to reflect most of his central ideas--indicates some of the directions and difficulties for comparative philosophical psychology. Using Freud, Heidegger, and Sartre as hermeneutic to discuss Dôgen does not necessarily impair or limit dealing with these thinkers in another context as the object of straightforward comparison, if the distinction between the two methods and aims is recognized and maintained; the two contextual planes may be complementary or even necessary corollaries, but they are distinct and separable approaches.

After uncovering the foundations of Dôgen's thought in terms of three Western thinkers, it is then possible to engage in direct comparison in a way that is mutually challenging and dialogical, and not defensive or apologetic; that is, to proceed from neutral through critical reconstruction and examination to constructive evaluation (or deconstruction). One question in that context is, how does Dôgen highlight and deepen our understanding of three modern reflections on death and the conflicts between the respective disciplines of psychoanalysis, phenomenological ontology, and existential psychoanalysis? Further. does the multidimensionality of Dôgen's view suggest a fundamentally more comprehensive and universalizable outlook than any of the Western thinkers, or an inconsistency and ambiguity to be rethought and revised? Does Dôgen have a flexibility and variety of perspectives arising from a deeper foundation which exposes a partiality or limitation in either Freud, Heidegger, or Sartre?

Comparative dialogue should not be static, but must force a continuing clarification of positions, not necessarily on different grounds, for the original ones may be valid, but through expanding and refining theoretical means of argument, illustration, and justification to resolve the ideological issues that emerge in the process of the discipline itself.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A paraphrase of Dôgen's frequently repeated expression of his primary motivation and inspiration in the quest for Buddhist Dharma, particularly in his autobiographical-exhortative works, such as *Zuimonki*, *Hôkyôki*, and *Shushôgi*. In his monumental philosophical opus *Shôbôgenzô*, particularly "Genjôkôan," "Uji," and "Busshô" fascicles, Dôgen expounds on the metaphysical basis of death in terms of the unity of impermanence and nonsubstantiality. See my *Existential and Ontological Dimensions of Time in Heidegger and Dôgen* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1985) for an examination of Dôgen's conception of death and dying in relation to being-time and Buddhanature and in comparative light with Heidegger's *Daseinalytik* of ecstatic temporality and historicality.

<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, tr. and ed. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, tr. by Joan Riviere, revised by James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1960), pp. 30-31.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>7</sup> Norman O. Brown, Life Against Death, The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), p. 105.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962). Heidegger does not explicitly refer to and attempt a refutation of Freud. It is not clear whether Heidegger, at the time of the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927, was aware of Freud's speculative writings on death (referred to above) from the early 1920's. However, his discussion in paragraph 49 (Part II, chapter I), "How the Existential (*Existenzial*) Analysis of Death is Distinguished from Other

Possible Interpretations of This Phenomenon" seems applicable to the Freudian as well as other modern standpoints.

<sup>9</sup> Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Heidegger, p. 289.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 332.

<sup>12</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness, An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology*, tr. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), p. 545. It should be noted that Sartre uses the terms "fact" and "facticity" in different senses than Heidegger.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 537.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 546.

<sup>15</sup> Dôgen, *Shôbôgenzô* ("Genjôkôan"), 2 vols., ed. Terada Tôru and Mizuno Yaoko, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972), I, p. 33. [See chapter 6 above.]

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., I, p. 36.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., I, p. 218 ("Udonge").

<sup>18</sup> Dôgen, *Shôbôgenzô* "Shôji" in *Dôgen zenji zenshû*, 2 voluems, ed. Ôkubo Dôshû (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1969 and 1970), p. 778. The "Shôji" fascicle does not appear in the Terada/Mizuno 88-fascicle edition, although it is included in the 92- and 95-fascicle editions of the *Shôbôgenzô*.

<sup>19</sup> Dôgen (Terada/Mizuno), I, p. 36.

<sup>20</sup> Dôgen (Ôkubo), I, p. 778.

<sup>21</sup> Dôgen (Terada/Mizuno), pp. 78-79 ("Shinjingakudô").

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.,I, p. 275 ("Zenki").

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

## DOES THE KÔAN HAVE BUDDHA-NATURE?

#### The Zen Kôan as Religious Symbol

#### Introduction: Two Views of the Kôan

In recent years breakthroughs in scholarship have helped begin the process of rewriting the history of Zen freed from some of misleading assumptions that dominated previously accepted studies (McRae 1987: 227). Many of the most basic and important issues concerning the life and thought of the early patriarchs Bodhidharma and Hui-neng, in addition to later figures such as Ta-hui and Dôgen, have been opened to question and reinterpretation. The main problem with conventional studies in the field has been a tendency to create stereotypical images of key thinkers and schools in terms of all too neat and conveniently set up opposing factions, including subitism vs. gradualism, silent-illumination vs. kôan-introspection as well as the northern vs. southern and Rinzai vs. Sôtô schools. Such accounts are one-sided because they are based largely on sectarian rhetoric taken out of context and discrepancies in the contemporary religious practices of Zen sects rather than a thorough examination of the historical background and doctrinal development of the works in question. They also reflect the tendency of approaches to intellectual history to view religious traditions in somewhat oversimplified monolithic and/or polarized terms, overlooking intertextuality and the mutuality of thematic and literary concerns among various groups in the tradition (Taylor). The polarities the conventional accounts presuppose may have existed but not necessarily in the manner presented and interpreted. Thus, along with revisionist history comes a need to reconsider the models of evaluating religious experience so that current interpretation corresponds to and fully captures historical reality.

One of the central issues so affected in understanding the religious meaning of Zen is the role of the kôan in relation to zazen as practiced in the Rinzai and Sôtô sects. The conventional view holds that Japanese Rinzai, influenced by the thought of Sung Chinese master Ta-hui, strongly supports the method of kôan-introspection (kanna-zen) epitomized by the major kôan

collections, Hekiganroku (Blue Cliff Record, C. Pi-yen lu) and Mumonkan (Gateless Gate, C. Wumenkuan) (Takao: 93-103), and sharply criticizes the Chinese Sôtô emphasis on silent-illumination (mokushô-zen). At the same time, Dôgen, the founder of Japanese Sôtô, rejects kôan-introspection by stressing an exclusive focus on zazen-only (shikan-taza), or singleminded sitting meditation. Influenced by the silent-illumination method of Hungchih and Ju-ching, masters of the temple at which he trained in China, Dôgen replaces the kôan seen in terms of studying traditional cases (kosoku-kôan) with the doctrine of the kôan realized in everyday life (genjôkôan) through the total dynamic functioning (zenki) of birth-and-death (shôji). His main work, the Shôbôgenzô, appears to be an anti-kôan tract, or at least a nonkôan oriented approach to Zen thought in contrast to the major collections. Thus, Dôgen decries the kôan used as a teleological means to the end of reaching enlightenment in a way that violates his basic principle of the oneness of practice and realization (shushô ittô) while Ta-hui charges that silent-illumination advocates a state of mind of "dead ashes and cold wood." thereby lapsing into a counter-productive quietism. The apparent polarity between kôan-introspection and silent-illumination is supported if one takes into account the Tokugawa era Rinzai approach of Hakuin, who also severely criticized silent-illumination (Yampolsky). On the other hand, the polarity is contradicted by a number of factors in considering Zen of the historical period in question (Sung China and Kamakura Japan), including the irony that according to traditional accounts Ta-hui, the popularizer of the kôan, burned the printing blocks of the Hekiganroku compiled by his own teacher, Yüan-wu, and Dôgen, the opponent, copied the same text in a single night just before returning from China to Japan (Kagamishima 1985: 318-320). Neither figure strictly supports or rejects the kôan; both have been critical of what they see as abuses in its application and have sought to restore its genuine significance as a symbol of religious transformation. Therefore, the difference between them is not merely a matter of antithetical kôan vs. zazen standpoints, but of two alternative visions of what most makes kôan practice effective as a form of meditation.

