The Standpoint of Zen

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I

In Zen one is called upon to investigate the most urgent matter of the self, to elucidate the great matter of life and death. In Western terms, we might say that this even includes bringing to light the inseparably related problems of the soul, the world, and God as they converge in the problem of oneself. When the phrase "investigation of self" is used in this comprehensive yet convergent sense, I think it most aptly indicates the unique character of the standpoint of Zen. Zen is the standpoint which exhaustively investigates the self itself. It is also spoken of as the way which sees through to the original face of the self.

When we speak of the self, usually we mean the self which is conscious of or has come to reflect on itself. This self has self-consciousness as its essence, and never parts from it. An investigation of the self itself would in this case mean a delving into the conscious self, and could take the form of becoming deeply immersed in one's own consciousness. When the matter takes on this kind of meaning, the investigation of self becomes sheer subjectivism. Where the self is investigated from the standpoint of self-consciousness, it internally makes itself into a screen, as it were, upon which it observes the stream of consciousness—the various sensations, emotions, desires, representations, conceptions and the like, arising and disappearing. The self is at the same time both the images moving upon

[•] This is a translation of "Zen no tachiba," in Kōza Zen, Volume I (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1967), pp. 5-28; revisions have been made by the author in collaboration with the translator.

¹ Koji kyūmei 己本究明 is a phrase found in the Yuikai or Admonitions of Daitō Kokushi (大量国际: 1282–1338) which are recorded in one of the biographies, but not in the Sayings, or Goroku, of Daitō. The passage in the original admonishes one to devote his time to a single-minded investigation of himself. See Okuda Shōzō, Kōzen Daitō Kokushi Nenpu, Tokyo: Morie Shoten, 1933, p. 33.

NISHITANI

the screen and their spectator. And such a mode of being is intrinsic to man, conscious as he is of himself.

A state of consciousness like that described above becomes particularly prominent in adolescence, when self-consciousness is intensified. The adolescent has a greater tendency to cut himself off from his surroundings, make an issue of himself, and shut himself up inside himself. This tendency makes it difficult for him to adapt to society and lends him a certain nervousness. When excessive, it frequently brings on neurosis, and can even lead to suicide. The person who resists and attempts to sustain himself at any cost consciously seeks solitude and drifts into a dimension of being which deviates from ordinary social life. Like Dostoevski's protagonists, he becomes a dweller in an attic (Raskolnikov), or in "the underground." By constantly being preoccupied with himself in that realm of solitude, he comes to concentrate on some notion or other, to cling to fixed ideas, and to tend increasingly toward monomania. This is a kind of pathological concentration on oneself, or psychic self-closure, an inclination toward so-called autism. Such pathological deepening of self-consciousness is accompanied by what may be called a fanaticism of consciousness, a kind of maniacal fervor.

This shutting off of the self in the secluded mind sometimes shows up as fanatical behavior of the sort exhibited by some demonstrating students, by the Chinese Red Guard and international "red armies," by punk rockers and by juvenile delinquents on the rise in the modern world. As much as the motivations for their actions may differ, one has the feeling that they have something in common with respect to their individual mental conditions. Fundamentally, moreover, the same mental condition lies behind both their case and the inclination toward neurosis, leading to suicide. This basic common character is the tendency for the self situated in the field of self-consciousness to close itself off, to concentrate vacuously on its own interior. This might also be said to be a primitive form of subjectivism, which, in a much higher dimension, reveals itself in various forms in the areas of art, thought and praxis. But what is meant here by the investigation of self is completely different from such a standpoint of subjectivism.

To investigate the self itself really means to assume a standpoint which is completely freed from any subjective, vacuous attachment or biased clinging to the self; indeed, the investigation of self first becomes possible from such a standpoint. It must exclude any sort of self-fascination or self-aversion, narcissism or self-torment. The investigation of self is the

standpoint which attempts to know the self itself, just as it is, in its original mode of being. In this sense, it may also be said to be a kind of objectivism. But at the same time, it must be fundamentally distinguished from sheer objectivism.

Ordinarily, the stance which attempts to know something objectively is called research or study. But the investigation of self is entirely different from research or inquiry in this sense. The researcher, facing something different from himself and taking it as the object of his study, observes and deliberates on it. The object of study remains always object, as opposed to the subject conducting the research. By being an object, it inevitably comes to stand over against the subject. This situation in turn essentially prescribes how the researcher should be, i.e., his mode of being as a researcher or his stance in conducting research. It is required of the researcher that he disregard his own subjective feelings and wishes, and look at things as objectively as possible. He must discard his own preferences and value judgments and any prejudices arising from them, and regard the object as if reflecting it in an unclouded mirror. The self, however, is absolutely not an object. In this sense, a stance which would objectively study the self seems essentially self-contradictory.

Nevertheless, we are conscious of ourselves, and this self-consciousness implies, as described above, that the self is reflected in itself. Hence it becomes possible to assume a standpoint from which one objectively observes and studies oneself as if reflected in an unclouded mirror. From this standpoint, the self—to continue our analogy—in addition to being the characters moving on the screen, as well as their spectator, is further the director and the critic. Here, instead of staying in the field of ordinary, everyday self-consciousness, one assumes the standpoint of the intellect which unfolds from out of that field. Then, from the standpoint of the intellect, it becomes possible for one to take himself as an object and study himself objectively. In the meantime, the fact that the self essentially cannot be objectified is lost from sight.

This sort of objective self-reflection takes various shapes. In general, the stance of objective study is found in its purest form in science. And the various standpoints of objective reflection on the self under consideration here betray, at their base, a certain slant towards scientific research.

Among those standpoints, perhaps the one closest to us is that found in literature. What first comes to mind is, for example, the so-called "I novel," or especially the confessional literature exemplified by Rousseau's Con-

fessions. However, it may be said that the novel in general basically includes its author's self-reflection. Modern man has gradually come to be more self-conscious, and as a consequence there has been an increasing tendency in literature to shift the various problems of human life to the interior of the characters' consciousness and to treat them as psychological conflicts. The author peers into the consciousness of his characters as if through psychological analysis, probes and exposes the lurking motivations in their actions and life which they themselves are barely aware of or unconsciously try to keep from their own eyes. In due course, this tendency is carried so far as to enter the domain of depth psychology. The movement is toward the general and the abstract, and takes on the character of what is generally called the study of human beings. It implies an attitude analogous to that of science, insofar as it involves objective analysis, the exposure of hidden motives, and dispassionate observation, as if seeing things reflected in an unclouded mirror. Yet at the basis of this study we can discern a tendency within the author to reflect on the contents of his own consciousness.

