

## REVIEW ARTICLE

### Abe Masao's *Zen and Western Thought*

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IT IS A RARE BOOK that calls for a reflective article instead of the usual skimpy review. After a few pages it was apparent to me that Professor Abe's volume was one of these exceptions: clear, very articulate, learned and immensely instructive, it places itself next to Nishitani Keiji's *Religion and Nothingness* and Takeuchi Yoshinori's *Essence of Buddhism* as one of those incomparable volumes of contemporary Buddhist philosophy to come out of the Kyoto School. I say incomparable because nothing like them has appeared elsewhere. There have been, to be sure, classic treatises in theology and the philosophy of religion to have emanated in our century from Western, that is, from Christian and Jewish, sources. But the horizon of even the greatest of these is limited to the traditions of Western philosophy and religion. In these works representing Japanese Buddhism, on the other hand, Western problems, themes and categories—both theological and philosophical—intertwine with the entire scope of Buddhism to bring together, as nothing else to my knowledge has done, two of the major, but before our century independent, religious and cultural traditions of our globe. Professor Abe is peculiarly able to accomplish this stupendous act of "dialogue"; as a student and then professor in both Japan and the United States, and for a decade the most indefatigable represen-

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\*The following is a review of Abe Masao's *Zen and Western Thought* (1985), edited by William R. LaFleur and published by Macmillan Press Ltd., London, and the University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, Hawaii.

tative of the Buddhist viewpoint at dialogic conferences everywhere, he is more thoroughly at home in and master of both traditions than anyone else I know.

For me at least the most valuable element in this work (as in Nishitani's and Takeuchi's) is that the Buddhist viewpoint, or better, the Buddhist way of being in the world, is presented to us reflectively in the categories and modes of thought which we in the West can understand and appropriate, as an answer to the problems for religion which we feel, that is, as a part of our contemporary reflection on the crises, possibilities and meanings of human existence. Thus while the viewpoint presented is certainly different and possibly "strange" to us, the text as a whole is not; it takes its place along with *I and Thou*, *The Courage to Be*, and even *The Epistle to the Romans* as a text in "our" world—even though it contains a message quite unlike anything else in that world. In his introduction, editor William R. LaFleur is quite right; Abe presents Buddhism here as a powerful, relevant and persuasive alternative to Western philosophical views and religious existence, by no means (as we used to assess representatives of these traditions) anachronistic, antiquarian or "primitive"—nor in any way as an impoverished copy of Western thought and commitments. (LaFleur also correctly notes that, surprisingly, it is in theology and not in philosophy or in social science that thinkers in the West are submitting their own fundamental presuppositions to non-Western criticism and influence.) Buddhism, like Hinduism and Sikhism, has long since appeared in the West as a "possible" and powerful mode of personal religious existence; these works of Japanese Buddhism, however, remain so far the only examples of such non-Western religions *reflectively presented*, and presented reflectively as viable, strong contemporary alternatives. In many ways it is from these volumes in religious philosophy that we can learn for the first time what Buddhism is actually like as a mode of religious existence, a mode *for us*—which is, after all, the only way authentic religious existence appears on the scene. It is, therefore, for what I learned in Professor Abe's volume about Buddhism that I am particularly grateful, and it is on the Buddhism that he presents that I wish to reflect in this article. I do not intend to summarize the richness of Abe's presentation of Buddhism. Rather, as a Westerner eager to understand what he says here, I want to continue the dialogue with him: to reflect on the major themes he presents, to

seek to "place" his thought in my own world, and thus to get inside it and so to understand it.

