

ESSAYS IN ZEN BUDDHISM

(SECOND SERIES)

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'Again, son of a good family, I will give you another illustration. Suppose the Tathāgata had stayed among us for another kalpa and used all kinds of contrivance, and, by means of fine rhetoric and apt expressions, had succeeded in convincing people of this world as to the exquisite taste, delicious odour, soft touch, and other virtues of the heavenly nectar; do you think that all the earthly beings who listened to the Buddha's talk and thought of the nectar, could taste its flavour?

'Sudhana: No, indeed; not they.

'Sucandra: Because mere listening and thinking will never make us realize the true nature of Prajñāpāramitā.

'Sudhana: By what apt expressions and skilful illustrations, then, can the Bodhisattva lead all beings to the true understanding of Reality?

'Sucandra: The true nature of Prajñāpāramitā as realized by the Bodhisattva—this is the true definitive principle from which all his expressions issue. When this emancipation is realized he can aptly give expression to it and skilfully illustrate it.'

From this we can distinctively conceive that Prajñāpāramitā which emancipates is something which must be personally experienced by us, and that mere hearing about it, mere learning of it, does not help us to penetrate into the inner nature of Reality itself. Why, one may ask, cannot the truth of self-realization be made graspable by means of knowledge? This is answered in another place in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*¹ by Śīlpābhijñā to the following effect:

'The truth of self-realization [and Reality itself] are neither one nor two. Because of the power of this self-realization, [Reality] is able universally to benefit others as well as oneself; it is absolutely impartial, with no idea of this and that, like the earth from which all things grow. Reality itself has neither form nor no-form; like space it is beyond knowledge and understanding; it is too subtle to be expressed in words and letters.

'Why? Because it is beyond the realm of letters, words,

¹ The forty-fascicle one, Fas. XXXI. This is also a later addition.

speeches, mere talk, discriminative intellection, inquiring and speculative reflection; and again it is beyond the realm of the understanding which belongs to the ignorant, beyond all evil doings which are in accordance with evil desires. Because it is neither this nor that, it is beyond all mentation; it is formless, without form, transcending the realm of all falsehoods; because it abides in the quietness of no-abode which is the realm of all holy ones.

'O son of a good family, the realm of self-realization where all the wise ones are living is free from materiality, free from purities as well as from defilements, free from grasped and grasping, free from murky confusion; it is most excellently pure and in its nature indestructible; whether the Buddha appears on earth or not, it retains its eternal oneness in the Dharmadhātu. O son of a good family, the Bodhisattva because of this truth has disciplined himself in innumerable forms of austerities, and realizing this Reality within himself has been able to benefit all beings so that they find herein the ultimate abode of safety. O son of a good family, truth of self-realization is validity itself, something unique, reality-limit, the substance of all-knowledge, the inconceivable, non-dualistic Dharmadhātu, and the perfection of emancipation in which all the arts find their complete expression.'

Further down in the forty-fascicle *Avatamsaka*¹ we read this:

'Sudhana: Where is the abode of all Bodhisattvas?

'Mañjuśrī: In the most excellent ultimate truth they have their abode. This is the truth that knows neither birth nor death, neither loss nor destruction, neither going nor coming; these are all words, and the truth has nothing to do with words; it is far beyond them, it is impossible to be described, it has nothing to do with idle reasoning and philosophical speculation. As it has from the first no words to express itself, it is essentially quiet, realizable only in the inner consciousness of the wise.' . . .

¹ Fas. XXXVIII. This is again missing in the other *Avatamsakas* and in the *Gaṇḍavyūha*.

consists in abandonments. "The abandonment of what?" you may ask. Abandon your four elements (*bhūta*), abandon your five aggregates (*skandha*), abandon all the workings of your relative consciousness (*karmavijñāna*), which you have been cherishing since eternity; retire within your inner being and see into the reason of it. As your self-reflection grows deeper and deeper, the moment will surely come upon you when the spiritual flower will suddenly burst into bloom, illuminating the entire universe. The experience is incommunicable, though you yourselves know perfectly well what it is.

'This is the moment when you can transform this great earth into solid gold, and the great rivers into an ocean of milk. What a satisfaction this is then to your daily life! Being so, do not waste your time with words and phrases, or by searching for the truth of Zen in books; for the truth is not to be found there. Even if you memorize the whole Tripitaka as well as all the ancient classics, they are mere idle words which are of no use whatever to you at the moment of your death.'

2. *The Significance of Satori in Zen*

Satori is thus the whole of Zen. Zen starts with it and ends with it. When there is no satori, there is no Zen. 'Satori is the measure of Zen', as is announced by a master. Satori is not a state of mere quietude, it is not tranquillization, it is an inner experience which has a noetic quality; there must be a certain awakening from the relative field of consciousness, a certain turning-away from the ordinary form of experience which characterizes our everyday life. The technical Mahāyāna term for it is *parāvṛtti*,¹ 'turning-back' or 'turning-over' at the basis of consciousness. By this the entirety of one's mental construction goes through a complete change. It is wonderful that a satori insight is capable of causing such a reconstruction in one's spiritual

¹ *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 184 et passim.

outlook. But the annals of Zen testify to this. The awakening of Prajñāpāramitā, which is another name for satori, therefore, is the *sine qua non* of Zen.