The development within modern literature of the novel is particularly significant, then, not only because this genre has shown as inclination to psychological analysis which is similar to science in its objectivity, but also because it is linked to the fact that modern man has become self-conscious, self-reflective. In this sense, it can be said that the modern novel is fundamentally, if covertly, of a confessional nature. Hence the scientific character which the modern novel displays is linked at bottom to its confessional nature. In Japanese literature this is most clearly seen in authors such as Natsume Soseki and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke. In genres other than the novel, the so-called moralists, beginning with writers such as Montaigne and Pascal, reveal a standpoint of the same nature. In academic fields, it appears above all in the evolution of psychology, ranging from introspective psychology to psychoanalysis and depth psychology.

Yet what we find in the self-reflection conducted from these various standpoints is not self-investigation in its original sense, but rather a study of human beings. What comes under observation in the moralists and in the novel in general, to say nothing of psychology, is something universal—the "human being" in every individual. That is to say, to observe from the outside, to analyze in various ways and expose the will, desires, and impulses functioning in the depths of our consciousness is to see the universal "human being" in each of us. Even when something of a wholly individual confessional nature lies behind the author's own self-reflection, it is always

something that can be projected into, and is reflected from, the study of the human being in his works. It is not confession in its original sense, as moral or religious confession, which involves the completely solitary self and concentrates on the self as an individual. Rather, the consciousness of the self revealed in such literature and psychology is inevitably displayed in such a way that its contents appear capable of being universalized at any time. In effect, the self which sees itself and the self which is seen by itself, although actually one and the same, are split in two. The standpoint of the individual and integral self, and of the investigation of that self, is not found here. Figuratively speaking, it is rather a standpoint where one would gaze at one's own face in a mirror and try to scrutinize disinterestedly the shape of the nose, mouth and ears, or even the eyes and facial expressions; a standpoint which resembles the scientific one mentioned before. Despite its being the self-reflection of a novelist or "moralist," insofar as it is of the nature of an objective study of man, there is basically something about it which is like a child making faces in the mirror. It is like searching out what sort of face—threatening, or sad, or kind and lovable—lies hidden behind the ordinary appearance of the face.

Nevertheless, behind the study of the human being reflected in the mirror of the intellect lies yet another standpoint. And this standpoint is a necessary condition for that of the intellect to arise. When we arrive at this standpoint, the aforementioned distinction between the self which sees and the self which is seen breaks down, and the situation takes a complete turn. This standpoint becomes manifest when, to continue our analogy, I look at myself in a mirror and notice that the one in the mirror is looking at the one outside the mirror. Ordinarily, when we see our own face reflected in the mirror, we pay no attention to this. Or at least our attention is rarely focused on this. Nevertheless, the one looking at oneself in the mirror is, conversely, always seen by the same one who appears in the mirror. When we attentively fix our gaze on our own eyes, they gaze back at us from within the mirror. This is likely to disturb anyone the instant it is noticed. The situation here is completely different from that of observing oneself in the mirror. Here there is no longer any distinction between being "inside" the mirror and being "outside" it. The inside is outside and the outside inside. Here the threatening, sad, or kind and lovable look in one's eyes, like the equivalent facial expressions, all vanish into the gazing eyes. Here remain only the eyes that have come to gaze directly at the eyes of the one who is looking. There is nothing other than one's own eyes gazing

intently at themselves.

This situation is comparable to two mirrors mutually reflecting one another with nothing in between to produce an image. This, then, is no longer an observation of the objective self. The self is neither the subjectively colored mirror of self-consciousness, nor is it an image reflected in the mirror of the intellect in which any such haze has been wiped away. In other words, it is not the self represented within itself as an object. For the intellect comes into being where the immediate self-knowledge contained in every form of our consciousness is refracted, so to speak, toward its own interior, and becomes reflective self-knowledge. The latter level might be likened to a sort of screen which, while reflecting an image, also reflects itself at the same time, thus making the image three-dimensional—similar to the case of the universal human being seen directly in the perception of each individual. In a word, it is the dimension of the "for itself" of Hegelian and Sartrian philosophy. Yet, as was said earlier, the self in which the self that sees and the self that is seen are completely one, the self which in no sense is an object or a representation of an object, belongs to a field transcending even the dimension of the intellect. The self which cannot be objectified or represented in any manner whatsoever is outside all forms of consciousness, including the intellect. On the other hand, it is not simply the unconscious, nor is it some "thing" taken as being outside our consciousness or mind. Such notions as "the unconscious" and "external things" are conceived from the standpoint of consciousness and intellect, and consequently already entail an interpretation.

The self of the field that transcends the dimenstion of consciousness and intellect is a self of which it can only be said that it is. And this being simpliciter of the self lies from the very beginning at the bottom of the self which one is conscious of or reflects on intellectually. It is the self-initself, prior to any self which is "for itself." But although we say that this self is there from the very beginning, it comes to be manifest for the first time when the dimension of self-consciousness and intellect has been penetrated and swept aside. It is in this sense that we return to our own self which was there from the beginning. This manifestation of our own self's being simpliciter can also be called the self-concentration of our being, in the sense that our own self has returned to itself. This self-concentration, however, is completely different from the autistic self-concentration of self-consciousness mentioned earlier. Again, though we may call it the being simpliciter of the self, it is fundamentally different from a thing's simply

being there. For this "oneself is" or "I am" is a mode of self-being that permits no objectification whatsoever. Its authentic manifestation takes place on a field which transcends the dimension of the intellect and its grasp of the self. This field is simultaneously both that of the being simpliciter of the self and that of knowing simpliciter, the knowing which is prior to and at the root of all knowledge by way of intellect. It is only here, on such a field, that we can take account of the way known in Zen as the investigattion of self.

In order to elucidate this matter a little further, let us try to contrast it briefly with the existence of the self in Descartes' famous "I think, therefore I am."

