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Dialogues, East and West

CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN PAUL TILLICH AND
HISAMATSU SHIN'ICHI

PART THREE

Participants: Paul Tillich
Hisamatsu Shin'ichi
(Mrs.) Hannah Tillich
Interpreters: Richard DeMartino
Fujiyoshi Jikai

DeMartino: In the beginning of this new book of his, *Zen and the Fine Arts*,¹ published in Japan just a few weeks ago, Dr. Hisamatsu contrasts the aesthetic creations of Zen with those of other Buddhist sects. The latter are generally found to be much more formal and cultish, making use almost exclusively of traditional Buddhist materials. The material of Zen art, on the other hand, can be anything, including what ordinarily would be considered most insignificant—or, indeed, even profane.

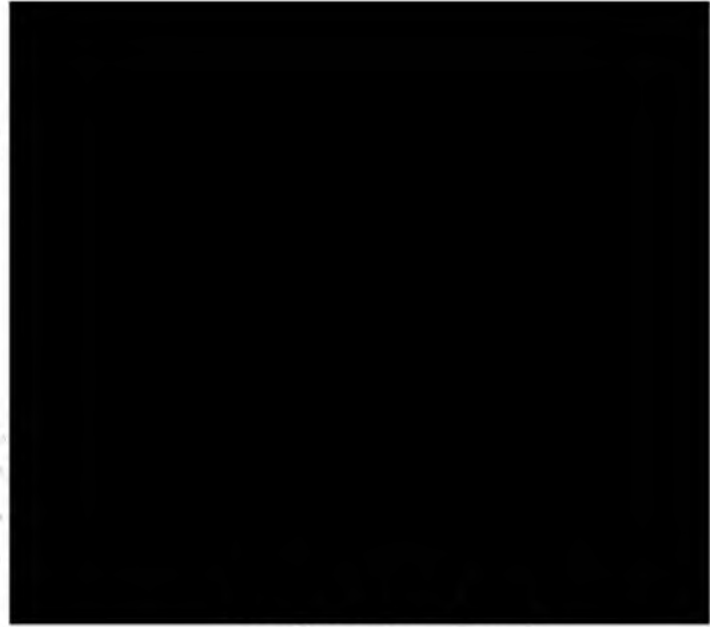
Mrs. Tillich (to Dr. Tillich): That is very similar to your idea of religious art.

* For Parts One and Two, see *The Eastern Buddhist, New Series*, Vol. IV, No. 2, October 1971, pp. 89–108, and Vol. V, No. 2, October 1972, pp. 107–128. (Ed.)

¹ Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, *Zen to Bijutsu*, Bokubisha, Kyoto, Japan, 1958. It has since been published in an English translation: Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, *Zen and the Fine Arts*, Kodansha International, Ltd., Tokyo and Palo Alto, 1971. (Ed.)



Goshomaru teabowl "Sekiyō"

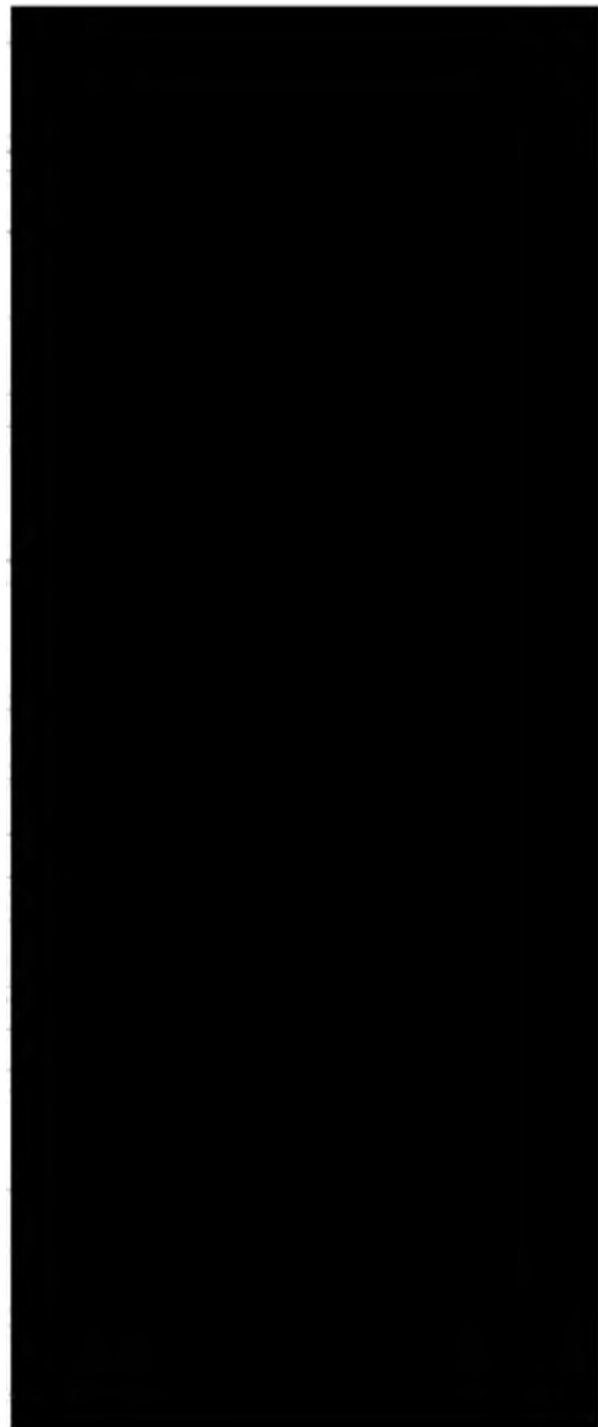


Warikōdai teabowl

De Martino for Hisamatsu: These earthen vessels for example, were made in Korea, where they did not receive any especial attention. In Japan, however, they were singled out by the Zen laymen fashioning the 'Way of Tea' as uniquely appropriate to the precise religio-aesthetic sense therein being developed. In other words, judged according to the canons of beauty and "taste" of this indigenous Japanese Zen art, these unassuming utensils came to possess a hitherto undiscovered significance. Many of these Chinese Zen paintings, not too highly regarded in China, were likewise eventually to find their home in Japan—for instance, this "Dancing Pu-tai" by Liang-kai.

Tillich: What is the characteristic of Zen in such a painting?

"Dancing Pu-tai"



DeMartino for Hisamatsu: The predominant Zen quality in this work is that of unattached—or “unconditioned”—freedom.

Tillich: Freedom from the natural form? or from what?

Fujiyoshi for Hisamatsu: Freedom from everything.

DeMartino: It is, of course, not alone a “freedom from.” Rooted in the Self that is Not-of-Form—or, in your designation, “Being itself”—it enjoys the unlimited “freedom to” realize its Self-expression in any form.

Tillich: I can understand that.

DeMartino: Though I used your term, “Being itself,” actually it is not confined to being—nor, for that matter, to nonbeing. In fact, the justification for characterizing it as “unconditioned” is exactly that it is free of the duality of “being-and-nonbeing.” This is the reason Zen does not speak of “Being itself,” which is still in some sort of conflict with “nonbeing.”

Tillich: Would freedom in this picture then mean becoming what one is essentially?

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: This dancing figure depicts the consummate unfetteredness of what is called in Japanese, *yuke-sammai*—the “*samadhi* of absolutely untrammelled play.”

Fujiyoshi: Sacred play.

DeMartino: Yes; spiritual play.

Tillich: “Spiritual play”—that is better than “freedom.”