There are some masters, however, who say that satori is something artificially set up; Zen has really nothing to do with such an excrescent growth as would injure its natural wholesomeness; just to sit quietly—that is enough, the Buddha is here in this doing-nothing-ness; those who make so much fuss about satori are not real followers of Bodhidharma. Such anti-satori masters would further declare that the ultimate truth of Zen consists in holding on to the Unconscious; that if anything marked with conscious strivings comes in, this surely mars the fuller expression of the Unconscious itself; and therefore that the ultimate truth must not be interfered or trifled with; this is the position taken up by some Zen advocates against the upholders of satori. As they oppose satori, they are inevitably also against the koan exercise.

Early in the twelfth century this anti-satori and anti-koan movement in China grew quite strong among Zen followers of the time, and the following is a letter written by Tai-hui¹ to his disciple Lü Chi-i,² warning him against those who deny the noetic experience of satori or self-realization:

'Lately there is an evil tendency growing up among certain followers of Zen who regard disease as cure. As they never had a satori in their lives, they consider it as a sort of superstructure, a means of enticement, as something altogether secondary in Zen, which belongs to its periphery and not to its centre. As such teachers have never experienced a satori, they refuse to believe in those who have actually gone through the experience. What they aim at is to realize mere emptiness where there is no life, no noetic

¹ Daiye in Japanese, 1089–1163. He was one of the most outstanding characters Zen Buddhism ever produced in the Chinese soil. He most strongly opposed the teaching and practice of quietism, and was never tired of upholding the importance of satori-awakening in the study of Zen, which he felt to be nothing if not for satori.

² The Kōkyō Shoin Edition, T'êng, VIII, f. 89a.

quality whatever—that is, a blank nothingness which is regarded by them as something which is eternally beyond the limitations of time.

‘In order to reach this state of utter blankness and unfathomability, they consume so many bowls of rice each day and spend their time sitting quietly and stolidly. They think this is what is meant by the attainment of absolute peace. . . . What a pity that they are altogether ignorant of the occasion when there is a sudden outburst [of intuitive knowledge in our minds]!’

The authoritative facts upon which the Zen quietists based their belief are mentioned to be as follows:¹

‘When Śākyamuni was in Magadha he shut himself up in a room and remained silent for three weeks. Is this not an example given by the Buddha in the practice of silence? When thirty-two Bodhisattvas at Vaiśālī discoursed with Vimalakīrti on the teaching of non-duality, the latter finally kept silence and did not utter a word, which elicited an unqualified admiration from Mañjuśrī. Is this not an example given by a great Bodhisattva of the practice of silence? When Subhūti sat in the rock-cave he said not a word, nor was any talk given out by him on Prajñāpāramitā. Is this not an example of silence shown by a great Śrāvaka? Seeing Subhūti thus quietly sitting in the cave, Śakrendra showered heavenly flowers over him and uttered not a word. Is this not an example of silence given by an ordinary mortal? When Bodhidharma came over to this country he sat for nine years at Shao-lin forgetful of all wordy preachings. Is this not an example of silence shown by a patriarch? Whenever Lu-tsu saw a monk coming he turned towards the wall and sat quietly. Is this not an example of silence shown by a Zen master?’

‘In the face of all these historic examples, how can one pronounce the practice of silent sitting as illegitimate and irrelevant in the study of Zen?’

This is the argument set forward by the advocates of Zen quietism at the time of Tai-hui in China, that is, in

¹ Daiye’s discourse delivered at the request of Chien Chi-i.

recognizes it and does not make further remarks. When Shui-lao was later asked about his Zen understanding, he simply announced, 'Since the kick so heartily given by the master, I have not been able to stop laughing.'

2. Yun-mên asked Tung-shan: 'Whence do you come?' 'From Chia-tu.' 'Where did you pass the summer session?' 'At Pao-tzu, in Hu-nan.' 'When did you come here?' 'August the twenty-fifth.' Yun-mên concluded, 'I release you from thirty blows [though you rightly deserve them].'

On Tung-shan's interview with Mên, Tai-hui comments:

How simple-hearted Tung-shan was! He answered the master straightforwardly, and so it was natural for him to reflect, 'What fault did I commit for which I was to be given thirty blows when I replied as truthfully as I could?' The day following he appeared again before the master and asked, 'Yesterday you were pleased to release me from thirty blows, but I fail to realize my own fault.' Said Yun-mên, 'O you rice-bag, this is the way you wander from the west of the River to the south of the Lake!' This remark all of a sudden opened Tung-shan's eye, and yet he had nothing to communicate, nothing to reason about. He simply bowed, and said: 'After this I shall build my little hut where there is no human habitation; not a grain of rice will be kept in my pantry, not a stalk of vegetable will be growing on my farm; and yet I will abundantly treat all the visitors to my hermitage from all parts of the world; and I will even draw off all the nails and screws [that are holding them to a stake]; I will make them part with their greasy hats and ill-smelling clothes, so that they are thoroughly cleansed of dirt and become worthy monks.' Yun-mên smiled and said, 'What a large mouth you have for a body no larger than a coconut!'

3. Yen, the national teacher of Ku-shan, when he was still a student monk, studied for many years under Hsüeh-fêng. One day, seeing that his student was ready for a mental revolution, the master took hold of him and demanded roughly, 'What is this?' Yen was roused as if from

the twelfth century. But Tai-hui declares that mere quiet sitting avails nothing, for it leads nowhere, as no turning-up takes place in one's mind, whereby one comes out into a world of particulars with an outlook different from the one hitherto entertained. Those quietists whose mental horizon does not rise above the level of the so-called absolute silence of unfathomability, grope in the cave of eternal darkness. They fail to open the eye of wisdom. This is where they need the guiding hand of a genuine Zen master.