II

A direction resembling the investigation of self in Zen can be said to have occurred in the West too from ancient times. In particular, Socrates' "know thyself" was a fundamental criticism of those caught up in purely subjective opinion (doxa) regarding themselves, or in views voiced from the standpoint of sophistic intellect based on such opinion; it was a criticism which completely uprooted their position and way of life, Socrates' dictum was an appeal to realize that this was not true knowledge, to discard all opinions and intellectual analysis, to return directly to the present existence of the self itself and from there to inquire into oneself anew. We can say that this was something which pointed out the way to the true self and true knowledge. There may be various views of the significance Socrates has, but I think that by indicating in this manner that there is a problem of inquiry into the self itself, and by opening up a way to such selfinquiry, Socrates possesses a peerless significance in all of Western history. The tradition of Western philosophy beginning with Plato and Aristotle also arose from there; it can be said, however, that that is only one side of Socrates' significance.

We can see a similar direction during the Christian era, particularly in the case of Augustine. Desperately seeking God as the "life of my soul, the life of my life," he made the way of investigating the self itself the main axis of his whole existence. But by the time he reached this point, he had undergone a period of profound doubt jolting the conceptual standpoint he himself was embracing. In his case as well, self-investigation became the

source of his philosophic thought, and in turn the source of medieval scholastic philosophy; but again, that is only one side of the significance he has. The other side lies in his religious practice of seeking peace of mind, or, for him, repose in God. As in the case of Socrates, for Augustine too the love of knowledge which gives rise to philosophy was backed up by a practice of self-investigation which sought a resting place for his own existence.

Just as classical Greek philosophy began with Socrates and orthodox medieval philosophy made Augustine its source, modern philosophy has its founder in Descartes. Descartes can be said to have such significance in that he shook off the fetters of scholastic thought and cut open the way to methodical doubt. This was, for him too, an inquiry into the self itself. He says, for instance, at the end of his first Discourse on Method, "I resolved one day to study also myself and to use all the powers of my mind to choose the paths which I should follow" (Sutcliffe trans.).

In fact, by taking this path he attained the indubitable conviction through which he could proclaim "I am." Until he reached that point, he proceeded by considering as unreliable anything that could be doubted for any reason whatsoever. In his case too the method of philosophy was implicitly a method of self-investigation. It was his resolve—and his practice in self-investigation to adopt this method and carry it through rigorously. Thus he placed everything in doubt, from all things appearing in the world to studies like mathematics and even the existence of God. Mathematics, as the principle and the exemplar of all studies, was not something to be doubted, but Descartes took into account the possibility of regarding mathematical truths as deceptions in his mind due to an all-powerful, deceiving god. In this manner all things were enveloped in doubt; all things became one layer of a great doubt. This great doubt gave birth to the certainty of the cogito, a certainty possessing a sense of self-evidence: the only thing which could not be doubted was that he himself was doubting. This cogito, functioning from the very beginning and always behind the process of the doubt encompassing all things, had been intensifying its selfconcentration more and more until at last it returned to itself. And the awareness of having returned to its own "self" which was there from the beginning became the consciousness of the certainty and self-evidence of the "I think" and of the "I am" fashioned after the "I think."

This was a kind of conversion, similar to religious conversion, like the experience Socrates probably had, and which Augustine certainly ex-

perienced. It meant coming upon a resting place for one's own existence, attaining an "unshakable peace of mind." Only it was not attained in the form of religious faith, but through the path of investigating the self itself. Accordingly, this peace of mind not only signified that one had directly attested to the certainty of one's own being, but entailed, at the same time, a self-awareness in the form of knowing oneself. The certainty of existence meant a realized self-awareness, and vice versa. The certitudo Descartes discovered in coming to the realization "I think, therefore I am" was of this nature. This "I am" suggests the actuality of the self in ordinary life; but insofar as the "I am" denotes the point of return of a self which underwent a radical doubt and its reversal, the way of self-investigation enfolded in it is far from ordinary. It is, rather, an "I am" possessing a philosophically (i.e., ontologically) founded certainty. It is not the kind of "I am" that anyone is aware of, as already misunderstood by philosophers of that time. The same holds for the "I think": although it expresses the activity of ordinary consciousness, it likewise is formulated on the basis of a philosophically founded awareness and not simply on the basis of the self-consciousness everyone has. And the "therefore" (ergo) was not a word indicating a logical inference, but does nothing more than mark, like a milestone, the turnabout which took place in the course of Descartes' self-investigation.

The way by which Descartes arrived at the existence and realized awareness of the self was in nature close to the Zen investigation of self. From that point on, however, the character of his thinking took a new turn. Taking the "I think, therefore I am" as a new starting point, he proceeded to the problem of God and further to the problem of our cognitive knowledge of the natural world and things in it. When he used methodical doubt, all these matters were held in reservation; but now his thinking persistently took on the character of inference.

The central task of his thinking concerning God was a proof of God's existence. The clue to the answer to this problem was found in the idea of something infinite and perfect discovered in his own soul, and in the speculation regarding the source of that idea. Insofar as this can be said to be an investigation of his own mind and soul, perhaps it meant for Descartes a continuation of his self-investigating which gave rise to "I think, therefore I am." Descartes' concept of meditatio seems in large measure to have such a connotation. However, this was no longer a further deepening of that way which directly attested to the certainty of the self's existence, nor

did it entail a development of realized self-awareness. His intent was to establish ultimate certainty for the soul of the self by basing and securing it on the demonstrated existence of God, or rather, by proving that it was from the very beginning ontologically founded on God's existence. That however was a path of thought which added one certain inference onto another; and the certainty of self-existence established thereby was qualitatively different from the certainty given by direct attestation of the self itself.

For example, Descartes takes up the matter of an ontological proof of God's existence; the purport of this is that in God all possibilities as such are already actuality, therefore God actually exists. Yet even granting that this proof has speculative certainty, it has nothing to do with the certainty of self-existence or of realized self-awareness as it was given by direct attestation. After all, in Descartes the certainty of self-existence came to a halt when it was made the point of departure of philosophical thought, and was not assigned any meaning above and beyond that. And considering it in retrospect, Descartes' way of self-investigation was cultivated with this intent in mind from the very beginning. This is already apparent in the fact that his doubt was carried out "methodically," as a method. This methodical doubt, however, was not doubt in its authentic sense, a doubt which grips one's whole body-mind, in which the self and all other things in their entirety become one big question-mark, as is the case with the "great doubt" in Zen. Rather, Descartes' point of arrival is the place where the great doubt, in the authentic sense of the word, first begins. The great doubt does not consist in excluding various possible data by means of doubt in its usual sense. Rather it begins with the Cartesian sum cogitans, the self-knowing self-being, the ego itself. It begins where the very self which has been brought back to itself by way of such ordinary doubt, which has returned to its own self-being simpliciter, once again becomes problematic for and to itself.