What is the authentic function of the kôan? Most modern interpretations, whether from the standpoint of psychology of the unconscious, philosophy of language and paradox, or comparative mysticism, highlight the iconoclastic role of the kôan as a "poison to counteract poison" (Buswell 1987: 348). This model of interpretation may be true to Ta-hui's "shortcut" method which uses one-word barriers to create a doubt-block in the practitioner. But it does not take into account how Dôgen's view of the kôan is influenced by the literary traditions of Chinese Zen and early Japanese religion as well as the sacramentalism of Japanese esoteric Buddhism (mikkyô), all of which tend to stress the efficacy of poetic metaphor or scriptural recitation in disclosing spiritual attainment. Dôgen sees the kôan as a means of ongoing hermeneutic disclosure of enlightenment experience based on a principle akin to Ricoeur's "surplus of meaning," or "fullness of language." Interpreting the kôan as a religious symbol, on the other hand, seems to be a way of impartially opening up the differences and affinities in the respective approaches. For example, it allows an evenhanded analysis of how both thinkers comment extensively on the famous kôan in which Chao-chou paradoxically answers "Mu" (literally no) and "U" (yes) in response to the query, "Does the dog have Buddha-nature?" Chao-chou's kôan is the first case in the Mumonkan and also

appears in his recorded sayings, Hung-chih's collection, and elsewhere; a similar version featuring master Ikan is included in the Keitoku Dentôroku (Transmission of the Lamp, C. Ching-te chüan-teng lu). In contrast to Dôgen and others, Ta-hui focuses exclusively on the Mu response. The key element in Ta-hui's approach is the shortcut "head-word" or "main phrase" (watô), in which Mu is seen as an example of a condensed version of the kôan fully contained in a single phrase, word, or syllable that creates a sudden breakthrough to enlightenment. The watô, an abbreviated essence or succinct kernel of the traditional cases, is a "tasteless" yet "live" word beyond intellect and conceptualization. It functions as both a hindrance to illumination and a sword cutting through all obstacles. For Ta-hui, the Mu response is an iconoclastic anti-symbol pointing to a nonconceptual, nondifferentiable, and ineffable truth. Does Dôgen see the Mu and other kôans as effective means of expressing realization? According to Dôgen, kôans are not to be condensed but expanded as a continuing hermeneutic revelation and elaboration of the multiple dimensions of insight into the doctrines from which the articulation of the original cases derive. Thus, the Mu is not seen as a tasteless syllable defying thought, but a symbolic disclosure that "the nothingness (mu) of all the various nothings (shomu) must be learned in the nothingness of no-Buddha-nature" (mu-busshô) (1970, I: 54). Dôgen stresses not the barrier but the gateless and ever-flexible nature of discourse and interpretation in conveying the fathomable depths of "nothingness-nothingness" (mu-mu).

The aim of this paper is to explicate the religious symbolism of the kôan as a model of interpretation that is more faithful to the debate between Ta-hui and Dôgen than interpretations highlighting only the aspect of iconoclasm. The following examination of the differing views of the kôan's function will include a discussion of possible Zen exegeses of two noted

parables in Western existentialist writings, Kierkegaard's "sign shop" and Kafka's "Before the Law," in addition to an analysis of several traditional cases including Te-shan's "rice-cake" and Chao-chou's "Mu."

#### Clarification of Historical Issues

The kôan is perhaps the most distinctive aspect of Zen theory and Zazen is an extension of various forms of traditional Buddhist practice. meditation, and the notions of satori and kenshô are elaborations on the central goal of attaining nirvana (Gimello). The kôan is a psycho-linguistic puzzle that leads to the exhaustion of the ego and fosters a dynamic and dramatic insight based on the unity of self and reality, humans and nature, subject and object. It is a technique for spiritual attainment with "no reliance on words and letters" (furyû monji) that is rooted in the basic Buddhist silence on unedifying queries and related approach to doctrinal developments, including the parable of the discardable raft, Madhvamika dialectical negation and theory of two truths, the Lotus Sutra's notion of skillful means, the Mahayana view of language as a "finger pointing to the moon," Vimalakirti's "no-words about no-words," etc. Yet, the kôan as embodied in the major collections functions by means of paradox, metaphor, and the subtle psychology of the master-disciple relation that reflect the influence of Taoist creativity, particularly Chuang Tzu's rhetorical skills concerning the "fishnet of words," and Chinese poetic eloquence and The kôan is unique because it is a record of the encounter naturalism. enlightened between and deluded practitioner. The former an therapeutically disentangles the "vines" of misunderstanding of the disciple by challenging--often enigmatic, irreverent, nonsensical, contradictory, а incongruous, redundant, or non-sequitored--expression or gesture that is intended to be appropriate pedagogically only to this particular fixation (Burr; Kasulis). The kôan is a direct, immediate, and intensely personal form of speech or gesture. Yet its usefulness goes beyond liberating the delusion of the situation for which it was originally devised, and takes on a timeless and universal quality as it becomes a tool for instruction and transformation of others. The main factor that contributes to its effectiveness as a means of spiritual training is that it must not be turned into a formula, conceptual crutch, or object of dependence--i.e., ritualized so that mere repetition diminishes spontaneity.

The notion of the kôan as a "public  $(k\hat{o})$  record (an)" or testimony of the spontaneous and therapeutic insight expressed by a Zen master in transmitting the Dharma began to develop in the late T'ang era and was

systematized primarily by the Yang-chi line of the Rinzai sect (Dumoulin 1988; Miura and Sasaki 1966). It appears that Nan-yüan in the second generation after master Lin-chi was among the first to use the words, blows, and gestures associated with traditional anecdotes and parables in instructing and illuminating disciples. The earliest collection is attributed to Fen-yang, several generations later, consisting of three portions of one hundred kôans each, including traditional cases, new queries, and alternative answers to older riddles. Wu-tsu, following Yang-chi, created his own cases and helped establish the kôan as a regular part of Zen training. His main disciple, Yüanwu, used the one hundred case collection of Yün-men school master Hsüehtou as the basis of the Hekiganroku. Yüan-wu contributed the introduction to each case as well as notes and commentary on both the cases and Hsüehtou's poems so that every chapter contains seven sections. As an indication that some aspects of the rivalry between Rinzai and Sôtô that came to the fore in Japan were not necessarily prevalent in Sung China, the Hekiganroku and other collections generally cite representatives from all the Zen schools as well as pre-Zen Mahayana thinkers like Seng-chao.

The Sung era collections attempt a formalization of kôan practice by organizing and interpreting the original dialogues, utterances, sermons, and anecdotes culled from T'ang and later writings, such as recorded sayings, transmission of the lamp histories, biographies, and poetry collections. By the Sung dynasty, as Shibayama Zenkei notes, the kôan tradition took on a "reminiscent, traditional character" that tried to recapture the spirit of "Zen [that] was most creative and vital in the T'ang dynasty" (xv). Thus, the Sung collections are sometimes seen as a decline from the initial period of spontaneous creativity. Ta-hui is said to have destroyed his own master's text because its poetic quality could become a misguided substitute for and a distraction from genuine pursuit of enlightenment. On the other hand, the prose and poetic commentaries in kôan collections represent from a "literary point of view...a pinnacle in the history of [Zen] literature..." (Maraldo: 166). Indeed, "A more complex genre of literature can hardly be imagined, rivaling any of the exegetical commentaries of the doctrinal [Buddhist] schools" (Buswell 1987: 345). By absorbing and reflecting in its multifaceted structure the full development of Zen thought, the seven-layered literary form and three-tiered historical fabric of the Hekiganroku is cited by Heinrich Dumoulin as the "epitome of poetic composition in Zen literature...[and] one of the foremost examples of religious world literature" (1988: 181, 249).