Tai-hui then proceeds to give cases of satori realized under a wise instructor, pointing out how necessary it is to interview an enlightened one and to turn over once for all the whole silence-mechanism, which is inimical to the growth of the Zen mind. This up-turning of the whole system is here called by Tai-hui after the terminology of a sūtra: 'Entering into the stream and losing one's abode,' where the dualism of motion and rest forever ceases to obtain. He gives four examples:

1. When Shui-lao was trimming the wistaria, he asked his master, Ma-tsu, 'What is the idea of the Patriarch's coming over here from the West?' Ma-tsu replied, 'Come up nearer and I will tell you.' As soon as Shui-lao approached, the master gave him a kick, knocking him right down. This fall, however, all at once opened his mind to a state of satori, for he rose up with a hearty laugh, as if an event, most unexpected and most desired for, had taken place. Asked the master, 'What is the meaning of all this?' Lao exclaimed, 'Innumerable, indeed, are the truths taught by the Buddhas, all of which, even down to their very sources, I now perceive at the tip of one single hair.'

Tai-hui then comments: Lao, who had thus come to self-realization, is no more attached to the silence of Samādhi, and as he is no more attached to it he is at once above assertion and negation, and above the dualism of rest and motion. He no more relies on things outside himself but carrying out the treasure from inside his own mind exclaims, 'I have seen into the source of all truth.' The master

recognizes it and does not make further remarks. When Shui-lao was later asked about his Zen understanding, he simply announced, 'Since the kick so heartily given by the master, I have not been able to stop laughing.'

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a deep slumber and at once comprehended what it all meant. He simply lifted his arms and swung them to and fro. Fêng said, 'What does that mean?' 'No meaning whatever, sir,' came quickly from the disciple.

4. One day Kuan-ch'i saw Lin-chi. The latter came down from his straw chair, and without saying a word seized the monk, whereupon Kuan-ch'i said, 'I know, I know.'

After enumerating these four cases Tai-hui concludes that there is after all something in Zen which can neither be imparted to others nor learned from others, and that the trouble with most people is that they are thoroughly dead and do not want to be resuscitated. Tai-hui now talks of his own experience in the following way:

I had been studying Zen for seventeen years, and during that period here and there I had fragmentary satori. I understood a little in the school of Yun-mên, and also a little in the school of Ts'ao-tung, the only trouble being that I had nowhere that decided satori in which I would find myself absolutely cut off from all time and space relations. Later I came to the capital, and staying at the T'ien-ning monastery I listened one day to my teacher's discourse on Yun-mên. He said: 'A monk came to Yun-mên and asked, "Where do all the Buddhas come from?"' Yun-mên answered, "The Eastern Mountain walks on water." But I, T'ien-ning, differ from Yun-mên. "Where do all the Buddhas come from?" "A breeze laden with fragrance comes from the south, and the spacious hall begins to be refreshingly cool!"' When my master said this, I felt suddenly as if I were severed from all time and space relations. It was like cutting a skein of tangled thread with one stroke of a sharp knife. I was at the time in a perspiration all over the body.

While I ceased to feel any disturbance in my mind, I found myself to be remaining in a state of sheer serenity. When one day I saw the master in his room, he told me this: 'It is not at all easy for anybody to reach your state of mind; the only regrettable thing is that there is enough death in it

but no life whatever. Not to doubt words—this is the great trouble with you. You know this well:

‘ “When thy hands are off the precipice,
Conviction comes upon thee all by itself;
Let resurrection follow death,
And none can now deceive thee.”

‘Believe me there is really such a thing as is stated here.’ The master continued: ‘According to my present state of mind, I am perfectly satisfied with myself and the world. All is well with me, and there is nothing of which I have to seek further understanding.’

The master then, putting me in the general dormitory, allowed me to see him three or four times a day like the lay-students of Zen. He just let me hold this, ‘To be and not to be—it is like a wistaria leaning on a tree.’ Whenever I wanted to speak, he at once shut me up, saying, ‘Not so.’ This continued for a half year, but I kept on. One day while I together with his lay-disciples was taking supper in the Fang-chang, I found myself so absorbed in the koan that I forgot to use my chopsticks to finish the supper.

The old master said, ‘This fellow has only succeeded in mastering Huang-yang wood Zen, which keeps on shrinking all the time.’ I then told him by a simile in what position I was. ‘My position is that of a dog which stands by a fat-boiling pot: he cannot lick it however badly he wants to, nor can he go away from it though he may wish to quit.’ The master said: ‘That’s just the case with you. [The koan] is really a vajra cage and a seat of thorns to you.’

Another day when I saw the master, I said, ‘When you were with Wu-tsu, you asked him about the same koan, and what was his reply?’ The master refused to give me his reply. But I insisted: ‘When you asked him about it, you were not alone, you were with an assembly. It won’t hurt you to tell me about it now.’

The master said: ‘I asked him at the time, “To be and

those who have had the experience discern what is genuine from what is not. The satori experience is thus always characterized by irrationality, inexplicability, and incommunicability.

Listen to Tai-hui once more: 'This matter [i.e. Zen] is like a great mass of fire; when you approach it your face is sure to be scorched. It is again like a sword about to be drawn; when it is once out of the scabbard, someone is sure to lose his life. But if you neither fling away the scabbard nor approach the fire, you are no better than a piece of rock or of wood. Coming to this pass, one has to be quite a resolute character full of spirit.'¹ There is nothing here suggestive of cool reasoning and quiet metaphysical or epistemological analysis, but of a certain desperate will to break through an insurmountable barrier, of the will impelled by some irrational or unconscious power behind it. Therefore, the outcome also defies intellection or conceptualization.