This problem appears in such questions as "Where do I come from and where am I going?" That is to say, it is the question seeking the very ground of self-being, the primal source of one's own heart or mind. This is not an intellectual question, or one which can be answered by speculative thought. When existence itself turns into a question, an answer can only come from the act of existing itself, an act directed toward existence itself. The investigation of self is the practice of such an act; and the knowledge arising from this investigation, as something that consists in persistent practice, must

have the character of direct attestation and realized self-awareness.

In Descartes' case, to seek the ground of the self's existence or the source of one's mind meant to prove the existence of God. Descartes thereby attempted to give a foundation to the relation between the self and the world with all its things, in the sense that he sought a metaphysical guarantee that the self is able to have physical knowledge of the world. Here one might expect that, in addition to God and the world, moral relations between the self and others or, to put it more broadly, the personal "I-Thou" relationship, would become a further problem; but Descartes did not go so far as to enter into this matter. For Augustine as well the problem of the soul led to the problem of God. Or rather, the problem of the soul was from the beginning oriented towards the problem of God. In the case of Socrates, the problem of the soul was linked to that of ethical relations with other people in the polis.

But the investigation of self which is the problem under consideration here is not a point of departure for the solution of the problem concerning God, the world and all its things, or other people. For in the investigation of self the point of departure is the "great doubt" in the sense mentioned earlier; and here Cartesian self-existence, having returned to the self by way of a *skepsis* toward all things including God and the world, itself becomes fundamentally problematic. Accordingly, the relation with God, with the world and all its things, or with other people can provide no answer to a self which has become problematic. Standpoints based on one or another of these relationships and attempting to provide a solution to the self have arisen in great variety, whether as religions or as philosophies seeking a foundation in the natural world or in society.

But the way of investigating the self which has become problematic in terms of the great doubt refuses any ready solution established from such standpoints. For the self questioning its very existence, anything coming from outside the self itself is not acknowledged as having authority, nor as capable of being relied upon. In this sense, the self is through and through "self-centered." The answer that solves the problem of the self can only arise from within the self itself. The problem which occurs when the very existence of the self becomes problematic for itself is one of this nature. The self itself becomes a problem for and to the self in such a way that the depth of God, the breadth of the world, and the closeness of personal relations all simply indicate the range in which the great doubt should be deployed, the range of the investigation where the self asks and the self

answers, the horizon which should be opened within that investigation.

In the East as well there have been various religious and philosophical ideas since ancient times. In particular, the Mahāyāna Buddhism from which Zen derived gave rise to numerous profound systems of doctrine ever since Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu. For the most part these have been worked out relying on some sutra or sutras regarded as the direct teaching of Sākyamuni. The investigation of self in Zen, on the other hand, is not founded on any doctrine, does not depend on any scriptural authority. The activity of speculative thinking which does such things as developing and interpreting doctrines is a path qualitatively different from the investigation of self. It is, rather, an obstacle to such investigation. Both abiding in faith in the Buddha, and being caught up in a web of doctrines, cover up the original face of the self. That is, they obstruct the self in attaining ultimate realization, in regaining its original self and truly becoming itself.

The standpoint of Zen advocates a "special transmission outside the teachings, not relying on words or letters." Perhaps this expresses that Sakyamuni's perfect enlightenment, his awakening as Buddha, i.e., his Buddha-mind, is transmitted directly just as it is. But it also designates the path whereby the self attains realization as itself, whereby it truly becomes itself. Here the Buddha, the world, and human society speculated upon in Buddhist doctrine, although once lost from sight in the great doubt, may come to appear again within the self-realization which has overcome the great doubt as the content of self-investigation, as that which is essentially inseparable from the self to be investigated. If they do so, we may ask: as what do "the self," "human beings," or "the mind" reveal themselves, when seen from the viewpoint of the self-realization usually called satori? And, in connection with that, we may also ask: what becomes of other associated problems such as that concerning Buddha, or the world, or interhuman relations?

Searching out these matters may provide a clue for further clarification of the unique character of the standpoint of Zen. This again is the problem of what it means to say that Zen is the standpoint of "directly pointing to man's mind, seeing into one's own true nature and becoming Buddha."

Ш

"Directly pointing to man's mind...." How is "man's mind" conceived in this expression? The term mind is one which is constantly used throughout Buddhism, not only in Zen. What does this term refer to? Generally speaking, how we conceive the mind is thought to radically influence how we view the human being. The same holds true for how we view "the self": the way we view the mind may give rise to various ways of thinking when we investigate the self. The divergence in the Eastern and Western views of man may be said to be based on the difference in how the mind is thought of, and in turn how the self is viewed.

Ordinarily we think of ourselves as having a mind, or that there is a mind within us. When the mind is thought of as the unity of various faculties such as sensation, the appetites, cognition and the like, then the self becomes that which possesses these faculties. And since all things in the world, including human beings, are known only via the self's sensations and intellect, the self is the vantage point from which all things come to be seen. In this sense, the self takes on the appearance of always being located at the center of everything. The mental faculties of the self are like beams of light emitted in all directions from this center. Entailed by this notion of self is a mode of being: it is itself the center of the world. The self sees and grasps the self placing itself in the center, opposite all other things. This is the self's self-centered mode of being and way of seeing. That is, thinking of the self as having a mind, and thinking of this mind as the unity of various faculties, both reflect the self's self-centered mode of being.

On the other hand, a completely opposite way of viewing matters is also possible, and in fact has existed since ancient times. In contrast to viewing the mind from the vantage point of one's "self," the mind is seen from the vantage point of the "world." The various mental faculties the self has within it are faculties which, objectively considered, apply all around to other living beings in the world as well. Other animals also have sensations and appetites. Intelligence too was regarded by the ancients as being common not only to human beings but to heavenly beings or angels as well. And today it is possible to think that intelligence of a sort may exist within some living beings on other planets in the universe.