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: For Dr. Hisamatsu they are synonymous.

Tillich: “Spiritual play,” an extremely clear concept, belongs to the romantic tradition. An immensely important element, it is, nonetheless, far from exhaustive. The concluding item in my own doctrine of freedom, Dr. Hisamatsu would probably not accept: the freedom to contradict one’s freedom.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Does that pertain to the doing of good and evil?

Tillich: The doing of evil.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Zen freedom manifests itself “beyond” the distinction of good and evil. Dr. Hisamatsu stressed that Zen is never legalistic. I told him that you weren’t either.

Tillich: No, I am not.

DeMartino: Breaking through duality *per se*, Zen breaks through the polarity as well of good and evil. With emancipation in Zen, there is no bondage

or "obstruction" of any kind; quite the contrary, there is unbounded and unobstructed "Self-regeneration."

Tillich: "Unobstructed" is also a good word.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: The conclusive feature of this lack of constriction is that despite Zen's being a "form"—or, I suppose I should say, "formless-form"—of Buddhism, it neither depends upon, is attached to, nor is shackled by "Buddha."

Tillich: That I would presuppose in all classical Buddhism.

DeMartino: Unfortunately, it does not apply to all of classical Buddhism.

Tillich: No?

DeMartino: It is a special mark of Zen.

Fujiyoshi: Only Zen!

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: Zen's freedom, moreover, is free from—or unattached to—"being un-attached."

Tillich: It can be attached?

DeMartino: No; it is "not attached" to its "being non-attached." Put another way, the "unattachment" is itself "unattached."

Tillich: If free from non-attachment, does this allow for a volitional "attaching"?

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): The freedom of Zen is free from attachment even to itself.

Fujiyoshi to *Hisamatsu* (in Japanese): You say, "not attached to non-attachment"; in that case, Dr. Tillich asks, "How about freely attaching?"

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Attached to freedom? Being unattached is freedom.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: It is the "unattachment" that is the "freedom."

Tillich: But you said more than that.

DeMartino: Yes; this freedom is likewise "unattached" to the "freedom"—or to the "not being attached."

Tillich: Then you can continue endlessly—not being attached to not being attached to not being attached.

DeMartino: When the "nonattachment" is "pure," it does not fall into the pattern of such an "infinite regress." For since what is entailed is not a lateral or "horizontal" negation of one pole of the duality by the other, this is not a simple or "relative" negation of attachment. It is rather a negation of the very duality of "attachment-and-unattachment." Consequently,

it is a negation that is actually positive—a freedom that is free precisely of the duality of “freedom-and-unfreedom.” This, incidentally, would be a further indication of its “unconditional” quality.

Tillich: So it is what in German Romanticism is spoken of as “freedom from bondage to anything.”

DeMartino: Zen demands the overt “Self-substantiation” of this “freedom from bondage to anything.”

Tillich: That returns us to the problem of our previous discussion. In this painting it delineates itself in this way and not in twenty other ways.

DeMartino: Yes; in this instance it manifests itself in this form.

Tillich: This *specific* form. There must be an inner relationship, therefore, between this particular manifestation and ultimate reality—or the Self that is Formless.

DeMartino: This form-expression as a formless-form “is” the Self-of-No-Form revealing Itself.

Tillich: In that usage, the copula “is” becomes ambiguous.

DeMartino: Yes. In Dr. Hisamatsu’s formulation: “That which expresses is that which is expressed”—to which I have made a slight addition: “and that through which it is expressed.” Nevertheless, I would agree that as with the personal pronouns “his” in the first conversation and “my” last time, the verb “is” here can be misleading. This is why Zen teachers often eschew the use of words, preferring instead to raise a finger, to offer one a cup of tea, to bellow divers “unintelligible” sounds, or, frequently, to have recourse to some sort of “bodily” contact.

Tillich: Looking at this picture, I see this face and these feet. It is a clearly defined image. There are such people in the world. The ultimate and this individual form, accordingly, have something to do with each other.

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): For Dr. Tillich, this is a “definite” form. There are people like this in the world. If this is a portrayal of the Self-Without-Form, then that ultimate “Formlessness” and this finite form must be related in some way.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): While all of the seven characteristics² of Zen art

² These seven characteristics are: asymmetry, simplicity, austere sublimity, naturalness, subtle profundity, nonattached freedom, and tranquility. See *Zen and the Fine Arts*, pp. 29ff. (*Ed.*)

are to be found in this work, the most pronounced is that of "unconditioned freedom."

DeMartino (in Japanese): The immediate concern of Dr. Tillich is the "relation" between this singular form and the Self that is Not-of-Form.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): The relation is that the freeness of the Self-that-is-of-No-Form is revealed in this form.

DeMartino (in Japanese): That is what I tried to say. What troubles Dr. Tillich, however, is this: this "Dancing Pu-tai" by Liang-kai has an explicit form.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes.

DeMartino (in Japanese): This "Sitting Pu-tai" by Hakuin has its own distinct form.

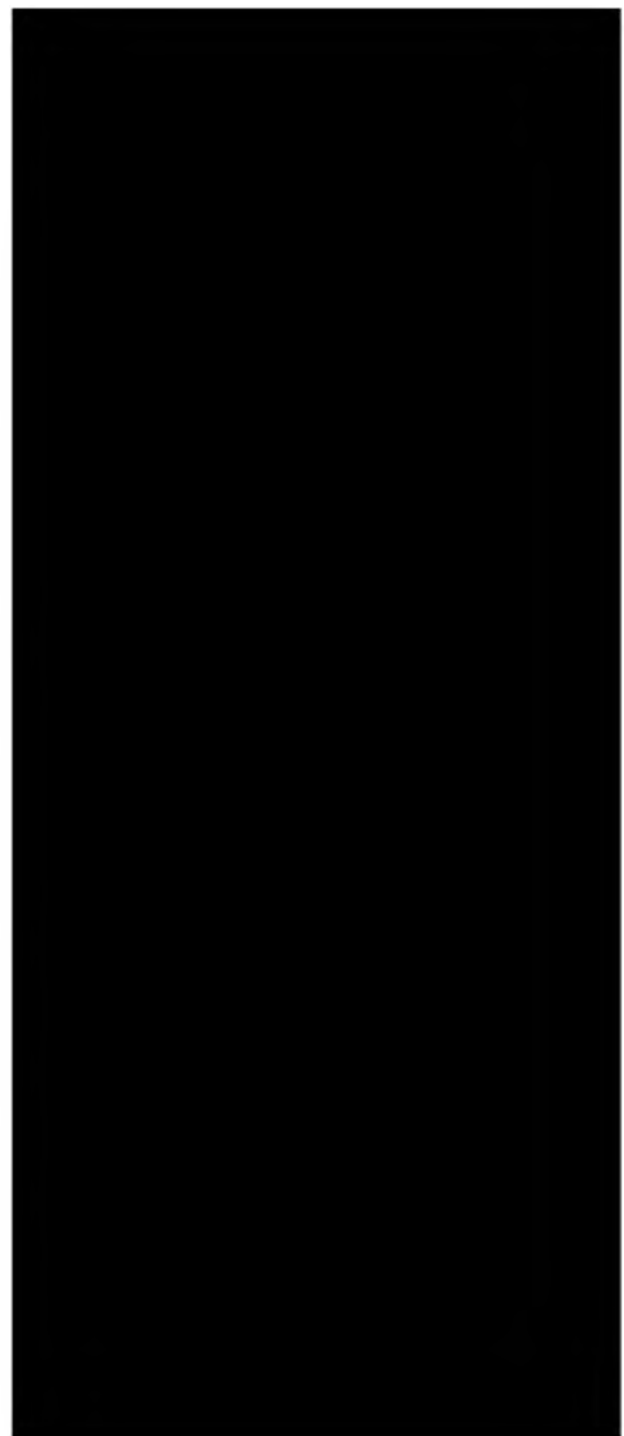
Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes; it is a different form.