2. *Intuitive insight.* That there is noetic quality in mystic experiences has been pointed out by James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and this applies also to the Zen experience known as satori. Another name for satori is 'ken-sho' (*chien-hsing* in Chinese) meaning 'to see essence or nature', which apparently proves that there is 'seeing' or 'perceiving' in satori. That this seeing is of quite a different quality from what is ordinarily designated as knowledge need not be specifically noticed. Hui-k'ê is reported to have made this statement concerning his satori which was confirmed by Bodhidharma himself: '[As to my satori], it is not a total annihilation; it is knowledge of the most adequate kind; only it cannot be expressed in words.' In this respect Shên-hui was more explicit, for he says that 'the one character *chih* (knowledge) is the source of all mysteries.'²

¹ Tai-hui's sermon at the request of Li Hsuan-chiao.

² *Miao* is a difficult term to translate; it often means 'exquisiteness', 'indefinable subtlety'. In this case *miao* is the mysterious way in which things are presented to this ultimate knowledge. Tsung-mi on *Zen Masters and Disciples*.

Without this noetic quality satori will lose all its pungency, for it is really the reason of satori itself. It is noteworthy that the knowledge contained in satori is concerned with something universal and at the same time with the individual aspect of existence. When a finger is lifted, the lifting means, from the viewpoint of satori, far more than the act of lifting. Some may call it symbolic, but satori does not point to anything beyond itself, being final as it is. Satori is the knowledge of an individual object and also that of Reality which is, if I may say so, at the back of it.

3. *Authoritativeness.* By this I mean that the knowledge realized by satori is final, that no amount of logical argument can refute it. Being direct and personal it is sufficient unto itself. All that logic can do here is to explain it, to interpret it in connection with other kinds of knowledge with which our minds are filled. Satori is thus a form of perception, an inner perception, which takes place in the most interior part of consciousness. Hence the sense of authoritativeness, which means finality. So, it is generally said that Zen is like drinking water, for it is by one's self that one knows whether it is warm or cold. The Zen perception being the last term of experience, it cannot be denied by outsiders who have no such experience.

4. *Affirmation.* What is authoritative and final can never be negative. For negation has no value for our life, it leads us nowhere; it is not a power that urges, nor does it give one a place to rest. Though the satori experience is sometimes expressed in negative terms, it is essentially an affirmative attitude towards all things that exist; it accepts them as they come along regardless of their moral values. Buddhists call this *kshānti*, 'patience', or more properly 'acceptance', that is, acceptance of things in their supra-relative or transcendental aspect where no dualism of whatever sort avails.

Some may say that this is pantheistic. The term, however, has a definite philosophic meaning and I would not see it used in this connection. When so interpreted the Zen experience exposes itself to endless misunderstandings and

'defilements'. Tai-hui says in his letter to Miao-tsung: 'An ancient sage says that the Tao itself does not require special disciplining, only let it not be defiled. I would say: To talk about mind or nature is defiling; to talk about the unfathomable or the mysterious is defiling; to practise meditation or tranquillization is defiling; to direct one's attention to it, to think about it, is defiling; to be writing about it thus on paper with a brush is especially defiling. What then shall we have to do in order to get ourselves oriented, and properly apply ourselves to it? The precious vajra sword is right here and its purpose is to cut off the head. Do not be concerned with human questions of right and wrong. All is Zen just as it is, and right here you are to apply yourself.' Zen is Suchness—a grand affirmation.

5. *Sense of the Beyond*. Terminology may differ in different religions, and in satori there is always what we may call a sense of the Beyond; the experience indeed is my own but I feel it to be rooted elsewhere. The individual shell in which my personality is so solidly encased explodes at the moment of satori. Not, necessarily, that I get unified with a being greater than myself or absorbed in it, but that my individuality, which I found rigidly held together and definitely kept separate from other individual existences, becomes loosened somehow from its tightening grip and melts away into something indescribable, something which is of quite a different order from what I am accustomed to. The feeling that follows is that of a complete release or a complete rest—the feeling that one has arrived finally at the destination. 'Coming home and quietly resting' is the expression generally used by Zen followers. The story of the prodigal son in the *Saddharma-puṇḍarika* in the *Vajrasamādhi*, and also in the New Testament points to the same feeling one has at the moment of a satori experience.

As far as the psychology of satori is considered, a sense of the Beyond is all we can say about it; to call this the Beyond, the Absolute, or God, or a Person is to go further than the experience itself and to plunge into a theology or metaphysics. Even the 'Beyond' is saying a little too

'trespasses', 'repentance', 'forgiveness', etc. Their mentality is more of a metaphysical type, but their metaphysics consists not of abstractions, logical acuteness, and hair-splitting analysis, but of practical wisdom and concrete sense-facts. And this is where Chinese Zen specifically differs from Indian Mahāyāna Dhyāna. Hui-nêng is generally considered, as was mentioned before, not to be especially scholarly, but his mind must have been metaphysical enough to have grasped the import of the *Vajracchedikā*, which is brimful of high-sounding metaphysical assertions. When he understood the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, the highly philosophical truth contained in it was turned into the practical question of 'Your original features even prior to your birth', and then into Ma-tsu's 'drinking up the whole river in one draught', etc.

That Zen masters were invariably students of philosophy in its broadest sense, Buddhist or otherwise, before their attention was directed to Zen, is suggestive. I say here 'Buddhist philosophy' but it is not philosophy in the strict sense of the term, for it is not the result of reasoning; especially such a doctrine as that of Emptiness is not at all the outcome of intellectual reflection, but simply the statement of direct perception in which the mind grasps the true nature of existence without the intermediary of logic. In this way '*sarvadharmānāṃ śūnyatā*' is declared.