### 1. The Radical Religious Existentialism of Abe's Philosophy

First of all, Abe begins with the question: is Zen a philosophy, and if not, what is it? The answer is both complex and to our traditions puzzling. As in verbal discussions with Buddhist thinkers, so here the initial surprise is the (to us) strangely dominant role that what seem to be philosophical (epistemological and metaphysical) judgments play in the religious existence of the Buddhist, or at least in Buddhist reflection on that existence. That is to say, it is repeated often that what we would term epistemological problems (that the self cannot know itself directly [5, 138] or that we think in terms of subjects and objects [6-7, 102], what Abe terms "substantive thinking") represent *the* cause of human anxiety, estrangement and alienation (6-7, 102). That such metaphysical judgments might lead to futile or even false thinking, to fundamental error, or that wrong religious doctrines lead to doctrinal error or heresy, Westerners would agree; but it puzzles them to find such intellectual assertions regarded as the cause of the "spiritual lostness" of humans, their personal religious problems. Clearly we tend to separate intellect and will, issues of philosophical truth on the one hand and issues of spiritual health, commitment or faith on the other more sharply than do the Buddhists. This is illustrated not only in the Western distinction between the "good" ontological structure of creation and the historical/personal character of the Fall, but also in the distinction between *is* and *ought*, fact and value, speculative theory and moral practice in secular philosophy. To Buddhists to think of reality as subjects and objects is inevitably to become *attached* to objects or to the self as subject (102); thus "substantive thinking" must cease or "be overcome" so that attachment to world and self is to cease. Correspondingly, if the self cannot know itself, it cannot "find" its true self—and is lost in ignorance (7-8, 138). Hence the philosophical truths of no permanent substance and no permanent self, and the metaphysical affirmation of endless dependent origination and *anatta* (no-self), are the *basis* for spiritual rebirth, for the fundamental spiritual *metanoia* necessary for salvation. Buddhism seems at first glance to be a religion based on a particular set of speculative

metaphysical affirmations, and even Buddhist salvation seems dependent on intellectual agreement to these metaphysical doctrines.

This is, however, too simple—as Abe continually cautions us. Such an “intellectualistic” or “speculative” interpretation would in fact be an Hegelian (or possibly “Process”) interpretation of Buddhism as a religion whose fundamental structure is grounded in speculative truths of reason, truths important to the spiritual life but knowable on their own. Nothing could be more *un*Buddhist as Abe presents Buddhism. Over and over he reminds us that only with practice: religious existence, meditation, Zazen, the beginnings of non-attachment, can we understand at all these “truths” (56, 59, 66). In the end they are, he says, “existential truths,” truths not known speculatively (56) but only through our existential subjectivity (9-10, 16-18, 56-60), with the achievement that is of *one's own* Absolute Subjectivity. It is not that we have through thought achieved a concept of “something” or an Absolute transcendent to subject and object, nor a concept of interdependent becoming or process—and *then* that we are as a result of those concepts spiritually transformed. Such “conceptualization” or “objectification,” such “duality” of Absolute and self, of process and thinker, Abe continually rejects as futile, as remaining stuck in the subject-object world of duality. Only through practice does the self cleanse itself of attachments and reach enlightenment: we become unattached to objects and world, to self and to its past and future; we are untouched by driving desire for objects or self-interest in our continuing projects. Now we may begin to see the world and the self as impermanent, endlessly appearing and disappearing. And with that “metaphysical vision” born of spiritual transformation, we can now understand what these truths say—or better, we *are* now what they express. A self empty of attachments, impermanent itself among changing and transient things, such a self *is* Emptiness and so understands Emptiness. It is now intensely real but real at a quite different level, free and utterly self-determined. It cannot *think* itself to that level; it must *be* it. “True Emptiness is not outside us, but the essential meaning of our deepest subjectivity: it is identical with ourself. I am Emptiness, Emptiness is in me” (160-1). Suddenly Buddhism as Abe presents it, however it may have appeared at first, is closer to Kierkegaard's emphasis on existing as a Christian rather than conceiving Christianity as a system of thought than it is to the interpretation of religion characteristic of

either Hegel or Whitehead. If this is an epistemological and metaphysical mode of spirituality, it is very different from either the doctrinal theology or the metaphysical philosophy of the West. It is at best a *religious* mode of existing reflected into philosophical categories, not a philosophical mode of thinking resulting in a religion.

This same theme—that the religious element, the “piety,” determines the philosophical content and not the reverse—is underlined in Abe's emphasis on the role of *negation* and the necessity of existential “leaps.” The actuality of ordinary experience—taken either cognitively or morally—is no place, says Abe, from which we can in thought proceed directly (109-10). Rather the whole realm of ordinary experience—subject-object, self-world, past potentialities leading to future actualization, this space here as continuous with that space there—this entire realm must be *negated* (7-8); in effect a “leap” beyond substantive thinking must be made (15). This negation is existential, and it is total (8): we must appropriate the endlessness and impermanence of all in the world and the unattainability of the self, and we must realize inwardly the emptiness and negativity of all. We must, in fact, realize the endless continuity of living and dying as “the Great Death” (166).