DeMartino (in Japanese): If, then, these diverse forms express the Selfless-Self, in Dr. Tillich's view there has to be some connection between these forms and that Self.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): In its Self-concretization the Self-Without-Self can assume innumerable forms.

DeMartino (in Japanese): Yes; but is there any interrelation "between" the various forms "and" the Self that is Formless? Dr. Tillich's understanding seems to be that the Self-Without-Form is somehow separate from these numerous forms.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): No; to think it separate is not good.



"Sitting Pu-tai"

DIALOGUES, EAST AND WEST

DeMartino to Tillich: I am attempting to explain what I believe is your position. You say this is a unique form; hence, it is in some relation to ultimate reality.

Tillich: Yes.

DeMartino: This is another discrete form; thus, it too bears a relationship to the ultimate.

Tillich: Yes.

DeMartino: So that involved are, as it were, three entities: this form, this other form, and ultimate reality.

Tillich: Yes.

DeMartino: In your interpretation, consequently, these multiple forms are to be distinguished from the ultimate.

Tillich: Yes; such a distinction is to be made.

DeMartino: If, however, this form is understood as being "apart from" that which is ultimate, it would not be what Zen is talking about.

Tillich: Then this form would stand absolutely for the ultimate, which would make any other form impossible.

DeMartino: To a Zen man, this form does not "stand for" but "ex-presses" ultimacy.

Tillich: Yes; it is one expression.

DeMartino: "One," and yet not simply "one." For this expresses the ultimate "entirely," and that also expresses the ultimate "entirely."

Tillich: If it is said of these two forms that they are expressions, then this is "one" expression and that is "another" expression.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): It is because Dr. Tillich thinks analytically. From the Zen vantage point, when this one form is painted, this is "the whole"; and when that one form is painted, that is "the whole."

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Dr. Hisamatsu feels that your approach is analytical. From the perspective of the Selfless-Self, this form circumscribes "all," and that form likewise circumscribes "all."

Tillich: Still, it does so in a particular manner.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Taken that way, Dr. Hisamatsu submits, it would no longer be ultimate.

Tillich: Neither if taken the other way. Here we really come to a pivotal

theme—the role of the particular. In this book, *Zen and the Fine Arts*, there are over a hundred individual representations of ultimate reality.

DeMartino: Merely to denominate them “individual representations” of ultimacy is to fail to recognize them as “formless-forms”—or as themselves “ultimate.”

Tillich: Is this the result of being under the power of *māyā*?

DeMartino: Dr. Hisamatsu referred to it as being “analytical.”

Tillich: Yes; but is the analytical untrue?

DeMartino: The risk is that with analysis alone, the Self that is “Not-of-Form”—and so “unanalyzable”—is missed.

Tillich: You spoke of the form “expressing the ultimate.” I, too, could say that of this flower.

DeMartino: I do not maintain, however, that it is “just one particular expression” of ultimacy—which would imply that it is not itself ultimate. On the contrary, as ultimacy expressing itself, this flower is both particular and non-particular—or, therefore, what I would like to call a “non-particular particular.” In more traditional Zen terminology, “The flower is not a flower.”

Tillich: Instead of “particular,” let us say “different from.” This flower is different from this painting.

DeMartino: “Different” and yet “not different.” A Zen master gazing at a flower may remark: “I see the flower, and the flower sees me.”

Tillich: “The flower sees me.” That I can understand.

DeMartino: In my own effort to deal with this “analytically,” I have suggested that the Zen man could simultaneously observe: “When I see the flower, I see my Self; the flower sees my Self; the flower sees the flower; the flower sees its Self; my Self sees its Self, its Self sees its Self.”³

Tillich: You forget that with the word “my” you introduce particularity.

DeMartino: Yes; “my Self” is particular and, concomitantly, “not-particular.” For, as Dr. Hisamatsu said during the last conversation, this “my”—like this Self—is Formless.

Tillich: Even so, you cannot eliminate the “my.”

³ See D.T. Suzuki, Erich Fromm and Richard DeMartino, *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Harper and Bros.), 1960, p. 170 (Ed.)

DeMartino: Exactly. That is why at the start of the previous session Dr. Hisamatsu emphasized that Zen's "Formlessness" must be the "Formless-Myself." This was the central issue as well in a discussion I had with Professor Buber (Martin, 1878-1965) earlier this year at Columbia University. In the Zen master's proclamation, "I am thou," the "I" does not cancel out the "thou." I am I and thou art thou; nevertheless, I am thou and thou art I. This is in no sense a "reductionistic" non-duality—which is the reason I choose to designate it a "non-dualistic duality." Indeed, any exclusively undifferentiated non-duality in which everything is reduced to a sheer sameness is branded in Buddhism a "false sameness"—precisely because particularity is annihilated.

Tillich: That, too, is my interest: the place and importance of particularity.

DeMartino: Zen is exceedingly careful about this danger of a "false sameness"—or an "abstract oneness." To see the flower "im-mediately," one must be oneself "im-mediate." Then the flower will really be the flower; and in "seeing" the flower, one will see not alone the flower: one will see therein one's Self. Hence, there cannot be a genuine "universality" or "non-differentiation" without "particularity" and "differentiation." Expressed otherwise, formlessness in Zen is never a vacuous formlessness: it is always a "formless-form," an "undifferentiated-differentiation," or a "nonparticular-particular."

Tillich: What bearing does this have upon the distinction of particulars? Does that derive from *māyā*?

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: No. It is solely when grounded in the Formless Self that distinctions such as you are you and I am I describe true individuality.

Tillich: That is an intriguing phrase. What is "true individuality"? What does that combination of words mean?

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Ordinary individuals are unfulfilled, isolated, or disintegrated, and cannot be regarded as "authentic individuals." Authentic individuality as understood in Zen Buddhism may be explained in terms of the Hua-yen concept of "*jiji-muge*" (事事無礙, the non-obstruction between particular and particular) or the T'ien t'ai concept of "*koko-enjō*" (個個円成, each individual fulfilled). A particular or individual of this order would be "genuinely" individual.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Individuality that is dualistically differentiated is not "autonomously in-dividual." Not only is it dependent on that in contrast

to which it is distinguished; but in so far as it is a "distinct" entity—or "one"—it is amenable to further division. To explicate "true individuality," Dr. Hisamatsu resorts to two Buddhist tenets: the first, "*jiji-muge*," may be interpreted as "no obstruction between particular and particular."

Tillich: "No obstruction."

DeMartino: Yes. Incidentally, that is what is written in Dr. Hisamatsu's own calligraphy on the little strip of ode paper hanging there on the wall: "*jiji-muge*," "between any thing and any other thing no 'opposition'—that is, no 'opposing position.'" In this dimension of what could perhaps be specified as Zen's 'coincidence of opposites,' accordingly, I am I, thou art thou, and the flower is the flower: yet, I am thou and I am the flower.

Tillich: Why the statement "I am thou," or "I am the flower"? Why these paradoxical pronouncements, which cannot be realized simply and directly?

DeMartino: Zen avows that they can be realized directly—in fact, only "directly." Indeed, it is just this realization that is articulated by "*jiji-muge*," "between one and another no hindrance."