Those who study Buddhism only from its 'metaphysical' side forget that this is no more than deep insight, that it is based on experience, and not the product of abstract analysis. Therefore, when a real truth-seeker studies such sūtras as the *Laṅkāvatāra* or the *Vajracchedikā*, he cannot lightly pass over those assertions which are made here so audaciously and unconditionally; in fact he is dazzled, taken aback, or becomes frightened. But still there is a certain power in them which attracts him in spite of himself. He begins to think about them, he desires to come in direct touch with the truth itself, so that he knows that he has seen the fact with his own eyes. Ordinary books of philosophy do not lead one to this intuition because they are

fitted to work is *toto caelo* different from what is ordinarily understood by that term.

The metaphysical quest which was designated as an intellectual antecedent of Zen consciousness opens up a new course in the life of a Zen student. The quest is attended by an intense feeling of uneasiness, or one can say that the feeling is intellectually interpreted as a quest. Whether the quest is emotionally the sense of unrest, or whether the unrest is intellectually a seeking for something definite—in either case the whole being of the individual is bent on finding something upon which he may peacefully rest. The searching mind is vexed to the extreme as its fruitless strivings go on, but when it is brought up to an apex it breaks or it explodes and the whole structure of consciousness assumes an entirely different aspect. This is the Zen experience. The quest, the search, the ripening, and the explosion—thus proceeds the experience.

This seeking or quest is generally done in the form of meditation which is less intellectual (*vipaśyanā*) than concentrative (*dhyaṇa*). The sitter sits cross-legged after the Indian fashion as directed in the tract called *Tso-ch'an I*, 'How to sit and meditate.'

In this position, which is regarded by Indians and Buddhists generally as being the best bodily position to be assumed by the Yogins, the seeker concentrates all his mental energy in the effort to get out of this mental *impasse* into which he had been led. As the intellect has proved itself unable to achieve this end, the seeker has to call upon another power if he can find one. The intellect knows how to get him into this *cul-de-sac*, but it is singularly unable to get him out of it.

At first the seeker knows of no way of escape, but get out he must by some means, be they good or bad. He has reached the end of the passage and before him there yawns a dark abyss. There is no light to show him a possible way to cross it, nor is he aware of any way of turning back. He is simply compelled to go ahead. The only thing he can do in this crisis is simply to jump, into life or death. Perhaps it

means certain death, but living he feels to be no longer possible. He is desperate, and yet something is still holding him back; he cannot quite give himself up to the unknown.

When he reaches this stage of Dhyāna, all abstract reasoning ceases; for thinker and thought no longer stand contrasted. His whole being, if we may say so, is thought itself. Or perhaps it is better to say that his whole being is 'no-thought' (*acitta*). We can no longer describe this state of consciousness in terms of logic or psychology. Here begins a new world of personal experiences, which we may designate 'leaping', or 'throwing oneself down the precipice'. The period of incubation has come to an end.

It is to be distinctly understood that this period of incubation, which intervenes between the metaphysical quest and the Zen experience proper, is not one of passive quietness but of intense strenuousness, in which the entire consciousness is concentrated at one point. Until the entire consciousness really gains this point, it keeps up an arduous fight against all intruding ideas. It may not be conscious of the fighting, but an intense seeking, or a steady looking-down into the abysmal darkness, is no less than that. The one-pointed concentration (*ekāgra*) is realized when the inner mechanism is ripe for the final catastrophe. This takes place, if seen only superficially, by accident, that is, when there is a knocking at the eardrums, or when some words are uttered, or when some unexpected event takes place, that is to say, when a perception of some kind goes on.

We may say that here a perception takes place in its purest and simplest form, where it is not at all tainted by intellectual analysis or conceptual reflection. But an epistemological interpretation of Zen experience does not interest the Zen Yogin, for he is ever intent upon truly understanding the meaning of Buddhist teachings, such as the doctrine of Emptiness or the original purity of the Dharmakāya, and thereby gaining peace of mind.

3. When the intensification of Zen consciousness is going on, the master's guiding hand is found helpful to bring about the final explosion. As in the case of Lin-chi, who did

not even know what question to ask of Huang-po, a student of Zen is frequently at a loss what to do with himself. If he is allowed to go on like this, the mental distraction may end disastrously. Or his experience may fail to attain its final goal, since it is liable to stop short before it reaches the stage of the fullest maturity. As frequently happens, the Yogin remains satisfied with an intermediate stage, which from his ignorance he takes for finality. The master is needed not only for encouraging the student to continue his upward steps but to point out to him where his goal lies.

As to the pointing, it is no pointing as far as its intelligibility is considered. Huang-po gave Lin-chi 'thirty blows', Lung-t'an blew out the candle, and Hui-nêng demanded Ming's original form even before he was born. Logically, all these pointers have no sense, they are beyond rational treatment. We can say that the pointers have no earthly use as they do not give us any clue from which we can start our inference. But inasmuch as Zen has nothing to do with ratiocination, the pointing need not be a pointing in its ordinary sense. A slap on the face, a shaking one by the shoulder, or an utterance will most assuredly do the work of pointing when the Zen consciousness has attained a certain stage of maturity.

The maturing on the one hand, therefore, and the pointing on the other must be timely; if the one is not quite matured, or if the other fails to do the pointing, the desired end may never be experienced. When the chick is ready to come out of the egg-shell, the mother hen knows and pecks at it, and lo, there jumps out a second generation of the chicken family.