Japanese Sôtô and Rinzai originated in the early Kamakura period and were based largely on a reaction to the practices of Sung Zen. Certainly there is ample reason based on the frequently high-pitched sectarian rhetoric

of both Ta-hui and Dôgen for seeing the sects as polarized on the role of kôan and zazen. Although close personal associates, Ta-hui repeatedly attacks Hung-chih, referred to affectionately by Dôgen as "old master" (kobutsu), as a "false teacher" and "fool" who "remove[s] objects but do[es]n't obliterate mind [rather than vice-versa]" (1977: 89, 90). For his part, Dôgen argues in Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki, "Although the kôan-watô seems to improve one's understanding slightly, it actually leads further and further from the way of the Buddhas and patriarchs" (1963: 261-262), and in Shôbôgenzô "Jishô-zammai" he goes so far as to question the legitimacy of the certification of Ta-hui's enlightenment. Several recent commentators, however, have pointed out that Dôgen's relation to his Rinzai rivals and Sôtô predecessors on the issue of the kôan is complicated by several textual, ideological, and historical factors. In the Foreword to an English translation of the Hekiganroku, for example, Maezumi Taizan highlights the need for further scrutiny of Dôgen's view of the kôan by calling attention to the tradition that it was Dôgen himself who introduced to Japan the Chinese compilation of one hundred cases that he recorded in a single night (Kagamishima 1985: 318-320). "We mention this," Maezumi argues, "because of an unfortunately widespread impression nowadays that Dôgen Zenji and the Sôtô School represent a non-kôan or even anti-kôan orientation within Zen. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth" (in Cleary and Cleary, I: vii).

An examination of Sôtô writings does not indicate that its leading thinkers were trying to throw down the gauntlet against all kôan practice. For instance, Hung-chih compiled his own kôan collections which became the basis for the highly regarded Shôyôroku (Record of Serenity, C. Ts'ung-jung lu), collected by Wan-sung, that is used widely along with Mumonkan in Japanese Zen training today. Dôgen's own collection of three hundred cases, the Shôbôgenzô sanbyaku-soku, includes several dozen kôans also cited in the Hekiganroku, though the main sources are other writings of Yüan-wu, as well as Ta-hui and Hung-chih, in addition to the earlier Zen texts including the Dentôroku (Ishii 1988: 560-568). Furthermore, the Shôbôgenzô consists of novel interpretations, sometimes in several different versions, of dozens of kôans, including some of the most famous ones like Chao-chou's "Mu," Teshan's "rice-cake," Ma-tsu's "polished brick," Bodhidharma's "skin, flesh, bones, marrow," and Po-chang's "fox." Dôgen's kôan collection (known as the Mana, or Chinese Shôbôgenzô) cannot be compared to the classic collections because it is just a listing of cases without commentary, although Edo era commentaries are extant (Miura and Sasaki 1966: 198-199). But the philosophical essays comprising the Shôbôgenzô (Kana, or Japanese

vernacular *Shôbôgenzô*) can be understood as a "kôan-text" with a different literary structure than the major collections (including Chinese Sôtô ones) reflecting a divergent vision of the symbolic function of the kôan in connection to language, meditation, and religious fulfillment. When Dôgen in the "Sansuikyô" fascicle labels as "pseudo-Buddhists" and "scatterbrains" those who understand the kôans only as "incomprehensible utterances," he is criticizing a particular interpretation of kôan study and not the technique of spiritual discipline itself.

Beyond that, Dôgen's attitude toward his colleagues is somewhat ambiguous. In the "Jinshin-inga" fascicle of the Shôbôgenzô, he is critical of "old master" Hung-chih, whose poetry he drastically rewrites in "Zazenshin," in addition to Yüan-wu and Ta-hui for their lack of a genuinely dynamic approach to the Buddhist doctrine of causality (1970, I: 435-437). Yet all three Sung Chinese thinkers used many of the philosophical terms featured in Dôgen's writings, including genjôkôan and zenki, that stress the vitalist rather than quietist nature of realization. It seems the Zen masters engaged in a game of ideological one-upsmanship concerning whose approach overcame a static view of realization in favor of dynamism. But a study of the recorded sayings of Ju-ching, by whose authority Dôgen's criticisms are supposedly voiced and whom he is careful only to praise, indicates that Dôgen's mentor was not a major player in sectarian controversies, and his views often do not diverge significantly from those of his contemporary Rinzai masters (Kagamishima 1983: 48-52). Also, Dôgen apparently borrowed the term Shôbôgenzô, which appears in the title of three of his works, from Ta-hui's kôan collection (though it is used in other Zen texts). In his earlier writings Dôgen frequently praised Ta-hui for his dedication to meditation, which suggests that his later attacks were based more on partisan concerns in establishing his monastic order in Japan than strict ideological discrepancies (Bielefeldt 1985; Faure).

It seems that Dôgen and Ta-hui each cast himself in the role of the preserver of the kôan tradition, and deliberately overstated his attack on his rival (Hung-chih for Ta-hui and Ta-hui for Dôgen) as a corrupter for partisan reasons. There are many affinities in the aims of the two thinkers. Both stress the dehypostatization of kôans so that they are understood as experientially-based expressions reflecting a thoroughly subjective awareness of original enlightenment rather than propositional truths about an objectifiable ultimate reality. They maintain, however, that the practitioner who seeks to overcome conceptual fixations must transmute rather than simply negate discursive consciousness in examining the kôan. Also, Dôgen and Ta-hui caution against awaiting or anticipating enlightenment as a final goal in a way that loses sight of the dynamism of spontaneous realization fully integrated with life-and-death.

One way of assessing the connection between the thinkers is to consider the distinction John Dominic Crossan sets up between myth which "establishes world" and parable which demythologizes or "subverts [that very] Parable, he argues, in showing the limitations of myth and world." deliberately shattering world is neither anti-myth nor a replacement of myth. It must be self-critical and self-subverting, so that "Each time the Parable is in danger of becoming fossilized and turned into a myth, it subverts its own domestication and breaks the very structures that would contain it" (104). In Crossan's terms, the kôan is an eminent example of parabolic religion "that continually and deliberately subverts final words about 'reality' and thereby introduces the possibility of transcendence," in contrast to mythical religion "that gives one the final word about 'reality' and thereby excludes the authentic experience of mystery" (105). However, Ta-hui and Dôgen differ significantly on the aim and outcome of the subversion process. For the former subversion is an end in itself leading to a state of no-words beyond myth and anti-myth, but Dôgen seeks to collapse the distinction between myth and parable so that the symbol-making of mythic awareness itself is continously self-subverting. As Hee-jin Kim puts it, "What was taking place then in Dôgen's mind was a radical demythologizing and, in turn, remythologizing of the whole Buddhist symbol-complex of original enlightenment, the Buddha-nature, emptiness, and other related ideas and practices. The crux of his revolutionary vision lay in a realistic affirmation and transformation of what was relative, finite, and temporal in the nondualistic vision of the self and world" (1975: 45).

characteristically Dôgen's unconventional interpretations of traditional cases are frequently aimed at defeating their author's apparent intentions in the belief that all expressions are fair game for the creative interpreter. In one interesting example, he subverts a kôan almost always seen as advocating a classic pro-kôan/anti-zazen position so that it takes on a reverse meaning supporting meditation. Based on a Dentôroku anecdote, Nan-yüeh likens his disciple Ma-tsu's practicing zazen in order to become a Buddha to the futility of polishing a tile to create a mirror, apparently to point out the limitation of meditation as a gradual means of attaining enlightenment. Dôgen subverts and remythologizes this understanding by arguing that the act of polishing does create a mirror, just as zazen brings about a realization of the potential illumination of Buddha-nature. "We truly know," he writes, "that when we make a mirror by polishing a tile, Ma-tsu becomes a Buddha. When Ma-tsu becomes a Buddha, Ma-tsu immediately

becomes Ma-tsu. When Ma-tsu becomes Ma-tsu, zazen immediately becomes zazen" (1970, I: 254). Dôgen argues that the kôan legitmates his view of zazen as the method of "practice in realization" (*shôjô ni shu*) and refutes Ta-hui's *kanna-zen* approach. However, such reversal of meaning or contradictory interpretation represents the kind of self-subverting process that typifies and enhances the kôan tradition even as it criticizes the standard understanding of one of the cases.