This is, however, not all. Even this negation of ordinary experience, of self and world, must itself be further negated. Emptiness, Sunyata, Nirvana, the Buddha-Nature, these do not represent a transcendent reality beyond or distinct from the endless rush of passing things. For then a *duality* between Emptiness and world would remain; an *attachment* to Emptiness and to the no-self would appear in ourselves; and the *aim* of achieving this higher stage would still dominate our present. Thus “Emptiness empties itself,” the true self negates the no-self and remains “cool” even to its own salvation. In this combination of, first, identity with endless transience and, second, of non-attachment to nirvana, the *identity* of the impermanent, unattainable self and the impermanent, endless world of appearance and disappearance (stage I) with Emptiness (stage II) is realized. And the essence of this perspective is that as existence and thought become *one*, so the endless becoming of finitude and Emptiness itself are *one*: samsara and nirvana are one. And when samsara is nirvana and nirvana samsara, the third stage is reached, and the great Life is opened up (166).

These stages are, as we have seen, existential. They are also radically *discontinuous* (15). Thus on these two counts the concepts that

thematize each stage are not intelligible; in fact they remain "mere concepts," until these stages have been realized existentially and in practice. Again there is no direct, intellectual or "rational" (speculative) route to these concepts (127). Now what has struck and fascinated me in this account is that clearly Buddhist philosophy—or at least Zen philosophy—is primarily existential-religious and not speculative; it is reflection on religion, on a certain mode of existing religiously, on (to use a traditional term) "piety." It is not metaphysical explication conducted on its own grounds and according to its own criteria. This is also true, so I believe, of much of the theology in the Christian tradition and of the thought in Judaism. In each of these religious traditions the concepts explicated express or thematize the universe within which the Christian, the Jew or the Buddhist exists when each exists religiously. In all these cases, therefore, it is to the character of the "piety" that one must turn if one would understand, interpret or compare the speculative concepts (or becoming, of the self, of God) involved in the different religions. Abe has stated this point, so it seems to me, with utter clarity.

It was, therefore, a surprise to me when, in comparing the views of Zen with those of Whitehead, he compared the two systems directly, concept for concept, as if each represented a particular kind of metaphysical system. Thus Abe argued that what represented the major difference between the two was that Whitehead's system has God and his does not, and that the "God" described in Process thought transcended in certain regards the endless appearing and disappearing of all things. These judgments are, to be sure, quite correct, and the presence of the concept of God does represent a significant difference between the two "systems" which are *metaphysically* otherwise interestingly similar. On Abe's own grounds, however, the existential and religious differences in the two viewpoints are of much greater weight and significance. For each represents an utterly different, sharply contrasting, mode of being in the world, and these differences of piety give to the philosophical concepts of each, despite any surface similarities they may have, vastly different meanings; in effect they spell out vastly different universes.

As did Hegel, Whitehead gallantly tried to provide a more coherent and rational base to the positive modern Western view of existence: in nature as known by science, in community as understood in modern

social theory, and in history as known by historians. In effect, his effort was to give a rational account of the value-laden world of interdependent things in the developing process assumed in what he liked to term "civilization." And for a multitude of good reasons he was sure that such a rational account of contemporary Western experience was possible only on the basis of a "non-substantial" philosophy of becoming rather than the traditional interpretation in terms of unchanging substances. Abe, on the other hand, radically negates participation (cognitive or moral) in that entire self-world or "terms and relations" process of becoming in order to return to it utterly transformed. Correspondingly, the world to which he returns is itself utterly transformed, a passing world now emptied and drained of its interconnections and its apparent values, and in turn the self is emptied of its aims, unattached and so freed. World and self are not abandoned in the Mahayana; but they are, as Abe makes clear, thoroughly transformed, remade from top to bottom and from beginning to end and remade into "emptiness," an emptiness quite unattached to any sequence of becoming. No wonder, therefore, that Whitehead felt he had to construct a factor "God" in order to "explain" (give a metaphysical reason for) the developing order and value so apparent and pervasive to him in ordinary experience. In turn it is no surprise that Abe finds such a concept both groundless and useless—for our ordinary experience of selves and world in temporal transition (on which Whitehead builds) must to Abe be negated in order that that entire realm of becoming be "overcome," be drained of desire or lure for its values and thus "emptied." It is the *piety* not the *metaphysics* that provides the main distinction of Abe's Buddhism from its Western counterparts.