Tillich: Is it that there is no centered self, no self-related self, which would be a hindrance?

DeMartino: The barrier is created by the reflectively self-conscious ego—or "I," which discriminates itself dualistically from 'not itself'—or "not-I." "*Muge*," the overcoming of this barrier, hindrance, or duality, is sometimes translated as "interpenetration." It is not, however, either what may be termed an "objective" interpenetration—as occurs when a dye is added to a liquid, or a "subjective" interpenetration—as occurs in the optical blurring of two

Jiji muge

images. It is, rather, the non-impediment of subject-and-object, of subjective-and-objective, of self and other—the basis of all of which is the non-duality of self and not-self. Thus the necessity of the ego's dying to itself as ego and becoming the Self that is also "Not-Itself"—or its "Formless" or "Selfless" Self—if there is to be actualized genuine "in-dividuality," which would be coincidentally genuine "universality."

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes. *Koko-enjō* affirms that every particular, because of being the Self-Without-Form, is itself fulfilled.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: With the coming to fruition of the Self-Without-Self, consequently, each individual is, in the Tien-t'ai formulation, *koko-enjō*, fulfilled or "complete."

Tillich: Each completes each other? or each is complete?

Fujiyoshi: Every particular is completely or fully matured.

Tillich: In the other one?

DeMartino: No, not "in the other one." Each individual is fulfilled as a "Self-of-No-Self"—or a "Self-of-No-Form."

Tillich: By the removal of his individuality?

DeMartino: No; by the fulfillment of his individuality.

Tillich: What is the difference between fulfillment and removal?

DeMartino: "Removal" would be a sheer, nihilistic negation, would it not?

Tillich: That is what the word means.

DeMartino: "Fulfillment," on the other hand, signifies that the individual through the "incorporation" of its own negation becomes an "unlimited-limit," a "nonparticular-particular," or, in that sense, a "universal." Non-dualistically 'itself' and 'not-itself'—which embraces 'any-thing' not itself, it is at once 'some-thing,' 'no-thing,' and 'every-thing.' For with no 'predicable' that it either "is" or "is not," either that it excludes or that is excluded from it, it may be said both "to be" and "not to be" 'itself,' 'not-itself,' and every 'other-to-itself.' Formulated in the manner of *The Vajracchedika* (or "Diamond") *Sutra*, "A is 'not-A,' therefore A is [truly or universally] A." In other words, with A "encompassing" its own negation ('not-A'), there isn't any contradictory or contrary 'not-A' that stands "opposed" to it. Hence, "between" A and not-A there is no "interposition." With the raising of a single finger, accordingly, the "whole universe" rises.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): But not a universe with form; the whole "Universe-Without-Form."

DeMartino: Dr. Hisamatsu again underscores that it is the whole "Formless Universe." Just as it can be held of the nonduality of self and other that the self "is" the other, it can also be held that there is "neither self nor other," "neither self nor world." So the Self is a Selfless—or "Formless"—Self, and the world or universe a "Formless" Universe.

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Dr. Tillich's earlier question, in effect, was: "When the individual is formless, does individuality disappear?"

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Dr. Hisamatsu confirms that with the unfolding of the Self-Without-Form, individuality is not eliminated. He says that it is, in fact, individuality "in-and-of-its-Self" that is the Self-of-No-Form. This is somewhat difficult to translate.

Tillich: I can see that it would be. What, however, is the experiential basis here? I want to understand. Concepts don't worry me.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): True experience is established precisely in the Self that is Not-of-Form.

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): I believe Dr. Tillich is really asking for a stronger disclosure of the ground of that very statement.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): The experiencer and the experienced are one.

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes; but to complement your extended verbal circumscription, Dr. Tillich would seem to be requesting a more "concrete" manifestation.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): What do you mean by "more concrete"?

DeMartino (in Japanese): You have been tendering "your-Self" by offering conceptual explanations. I think Dr. Tillich would now appreciate a "firmer" display of the underlying basis.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): The Self-Without-Form is the basis.

DeMartino: The basis, he says, is the Self-of-No-Form. In spite of an endeavor to get him to articulate this Self non-conceptually, he won't do it. I had hoped he would hit you squarely with a more direct—and, therefore, more "telling"—"ex-position." That is what he should have done.

Tillich: He should have done what?

DeMartino (thrusting his outstretched hand sharply towards Tillich): He

should have struck forth with an unmistakably "existential" unfurling of the "existential basis." (*Tillich*: Laughs). Instead, he continued to make his presentation verbally in terms of the 'Self-that-is-No-Self.' It is probably my fault. Perhaps if I could have conveyed the focus of your concern better in Japanese, he would have lashed out with a suitable "Zen-type" response.

Tillich: Now to become pragmatic: as you are aware, the pragmatists always ask: "How does this work?" "What does it do for us?" I know what it does for me if I say that in this flower there is ultimate reality. Individualized, this flower is not any other flower: it is not a man; it is not a picture; it is this particular flower. And in this individual flower the ultimate is manifest.

DeMartino: In Zen it would not be put quite that way.

Tillich: I am affirming what I realize pragmatically in myself. It is my great love that I can make this affirmation. I can also state that this work of art is another manifestation of the ultimate. But this work of art is not the flower, it is not this table, and it is not this other work of art; it is something different. This gives rise to the problem that bothered Plato so much: How can diversity be spread over the entire system of Ideas? How is that conceivable? Where does multiformity come from? The all-embracing Idea, for Plato, was the "Idea of the Good." Nevertheless, in the realm of Ideas there is diversification. Plato merely asserted that there is. The Greeks acceded to this, though they were deeply critical of it. Where, however, does multiplicity remain in Zen Buddhism? I must try to learn with my dualistic mind how the individual—or "particular"—is simultaneously preserved and not preserved. I could understand if it were said to be transparent or translucent.

DeMartino: Were "translucency" or "transparency" to mean "emptiness" or "formlessness," that might be acceptable. Because to Dr. Hisamatsu—or to Zen—it would not be "transparent" or "translucent" for "anything-else," for anything "other-to-it." Just the opposite, "transparency" and "translucency" would rather denote the "nondualistically ecstatic" "absence-in-presence"—or "presence-absence"—of its own 'Self-Negation-Fulfillment.'

Tillich: Dr. Hisamatsu seems, then, to be at a point that has nothing to do with sin or guilt. On this issue of the particular, there is apparently a profound difference between us. What I would like to comprehend is how his position is even possible.

DeMartino: That is what I sought to get him to demonstrate—that it is possible by his “being” it. I think there could be no better “answer” to your question than a forthright, irrefutable exhibiting of the “living actuality.” It is almost—although not exactly—the same as if someone were to ask, “How is Jesus as the Christ ‘possible’?”

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): It is no other than “*jiji-muge*” that accounts for the ‘Self that is Not-of-Form’ realizing itself without destroying individuality.

DeMartino to *Hisamatsu* (in Japanese): Yes; but your response persists in the mode of an “explanation.” At this juncture, Dr. Tillich would appear to be ready for more than that.