#### Models of Interpretation

A clarification of the differences between Ta-hui and Dôgen in light of their common goal of revivifying the kôan demands a reassessment of interpretive models that have been based generally on an iconoclastic standpoint Dôgen refutes. Perhaps the most prevalent modern interpretation of kôan practice is the psychotherapeutic model proposed by Suzuki and other leading figures in Zen studies [Dumoulin, Sekida, DeMartino, Kasulis] and psychotherapy [Fromm, Jung, Benoit, Konda, Horney]. This approach highlights the view that the kôan is aimed at creating a tension or conflict between two levels of awareness--the logical and irrational, discursive and intuitive, conscious and unconscious--resulting in an impasse or barrier to understanding and consequent sudden breakthrough to enlightenment. The kôan is seen as deliberately causing a "double-bind" or psychological impasse based on the accumulation of theories and eventual saturation of the intellect leading to a penultimate psychic explosion of entrance into transcendental awareness. This model seems to have certain advantages over mystical and philosophical interpretations because it emphasizes the concrete experiential transformation realized in Zen through the dispossession of the ego, abandonment of illusion, and attainment of the fundamental nature of selfhood--the "original face" (honrai no memmoku), "own-nature" (kenshô), or state of "no-thought" (munen)--which Suzuki generally refers to as the According to Suzuki on the higher or "Unconscious" (1973: 124). transcendental level (Skt. lokottara), language "becomes warped and assumes all kinds of crookedness: oxymora, paradoxes, contradictions, contortions, absurdities, oddities, ambiguities, and irrationalities" (1968: 242). This seems to be a good explanation of why the Dentôroku refers to Zen teachings as "strange words and extaordinary actions" (kigen kikô), and it may accurately portray the Rinzai approach to sudden enlightenment (satori) through "a separate transmission outside the scriptures" (kyôge betsuden). But the use of psychotherapy as a methodology for Zen studies is not fully sensitive to the complex evolution of the conceptual and literary forms of this tradition

(Gomez). Furthermore, it tends to presuppose the kind of bifurcation between a hopelessly futile rationality and a transcendental, unutterable illogicality that kôan practice in Dôgen's view seeks to overcome.

Another approach stresses the kôan's paradoxical use of language as a philosophical mode of expressing spiritual realization. Rather than distinguish between two levels of selfhood, Chung-ying Cheng suggests a double meaning of the kôan's function: one for the unenlightend who seek nirvana, the other for the enlightened who have already attained it. According to Cheng, the puzzles and paradoxes of Zen dialogic exchanges achieve a liberation from ontic commitment on the basis of the freedom of the deep ontological structure of emptiness and nonattachment. Upon the attainment of enlightenment, however, the paradoxicality of the kôan disappears for "Zen paradoxes are paradoxical to those who are not enlightened in Zen. Once a person has Enlightenment, the paradoxes are no longer paradoxical to him even though they remain the same in their linguistic appearance" (90). Thus, while stressing paradoxicality Cheng's conclusions seem to concur with Isshû Miura and Ruth Fuller Sasaki, who argue that the kôan is not "ever a paradoxical statement except to those who view it from outside. When the kôan is resolved it is realized to be a simple and clear statement made from the state of consciousness which it has helped to awaken" (1965: xi-xii). The first meaning of paradoxicality described here as the pursuit of liberation seems appropriate to the Rinzai iconoclastic view as reflected by the Mumonkan warning that any interpreting of Chao-chou's Mu is "like having bolted a red hot iron ball. You try to vomit it but cannot" (Shibayama: 19). In the Rinzai tradition, however, the aim of kôan practice is not to solve the paradox but to realize the hopelessness of any attempt to find solutions. It seems that much of the kôan's effectiveness rests on its defiance of common or refined logical sense. Thus, the idea of the second meaning Cheng suggests, that for the enlightened the kôan is a "simple and clear statement," may be unfaithful to the Rinzai approach and yet not fully capture Dôgen's hermeneutic view either.

Hsueh-li Cheng seems to take this second meaning a step further by emphasizing that it is inappropriate to dissect Zen in terms of psychology and language because its sole aim is an holistic transformation for the sake of soteriology. He points out the kôan is dependent upon and an expression of *satori*, "the emancipation of human beings from suffering and evil...touching on moral, social, physical and intellectual aspects of life" (459), and not the other way around. The kôan articulates soteriological transformation, "not metaphysical insight into any nature or into human nature, but living a clear, normal life without any attachment" (472). By interpreting the kôan as a natural outgrowth of realization, this approach represents the inverse of the psychotherapeutic model, which sees the kôan as a tool leading up to yet ironically blocking enlightenment. If the soteriological aspect of Zen has priority over the psychotherapeutic and philosophical, then the kôan could be analyzed as an example of religious symbolism with significant parallels to the enigmatic and paradoxical passages of scriptures and mystical texts. For instance, Martin Buber and Gershom Scholem, despite discrepancies in their approaches to Jewish mysticism, stress the uniqueness of the kôan in the context of world religions while pointing out affinities with Hasidic tales (Dumoulin 1979: 74-76). Both Zen and Hasidism are based on awakening through a living encounter with the concrete reality of truth embodied by the master; that is, truth is a state of being that is transmitted through the whole person and not necessarily words. Yet Hasidic legends often highlight fanciful and other-worldly features of the masters' lives (Wiesel) in a way that is not in accord with Zen naturalism and puritanism (although the mythologization of Zen masters to popularize the tradition is not an uncommon theme).

The main problem with using a religious model for the kôan is that symbols are generally understood as referring to the Sacred, the numinous source from which they spring as metaphorical discourse. Yet, the basis of Zen realization is what Kyoto school thinkers call "absolute nothingness" (zettai mu) or in a phrase attributed to Bodhidharma, "Just empty, nothing sacred" (kakuzen mushô). These expressions stress an iconoclasticism attempting to defeat all symbol-making as obstructive of *satori*. On the other hand, as Paul Ricoeur points out, "within the sacred universe there are not living creatures here and there, but life is everywhere as a sacrality, which permeates everything ... " (1974: 61). For Ricoeur, the sacred generates an overabundance of meanings which have a non-linguistic dimension, and its symbolic articulations have a polysemous quality that encompasses nonsemantic as well as metaphorical modes of expression. Thus, the objection is overcome when Zen nothingness is seen as a universalist and utopian view of the sacred whereby the absolute is manifest through each and every concrete spatio-temporal phenomena, and discourse and silence profoundly interact as modes of symbolic disclosure (Turner: 46-48, 291-292). For Zen, "Either nothing and nowhere is sacred, or everything and everywhere is .... [all things are] capable of teaching and manifesting the Dharma, an extremely dynamic quality" (Powell: 17, 15).

One of the difficulties in interpreting the kôan is that the iconoclastic view tends to define it negatively in terms of the pitfalls inherent in coming to terms with the practice. Ta-hui, stressing the shortcut method of the *watô*,

refers to the Mu kôan (and other pithy, maieutic examples, such as "three pieces of flax," "the cypress tree in the garden," or "East Mountain sails along the river") as "a knife cutting through the doubting mind," "a snowflake falling on a hot stove," "an iron rod that cannot be swallowed," or "a mortar and pestle used to smash misconceptions" (1969: 65, 68, 113, 226; 1977: 86, 88). He admonishes, "As the inquiry goes on steadily and uninterruptedly you come to see that there is no intellectual clue in the kôan, that it is altogether devoid of sense as you ordinarily understand that word, that it is entirely flat, devoid of taste, has nothing appetizing about it...[and] you will become aware that you have pushed yourself like the old rat into a blind alley" (in Suzuki 1970: 105, 109). Following the lead of Tung-shan Shou-chou of the Yün-men school (two generations before Hsüeh-tou), Ta-hui distinguishes between the "live word," which is tasteless in providing no clues to be fathomed as to a rational interpretation of meaning but puts an end to the functioning of discriminative awareness, and the "dead word," which is given logical or philosophical analysis that only leads to the snare of intellectualism. The term Mu can function either way depending on the approach of the practitioner. If seen as a "live word" it becomes a devastasting weapon smashing through the causes and consequences of the "ten defects" of conceptualization (see below, p. 228); the Mu liberates the mind from any concern with yes and no, have and not have, being and nothingness. But as a "dead word" it perpetuates the vicious cycle of partial views, leading to the extremes of nihilism or realism.