## 2. The Radical "Naturalism" of Abe's Buddhism

The second theme that struck me forcefully was the radically *naturalistic* character of the universe as viewed by Zen Buddhism. By that Western word I refer to the kind of metaphysical vision presented to us by the so-called non-reductionist naturalists of the first half of the American twentieth century: John Dewey, George Santayana, John Herman Randall, Jr. being possibly the most prominent examples. To them reality contains only "beings" in interdependent relations, beings that rise and fall in dependent causation; all are continually changing,

impermanent, transitory. Beyond them there is nothing transcendent or eternal: no Being Itself, no permanent substance, no Absolute Spirit, no God. Also, however, there is no immanent, all-determining causal mechanism; to insist that physical causation is universally dominant is to them as parochial as to opt for the sole effectiveness of spirit. This is a *naturalism* (and thus not idealistic, pantheistic or theistic); but it is a *non-reductionist* naturalism; it denies a reduction to an all-determining materialism. Each finite being, therefore, is both caused and causing, arising dependently and yet partially self-determining, dependent on its past and yet also effective in its future. To Dewey and Santayana their contemporary Whitehead ought to have confined his universe to these transitory beings and never added "God"; to Whitehead Dewey and Santayana could explain neither the order nor the value they assumed to be true of experienced reality without some more universal and pervasive factor. Interestingly, this non-theistic, non-reductionist naturalism is, so it seems to me, despite its explicitly non-religious character, *metaphysically* much closer to Abe's Buddhism than are most of the alternative religious visions: Brahmanic pantheism, Christian or Sikh theism, or the finite theism of Process thought. If we would better understand the queer, even paradoxical relationship between metaphysical judgments and "piety" in religious visions, it is with this sort of naturalism and not with either Hegel or Whitehead that we should compare Zen philosophy.

Throughout his discussion Abe underlines in a variety of ways his denial that there is any "reality" transcendent to "the beings." The Buddha-Nature is *not* transcendent; it is not a substance whose attributes are unnameable or limitless, permanent or unchanging; it is not a "something" beyond the beings (37-40). In effect, as he says, there is here no "ontological difference" between being and beings; "All beings are, however, just all beings, no more, no less; *nothing* is outside them" (47). Rather, the limitless, the transient, the impermanent *is* the Buddha-Nature (37-49), and the Buddha-Nature *is* in turn the limitless, the transient, the impermanent. The beings as they are are all that there is: an endless process of coming to be and disappearing, all in dependent interrelation. This is, however, a vision to be appropriated existentially, as we have seen. When we realize inwardly the endless process of coming and going, and appropriate as *our* reality its impermanence, its going, so to speak, nowhere, then utter non-attach-



## ABE'S ZEN AND WESTERN THOUGHT

ment to its limitless sequences begins to suffuse our inwardness. At this point the identity of our subjectivity with the limitless becomes clear, and with that the identity of both (our subjectivity and the endless process) with the Buddha-Nature become clear. Our subjectivity thus becomes identical with all things and with the Buddha-Nature in Emptiness, i.e., in total non-attachment. This is the *meaning* of Emptiness as it is the meaning of the identity of samsara and nirvana: when samsara is *seen* as sheer samsara, and nirvana is seen as identical with all this, then Emptiness is realized in and through their identity (see esp. 48-52). We are emptied of attachments, aims, projects and goals; we have "cooled down" infinitely as a self in a world; we are unrelated to the temporal process: we *are* Emptiness. "For Dogen, impermanence itself is preaching impermanence, practicing impermanence, and realizing impermanence, and this, as it is, is preaching, practicing and realizing the Buddha-Nature" (52).

What is fascinating in this comparison, therefore, is the near identity of these two metaphysical visions with regard to the *structure* of reality, and yet the utter disparity of their religious ways, of their piety. For Dewey, Randall and the other neo-naturalists (Santayana was here an exception), this naturalistic metaphysical vision provides the only viable intellectual or philosophical basis of the creative Western way of being in the world. A way grounded in the scientific knowledge and the scientific method of thinking and guided by democratic, liberal ideals and moral aims, this vision expresses for them the *modern* way of self-fulfillment in a free society, the way in which human social history will genuinely be enabled to progress. As there is for them no *reality* transcendent to the process of objective things or to the knowing and willing self, so in their vision of authentic existence there is no hint of a transcendent "piety," a repudiation *either* of the subject-object world, the self-world (or organism-environment) "duality" in experiencing, thinking and planning, *or* of the natural (appraised) aims and ends of the self in the world. And the same applies to more recent Western views of "*praxis*," Habermas, Bernstein, liberation theologies. They all assume the pluralistic world of becoming in time, and they all seek to remake it. As we have seen, however, for Abe this same metaphysical vision implies and necessitates a directly opposite mode of existing: the overcoming of the subject-object mode of thinking and the negation of attachment to all natural and social ends.