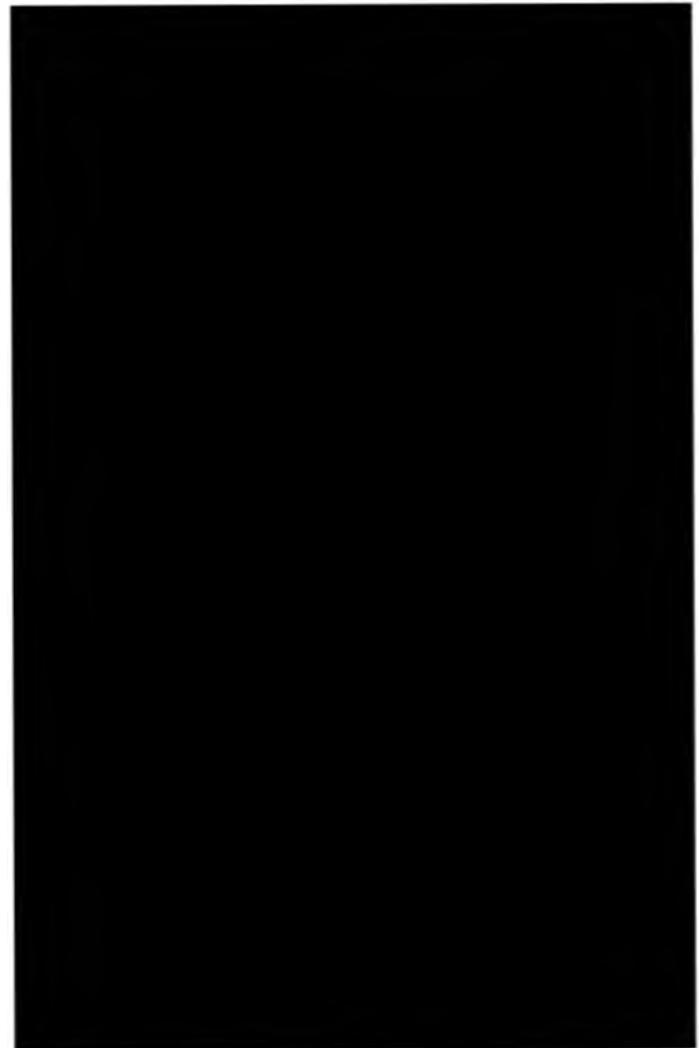
DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: He reasserts that it is precisely the non-impediment “between-thing-and-thing” effected with the attaining of the Formless Self that constitutes the “impermeable foundation” of individuality.

Tillich: How does this relate to encounters among individuals? The world is replete with particulars. Here is one (“The Sixth Patriarch” by Chih-weng) that is extremely expressive for ultimate reality. Nonetheless, it does not cease to be an individual entity.

DeMartino: The particular form, Dr. Hisamatsu reiterates, becomes a true particular when rooted in the Self-of-No-Form—so, again, when it is a “formless-form” or a “non-particular particular.”

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Otherwise there would exist a “false differentiation” of particulars.

DeMartino: I made mention previously of the Buddhist concept of a “false sameness.” Dr. Hisamatsu now refers to the corresponding Buddhist characterization of any differentiated individuality that is not formless as a “false differentiation” or a “false individuality.” In other words, if



“The Sixth Patriarch”

something is taken exclusively as particular differentiated from every other particular, each supposedly standing on its own sequestered ground, that would be a "false differentiation."

Tillich: I would agree with that. I would speak of the universal ground.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): In Zen, the 'universal ground' is not to be found on "the other side"; it has its locus on "this" side.

DeMartino: For Zen, the universal ground does not betoken anything "external." The particular form as a formless-form or a nonparticular-particular is its own "universal" ground.

Tillich: Then I must return to my question about the experiential possibility.

DeMartino: Yes; that is crucial.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: Dr. Hisamatsu maintains that while the ultimate ground is not wholly accessible to human "experience," it is not extrinsic to the total human potential.

Tillich: Does Zen Buddhism give reasons for the existence of this "lower" level of experience?

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Ordinary "experience"—or "existence"—can have a double connotation: it can be that which leads to the 'Self that is Not-of-Form'; or it can be in itself the operation of the 'Self that is of No-Form.'

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: The "ordinary" may be viewed in two ways: one is that it can lead—or be the approach—to the 'Self-Without-Form'; the other is that it can be itself the working of the 'Self-of-No-Form.' As the functioning of the Self-that-is-Formless, it is, needless to say, no longer solely "ordinary."

Tillich: These options are not altogether clear to me.

DeMartino: Considered from the standpoint of the religious quest, ordinary 'experience'—or 'existence'—can be said to lead to the Selfless-Self.

Tillich: "Lead to"? In which sense? By meditation and so on?

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): By "lead to" I mean that what is not yet fulfilled is under the need to become so.

Fujiyoshi to *Hisamatsu* (in Japanese): Since it is not "authentic," it "has to become authentic"; is that what you have in mind?

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes. Habitual existence gains its genuine significance as the 'materialization' of the Formless Self. What I intend by the phrase

“lead to” is that until common experience becomes “true” experience, it “wants” its final consummation.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: Ordinary existence—or “experience”—cannot stop by being merely ordinary.

Tillich: Is it by inner dialectics driven beyond itself?

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: It could be spoken of in that way. Dr. Hisamatsu speaks of it as still not being “complete.”

Tillich: And this lack is the propelling force to the Self that is of No-Form?

Fujiyoshi: Yes.

DeMartino: The alternate possibility concerning the “ordinary” is that it can be regarded as the “unfolding” of the Self that is Selfless. This is what is meant by the general Mahāyāna Buddhist assertion that “*samsara* is *Nirvāna*,” or the Zen dictum that the conventional—or “everyday”—is the Tao.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes. The “customary,” preliminarily to be negated, is in its “Self-creation,” a positive affirmation.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: “Wanting” the actualization of its ultimate ground or fulfillment, the ordinary has to overcome—or to “negate”—itself; as the manifold substantialization—or “production”—of its ultimate ground, on the other hand, it becomes a positive “affirmation.”

Tillich: So it is somewhat similar to the scheme of negative and positive philosophy. The negative is impelled towards the absolute; then, after having the absolute, we can find it in the particular—which is particularly negative.

DeMartino: The ‘sheer particular’ in the simple or ‘unresolved’ duality of positive-and-negative may be said to be initially “negative”; the ‘non-particular particular’ as a resolved or ‘nondualistic-duality’ of positive-and-negative may be said to be totally “positive.”

Tillich: Yes. Likewise according to negative and positive philosophy: one cannot stay with the tulip because it is not the whole—it is not sufficient. There is a momentum in the direction of something greater.

DeMartino: Yet, from the other side, this tulip, at once both “itself” and “not-itself,” is the “whole.”

Tillich: That is the “other” side. At the outset, however, as in the case of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, there is the negating of the flower, the

picture, or whatever, by seeing that they are not enough; then, after reaching the Selfless or "Formless" Self—or the "One" in Plotinus, this One can be seen in everything, which formerly was only a springboard toward that culmination.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: With Plotinus, as the emanation from the One moves further away from the One, it becomes less "positive" and more "negative." Zen Self "ex-pression," in contrast, does not have this hierarchy from positive to negative; it is uniformly "positive."

Tillich: I was not referring to the hierarchical order. The same can apply in a nonhierarchical way.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Dr. Hisamatsu holds that even so, for Plotinus the One in this flower is mixed with "negative matter." In Zen, there is not that kind of matter.

Tillich: If the flower has in any sense to go out of itself, then for Zen, too, there must be something negative about it.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: From the true standpoint, there isn't anything negative.

Tillich: From which standpoint?

DeMartino: The true standpoint.

Tillich: The true is the second; but there is also the first.