From this viewpoint, that which is seen as the faculties the self "possesses" within it, each "faculty" or "power" sui generis, can also be seen as

something which extends throughout the world and has universality. Accordingly, the "mind" as the unity of all these powers, in the same manner as the "life" viewed as their wellspring, is thought to have a universal mode of being on the world-plane. In fact, ancient peoples regarded psyche or nous, soul or mind, under the aspect of such a universality. We can see a similar trait in the way modern sciences such as biology and psychology view such matters; their "objective" stance supports claims about universality. In any case, this sort of viewpoint gave rise to the idea of a cosmic life and concommitantly of a cosmic soul or mind. Today there are people who even speak of cosmic consciousness. Assuming a different way of viewing things then, the mind or faculties within us can be seen as something extending to all other living beings, with the world as its field. From this perspective, the "minds" which exist within all individual living things or human beings are individualizations of the great "mind" extending throughout the world.

There is a Japanese proverb used, sometimes humorously, in asserting oneself or one's rights: "Even an inch-long worm has its own half-inch soul." Here the universal soul is individualized in a single worm, forming the worm's own self-nature (svabhāva). It becomes, so to speak, the root will or Nietzsche's "will to power," by virtue of which the worm asserts its own right of existence in this world. The same can be said of the human soul. Viewing things from the perspective of the "world," there is no fundamental distinction between animals and human beings. Buddhism's view of humans as "sentient beings," and hence as equal to all other animal species, derives from such a way of seeing.

The way of seeing which sees the mind from the field of the world forms the basis of diverse myths in both East and West, and has found its way into various religions and philosophies. It constitutes from the beginning a strong undercurrent in the history of Western philosophy, where concepts like World-soul and World-mind have often appeared. Suffice it here to cite as examples the names of Anaxagoras, Plotinus and Schelling. Viewed from such a perspective, the "mind" assumes rather the central position in the universe or world and forms the vantage point from which all things are to be seen. The minds of individual living beings, as well as of individual humans, are as it were beams of light emitted from that center. We cannot go into details here, but a way of seeing along these lines has deeply permeated the Geistesgeschichte of the world. Looking at man as a microcosm over against the macrocosm, for example, derives from such a

way of seeing. In a word, it can be called a cosmocentric way of viewing the mind.

Hence there are two possible ways to view the mind, cosmocentric and egocentric, and in fact these two have come to be complexly interwined in both Eastern and Western intellectual history. In ancient Greece and Rome the cosmocentric way of seeing can be said to have set the underlying tone of thought for the most part. But ever since Christianity became dominant, the main axis of thought in the West has to this day been the egocentric way. In Christian teaching God has personal existence, as expressed by the biblical proclamation, "I am that I am" (Exodus 3: 14). The relationship between God and man also is a personal one, where man is conceived according to the dual character of his relationship toward God, i.e., sin and love. Man as sinner is in the state of "original sin," symbolized by Adam's defying God and eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. What the biblical story gives expression to here is man's egotistic way of being a "self." The notion of man as a being having self-consciousness and intellectual knowledge, as a "being-for-itself," designates a way of being which has rebelled against God and become independent of Him. God, on the other hand, sent Christ to the earth in order to redeem sinful man, and through Christ's death on the cross expiated man's sin for him. By his faith in Christ, i.e., by accepting in faith the grace of God, one reestablishes his relationship with God and is reborn "a new man." This is a personal relationship with God via love.

Yet the way this Christian doctrine is conceived suggests that, both where sin obtains and where love obtains, God and man equally are assumed to exist in the mode of self-being, that is, in the form of "I am." Thus God and man stand in the so-called "I-Thou" relationship. Within this relationship, the mode of being an "I" prescribes the human being so thoroughly that no room is left for the cosmocentric way of viewing the mind. Consequently, the view of man in the West is to this day "personal" through and through; and the framing of man and ego in terms of "I am" is taken as something fixed, as it were, for all eternity, something impossible to overcome.

At the same time, the human is regarded as occupying a special place among all creatures, as being granted by God dominion over all other things. Moreover, in the modern West, this way of seeing humans as having a privileged existence has been removed from the sphere of Christian dogmatics and generalized as the concept of the "person." Essentially this con-

INATIHZIN

cept is formed by what was previously called the self-centered way of seeing "the self." Descartes' "I think, therefore I am" also issued from an investigation of such a way of being a "self." Generally speaking, the Western and Buddhist views completely differ on this fundamental point: the Western view is based on the concept of person, whereas Buddhism, standing on the equality of humans with all living things, bases its view on the concept of "sentient beings" (sattva).

The two ways of viewing the mind, cosmocentric and self-centric, have been inseparably preserved throughout Buddhism, in marked contrast to the West. At the root of this divergence is the difference between the way "God" is viewed and the way "Buddha" is understood. And correlative to this divergence in how the Absolute is seen is a divergence in the respective views of man. In Buddhism also, the human's mode of being self-centered, and his viewing himself from within such a mode of being, have been made a problem to be sure. But this problem is always placed in connection with the cosmocentric way of viewing. In this view the mind of every living being is seen as something that has its center in itself and constitutes the selfnature of that being. Referring to our proverb again, the half-inch soul in the one-inch worm is its self-nature, its "ego." Man, however, possessing the faculty of intellect, knows himself at the same time as he knows things, so that his mode of being is that of an "ego" which has become selfconscious. Being a self-centered "ego-self," man, in knowing things, discriminates between himself and other kinds of things. As was stated previously, he places himself at the center of the world. Yet even though being self-conscious is peculiar to human beings, the basis of this mode of being lies in the fact that the "mind" of every living being includes a center or exists as a self-nature which takes on the character of "ego." In man's being, it can be said, this self-nature comes to appear in the form of beingfor-itself; and the mode of existence as self-nature or "ego" common to all sentient beings becomes specialized into being an "ego-self." The mode of being wherein each man places himself at the center of his own world is itself but one particular self-determination of the mode of being of universal mind, mind on the world-plane.

This universal mind generally appears in animals as a mentality capable of sensation and perception, and in man as a mentality enjoying, in addition to these, intellect. By means of this intellect man clearly discriminates one thing from another, and his self from all other things. Self and external world, subject and object, are divided, and man views the world of

objects from the self-centered vantage point of the subject. Man thereby exists as if he had no essential connection with other things in the world, as if he were removed from the sphere of the world; and he grasps himself by himself according to such a mode of being. In grasping the self in this manner, each man sees himself as though he himself alone were the center of the world. Yet grasping the self in this manner is itself a mode of being common to all men; moreover, this human mode of being is itself but one determinate form of the universal mind that has the world as its field.