Thus, the *Mu watô*, according to Ta-hui, highlights and extends to the furthest possible extent the unbridgeable gap between symbol and reality, or language and truth, creating an anguishing sense of the utter futility of all ideas and discourse that is a necessary impasse setting the stage for a breakthrough to *satori*. The contrast between the *watô* method and Dôgen's approach can be illustrated by considering the following Soren Kierkegaard anecdote, which in offering an existentialist critique of systematic philosophy highlights the need for an "indirect communication" to convey the profound subjectivity of religious truth:

What the philosophers say about Reality is often as disappointing as a sign you see in a shop window, which reads: Pressing Done Here. If you brought your clothes to be pressed, you would be fooled; for the sign is only for sale (31).

A Ta-Hui interpretation would likely focus on the phrase "Pressing Done Here" as an example of a *watô* revealing the fundamental paradoxicality that reflects the trap inherent in conceptual thinking, which mistakes the bifurcations of discursive consciousness (Skt. vijnana) for the holistic insight of genuine wisdom (prajna). The sign does not and cannot deliver the results it promises. It entices the mind to pursue its supposed reservoir of meaning but only leads to a recognition of thoroughgoing meaninglessness. The moment when the mind considers how it has been betrayed or has led itself into this mockery is a turning point to freedom from dependence upon signs. The disappointment and distrust with all material (or advertising) signs and linguistic designations gives way to a sense of release from an appetitive interest in examining the content and meaning of "dead words." As long as one insists on grappling with the sign, making sense of the phrase "Pressing Done Here" is like trying to swallow an iron rod. But in causing liberation from such a preoccupation, it functions as a tasteless "live word."

A Dôgen interpretation of the anecdote begins as an extension of Ta-hui's approach and culminates in a view that is in some ways opposite to watô practice. Dôgen's understanding of the kôan is based on a view of language influenced by a combination of elements in Chinese Zen and Japanese religiosity that view literary symbols as the essential means of conveying spiritual truth. First he seeks to be sensitive to and to recapture the poetic creativity and ingenuity of early Zen masters, for whom "ultimate reality [is] revealed to the mind's eye in concrete phenomena. Metaphor and poetry are ideally suited to function in this way ... " (Powell: 11), so that "it had become commonplace to discuss poetry in terms of [Zen], to say that poetry...'is like' [Zen]" (Lynn: 381). Dôgen's approach also reflects his initial training in Japanese Tendai Buddhism on Mt. Hiei. In the early Kamakura period, Tendai was an eclectic sacramentalism that seemed to draw upon the emphasis in early Japanese mythology and poetry on direct participation in the reality symbolized in the sense that the mountain, for example, neither represents nor houses but is the kami. Kitagawa refers to this view as a symbols" because "nonsymbolic understanding of the ontological identification of symbol and sacred is prior to yet establishes the epistemic ground for a sense of distance that is presupposed for a symbol to re-present the sacral object (45-49). Tendai affirmed the efficacy of sutra study and recitation as a locus of religious truth, particularly the Lotus Sutra, cited by Dôgen more than fifty times in his collected writings (Kagamishima 1974: 121-137). It also integrated the use of sacred syllables or dharani and circular designs or mandala, which are techniques connecting the subjective psychophysical universe with the limitless potentialities of cosmic awareness

"penetrating every sphere of phenomenal existence" (Matsunaga I: 184). Tendai, in turn, had absorbed Kûkai's Shingon esoteric notion of the oneness of sound, meaning, and reality (Hakeda): "From the Shingon standpoint, each and every thing in the universe is an 'expressive symbol' (monji) of the dharmakaya. In fact, the universe as a whole is the 'symbolic embodiment' (sammayashin) of the dharmakaya as the Buddha, Dainichi" (Kasulis 1988: 262). Finally, Dôgen is also influenced by classical Japanese literature which conventionalizes complex wordplay involving puns, homophones, and grammatical restructuring to accentuate the polysemous quality of words and sounds (Heine: 13-15, 61-66).

The combined effect of these factors is Dôgen's notion that each and every aspect of the universe in its daily activity preaches the Dharma verbally or non-verbally, and therefore "mountains and rivers themselves are the sound of the sutra" (sansuikyô). Dôgen's heremenutic approach seems to be striving for a middle way between sacramentalism and iconoclastism, metaphor and criticism, mythos and logos. He maintains the necessity of Way" perpetually "explaining the (dôtoku) through "disclosing mind/disclosing nature" (sesshin sesshô), and clearly and consistently affirms rather than denies the efficacy of all forms of discourse including anecdotes, parables, metaphors, and logical analysis as essential means of revealing the experience of enlightenment. In "Muchûsetsumu," he maintains that words are not "figures of speech" (hiyu) but the "true form of reality" (shohô jissô). Yet Dôgen does not overlook the critical and subversive aspect of language whose foundation is the insubstantiality of nothingness-nothingness or no-Buddha-nature. Ta-hui emphasizes the power of doubt, or the "ball of doubt" which is designed to concentrate all aspects of human frustration with the perplexities of life into a single event forcing a breakthrough to satori (Buswell 1987: 352-356). Dôgen, on the other hand, stresses the power of disclosure to continuously unfold multiple meanings stemming from a surplus at the inexhaustible source. As Dôgen writes in the following waka which subverts the conventional meaning of its title, "No reliance on words and letters," by stressing continuous discourse rather than silence: "Not limited/ By language/ [Dharma] is ceaselessly expressed;/ So, too, the way of letters/ Can display but not exhaust it" (Heine: 98).

Dôgen's approach to the Kierkegaard parable probably highlights the point that the phrase "Pressing Done Here" does indeed disclose the truth even if it is a partial, misleading, or even contradictory truth. That is, the sign is an expression of the truth that there is no particular, fixed truth, but always a connection between words themselves and relative or contextually-based truths. If assumed to represent a single absolute truth, Dôgen might agree with Ta-hui's view that live-words are meaningful only in their meaninglessness; the sign points to something that cannot be pointed to and in so doing shows the futility of all pointers. Thus "Pressing Done Here" would seem to represent the inverse of the *Diamond Sutra* dictum: no-truth is truth and therefore no-truth. But whereas Ta-hui uses this paradox to make the case for the hopelessness of language, Dôgen reaches a radically different conclusion by uncovering other levels of paradoxicality. If seen in terms of its relative context, the sign invariably holds meaning: in a sign shop it is a sample product, and in a dry cleaning shop it is either a description (if on the inside wall) or an advertisement (if on the outside door). Beyond that, the verbal image of the sign "Pressing Done Here" in the anecdote holds a symbolic import because it invites the reader to identify with an existential feeling the author conveys. Subjective response transforms the sign into a symbol, which according to Tillich is an indicator that allows participation in what it symbolizes (I: 239). This understanding now reverses Ta-hui's view so that words are meaningless because of their inherent meaningfulness.

Furthermore, for Dôgen there are no half-truths. In his doctrine of "total penetration of a single dharma" (ippô gûjin), each and every aspect as the true form of reality reveals without partiality or limitation the truth of the whole: "A full [instance of] being-time half known is a half being-time fully known" (1970, I: 259). "Pressing Done Here," then, is the complete truth or full disclosure of reality. It is not an absurdity and it only disappoints those minds which bring to it deluded expectations. The verbal sign does deliver because it fulfills what the mind really needs, which is not a matter of cleaning or repairing a material object but spiritual purification and elevation through unity of subjective awareness and objective expression. In that light, Dôgen argues that the most basic paradox of language and thought embedded in the use of kôans is, "Only the painted rice-cake satisfies hunger" That is, the illusion of metaphor, wordplay, and symbolism is the (287). reality of truth. According to Ricoeur, "In no way does poetic imagination reduce itself to the power of forming a mental picture of the unreal; the imagery of sensory origin merely serves as a vehicle and as material for the verbal power whose true dimension is given to us by the oneiric and the cosmic. As Bachelard says [La Poetique de l'espace: 7], the poetic image 'places us at the origin of articulate being'; the poetic image 'becomes a new being in our language, it expresses us by making us what it expresses'" (1971: 15-16). "Pressing Done Here" therefore is not an anti-symbol or a necessary barrier to enlightenment but a metaphor completely containing and fully revelatory of realization. Metaphor, Ricoeur suggests, can be "compared to stereoscopic vision where the different concepts may be said to come

together to give the appearance of solidity and depth" (1974: 56). Dôgen might concur with Ricoeur's distinction, which would represent the converse of Ta-hui's view, between "dead" metaphors whose strength is dissipated by repetition and contrivance (perhaps as in the *watô*) and "live" metaphors which spring from an ever inventive and creative source of inspiration (1974: 52).