The radical difference in piety between that of modern Western naturalism and Zen—despite their apparently similar metaphysical visions—is most clearly seen in the way each understands and assesses temporal sequence. For Western naturalism the meaning of life is fundamentally teleological, achieving ends through action over time. Intelligence informed by science, says Dewey, and guided towards appraised ends can achieve greater and greater satisfaction. Intelligence can unravel puzzles, resolve problems and recreate social anachronisms to an almost unlimited extent. Thus can “natural” sequences of events, whose values are “accidental” or “casual,” be redirected through intelligent control into a realm of *secure* values. With somewhat less euphoria, Whitehead would have agreed with Dewey here, as would most (though by no means all) twentieth century Western social thinkers. To all of them the fluidity and transience of events means their controllability by intelligence and so bespeaks the possibility, not the denial, of steady progress.

In the starkest contrast to this confidence in the developmental possibilities of temporal sequence, Abe negates the meaning of all the sequences in which the self participates. Nothing builds to a fruition, a satisfaction, an achievement either personal or social. “Substantial thinking,” a world made up of selves and objects, self and environment, past events and future projects, and the scientific intelligence built upon that world, is creative of estrangement and not of resolutions; attachment to ends, natural or appraised, must be overcome and eradicated. All sequences of events lead nowhere, only to more desire and duality and the suffering consequent on both. Instead of an intelligently directed *continuity* of moments from puzzled past to problem-free future, the continuity of the moments of time must be negated (64) and the independence of each moment emphasized (64): “Only by being freed from aim-oriented human action both in practice and in enlightenment is Dogen’s idea of oneness of practice and end realized” (60); “this indicates complete discontinuity of time which is realized through negating a transition from one state to another” (63). “Only by the realization of the complete discontinuity of time and of the independent moment, i.e., only by the negation of temporality, does time become real time” (64). The true self is not achieved by intelligent action over time within the world; it is rather emptied of sequences as it is of all else. Through its realization of outer endless and

“pointless” impermanence, it empties itself of attachments to objects or to self, to memories and to projects alike, and so it empties itself of world and of self in time. In that cool emptiness it becomes identical with the endless process outside of it—it is both enlightened and released. Unattached to any worldly meanings, it has *become* the meaningless natural world in which it participates. Put this way, Abe’s Buddhism seems, in truth, to be the more valid mode of “natural piety” in such a totally unstructured and transient universe than does the optimistic, rational, moral and progressivist humanism of Dewey!

In viewing these two in juxtaposition, one cannot help but wonder what sorts of secret baggage Dewey sneaked into his vision in order to make credible or possible the progressive worldly optimism he assumed to be “natural”—especially the amazing rational and moral capacities of his “naturalistically interpreted” human organism. Whitehead was perhaps right in his argument on this point with Dewey: “Without an Orderer,” he said, “there would be no order (and so neither reason nor morals) in a world of endless passage; and without such order, there would *be* no world: no order, no world.” Since (as all Westerners know) “there *is* a world,” thus there must be an Orderer. Buddhism is not nearly so sure about the proposition “since there *is* a world”—but both Buddhism and Whitehead agree that without an Orderer, the limitless passage of beings implies only emptiness!