In Buddhism, the mind that discriminates between subject and object, and between the mind itself and other things, has been considered from a holistic standpoint as part of cosmic, universal mind. As representative of this standpoint we can cite the theory of vijnaptimātratā, consciousness-only. In rough outline, the theory of consciousness-only is a system which places in the center of Buddhist doctrine the "mind," ontologically speaking, or "consciousness" (vijnāna) epistemologically speaking, or in general, "mind-consciousness." In its long course of development the theory of consciousness-only gave rise to hair-splitting analyses of mind-consciousness and to several quite ramified standpoints, but we need not discuss these now. The issue here is only the most basic way of thinking in these doctrines.

As is commonly known, consciousness-only theory distinguishes eight consciousnesses. The first five are sensations such as seeing, hearing and the like; the sixth, mano-vijnana or thought-consciousness, unifying the first five, gives rise via judgment to cognitive knowledge. It seems almost comparable to the sensus communis and judgmental intellect combined of the medieval scholastic theory of mind in the West. In the seventh, manas or self-consciousness, the unifying function of the sixth becomes consciousness for-itself; here, along with self-attachment (ātma-grāha), arises the notion of ego-self, and one lapses into a self-centered way of being. Perhaps this could also be understood as the point where self-consciousness in the Western sense becomes purely for-itself, to the extent of exclaiming "I am I" (as does Shakespeare's King Richard²), thus revealing its self-attach-

² King Richard III, Act 5, Scene 3: After the ghosts of Prince Edward, Henry VI and Clarence whom he has murdered, appear to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, now King Richard, he proclaims:

O coward conscience, how doest thou afflict me! The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.

ment. In any case, thus far this theory for the most part runs parallel to the structure of "consciousness" as it has been conceived in the West since ancient times. However, a fundamental difference from the Western way of viewing consciousness and mind appears when the Eastern doctrine posits, as the ground of all, an eighth root consciousness, called the *ālaya* or store consciousness.

The alaya-consciousness most aptly manifests the character of mind previously said to be universal on the world-plane. Constituting the basis of our minds, it is at the same time of the nature of what may be called a cosmic consciousness, or rather a cosmic unconscious. This unconscious is of course not to be understood merely in a psychological sense, but also as having ontological significance such as is implied in the concept of "life." Just as the "life" of living things is thought on the one hand to be the root potentiality out of which faculties such as sensations, emotions, impulses, appetites and finally intelligence are generated, and taken on the other hand as pervading our flesh and giving it life, the ālaya-consciousness is understood to include the aspect we call universal "life" on the world-plane. Speaking analogically, it might be said to include the thesis that at the root of and at one with cosmic "mind" is a "life" which is analogous to a human life, which encompasses the entire process of being conceived in one's mother's womb, maturing as a fetus, being born, growing as a human possessing consciousness, and, finally, generating one's own child anew; a "life" embracing the entire spectrum of the life of the flesh, the unconscious, and consciousness. Such an alaya-consciousness lies latent at the base of the human mind and of the minds of all living things. And the activity of the human mind, acting from within the sphere of the alayaconsciousness, sets in motion the consciousnesses up to the seventh one like a seed stretching out, and gives rise to our seeing, hearing, perceiving and knowing, our egoistic notions and ego-attachment. All these are the synthetic acts of the seven consciousnesses, whose influence in turn reaches the very depths of the mind and leaves traces in the ālaya-consciousness. These traces are deposited as new seeds in the alaya-consciousness and thus become the potentialities for new activity in our mind-consciousness.

In short, the activity of our mind-consciousness, while comprising the

Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh. What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by. Richard loves Richard: that is, I am I....

activities of all seven consciousnesses, and while being reflected in the ego-self of the manas-consciousness, nevertheless has its latent cause within the alaya-consciousness, so that the effects of this activity are preserved within its depths also. Seen from this perspective, even our ego-self is not something isolated from the world, but in its hidden interior is connected to the vital, unconscious layers which make the whole world their field. The ego-self sinks roots deep within the alaya-consciousness. The alaya-consciousness in turn is the root cause of all activity and ceaseless change in the minds and bodies of all living things, including all human beings; the root cause of the generation and extinction, or life and death, of their very bodies and minds. Even from this simplified description we may catch sight of the fact that our egoistic mode of being is seen not within an immutable framework such as the Western concept of person, but rather as having hidden roots outside that framework and arising only in connection with such roots.

Our egoistic mode of being, our being ego-selves, signifies the mode of being of a mind-consciousness which divides subject and object, self and external world, or which, in terms of vijnaptimatrata or consciousness-only theory, divides consciousness (vijnana) and its surrounding world of objects (visaya), and is in this sense the discriminating mind. It is the mind which grasps itself as if it were isolated from the world. Nevertheless, one of the fundamental teachings of consciousness-only theory consists in bringing to light the inauthenticity of this discriminating mind. The standpoint of discrimination is that of placing the ego-self in the center, regarding the things of the so-called external world, and becoming attached to them. But attachment to things is only the other side of attachment to self. It is a twofold process: in the course of being attached to itself, the ego-self is attached to things, and in the course of being attached to things, it is attached to itself. While dividing self and things, it is tied to things and hence can neither truly become one with things nor truly become one's self. This mode of being is an essential, intrinsic aspect of the human mind; but regarded from the field of the alaya-consciousness which forms the basis of this discriminative mind, the standpoint of the latter proves to have no foundation in truth whatsoever, to be "imaginary in nature" (parikalpita svabhāva).

Discriminative knowledge is essentially falsehood (abhūta parikalpa). Yet at the same time, considering the essential connection between the seventh consciousness which is the seat of the discriminating mind, and the

eighth or ālaya-consciousness, we can see how difficult it is to shake off this falsity. For the alaya-consciousness which becomes the ground for pointing out the falsity of discrimination is at the same time the hidden root of discrimination; the two are as inseparable as roots from the earth. Therefore, in order to free oneself from the discriminating mind and negate its falsity, one must break through the eighth as well as the seventh consciousness. To crack the rigid frame of the ego-self, the force binding the frame together must also be torn loose from its roots up. This great latent force, determining the apparently free discriminative activity of the ego-self from within its hidden depths, imparts to it the character of necessity called karma. The connection between the seventh and eighth consciousnesses can in this sense also be designated the "karma-consciousness" of The Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana. Breaking through the frame of the ego-self is only accomplished by cutting the roots of this karma-consciousness which reach to its depths. This is the meaning of Zen master Hakuin's saying, "Slice right through the field of the eighth consciousness."

