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itself, and Professor Nishitani's thinking demands that this "life" be understood to include death, evil, and nihility. This demands that we thrust ourselves all the way to the very roots of life. Life thus experienced is the life of Buddha, where there is neither creation nor destruction. But like the front and back sides of a sheet of paper, it is also the reverse side of our relative existence. Professor Nishitani's thinking continuously urges his readers to arrive at this realization so as to change the quality of their lives.

This is nothing less than Sensei's "thinking of life" being revealed from its root-source, itself going out in search for life, and life awakening to life. Such was Sensei's "thinking," united with life, and one with a "life of thinking." As Sensei's thinking tapped the root of life in emptiness, his "life of thinking" bloomed forth endlessly. It calls to mind the lines in the *Cold Mountain Poems*: "I search to the end of the sourceless source. The source is exhausted, but the water is not."

Keeping his door open to all visitors and participating actively in various study groups were of course aspects of this "life of thinking." They are what is referred to in Mahayana Buddhism as "the samadhi of enjoyment for others." From late at night to early in the morning Sensei read, contemplated, and wrote. This was his "thinking of life"—"the samadhi of enjoyment for self." Sensei was "free to come and go" in both of those directions. And it was that which characterized his "person" (*nin*).

The following lines on Socrates by the German poet Hölderlin seem to have been composed with precisely this "person" of Professor Nishitani in mind:

"Wer das Tiefste gedacht, liebt das Lebendigste."

"Who the deepest has thought, loves what is most alive."¹

Reminiscence

Ueda Yoshifumi

Although I had no direct connection with Kyoto University, I visited Professor Nishitani both at his office there and at his home and learned a great

¹ "Socrates and Alcibiades," translated by Michael Hamburger, *Friedrich Hölderlin, Poems and Fragments* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 66-67.

deal from him. He occupied an important place in my life, and with his death I deeply sense the loss.

Among the many things I learned from Professor Nishitani, I would like to mention one or two here that concern the study of Buddhist thought. I studied under Professor Ui Hakuju, who taught me methods of philological and historical research, but I had not originally taken up the study of Buddhism in order to become a Buddhist scholar. Rather, I wanted to learn what Buddhism had to teach concerning human existence, and I became aware of the impossibility of grasping Buddhist thought adequately through a philological approach alone. Gradually, I came to turn to such figures as D. T. Suzuki, Nishida Kitarō, and Nishitani Keiji. In the case of Nishida, this was solely through his writings, and I never met him in person, but I did have the opportunity to meet with Suzuki and Nishitani many times.

As I have said, I carried on my study of Buddhism in order to discover its real nature and significance. Through the influence of Professor Ui, I was attracted to *Mahāyāna samgrāha (Shōdaijōron)* in the translation of Paramārtha (Shintai) and Vasubandhu's commentary on it, and spent a number of years in research. However, I discovered that there were difficulties in understanding these works that could not be clarified through standard procedures of textual study, and I labored to find a method by which to resolve those problems. While making various efforts, I was given a significant hint by an article by Suzuki. When the opportunity arose to write about Suzuki in a leaflet inserted in volumes of his collected works, I discussed how Suzuki's approach to the understanding of Buddhist tradition had opened up an effective avenue in my own study. This article was translated and submitted to the *Eastern Buddhist*, and appeared under the title "Reflections on the Study of Buddhism." Professor Nishitani personally encouraged its publication, and I have taken this as an indication of his understanding and support of my approach to Buddhist studies.

I have devoted fifty years to the study of Yogācāra thought, and in a recent book, *A Study of Trīmśikā* (in Japanese), I quoted Nishitani concerning the study of Buddhism:

Buddhist thought is extremely difficult to grasp. In a sense, this is a matter of its fundamental nature. . . . It differs from matters that we come to understand through a consideration with our ordinary intellect. (*Kono eien naru mono*; Kyoto: Yūkonsha, 1975)

Further, in my book, I present concrete examples that are illuminated by Nishitani's insight, "in things and events just as they are, one directly sees oneself and one's existence." (*Zen no tachiba*; Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1986)

I have, in my research into the nature of Buddhist tradition, explored

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Prajñāpāramitā, Mādhyamika, and Yogācāra thought (from the beginnings of the Mahāyāna tradition around the start of the common era to the sixth century), the Chinese developments in San-lun, T'ien-t'ai, and Hua-yen, and the thought of Shinran in Japan, and I have finally come to the point at which I feel I can go beyond the limits of philological research. During these decades of research, the question of the fundamental nature of religion has always been before me. This problem has been connected with the question of the truth of Buddhism. Particularly since I have only a fragmentary knowledge of Western philosophy and religion, the works of two great religious thinkers, Nishida Kitarō and Nishitani Keiji, have been immensely illuminating for me, and I have been guided by Nishitani's insight that "the problem of religion differs fundamentally from all other kinds of problems."

In my understanding of Shinran, I feel the influence of both the approaches of Ui and Nishitani. From Ui I learned a method of close textual study, in which not a single word or phrase is ignored, and in which one puts aside all secondary reference works and commentaries in order to grasp the text in its own terms. From Nishitani I learned a method of philosophical thought, flexible and pliant enough to consider its objects in conformity with the objects themselves; as Ueda Shizuteru has put it, "a mode of thought pervaded by a keenly aware and sensitive spirit." Through what I have learned from Ui and Nishitani, I feel I have been able to see the scholastic works of the Shin Buddhist tradition, from Zonkaku to modern times, in a critical light from the stance of Shinran himself, and been able to read Shinran's works directly. I sense in Shinran's thought a depth that exceeds my grasp, however much I advance. It has been in coming to Shinran that I have been able for the first time to go beyond the limits of philological study. While Shinran's teaching is a form of Mahāyāna Buddhism, it stands as a Buddhism of Other Power in opposition to self-power forms of Buddhism, and at the same time, while it more closely resembles Christianity than other branches of Buddhism, it includes, like other Mahāyāna traditions such as Zen, a fundamental difference from Christianity. While possessing such uniqueness, Shinran's Buddhism manifests genuine religious truth. This is what I have learned from Professor Nishitani and his teacher Nishida.