DeMartino: The first is "before." (*Tillich:* Yes.) With the attainment, there is, as it were, a radical "turn-over." (*Tillich:* Yes.) In Plotinus, after this "reversal" and consequent emanation from the One, there is a progressively descending scale terminating in an utterly "formless" and "negative" matter or non-being. For Zen, all becomes "positive": *samsara* becomes itself *Nirvāna*. That is, with the positive no longer in a simple, dualistic opposition to the negative, the particular as a "nonparticular" comes to be 'in-its-Self'—or as the 'nonduality of Itself-and-Not-Itself'—the "formless-form" of *Nirvāna*. This Zen way of negation—or 'via negativa'—as the Self-actualization of the nonduality of positive-and-negative, is thus always a Way of 'Self-Negation' that is at once a 'Self-Fulfillment.' Accordingly, Zen's 'Via Negativa'—or, indeed, 'Via Positiva'—is more precisely characterized as a 'Via-Negativa-Positiva,' or a Way of 'Self-Negation-Affirmation.'

Tillich: I was not thinking so much of Plotinus as of Pseudo-Dionysius, for whom the Eros power prevails universally. The quintessence of the comparison revolved around the dual modes, not the emanistic symbol. The movement to the ultimate prior to seeing the ultimate everywhere does not necessarily have to be hierarchical—for instance, proceeding from the flower to the animal, and then from the animal on up.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): The perspective from which something has yet “to get outside of” itself is not conclusive. With the ‘consummate’ transformation, what could not hitherto be contained in ‘itself,’ now can.

DeMartino to *Hisamatsu* (in Japanese): Because “after” the awakening to—or “of”—the Formless Self, the Formless Self can be seen—or can see Itself—in any thing.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Yes; that is right.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: Dr. Hisamatsu is in accord that if envisaged as a process, two phases may be distinguished: the approach from the initially “negative” ‘insufficient and un-self-sustainable,’ which, when successful, culminates in the burgeoning of the “positive” ‘Self-of-No-Form’ with each form becoming its Self-expression—and, as a consequence, ‘Self-containable.’

Tillich: So the negative way—the *via negativa*—is necessary.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: Dr. Hisamatsu notes that although the *via negativa* in your meaning may be necessary “on the way to,” it is not the authentic way; the genuine way is the *via positiva*.

Tillich: That would be very, very near to me.

DeMartino: I think the difference is that for you the ultimate—or God—is finally ‘transcendent.’ The single exception is, of course, Jesus as the Christ. Christhood is not, however, a possibility open to anyone else. Zen, on the other hand, encourages everyone to become a Christ—or a Buddha. With this integrant “Self-Emptying” (or “Self-Negation”) that is a “Self-Full-Filling” (or “Self-Affirmation”), there is actualized the nonduality not alone of ‘negative-and-positive,’ but also of ‘immanent-and-transcendent.’ Hence, what was ordinarily merely immanent and particular—and therefore “negative,” now becomes as well ‘in-its-Self’ transcendent, non-particular, or ‘universal’—and therefore “positive.”

DeMartino for *Tillich* (in Japanese): Dr. Tillich contends that there has to be

the "problematic" negative regardless of the coming to fruition of the Selfless Self.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu*: Why?

Tillich: Because the representative of the ultimate . . . (*DeMartino*: "Representative"?) . . . or "manifestation," may be better, must be particular.

DeMartino: With True Self-Awakening, the particular comes to be "in-itself" 'non-particular,' 'universal,' or 'ultimate.'

Tillich: Nevertheless, the presence of the two stages requires that one look through something in order to see in it a universal. We remain inexorably in the first sphere and in the second.

DeMartino: To a Zen master these levels cease to be simply "two"; they are two and—concurrently—"not two."

Tillich: In any event, he cannot dwell exclusively on the second plane; for particularity is ever experienced as particularity. His handling this pencil or taking his eyeglasses off is, to begin with, something particular. He can rise above this; but by way of the two stages, which are perennially present but "different," he has again to return. That is the human condition of finitude.

DeMartino to *Hisamatsu* (in Japanese): Dr. Tillich insists that man cannot escape the situation of finitude. No Awakening, consequently, can totally transform the problematic—or "negative"—particular. I said that this was not the case with Zen.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): That is correct.

DeMartino (in Japanese): Dr. Tillich's argument is that it is not possible for it not to be the case.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): As to this point, the concepts of *koko-enjō* and *jiji-muge* are especially appropriate. The antecedent Hua-yen concept of *riji-muge* (universal-particular-no-obstruction) is less useful, as it may mislead one to differentiate between "ri" (universal) and "ji" (particular).

DeMartino (in Japanese): That would appear to be Dr. Tillich's understanding.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): With *jiji-muge* there is no "ri" ("universal"); so each individual is really fulfilled (*koko-enjō*), and every particular is truly "comprehended within" every other.

DeMartino: To clarify the Zen position, Dr. Hisamatsu refers once more to *jiji-muge*, contrasting it with another Hua-yen phrase, *riji-muge*—usually

interpreted as "between universal and particular no impediment." It is expressly because this latter formulation could give the impression of a universal apart from—or in dualistic distinction to—the particular, which I believe is your view . . . (*Tillich*: Yes.) . . . that it is superseded by the final assertion, *jiji-muge*, "between particular and particular no barrier." This is why I prefer to render "*ri*" not so much as "universal" as "non-particular." "*Riji-muge*" would thus be "between non-particular and particular no contraposition." For precisely on the basis of this nonduality of any thing and its own negation (*riji-muge*) rests the nonduality of any thing and any "other" thing (*jiji-muge*). From this it ensues that every thing "is"—and is "in"—every thing. And just as each "is"—and is "in"—each, or one "is"—and is "in"—all, so all "is"—and is "in"—one. But, further, as all or every thing "is" and "is not," every thing "is"—and is "in"—"no-thing," as "no-thing" "is"—and is "in"—every thing. I would, moreover, offer the thought that exactly this is the nature, meaning, or *logos* of Love.

Tillich: May I ask, does the expression, "*Tat tvam asi*," come from Buddhism or Hinduism?

DeMartino: "*Tat tvam asi*," "That thou art," is from Hinduism.

Tillich: Still, Buddhism has taken this over, has it not?

DeMartino: Is it your feeling that the Hindu "*Tat tvam asi*" is comparable to the Buddhist "*jiji-muge*"?

Tillich: Doesn't "*Tat tvam asi*," "That is you," similarly encompass the relationship to the other particular? Isn't that intended as well in Hinduism? "The other one you are!" People there on the street, they are you; in the ultimate you are identical. If you look at a poor beggar, a powerful ruler, or a beautiful flower, you should realize that they are not completely strange; rather, there is a point of identity. Paul Tillich is Richard DeMartino. As usual, the word "is" needs clarification. "Is" can indicate participation. In this use, however, it signifies that everyone is an expression of the ultimate—and that is what establishes the identity. Therefore I am the one and the other.

DeMartino: Zen would regard each as a *Self*-expression of ultimacy. You are the "ultimate"—or Selfless Self; I am the "ultimate"—or Selfless Self; hence, I am you and I am the flower.

Tillich: Leaving aside Hinduism and speaking for myself, I would be shy to say this.

DeMartino: As of this moment, I would, too. Yet, from Dr. Hisamatsu's side, that is the statement that is being made.

Tillich: I never would suggest that I am the ultimate. "I am you" because I participate as you do in the ultimate.

DeMartino: Zen's "nonduality" is not a "participation."

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): For Dr. Tillich, you are I and I am you since you and I both "participate" in the ultimate 'Self of No-Self.'

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): No; it is not "participation."