The "Shin-fukatoku" fascicle of the Shôbôgenzô illustrates Dôgen's subversive remythologization of the kôan based on its symbolic power. Here, Dôgen reinterprets a well-known traditional case cited in chapter four of the Hekiganroku (and elsewhere) to highlight his understanding of the role of language and symbol in relation to silence and quietism. In the source passage based on an intriguing wordplay, master Te-shan, known as an expert on the Diamond Sutra, wants to buy some refreshments (ten-shin) from an old woman selling rice-cakes. The woman asks, "According to the Diamond Sutra, the past mind is non-abiding (fukatoku), the present mind is non-abiding, and the future mind is non-abiding. So, where is the mind (shin) that you now seek to refresh (ten) with rice-cakes?" (1970, I: 108). Te-shan is rendered speechless, outsmarted by the old woman who has apparently led his mind to an impasse in confronting nonconceptuality and silence that requires the abandonment of thought and discourse.

While the conventional Rinzai interpretation admires the woman's verbal feat in putting an end to words, to Dôgen the silence that concludes the dialogue reflects the deficiencies in the Ta-hui approach to kôans. Dôgen's commentary criticizes both the woman and Te-shan for not bringing the conversation to a more productive conclusion. He suggests that Te-shan should have turned the woman's deliberate use of irony back on itself by demanding, "As the past, present, and future minds are non-abiding, where is the mind that now makes the rice-cakes used for refreshment?" (111) The woman's hypothetical reply that is recommended by Dôgen indicates that the mind is neither an entity nor non-entity but is actively engaged in selfliberation: "You know only that one cannot refresh the mind with a rice-cake. But you do not realize that the mind refreshes the rice-cake, or that the mind refreshes (or liberates) the mind (kokoro no kokoro o tenzuru)" (111). Dôgen concludes that the woman should reward Te-shan with three cakes, one for each of the temporal occasions of the mind. Thus, Rinzai Zen interprets the woman's pun as a barrier of language and a pathway to silence, whereas Dôgen sees it as a hermeneutic vehicle for the continual unfolding of the multiple levels of self-critical symbolism and understanding: the mind liberating the mind through discourse and symbolic disclosure of experiential truth.

### The "Mu" Kôan

The above discussion cites several instances of Dôgen's reinterpretation of traditional cases. Although in some passages, particularly the Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki, Dôgen appears to be sharply critical of kôan exercises, his aim is not to assert the priority of zazen over the kôan as the key to Zen practice. Rather, he seeks to highlight a distinctive vision of the role of symbol and metaphor in relation to religious truth that he feels lies embedded in the initial and essential use of kôans yet obscured by the watô approach. (Dôgen 1970, I: 334). How greatly does he value kôans, and what role do they play in the Shôbôgenzô? In other words, is it fair and reasonable to refer to Dôgen's main philosophical work as a kôan-oriented text?

Clearly, the literary structure of the Shôbôgenzô is quite distinct from the major kôan collections as well as Zen recorded sayings and transmission of the lamp histories. The earlier writing forms--the sayings and lamp histories--focus on the ineffable truth embodied by the charismatic personality of a great master who carefully initiates a chosen successor (McCrea 1986: 73-100). The Hekiganroku, Mumonkan, and other compilations are centered on the traditional case usually extracted from an encounter dialogue in the previous works reflecting a mind-to-mind transmission; their commentaries cite other anecdotes, parables, and interpretations to amplify concentration on themes established by the case. The Shôbôgenzô, on the other hand, revolves around doctrine. Each fascicle sets up a key Mahayana or Zen notion of philosophy or practice and uses various cases and sutra passages (generally overlooked by the collections which see themselves as "separate from the teachings") as sources for elaborating on the meaning and significance of the doctrine. Thus, the dialogue of the traditional case is subsidiary to Dôgen's novel and creative philosophical perspective; it becomes illustrative rather than paradigmatic. Kawamura Kôdô, one of the leading Sôtô specialists in studies of the formation of the Shôbôgenzô, argues that the Mana Shôbôgenzô (or kôan collection in Chinese) was compiled first by Dôgen, and that the composition of the Kana Shôbôgenzô grew out of this by referring to many of the same traditional cases as Dôgen sought to create a new literary structure in order to express his novel approach to the use of kôans in Zen training. The Kana Shôbôgenzô is a less "conservative" text than the major kôan collections in that it allows for or even demands taking license with tradition in accord with the spirit and intention of the T'ang masters' spontaneous utterances. Yet in

addition to its poetic quality, it also reflects some degree of influence from Abhidharma or sastra literature in its use of line-by-line analysis exploring the metaphysical and psychological implications of doctrine.

Zen writings are based on the direct transmission of the Dharma rather than hagiography or speculation in the conventional sense. A feature shared by the Shôbôgenzô and the kôan collections, though they would appear to accuse each other of perpretrating the problems, is an emphasis on admonishing disciples against the traps and pitfalls of misinterpreting the kôans through a faulty appropriation of ineffability leading to either too much or too little interpretive language. One of the ways in which the structure and content of the Shôbôgenzô converge in contrast to the collections is the manner of Dôgen's analysis of specific cases. Instead of setting up an opposition of untruth and truth represented by the dialogue between a deluded disciple and enlightened master, Dôgen tries to show that the expressions of both parties if properly interpreted constitute the truth of the Dharma. In the Mu kôan, for example, the initial query, "Does the dog have the Buddha-nature or not?" is generally seen as an unfortunate idle, speculative question begging to be rebuffed or dismissed about whether a being that lacks self-reflective consciousness possesses the potential to be enlightened. But Dôgen comments, "The meaning of this question must be clarified. It neither asks whether the dog has or does not have the Buddhanature. It is a question of whether an iron [enlightened] man continues to practice the Way" (1970, I: 68). He argues that the question is so challenging and penetrating that Chao-chou is taken aback and feels threatened. When the query is somewhat stubbornly restated (after Chao-chou answers Mu to the first question) as, "All sentient beings have the Buddha-nature, why not the dog?" Dôgen argues, "The real meaning of this is, if all sentient beings are nothingness (*mu*), the Buddha-nature must be nothingness, and the dog must be nothingness as well. The real meaning is such, the dog and Buddhanature manifest nothingingness as such[ness]" (69). That is, Dôgen rereads the question, "Why does not the dog have [the Buddha-nature]?" as the statement, "the dog is such nothingness," or "the dog is no[-Buddha-nature]." Therefore, the supposedly deluded question discloses in a way equal to the master's enlightened response the wellspring of nothingness and suchness from which all expressions derive.

The "Busshô" fascicle offers the clearest demonstration of the constructive and de-constructive elements in the *Shôbôgenzô*. "Busshô" is the longest and most complex fascicle, and thus the one with the most sustained and consistent argumentation on a single doctrinal topic. Here, Dôgen examines over a dozen kôans concerning causality, temporality, language,

life-and-death, illusion, and practice in regard to the Buddha-nature. He refutes numerous misconceptions which hypostatize the Buddha-nature as either an objectifiable entity or a supramundane transcendence, a teleological goal or a prior possession, something in time or beginningless and eternal, a reality beyond illusion or an idealistic projection. These misconceptions tend to identify truth with the mundane world or presuppose a realm beyond concrete existence, thereby violating the middle path. Dôgen seeks to subvert and to replace the delusions with positive notions encompassing a unity of opposites, such as shitsuu or "whole-being" which overcomes the apparent conflict between anthropocentrism and transcendence, shingen or the "manifesting body" (overcoming cosmology and substantiality), gyô or "activity" (teleology and potentiality), setsu or "symbolic disclosure" (ineffability and reason), mujô or impermanence (time and eternity), i or "dependence" (causation and liberation), and gabyô or the "painted rice-cake" (reality and illusion). In that light, Dôgen disputes Po-chang, who suggests that freedom from extreme views is gained through the denial of each by saying that "to preach sentient beings have...or have not the Buddha-nature argues. contrast Dôgen disparages Buddha." In "Despite such disparagement, you cannot avoid explaining something....Atlhough disparages, is the Buddha-nature disclosed, or not? If the Buddha-nature is disclosed, it is penetrated by the teacher and at the same time it is heard by the listener" (64).