To cut through the mind of self-attachment that arises in the form of the ego-self is at the same time to go beyond the world (or the so-called "three worlds" of desire, form, and formlessness). This is the "great death" of Zen, which cuts through the roots of life and death for the first time. In consciousness-only theory, it is said that in extinguishing vijñana or consciousness, the visaya or world of objects over against it is finally extinguished. What comes to be manifest here is the non-discriminating or fundamental knowledge which in usual Buddhist parlance is called prajñā. Its standpoint is that which has transcended the world to the "other shore," which has gone beyond all possible beings in their very beingness, i.e., insofar as they are thought to be, and in this sense is called absolute emptiness (sunyata). This of course does not mean void or empty in a privative sense, emptiness as opposed to fullness. Rather it is the standpoint of the oneness of mind and things. Here all things cease to be the world of objects over against the discriminative mind, and manifest their true form in the field of absolute emptiness. All things manifesting their true form is nothing other than non-discriminating knowledge. This then is the standpoint of the great wisdom of the oneness of things and mind, the wisdom that is prajñā. It is here that the realization of self as no-self, the awareness of one's own true self, occurs. All things are brought to light as being originally without self-nature, "self"-less, as being no-self-nature. All things are "no-self-nature as emptiness." And this at the same time means that each

and every thing becomes manifest in its true reality. Consciousness-only theory calls this field of self-realization or awareness "parinispanna svabhava"—perfected, real nature.

IV

Earlier I cited the Zen saying, "Directly pointing to man's mind, seeing into one's own true nature and becoming Buddha." From the example of consciousness-only theory just given we may surmise the kind of background against which "man's mind" is understood. Based in its depths on the universal mind coextensive with the whole world which it has in common with all other animals, the human mind sinks roots as far as the ālaya-consciousness that may be said to underlie the "three worlds" past, present and future—in their entirety. And where this underlying basis is overcome, there the field of absolute emptiness is lying in wait. This overall background is borne deep in the mind of even a single human being and forms his self-nature. The phrase "pointing directly" presents the standpoint where one returns immediately and directly to his own mind just as it is, without going astray in any other direction; it is the standpoint which does not allow one to separate his own self and become involved with the world and its various domains and phenomena. As I will touch upon later, it even excludes committing oneself to Buddha. But within one's own mind to which one returns is stored the source of the mind of all living things, that is to say, the place of prajnā-emptiness which is oneness with things as they really are. The investigation of one's own mind, when it is radically pursued, takes on the meaning of seeing through to the core of sentient beings, the world, and Buddha.

The same holds true with respect to the "nature" of the self in the phrase "seeing into one's own true nature and becoming Buddha." One's own self-nature penetrates to the original nature of Buddha. This is why man too is said to be endowed with Buddha-nature. Hence, seeing through to one's own self-nature comes to have the meaning of "becoming Buddha," of becoming truly awakened. Of course, given the idea of "self" we usually have, it may be quite difficult to conceive of seeing into one's own true nature and becoming Buddha. Ordinarily we grasp the self on the field of opposition between subject and object, from the standpoint of what consciousness-only theory calls illusory discrimination. This is the way of being

of the self which has become self-centered by settling in the seventh consciousness or manas, to use the language of consciousness-only doctrine again. Looking at the matter from the standpoint of this self, it is only natural that it be difficult to conceive of a human being becoming Buddha. In view of this sort of idea of a self-centered self, which for Western people is commonly the only idea of self they have, it is natural to think it nonsense that man could become God. Yet the self is not something which exists isolated from the world. Such a mode of existence itself would be based on the illusory discrimination of the self, on being self-centered. When this discriminating mind is dropped, our own self-nature manifests the character of Buddha-nature beyond the alaya-consciousness.

Our Zen slogan can be said to gather the doctrine of "mind" with its epistemological, ontological and cosmological character as found, for example, in consciousness-only theory, directly into the standpoint of existence and to turn it into the real content of existential self-investigation. It is for this reason that the kensho or "seeing into one's own true nature" that Zen makes its motto is sought in the direct and immediate experience of "sudden enlightenment." Separated from our actual here and now existence, the study of doctrines becomes mere speculation. In Buddhism, speculation apart from existence is called vain discourse (prapañca). In his Song of Zazen, Hakuin expressed this "directly pointing to man's mind, seeing into one's own true nature and becoming Buddha" in this way:

How much more when you turn to yourself and directly confirm your own self-nature. Then your self-nature is no-nature; you have parted from vain words.

To return to oneself just as one is, directly see through to one's own self-nature on the field of prajnā-emptiness, and realize "no-self-nature-as-emptiness," is to drop the standpoint of mere speculation. This verse aptly expresses the original character of the way called the investigation of self. It may well be on the same track, at least in its direction, as the standpoint of existence first formulated by Kierkegaard in his critique of Hegel's speculative standpoint.

In the tenth century, during the Period of the Five Dynasties in China, Hogen Bun'eki (Fa-yen Wen-i), who had founded a particular style of Zen known as the Hogen School, wrote a verse on "perfected real nature."

Since we have touched upon the consciousness-only theory, let us cite this verse as an example of how this doctrine was assimilated into Zen and given existential import.

With reason exhausted, feelings and deliberations are forgotten.

How can it be likened to anything!

Right here this frosty night's moon

Sinks serenely into the river valley ahead.

Ripened fruit hangs heavy with monkeys,

The mountains deepen as if to lead astray.