Fujiyosbi to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Dr. Tillich said he is too shy to declare that he is the ultimate.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Non-dualistic ultimacy does not—and should not—make one hesitant to proclaim that one is oneself "ultimate." The sort of ultimacy that might cause such a reluctance most likely involves the judgement of good and evil.

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Dr. Hisamatsu thinks the reason for your shyness is that your ultimate is still associated with the ethical distinction between good and evil. In other words, for you the ultimate is undoubtedly ultimately "good" as opposed to evil.

Tillich: Yes; that is so.

DeMartino: In Zen, as every duality—including the axiological polarity of good-and-evil—is broken-through, there is no uneasiness to be felt in professing, "I am the ultimate." For this is not to assert that I am "axiologically" 'good' in contrast to 'evil,' but rather that I am—"onto-existentially"—both that which is judged to be 'good' and that which is judged to be 'evil,' or, conversely, neither that which bears the valuation 'good' nor that which bears the valuation 'evil.' It will be recalled that in the onto-existential nonduality—or "nondualistic-duality"—of the one and the other, as it may be said that the one "is" the other, it may equally be said that there is "neither" the one "nor" the other, "neither" the self "nor" the world. So the Self is a Selfless—or Formless—Self, and the world or universe a "Formless" universe. With Zen, consequently, it is not a matter of "participation"—which as you intend it, if I am not mistaken, would mean "partly."

Tillich: Yes; "partly." This is not connected solely with the issue of good and evil, which we have excluded from our discussion tonight, having dealt with it last time; it has also to do precisely with the question of the status of the particular and the universal. For if I assign to the particular an ontological quality—which Dr. Hisamatsu probably does not—then while a "dialectical" identification is possible, one cannot identify "simply" or "directly."

DeMartino: The pronouncement, "I am the ultimate—or the Self that is of No-Self," does not enunciate an "identification" of particular "and" universal.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): No, it is not "identity."

DeMartino: As Dr. Hisamatsu indicated earlier, that is a misunderstanding that could arise from the conceptualization, *riji-muge*, "the non-obstruction of 'universal' and particular." This is what prompts me to propose that instead of "universal," "ri" may better be understood as "non-particular" or "No-thing"—that is, as the Self-Negation of the particular. For, to re-emphasize, it is this "nonduality of 'itself' and 'not itself'" (*riji-muge*) that includes as one dimension the "nonduality of 'itself' and every 'other to itself'" (*jiji-muge*). *Jiji-muge* is not, therefore, an "identification" of "two" as "one." It is, rather, the nonduality of two that "are" two even as they cease to be "two" because they in a sense indeed cease "to be." It is incidentally in this same sense, I would submit, that True—or Great—Love constitutively entails a "Great Death."

Tillich: This brings me back to my experience of the particular in its infinite significance *as particular*. In your and Dr. Hisamatsu's understanding, it has not this significance *as particular* but *as expression*.

DeMartino: Yes; this is critical. You experience the particular *in* its ultimate significance; Dr. Hisamatsu "experiences" the particular *as* "ultimate," as a "nonparticular-particular," or as the "Self that is Not-Itself." This is why the way of Zen, I would stress, is never one-sidedly either a *via-negationis* or a *via-positionis*: it is always conjointly a '*via-negationis-positionis*'—or the Self-actualization of the nonduality of the negative-and-the-positive.

Tillich: Here, then, there is a decided difference. When I look at this yellow flower, it speaks to me with a magnificent eloquence—as you know, I am a nature mystic.

DIALOGUES, EAST AND WEST

DeMartino: Yes, you are very much a German romantic nature mystic. (All laugh.)

Tillich: Nevertheless, the flower cannot be, for me, more than a particular. I would not refer to it as the ultimate—or Formless Self. Experientially—in my emotions—I could not countenance that.

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): Dr. Tillich, with his strong strain of German romanticism, harbors a profound love of flowers.

Tillich: These flowers are indispensable for our discussion. (Laughs).

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Dr. Hisamatsu concurs, and shares your love and compassion.

DeMartino to Hisamatsu (in Japanese): I said that for you this flower as an expression of the 'Self Without Form' is itself ultimate. Dr. Tillich says that despite his closeness to the flower, he cannot "experientially" regard it in such a manner.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): No; for him it cannot be so.

Tillich: It is my bondage to the particular.

DeMartino: Zen would posit the primary or "root" problem not with the finite form, but with the failure to break through to the "non-finite" or "Form-less" Self.

Tillich: Isn't that the same, since the present focus is the relation to the particular?

DeMartino: Still, in the acknowledgment of your 'servitude to the particular,' I somehow hear a note of self-justification—as if it were a subtle reminder that whereas the concrete individual gets lost in Zen, with you it does not.

Tillich: That I would contend.

DeMartino: Zen would counter that solely with the Awakening of the 'Self of No-Self' does the differentiated particular comprehend its own negation to become a fulfilled particular, thereby realizing its genuinely "autonomous in-dividuality."

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: Only then, Dr. Hisamatsu adds, does the full beauty of the flower emerge. Prior to that, the deepest beauty of the flower is not really appreciated.

Tillich: If it is seen as particular?

DeMartino: If it is not also seen as "non-particular" or "without form."

Tillich: Cutting it off from all other forms? For myself, I can't do that. I see

the flower against the background of Mr. Fujiyoshi, and he is different.

DeMartino: Insofar as you see it simply "against the background" of Mr. Fujiyoshi, sheerly as "different from" him, that is not seeing him or the flower as "form-less" even while formed, as "limit-less" even while limited, or as "non-finite" even while finite. This is why Dr. Hisamatsu, Zen—or, actually, Mahayana Buddhism—places prime emphasis on the need to become oneself "Formless," "Empty," or "Nothing." So, likewise, is it that "one-in-all," "all-in-one," or "all-in-all" may further be specified as "all-in-none"—or, indeed, "none-in-all."

Tillich: Is it as a result of meditative concentration on the flower—on its yellow color, perhaps, that you lose consciousness of the surroundings? That I would understand.

DeMartino: No; Zen's 'Nothingness' is not a matter of intense concentration upon "some-thing" with the consequent negative blocking-out of the consciousness of everything else. Neither is it, as frequently it is misunderstood to be, a suspension or cessation of total consciousness. Quite the contrary, the Nothingness of Zen is a creatively active "positive negation" or "positive losing" that is coincidentally an "affirmation," "finding," or "gaining." It is, accordingly, a 'negation-affirmation,' a 'losing-finding,' or a 'losing-gaining' both of oneself and 'not oneself' and, hence, of oneself and the 'other'—or 'all others.'

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: For this reason, Dr. Hisamatsu would describe Zen concentration not so much as "one concentrating on the flower" as "the flower concentrating on the flower."

Tillich: What is the importance of that?

DeMartino for Hisamatsu: It is then that the flower is truly the flower and you are truly you. That is, in the Zen view the flower is not really the flower nor are you really you until the duality between you and the flower has been overcome—or, consequently, until you become the flower "concentrating upon the flower." I remember you remarking once in New York, "I can never experience the tree as the tree experiences itself."

Tillich: I say that often.

DeMartino: I believe my comment on that occasion was that this could be said to be the aim of Zen. For the flower's own "experience of"—or "concentration on"—itself is realized precisely when one 'becomes the flower concentrating upon the flower.'

Tillich: I would speak of participating in its inner essentiality.