We can probably state in this connection that this pointing or guiding, together with the preliminary more or less philosophical equipment of the Zen Yogin, determines the content of his Zen consciousness, and that when it is brought up to a state of full maturity it inevitably breaks out as Zen experience. In this case, the experience itself, if we can have it in its purest and most original form, may be said to be something entirely devoid of colourings of any sort,

Buddhist or Christian, Taoist or Vedantist. The experience may thus be treated wholly as a psychological event which has nothing to do with philosophy, theology, or any special religious teaching. But the point is whether, if there were no philosophical antecedent or religious aspiration or spiritual unrest, the experience could take place merely as a fact of consciousness.

The psychology, then, cannot be treated independently of philosophy or a definite set of religious teachings. That the Zen experience takes place at all as such, and is formulated finally as a system of Zen intuitions, is principally due to the master's guiding, however enigmatical it may seem; for without it the experience itself is impossible.

This explains why the confirmation of the master is needed regarding the orthodoxy of the Zen experience, and also why the history of Zen places so much stress on the orthodox transmission of it. So we read in the *Platform Sūtra* of Hui-nêng:

'Hsüan-chiao (d. A.D. 713)¹ was particularly conversant with the teaching of the T'ien-tai school on tranquillization (*śamatha*) and contemplation (*vipaśyanā*). While reading the *Vimalakīrti*, he attained an insight into the ground of consciousness. Hsüan-t'sê, a disciple of the patriarch, happened to call on him. They talked absorbingly on Buddhism, and Hsüan-t'sê found that Hsüan-chiao's remarks were in complete agreement with those of the Zen Fathers, though Chiao himself was not conscious of it. T'sê asked, "Who is your teacher in the Dharma?" Chia replied: "As regards my understanding of the sūtras of the Vaipulya class I have for each its regularly authorized teacher. Later while studying the *Vimalakīrti*, by myself I gained an insight into the teaching of the Buddha-mind, but I have nobody yet to confirm my view." T'sê said, "No confirmation is needed prior to Bhīṣmasvara-rāja,² but after him those who have

¹ See First Series, p. 223.

² *Wei-yin-wang*. This may be considered to mean 'prior to the dawn of consciousness' or 'the time before any systematic teaching of religion started'.

insight into the Unconscious. There is something noetic in the Zen experience, and this is what determines the entire course of Zen discipline. Tai-hui was fully conscious of this fact and was never tired of upholding it against the other school.

That satori or Zen experience is not the outcome of quiet-sitting or mere passivity, with which Zen discipline has been confused very much even by the followers of Zen themselves, can be inferred from the utterances or gestures that follow the final event. How shall we interpret Lin-chi's utterance, 'There is not much in the Buddhism of Huang-po'? Again, how about his punching the ribs of Tai-yü? These evidently show that there was something active and noetic in his experience. He actually grasped something that met his approval.

There is no doubt that he found what he had all the time been searching for, although at the moment when he began his searching he had no idea of what it meant—for how could he? If he remained altogether passive, he could never have made such a positive assertion. As to his gesture, how self-assuring it was, which grew out of his absolute conviction! There is nothing whatever passive about it.¹

The situation is well described by Dai-o Kokushi when he says: 'By a "special transmission outside the sūtra-teaching" is meant to understand penetratingly just one

¹ One day St. Francis was sitting with his companions when he began to groan and said, 'There is hardly a monk on earth who perfectly obeys his superior.' His companions much astonished said, 'Explain to us, Father, what is perfect and supreme obedience.' Then, comparing him who obeys to a corpse, he said: 'Take a dead body and put it where you will, it will make no resistance: when it is in one place it will not murmur; when you take it away from there it will not object; put it in a pulpit, it will not look up but down; wrap it in purple and it will only look doubly pale.' (Paul Sabatier's *Life of St. Francis*, pp. 260-1.) While it is difficult to tell what is the real purport of this, it may appear as if St. Francis wished his monks to be literally like a corpse; but there is something humorous about the remark when he says, 'Put it in a pulpit. . . .' The Zen Buddhist would interpret it as meaning to keep one's mind in a perfect state of perspicuity which perceives a flower as red and a willow-tree as green, without putting anything of its own confused subjectivity into it. A state of passivity, indeed, and yet there is also fullness of activity in it. A form of passive activity, we may call it.

is intended 'to destroy the root of life', 'to make the calculating mind die', 'to root out the entire mind that has been at work since eternity', etc. This may sound murderous, but the ultimate intent is to go beyond the limits of intellection, and these limits can be crossed over only by exhausting oneself once for all, by using up all the psychic powers at one's command. Logic then turns into psychology, intellection into conation and intuition. What could not be solved on the plane of empirical consciousness is now transferred to the deeper recesses of the mind. So, says a Zen master, 'Unless at one time perspiration has streamed down your back, you cannot see the boat sailing before the wind.' 'Unless once you have been thoroughly drenched in a perspiration you cannot expect to see the revelation of a palace of pearls on a blade of grass.'

The koan refuses to be solved under any easier conditions. But once solved the koan is compared to a piece of brick used to knock at a gate; when the gate is opened the brick is thrown away. The koan is useful as long as the mental doors are closed, but when they are opened it may be forgotten. What one sees after the opening will be something quite unexpected, something that has never before entered even into one's imagination. But when the koan is re-examined from this newly acquired point of view, how marvellously suggestive, how fittingly constructed, although there is nothing artificial here!