The same comparison raises as well, however, interesting questions about Abe’s vision. In that world of endless, impermanent, interdependent “beings,” where no rational or moral structure “reigns” nor any fundamental teleology rules, how is the salvation that Buddhism promises and Abe describes possible? Compared to Hindu pantheism or Christian theism, this vision *is* naturalistic; but compared to the utter soullessness of modern scientific naturalism, this Buddhist vision seems laced with universal and effective “spiritual” structures. How is it possible that a Law of Karma, a *moral* law of cause and effect, rules every aspect of this endless and unstructured process of becoming if all is *merely* “coming to be and passing away”? How can it be that without some sort of “spiritual” character universal to this process, there is universally such full *subjectivity* and *self-determination*? After all, Bertrand Russell’s and B. F. Skinner’s worlds are also endlessly coming to be and passing away. How is it that when Absolute Subjectivity is achieved through non-attachment and emptiness, the true self is then

identical with all else in process (32, 42)? Abe argues repeatedly that if there is no transcendent Determinator in the universe (no God), then process is freed for *self-determination*; hence if existence is non-substantial, i.e., Empty, then self-determination is guaranteed (see esp. 20-1, 38-39, 66-67). But as modern scientific naturalism shows, a transcendent reality or a deity do not represent the only metaphysical threats to self-determination; in fact they may, if properly interpreted, function as its sole guarantee. For a sequence of finite, natural causation—as depicted in physical science, in genetics, socio-biology, behaviorist psychology, and so on—can stifle any hint of self-determination. To counter this—as to make credible any universal law of Karma or process of transmigration—(1) some sort of “spiritual” character to the universe is necessary, a character that comes to realization in Absolute Subjectivity, that is, in the true or self-determining self, and that is present in all beings (42); and (2) a universal “moral” order within transmigration, an order of moral cause and effect covering all beings, is necessary so that Karma is possible. In other words, more must be there than merely “the realization of the endless process of appearing and disappearing of all beings at each moment” (35) if the Buddha-Nature as Abe describes it is to be possible. This metaphysical “more” remained hidden over against the Hindu pantheistic and theistic systems among which Buddhism appeared and prospered. This “more” is, however, revealed when the starkly *secular*, not to say physicalist, character of modern scientific naturalism is set beside Abe’s world of impermanent becoming. Perhaps, in the light of these points, some of the more “substantial” interpretations of the Mahayana make good sense.

There is much else in this volume every bit as worthy of extended discussion as these few issues I have raised. There are, of course, a minimal number of points of criticism: for example, his interpretation of “The Greeks” as essentially world-affirming and optimistic seems one-sided (96); and his interpretation of Christianity as basing evil and sin on the finitude of human beings (123, 190), is clearly a misinterpretation—though an “understandable misunderstanding” considering the very dominant role that metaphysical judgments concerning ontological *structure* have, as we have noted, for Buddhism.

Finally, a Westerner, whether Christian or humanist, cannot help but wonder why for Abe any hint of “dualism” is taken for granted as

representing an objectively fatal problem for any viewpoint, however diverse from his own. Of course, any final distinction between self and world or between self-world and God is a problem within the Buddhist context he describes. As we have seen, it is there assumed that such ultimate distinctions of self and world or self-world and God—or of past and future, self and other selves—represent the very “substantial thinking” and the realm of attachment that must be negated. Even if, as in most modern Western thought, the “dualities” are seen as in dependent interrelation to one another, and not as independent, self-sufficient “substances,” such permanent distinctions must be negated in Buddhism before samsara can be returned to “Emptiness.” If, however, it is *that* temporal world (of nature, selves, communities and history) that is regarded as potentially if not actually good and meaningful, whether under God or on its own, then such “dualisms” only represent the variegated reality of selves and world which that viewpoint seeks to affirm and renew. For most modern Western thought, religious or humanist, it is not the structure of finitude that is at fault or must be negated, whatever the source of our problems is thought to be. Abe is aware how non-universal and so questionable is the common Western assumption that being precedes non-being and is superior to it (cf. esp. chs. 4 and 5). In the same way, however, the assumption that duality in the sense of ultimate structural distinctions is universally a fault represents an *aspect* or *implication* of the Buddhist viewpoint itself and not an objective *argument for* that viewpoint.

This is an excellent volume, a model of dialogue writing. While he argues forcefully and persuasively for the intelligibility and creativity of the Buddhist viewpoint as he should—Professor Abe is well aware of the points where that view has revealed weaknesses, and where, therefore, it needs supplementation by Western emphases (cf. esp. ch. 4). Above all, this volume provides us with an invaluable entrance into the spiritual world: metaphysical, existential, and religious, of the Zen Buddhist. All of us who are interested in a deeper understanding of Buddhism, and of our own relation to it, are thus now very deeply in Professor Abe's *intellectual* debt—as many of us have for long been indebted *personally* to him for his kind and thoughtful friendship.