DeMartino: With 'the flower concentrating on itself,' one is not restricted to "participation." In fact, since authentic 'Zen-concentration' isn't either a temporal, spatial, psychological, or otherwise 'negative' "loss" of consciousness, but is a 'positive' onto-existential "losing-gaining" (or "negation-fulfillment") of oneself, not oneself, the other, as well as of time-and-space, it is not even subject to the limitation of being "an experience." It is rather to be characterized as the opening up of a completely new nondualistic ground or matrix of "being" or "experience" in which one coterminously "is" and "is not"—whether oneself, not oneself, the other, or "in time-and-space." As the 'flower concentrating upon the flower,' therefore, one is the flower ("that is not a flower"), as the flower is one's ("Selfless") Self—or the "whole 'Formless' or 'Selfless' universe."

Tillich: Including the flowers in India or Japan?

DeMartino: Yes. For in the "nondualistic-duality of the flower concentrating upon itself," all distinctions are both retained (*jiji*—or duality) and annulled (*muge*—or nonduality). So it is, returning to another major dispute of the last conversation, that Hitler and his shoemaker are also included.

Fujiyoshi (in Japanese): As Dr. Tillich's viewpoint seems to be that of *riji-muge*, this may be difficult.

DeMartino: Mr. Fujiyoshi feels that given your understanding of a particular in contradistinction to a universal in which it participates . . . (*Tillich:* Yes.) . . . the idea of a particular incorporating its own negation—that is, being "formless," and thereby incorporating every "other" particular (*jiji-muge*) may be somewhat forbidding. In any case, it may make clear why I said before that whereas for you the ultimate—or "God"—finally remains transcendent, for Zen, as there "is" no universal besides the particular fulfilled in and through its own Self-Negation (which is thus a Self-Negation-Affirmation), there isn't any such predominantly transcendent ultimate.

Tillich: Yes—I can see that now.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu:* Dr. Hisamatsu recapitulates that with Zen the universal does not exist as "universal" or the particular simply as "particular"; nor is there any unification or "identity" of universal "and" particular. What may be spoken of as "universal" is the lack of any "interposition" between particular and particular.

Tillich: Formulated in this manner, that is a possibility which could be Aristotelian.

Fujiyoshi: This is the main doctrine of Hua-yen or Kegon Buddhism. Zen is based on this philosophy of Kegon.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): No, just the reverse: Kegon philosophy has its basis in Zen. Zen goes beyond Kegon.

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu:* Dr. Hisamatsu asserts that, to the contrary, the Hua-yen principle of "between particular-and-particular-no-obstruction" arises out of Zen. For the Zen master is the 'living source' of that maxim.

Tillich: May I then ask: what happens experientially if a Zen man eats a lobster? What is the lobster for him in this moment? What is the inner experience?

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu:* Do you intend the act of eating a lobster as a 'particular experience'?

Tillich: Yes, I have to; because some minutes later he will sleep.

Hisamatsu (in Japanese): If I am asked what Zen is, I would reply: "When I want to eat, I eat; when I want to sleep, I sleep."

DeMartino for *Hisamatsu:* In Zen there is the expression, "When one wishes to eat, one eats; when one wishes to sleep, one sleeps."

Tillich: That is what I had in mind.

DeMartino: This, however, is not your "particular."

Tillich: I don't see the difference.

DeMartino: Although Dr. Hisamatsu's saying, "When I want to sleep I sleep, when I want to eat I eat," may sound ordinary, actually it is not.

Tillich: Then why wouldn't he change the sequence of these verbs in order to set forth the extraordinary? Were he to announce, "When I eat, I sleep; when I sleep, I eat," that would be unusual.

DeMartino: He could express himself that way as well. He certainly could proclaim, "I eat when I sleep; I sleep when I eat."

Tillich: That is compatible with your position. But the sentence, "When I eat I eat," is not.

DeMartino: Only if the ostensibly "ordinary" is taken as different from the patently "paradoxical."

Tillich: Yes.

DeMartino: The True "Self of No-Self," however, may articulate its Self-consummation by utilizing either mode of expression—and to employ them

separately or together. In the creatively dynamic "*ek-stasis*"—or "absence-presence"—of its Self-Negation-Fulfillment, it can alternately aver "I am," "I am not," or "I am because I am not."

Tillich: I would call that a consistent statement of identity.

DeMartino: "I am not I, therefore I am I," would be a consistent statement of identity?

Tillich: Yes; of being and non-being. This is dialectical.

DeMartino: Yet to say, "I am not," would be "paradoxical."

Tillich: Yes, that is paradoxical.

DeMartino: And were a Zen man to declare, "I am," you would consider that ordinary?

Tillich: Yes.

DeMartino: As the 'Self-fructification' of the "nondualistic-duality" of being and nonbeing, the Zen master may, at his bidding, affirm "I am" or "I am not."

Tillich: Yes. I, too.

DeMartino: Then why is one congruent and not the other?

Tillich: Because when the ordinary is used with a special "twist," this must be indicated.

DeMartino: From the standpoint of the Self that is Formless, it is not that one assertion carries a special "twist" that the other does not have. Both are verbalizing the same Self-realization. As the Selfless Self, embracing its own negation, can be said "to be-without-being" and "to do-without-doing," it may exclaim in unqualified Self-affirmation, "I am" or "I am not," "When I eat I eat," or, "When I eat I do no eat."

Tillich: "Twist" is probably not the best word; in any event, something to show that the ordinary is extraordinary. Unless this is made explicit, it would appear not to be different.

DeMartino: Albeit semantically—or "objectively"—Zen utterances do sometimes seem commonplace, with a true Zen person, the "existential"—or "onto-existential"—matrix that is being enunciated remains unaltered. For when a Zen man, who may be described as a "dead-man-living," says, "I am," this is not the customary "I am" that stands in a simple dualistic distinction to "I am not" and so cannot be freely interchanged with it. In broader terms, the *samsara* that "is" *Nirvāna* is not a merely dualistic

samsara in which affirmation and negation constitute an unreconciled contradiction. It is always a nondualistic *samsara* such that while affirmation is affirmation and negation is negation, each sustains "coincidentally" its own negation. Accordingly, it is a *samsara*—or *Nirvāna*—in which the particular, never "exclusively" particular, is also "non-particular." The Zen master as the concrete embodiment of this nonduality (or "nondualistic-duality") is thus giving an equally valid—and consonant—expression of him-Self whether he chooses to avow "I am," "I am not," "I am I," "I am not-I," or "I am thou."

Tillich: All right. Therefore I tried and tried to hammer away on the experiential.

DeMartino: Yes, you did. Dr. Hisamatsu, however, held back. He steadfastly refrained from formally answering—or "engaging"—you non-intellectually. Instead, he kept making his 'existential presentation' through the use of concepts. (*Tillich*: Yes.) For some reason he did not deal with you fully as a Zen teacher, which I believe he should have. (*Tillich*: Laughs.) When you originally advanced the query, he should have responded to you in a blockbusting non-verbal manner. He did not, and so your inquiry persisted. (*Tillich*: Yes.) Perhaps I am to blame—in not interpreting adequately. Maybe if you were speaking to him directly in Japanese, he would have given you what I expected him to give you from the start.

Tillich: You mean a push in the stomach?

DeMartino: Well, as you yourself are now suggesting it, that, apparently, would have served very nicely. (General laughter.)

Fujiyoshi (in Japanese): I don't think that for Dr. Hisamatsu to have done so would have been quite appropriate.

DeMartino (in Japanese): Since Dr. Tillich was attempting to penetrate through the concept to the "existential basis," the response should really have been something akin to a poke in the stomach. That is the sort of reaction I was trying to evoke from Dr. Hisamatsu, but I just couldn't.