Raising my head, there's still some light—Originally to the West of my abode.³

"Perfected real nature" means that by way of the investigation of self the Buddha-nature of the self comes to be manifest out of the self like an unearthed jewel. At the point where the discriminating mind (the" feelings and deliberations" of our verse) has scrutinized reason exhaustively and reached the extremity of reason, it forgets itself, and forgets reason as well. Our original self-nature, Hakuin's "self-nature as no-nature," shines forth as something beyond comparison. "My mind is like the autumn moon," writes the Chinese poet Han Shan (Cold Mountain); but, he continues, it really withstands all comparison—this moon shining purely in the deep, blue pool of water. In Hogen's verse, the moon setting in the river valley on a frosty night, the monkeys coming to pick the fruit, etc., all only depict features of Hogen's daily mountain life. All this however, is no other than "perfected real nature" as the Zen state. It is, as it is, the mind of Högen, a man of Zen. We must not understand the features expressed in this verse as a description of a landscape. The Zen master Kassan Zenne (Chia-shan Shan-kui, named after the mountain of his abode), was once asked, "How are things around Kassan?" He replied, "Monkeys holding their young in their arms retreat behind the blue ridge, birds holding flowers in their beaks plummet before the blue cliff." Tradition has it that Hogen said of this phrase, "For thirty years I mistook this to be a picture of the world around Kassan." Whatever Hogen might have really meant at the time he said this, the features of Hogen's mountain life in the verse above as well are not just a description

³ This verse is cited in Case 34 of the Blue Cliff Records (Pi-yen-lu).

of the world around a quiet, secluded place in the mountains.

At the conclusion of his Faust Goethe has the Chorus Mysticus sing, "Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis"—all changing things are only the likeness [of eternal things]. The expression in the second line of Hogen's verse is evidently the equivalent of this Gleichnis. But for Goethe the features of mountain life too would belong to the world of changing things, would be only a likeness of eternal things. Yet Hogen's self-nature is something wholly beyond likening. It transcends the distinction between impermanence and eternity; it goes beyond the relativity of impermanent vs. eternal. If we are to speak of the impermanent, then the features of this mountain life are impermanent through and through, are not even a likeness, metaphor, or symbol of eternal things. They are, as they are, the real aspects of mountain life. Or, if we are to speak of the eternal, they are eternal through and through, for which we cannot even find a likeness in the impermanent. They are, as they are, emptiness, and absolute emptiness, as such, is the suchness of mountain life—is ultimately Hogen's own mind. In comparison, even Goethe can be said to have lapsed into reason, into logos. Högen's state here reveals the existentialized version of the "perfected real nature" of consciousness-only theory.

The problem of mind came to be a central issue throughout the history of Buddhism. And that is only natural, insofar as the source of Buddhism lies in what is called the perfect enlightenment or satori of Sakyamuni. The consciousness-only theory which developed and spread from India to China was of fundamental significance for the consideration of this problem. But representative Chinese doctrinal systems too, such as the Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) and Kegon (Hua-yen) which were built upon these considerations, can be seen as profound attempts to exhaust the same problem of mind. The Tendai School speaks of the three thousand worlds in one thought-moment, and of the perfect harmony of the three truths of the empty, the provisional, and the middle. The Kegon School teaches the non-distinction between Buddha, sentient beings, and mind; and elucidates the interpenetration of all things: reason unimpeded by phenomena (rijimuge) and phenomena unimpeded by phenomena (jijimuge). All of these are ideas concerning the "mind." The same concern can be traced back to what is called primitive Buddhism and Theravada. Not only there, but also in non-Buddhist teachings such as Confucianism and Taoism, the problem of mind was constantly a matter of serious concern. Then, from its completely free standpoint, Zen was able to find in all these a clue to the

investigation of self, and an occasion to take off from there. What we said above of Hogen and consciousness-only theory was nothing more than simply one example of this—except that the occasion of Hogen's attaining satori for the first time bears a special relation to consciousness-only theory. The story is as follows.

On a pilgrimage seeking the Way with two companion monks, Hogen stopped to rest at the temple of a Zen priest named Jizō (Kuei Ch'en) one rainy day. When the rain cleared and they were about to set off again, Jizō, who had come to see them off, remarked, "It is said you usually expound the doctrine that the three worlds are mind only." Then, pointing to a rock in the garden, he asked, "Is that rock inside your mind or outside it?" "Inside my mind, of course," was the answer Hogen gave, typical of consciousness-only theory. Jizō immediately retorted, "By what karmic fate I do not know, but a man is wandering around with a lump of stone in his mind. He must feel quite heavy." At a loss for a word to counter, Hogen at length took off his sandals again and stayed on together with his companions, advancing various views to settle the issue. After a month or so of this, the monk Jizō at last said, "When it comes to the Buddha Dharma, all things present themselves as they are." It is said that Hogen was greatly enlightened upon hearing this.

"All things present themselves as they are" means that the Buddha Dharma manifests itself precisely therein, that every single thing is manifest entirely as it is, as clearly and distinctly as what one sees in one's own hand. This is the basic principle of consciousness-only doctrine: "three worlds-mind only," but as it is treated from the standpoint of Zen. In the way of self-investigation called "directly pointing to man's mind," this signifies that "I" directly see "myself" in the appearance of every single thing just as it is, as though two mirrors were mutually reflecting one another. In contrast, when Hogen first answered "in my mind," his "three worlds-mind only" was, to use the modern idiom, an idealistic position. It was a standpoint of seeing the rock as a mental entity. Yet the opposite of this mentalism of "mind only," i.e., a materialism of "things only," would fare no better. So long as the materialist is unable to see in one manifest rock the reality of the self that absolutely cannot be objectified, the shadow of the self that sees the rock will be projected, so to speak, upon the rock's hidden side. Materialism cannot escape the situation that the problem of the mind lies concealed in the appearance of every material thing. Or we can put it this way: if idealism's "in the mind"

NISHITANI

loads the rock into the front of the mind, materialism's "outside the mind" sticks the mind onto the back of the rock. From the standpoint of Zen, both mind and things are seen from a perspective that completely transcends these two opposed ways of seeing.

Still, the problem of the world and all its things is one that should be touched upon again. But before doing this it will be necessary to first examine the problem of mind a little more closely. That is to say, what I have related so far scarcely broaches the topic of the investigation of self from the standpoint of "directly pointing to man's mind." Or again, after having undergone the problem of mind, other matters such as Buddha, the world and all things, and human relationships, become problems anew. As stated before, these matters can be said to be a development of the problem of mind. I do not know how deeply I can go into these problems, but at any rate such fundamental issues as these await our consideration.

TRANSLATED BY JOHN C. MARALDO