Like most of the fascicles in the Shôbôgenzô, "Busshô" does not have a clear, linear design reflecting a logical progression of ideas. But the theme that emerges underlying its various refutations is the issue of having and not having, or the being and nothingness of the Buddha-nature. Of the fourteen sections in the fascicle (Kodera), half deal directly with this topic, including the commentary on the Mu kôan. Dôgen indicates that the question of having is grounded on being (u), and the question of not having is grounded on nothingness (mu), based on the fact that the Sino-Japanese words u and mu have a double meaning. Beyond that, he maintains in analyzing several dialogues between the fourth and fifth patriarchs that the nothingness of "no-Buddha-nature" (mu-busshô) is the fundamental concern of Zen attainment pervading Chao-chou's Mu. No-Buddha-nature is not the denial of the existence of Buddha-nature because "no is a touchstone to express emptiness; emptiness is the foundation of expressing no" (1970, I: 52). Dôgen asks rhetorically, "Isn't the being of whole-being (shitsuu) based on the nothingness of nothingness-nothingness (mu-mu)?" (52). On the other hand, no-Buddha-nature does not merely represent an ironic affirmation since the categories of affirmation and negation must be subverted and broken

through. The average person, he maintains, in hearing of the doctrine of the Buddha-nature, fails to consider what it truly means and remains preoccupied with "such things as the existence or non-existence of Buddha-nature" (54). But Dôgen stresses that to comprehend the truth of no-Buddha-nature, "one must not think of it in terms of the nothingness of being and nothingness, but ask 'What is this very Buddha-nature?" (54) Thus, by the time Dôgen considers the Mu kôan in the thirteenth section of the fascicle, he has developed a hermeneutics of mu embracing yet sublating the topics of denial, negation, non-existence, nothingness, and emptiness in terms of the direct, immediate yet continuing experience of no-Buddha-nature.

As Dôgen and others suggest, the Mu response to the question of the dog's Buddha-nature is perplexing and subject to various interpretations. Mu has various "negative" implications, including: no, what a foolish question for the Buddha-nature is not a possession and a dog cannot be enlightened; or it may convey a diamond-cutting and lion's roaring silence putting an end to all speculation. Mu can also paradoxically indicate an affirmation in that there is no Buddha-nature apart from concrete existence symbolized by the dog, and therefore from the standpoint of emptiness, of course, the dog and each and every phenomenon is Buddha. Ta-hui, who referred to this kôan at least twenty times in his writings (Ôgawa: 437), interprets Mu as the prime example of the shortcut or watô technique. He sees "this one word [as] the weapon which smashes all types of wrong knowledge and wrong conceptualization" (in Buswell 1983: 338), leading the conceptual mind to the brink of collapse beyond which lies the abyss of nonconceptual truth. According to Ta-hui:

> This one character is the rod by which many false images and ideas are destroyed in their very foundations. To it you should add no judgement about being or non-being, no arguments, no bodily gestures...Words have no place here. Neither should you throw this character away into the nothingness of emptiness...continually stir it [this kôan] around the clock (Dumoulin 1988: 258).

Ta-hui emphasizes that while concentrating on the Mu during all occasions and activities, one should feel supreme doubt of perplexity and frustration until the ten defects have been conquered and the breakthrough to *satori* is attained. The ten defects that were originally suggested by Ta-hui and then elaborated upon by Korean Zen master Chinul are (to paraphrase): 1) thinking of Mu in terms of the categories of yes and no 2) relating it to

other doctrines 3) pondering it logically 4) considering it a wordless gesture 5) evaluating the meaning of the word 6) approaching it through silent illumination 7) viewing it as a product of meditation 8) examining it through literary analysis 9) taking it to be true nonexistence 10) relating it to the original, inherent potentiality for awakening (Buswell 1983: 337-338, 373-374; Keel: 148). Ta-hui's watô appears to be similar to the contemplative prayer recommended by the anonymous author of The Cloud of Unknowing, who argues that "it is quite sufficient to focus your attention on a single word such as sin or God (or another one you might prefer) and without the intervention of analytical thought allow yourself to experience directly the reality it signifies. The one syllable prayer is like crying out 'help!' or 'fire!'" But The Cloud warns, "Do not use clever logic to examine or explain this word to yourself nor allow yourself to ponder its ramifications... I do not believe reasoning ever helps in the contemplative work. That is why I advise you to leave these words whole...When you think of sin, intend nothing in particular but only yourself, though nothing particular in yourself either" (Johnston: 94).

Hung-chih comments on the Mu kôan in case eighteen of his Juko hyakusoku (C. Sung-ku pai-tse, collection of one-hundred cases with poetic commentary) used as the basis for the Shôyôroku. Hung-chih's interpretation seems to indicate a different direction than Ta-hui by stressing that the Mu is not a truth to be contemplated without conceptualization but an expression based on and springing forth from the experience of enlightenment:

It is not realized by no-mind (mu-shin) or known with-mind (u-shin). Because it circulates freely throughout the veins and speech of the unbounded, true person, there is no place it does not penetrate" (in Ôgawa: 446).

The approach suggested by Hung-chih may have been a key influence on Dôgen's contention that the *watô* method creates subtle yet devastating dichotomies between means and end, practice and realization, and illusion and truth. However, the interpretation of Ju-ching, whom Dôgen cites as his only authentic teacher (aside from Sakyamuni), does not seem to diverge significantly from Ta-hui's explanation of the Mu as a method of surpassing conceptualization through concentrating on a conceptually unresolvable puzzle. According to Ju-ching:

In Chao-chou's expression Mu uttered in response to the question of the dog's Buddha-nature, the word Mu is an iron broom used to sweep aside delusions. As one sweeps,

countless delusions are exposed; the more sweeping, the more delusions. One must sweep away all conceptualizations that even this broom cannot reach. Sit erect and vigilant day and night without taking your attention off [the kôan]. Suddenly, the broom breaks open the great, empty sky and the myriad distinctions are fully penetrated" (in Kagamishima 1983: 282).

Yet, the final line may be different than Ta-hui in suggesting that discursive thought is an avenue rather than obstacle to realization.

Dôgen's approach to the Mu kôan is distinctive in several respects. First, as indicated above, Dôgen grounds the discussion of Mu in terms of the doctrine of no-Buddha-nature, which he says causes a "reverberating echo circulating through Chao-chou," and related notions of nothingness and emptiness. Mu is one of the multiple ways of expressing no-Buddha-nature which must not be absolutized but explored through alternative possibilities. Dôgen also highlights Chao-chou's affirmative response U, which he interprets in terms of being-Buddha-nature. The doctrine of being-Buddhanature, however, is not a possession or an inherent potentiality that exists in contrast to no-Buddha-nature. Chao-chou's U, he writes,

> ...is not the 'has' posited by the Sarvastivadans [an early Buddhist school of 'realism']....The being of Buddha is the being of Chao-chou. The being of Chao-chou is the being of the dog. The being of the dog is being-Buddha-nature" (1970, I: 69-70).