9. *Practical Instructions Regarding the Koan Exercise*

The following are some of the practical suggestions that have been given by Zen masters of various ages, regarding the koan exercise; and from them we can gather what a koan is expected to do towards the development of Zen consciousness, and also what tendency the koan exercise has come to manifest as time goes on. As we will see later on, the growth of the koan exercise caused a new movement among the Zen masters of the Ming dynasty to connect it

I-an Chên of Fo-chi monastery gives this advice :

‘The old saying runs, “When there is enough faith, there is enough doubt which is a great spirit of inquiry, and when there is a great spirit of inquiry there is an illumination.” Have everything thoroughly poured out that has accumulated in your mind—learning, hearing, false understanding, clever or witty sayings, the so-called truth of Zen, Buddha’s teachings, self-conceit, arrogance, etc. Concentrate yourself on the koan, of which you have not yet had a penetrating comprehension. That is to say, cross your legs firmly, erect your spinal column straight, and paying no attention to the periods of the day, keep up your concentration until you grow unaware of your whereabouts, east, west, south, north, as if you were a living corpse.

‘The mind moves in response to the outside world and when it is touched it knows. The time will come when all thoughts cease to stir and there will be no working of consciousness. It is then that all of a sudden you smash your brain to pieces and for the first time realize that the truth is in your own possession from the very beginning. Would not this be great satisfaction to you in your daily life?’

Tai-hui was a great koan advocate of the twelfth century. One of his favourite koans was Chao-chou’s ‘*Wu*’, but he had also one of his own. He used to carry a short bamboo stick which he held forth before an assembly of monks, and said : ‘If you call this a stick, you affirm ; if you call it not a stick, you negate. Beyond affirmation and negation what would you call it?’ In the following extract from his sermons titled *Tai-hui Pu-shuo*, compiled by T’su-ching, 1190, he gives still another koan to his gardener-monk, Ching-kuang.

‘The truth (*dharma*) is not to be mastered by mere seeing, hearing, and thinking. If it is, it is no more than the seeing, hearing, and thinking ; it is not at all seeking after the truth itself. For the truth is not in what you hear from others or learn through the understanding. Now keep yourself away from what you have seen, heard, and thought, and see

what you have within yourself. Emptiness only, nothingness, which eludes your grasp and to which you cannot fix your thought. Why? Because this is the abode where the senses can never reach. If this abode were within the reach of your sense it would be something you could think of, something you could have a glimpse of; it would then be something subject to the law of birth and death.

‘The main thing is to shut off all your sense-organs and make your consciousness like a block of wood. When this block of wood suddenly starts up and makes a noise, that is the moment you feel like a lion roaming about freely with nobody disturbing him, or like an elephant that crosses a stream not minding its swift current. At that moment there is no fidgeting, nothing doing, just this and no more. Says P’ing-t’ien the Elder:

“The celestial radiance undimmed,
The norm lasting for ever more;
For him who entereth this gate,
No reasoning, no learning.”

‘You should know that it is through your seeing, hearing, and thinking¹ that you enter upon the path, and it is also through the seeing, hearing, and thinking that you are prevented from entering. Why? Let you be furnished with the double-bladed sword that destroys and resuscitates life where you have your seeing, hearing, and thinking, and you will be able to make good use of the seeing, hearing, and thinking. But if the sword that cuts both ways, that destroys as well as resuscitates, is missing, your seeing, hearing, and thinking will be a great stumbling-block, which will cause you to prostrate again and again on the ground. Your truth-eye will be completely blinded; you will be walking in complete darkness not knowing how to be free and in-

¹ (Dṛiṣṭa-śruta-mata-yñāta). Abbreviated for ‘the seen, heard, thought and known’.

take place only when one makes oneself a receptacle for an outside power.

The attainment of passivity in Buddhism is especially obstructed by the doctrine of Karma. The doctrine of Karma runs like warp and weft through all the Indian fabrics of thought, and Buddhism as a product of the Indian imagination could not escape taking it into its own texture. The Jātaka Tales, making up the history of the Buddha while he was yet at the stage of Bodhisattvahood and training himself for final supreme enlightenment, are no more than the idea of Karma concretely applied and illustrated in the career of a morally perfected personage. Śākyamuni could not become a Buddha unless he had accumulated his stock of merit (*kuśalamūla*) throughout his varied lives in the past.

The principle of Karma is 'Whatever a man sows that will he also reap', and this governs the whole life of the Buddhist; for in fact what makes up one's individuality is nothing else than his own Karma. So we read in the *Milindapañha*, 'All beings have their Karma as their portion; they are heirs of their Karma; they are sprung from their Karma; their Karma is their refuge; Karma allots beings to meanness or greatness.'¹ This is confirmed in the *Samyutka-nikāya*:

'His good deeds and his wickedness,
Whate'er a mortal does while here;
'Tis this that he can call his own,
This with him take as he goes hence,
This is what follows after him,
And like a shadow ne'er departs.'²

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, Chapter XIX, Karma is divisible into several groups as regards the time and order of fruition and its quality: (1) that which bears fruit in the present existence, that which bears fruit in rebirth, that which bears fruit at no fixed time, and bygone Karma;

¹ Quoted from Warren's *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 255.

² Loc. cit., p. 214.

losable" is moral discipline.¹ Every Karma once committed continues to work out its consequence by means of the "unlosable" until its course is thwarted by the attainment of Arhatship or by death, or when it has finally borne its fruit. This law of Karma applies equally to good and bad deeds.'

While Nāgārjuna's idea is to wipe out all such notions as doer, deed, and sufferer, in other words, the entire structure of Karma-theory, this introduction of the idea 'unlosable' is instructive and full of suggestions.