According to Dôgen, Chao-chou answered both Mu and U because these terms are interchangeable yet distinct ways of expressing no-Buddha-nature. In addition, Dôgen comments on the Chao-chou's ironic answer, "It is because a dog has karmic consciousness," given in response to the disciple's restatement of the initial question, "All sentient beings have the Buddha-nature, why not the dog?" Dôgen interprets Chao-chou's reply in positive terms. Since causality is inseparable from non-causality, the existence of karma indicates that the problem of the dog's Buddha-nature is oriented in terms of "the nothingness of the dog and the nothingness of the Buddha-nature" (70). This phrase (*kushi-mu*, *busshô-mu nari*) can also be read as "no-dog and no-Buddha-nature," "dog-nothingness and Buddha-nature-nothingness," or "dog-Mu and Buddha-nature-Mu."

In some ways, Dôgen's approach to the Mu kôan is similar to Ta-hui, especially when he suggests that "this Mu has the power of the sun to melt rocks" (69). Dôgen seems to concur with Ta-hui's refutation of some of the ten defects, such as 1), 4), and 10), but he clearly and willingly violates others, including 5), 8), and 9). Dôgen's argument appears to be: Is it reasonable or even desirable to use words such as Mu (or in The Cloud, sin or God) that are loaded with so many levels of meaning and implication reflecting the historical development of doctrine only in order to defeat thought and discourse? Isn't it preferable to explore the polysemy of such words while remaining free from commitment to any particular meaning? This is the "language of samadhi" (Sekida: 99), or the playful (asobiteki) expressions of awakened consciousness. Subversion is liberating in a sense parallel to Derrida's view of the repetition of language: "Its freedom is to exploit every latent connection, every associative bond, every phonic, graphic, semiotic, and semantic link, every relation of whatever sort which exists among signifiers, in order to set forth the power of repetition in all its productivity, inventiveness, and freedom" (Caputo: 142). Dôgen's critique of the watô approach thus reflects several concerns. Philosophically, he seeks to firmly establish the middle way encompassing the oneness of means and end, practice and realization, activity and anticipation without any subtle gap separating these apparent opposites. Psychologically, Dôgen emphasizes the interplay of thought and thoughtlessness in order to open up all possible approaches to enlightenment experience. From the standpoint of religious language, he values the deconstructive function of metaphor and symbol as semantic and non-semantic modes of disclosing the nothingness of nothingness.

#### Conclusions: Abuses and Uses

In The Temple of the Golden Pavilion, Mishima Yukio discusses the potential fatal flaw of the kôan used in Zen training. Near the end of the book, just before the miserable anti-hero Mizoguchi commits the tragic act of burning down the hauntingly beautiful temple based on his overly literal interpretation of Rinzai's dictum, "If you see the Buddha, kill him," he meets Father Zenkai. In contrast to the secretive and corrupt Dosen, Father Superior of the temple, the visiting Zenkai appears to Mizgocuhi as an authentic teacher who is able to see into his heart without making judgement or causing suspicion. Zenkai exhibits "the gentleness of the harsh roots of some great tree that grows outside a village and gives shelter to the passing traveler" (244). He is not like "[Zen masters who] are apt to fall into the sin of never giving a positive judgement on anything for fear of being laughed at

later in case they have been wrong....[or] the type of Zen priest who will instantly hand down his arbitrary decision on anything that is discussed, but who will be careful to phrase his reply in such a way that it can be taken to mean two opposite things" (245).

Both Dôgen and Ta-hui are sensitive and seek to avoid the kind of counter-productive spiritual predicament in which the study of traditional cases can easily result if metaphor is taken literally and flexibility, spontaneity, and ambiguity degenerate into arbitrary, whimsical, misleading pronouncements (Kapleau). The issue in comparing these thinkers is not whether the former accepted or rejected the kôan in taking a position that is polarized in relation to the latter. Rather, within the context of trying to revive and refashion the kôan tradition, two distinct views arose of how to minimize the kinds of problems Mishima describes. Ta-hui warns that thinking itself which invariably results in the ten defects must be conquered by trying to spit out the tasteless live word; one word is sufficient to the task. For Dôgen, all words are touchstones to articulate the nothingness of no-Buddha-nature; language is the play of samadhi). Kôans are not seen as either merely compatible with or replacing sutras but as the essential nature of the symbol-making process encompassing parable and paradox, tautology and metaphor, syntactical meaning and non-semantic wordplay (puns, homophones, onomatopoeia, etc.)

The differences in approach can also be seen by interpreting Franz Kafka's famous parable in The Trial, "Before the Law" (267-269). According to Kafka, a "man from the country" comes to the door of the Law begging for admittance but is denied entrance by an intimidating doorkeeper who counsels, "It is possible, but not at this moment." The man continues to wait, trying to cajole and even to bribe the doorkeeper, all to no avail. Finally, near the end of his life, the man sees a radiance streaming inextinguishably from the door of the Law and asks the doorkeeper, "Everyone strives to attain the Law, how does it come about, then, that in all these years no one has come seeking admittance but me?" The doorkeeper responds, "No one but you could gain admittance through this door, since this door was intended for you. I am now going to shut it." Ta-hui would likely see the doorkeeper as an embodiment of the necessary obstacle or impenetrable barrier of the Mu watô which forces the conceptual mind into exhaustion and eventual collapse. The death of the man from the country represents the demise of rationality, requiring a sudden leap beyond all doorways into the Law. The paradox for Ta-hui is that the man has wasted his efforts on a path of hopeless futility. Dôgen, however, interprets the paradoxicality in terms of the doorkeeper's final pronouncement: there are an infinite number of doors

but each person must find the key to the one that is appropriate to him or her. The man from the country never realizes that he has always been at the door containing the light or the truth of the Law. Instead of idly waiting or focusing on his frustration, the man should have tried to negotiate his way through the gateless gate (*mumonkan*) by engaging earlier in the discursive process that inspired his final illuminative question.

The conventional account of Zen history which suggests that the kôan is useful and meaningful only in demonstrating the uselessness and meaninglessness of words may be applicable to Ta-hui's Rinzai Zen but is misleading or irrelevant for Dôgen's Sôtô approach. In light of the above examination of the "Mu" and other cases, does the kôan for Dôgen have the Buddha-nature? To paraphrase (by substituting the word "kôan" for "sentient beings" in the original, 1970, I: 64) Dôgen's rhetorical comment to Ta-kuei, who said that "all sentient beings have no Buddha-nature":

You explain that all kôans are no-Buddha-nature. But you do not explain that all Buddha-natures are no-kôan, or that all Buddha-natures are no-Buddha-nature. How could you expect to realize even in your dreams that all Buddhas are no-Buddha-nature? You must see things more clearly!

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This book is a collection of articles by one of the leading scholars in Japanese thought dealing with three areas of Japanese philosophy and religion: Dôgen's Zen view of liberation, including his key doctrines of casting off body-mind, being-time, and spontaneous manifestation of the kôan; the relation between Buddhism, literary aesthetics, and folk religion; and a comparison of Japanese and Western thought, particularly Heidegger, on science, language, and death. The central theme throughout these essays is the meaning of time and impermanence in Japanese religion and culture based on Buddhist contemplation. The book's title refers to a phrase used by Dôgen, the dramatist Chikamatsu, and others that plays on the twofold image of "dream" representing either the fleeting world of illusion or the nonsubstantial realm of ultimate reality. One of the articles is a new annotated translation of Dôgen's *Shôbôgenzô* "Muchûsetsumu" ("Disclosing a Dream Within a Dream") fascicle. Other essays offer novel interpretations of traditional Zen thought and modern Kyoto-school thinkers Kuki Shûzô and Nishitani Keiji, in addition to Japanese religiosity expressed in literary ideals and folk religion

Steven Heine, former Fulbright Researcher and a professor of religion at Pennsylvania State University, has published a book on comparative philosophy, *Existential and Ontological Dimensions of Time in Heidegger and Dôgen* (with a translation of Dôgen's "Uji" fascicle), and on Japanese religio-aesthetics, A Blade of Grass: Japanese Poetry and Aesthetics in Dôgen Zen (with a translation of Dôgen's poetry collection) [Peter Lang, 1989]. Heine is also the editor and partial translator of Masao Abe's A Study of Dôgen: His Philosophy of Religion, and he is currently working on a book examining the relation between Dôgen and the Zen kôan tradition in light of postmodern discourse analysis.