Taking all in all, however, there is much obscurity in the doctrine of Karmaic continuity, especially when its practical working is to be precisely described; and, theoretically too, we are not quite sure of its absolute tenability. But this we can state of it in a most general way that Karma tends to emphasize individual freedom, moral responsibility, and feeling of independence; and further, from the religious point of view, it does not necessitate the postulate of a God, or a creator, or a moral judge, who passes judgments upon human behaviour, good or bad.

This being the case, the Buddhist conviction that life is pain will inevitably lead to a systematic teaching of self-discipline, self-purification, and self-enlightenment, the moral centre of gravity being always placed on the self, and not on any outside agent. This is the principle of Karma applied to the realization of Nirvāṇa. But, we may ask, What is this 'self'? And again, What is that something that is never 'lost' in a Karma committed either mentally or physically? What is the connection between 'self' and the 'unlosable'? Where does this 'unlosable' lodge itself?

Between the Buddhist doctrine of no-ego-substance and the postulate that there should be something 'not to be lost' in the continuation of Karma-force, which makes the latter safely bear fruit, there is a gap which must be bridged somehow if Buddhist philosophy is to make further development. To my mind, the conception of the Ālayavijñāna

¹ *Bhāvanamārga*.

('All-conserving soul') where all the Karma-seeds are deposited was an inevitable consequence. But in the meantime let us see what 'self' really stands for.

The Conception of Self

'Self' is a very complex and elusive idea, and when we say that one is to be responsible for what one does by one-self, we do not exactly know how far this 'self' goes and how much it includes in itself. For individuals are so intimately related to one another not only in one communal life but in the totality of existence—so intimately indeed that there are really no individuals, so to speak, in the absolute sense of the word.

Individuality is merely an aspect of existence; in thought we separate one individual from another and in reality too we all seem to be distinct and separable. But when we reflect on the question more closely we find that individuality is a fiction, for we cannot fix its limits, we cannot ascertain its extents and boundaries, they become mutually merged without leaving any indelible marks between the so-called individuals. A most penetrating state of interrelationship prevails here, and it seems to be more exact to say that individuals do not exist, they are merely so many points of reference, the meaning of which is not at all realizable when each of them is considered by itself and in itself apart from the rest.

Individuals are recognizable only when they are thought of in relation to something not individual; though paradoxical, they are individuals so long as they are not individuals. For when an individual being is singled out as such, it at once ceases to be an individual. The 'individual self' is an illusion.

Thus, the self has no absolute, independent existence. Moral responsibility seems to be a kind of intellectual makeshift. Can the robber be really considered responsible for his deeds? Can this individual be really singled out as

the one who has to suffer all the consequences of his anti-social habits? Can he be held really responsible for all that made him such as he is? Is his *svabhāva* all his own make? This is where lies the main crux of the question, 'How far is an individual to be answerable for his action?' In other words, 'How far is this "he" separable from the community of which he is a component part?' Is not society reflected in him? Is he not one of the products created by society?

There are no criminals, no sinful souls in the Pure Land, not necessarily because no such are born there but mainly because all that are born there become pure by virtue of the general atmosphere into which they are brought up. Although environment is not everything, it, especially social environment, has a great deal to do with the shaping of individual characters. If this is the case, where shall we look for the real signification of the doctrine of Karma?

The intellect wants to have a clear-cut, well-delineated figure to which a deed or its 'unlosable' something has to be attached, and Karma become mathematically describable as having its originator, perpetrator, sufferer, etc. But when there are really no individuals and Karma is to be conceived as nowhere originated by any specifically definable agent, what would become of the doctrine of Karma as advocated by Buddhists? Evidently there is an act, either good or bad or indifferent; there is one who actually thrusts a dagger, and there is one who actually lies dead thus stabbed; and yet shall we have to declare that there is no killer, no killing, and none killed? What will then become of moral responsibility? How can there be such a thing as accumulation of merit or attainment of enlightenment? Who is after all a Buddha, and who is an ignorant, confused mortal?

Can we say that society, nay, the whole universe, is responsible for the act of killing if this fact is once established? And that all the causes and conditions leading to it and all the results that are to be connected with it

are to be traced to the universe itself? Or is it that the individual is an ultimate absolute fact and what goes out from him comes back to him without any relation to his fellow-beings and to his environment, social and physical?

In the first case, moral responsibility evaporates into an intangible universality; in the second case, the intangible whole gets crystallized in one individual, and there is indeed moral responsibility, but one stands altogether in isolation as if each of us were like a grain of sand in no relation to its neighbours. Which of these positions is more exactly in conformity with facts of human experience? When this is applied to the Buddhist doctrine of Karma, the question comes to this: Is Buddhist Karma to be understood individually or cosmologically?

Mahāyāna Buddhism on the Theory of Karma

As far as history goes, Buddhism started with the individualistic interpretation of Karma, and when it reached its culminating point of development in the rise of Mahāyāna, the doctrine came to be cosmically understood. But not in the vague, abstract, philosophical way as was before referred to but concretely and spiritually in this wise: the net of the universe spreads out both in time and space from the centre known as 'my self', where it is felt that all the sins of the world are resting on his own shoulders. To atone for them he is determined to subject himself to a system of moral and spiritual training which he considers would cleanse him of all impurities, and by cleansing him cleanse also the whole world of all its demerits.

This is the Mahāyāna position. Indeed, the distinction between the Mahāyāna and the Hīnayāna forms of Buddhism may be said to be due to this difference in the treatment of Karma-conception. The Mahāyāna thus came to emphasize the 'other' or 'whole' aspect of Karma, and, therefore, of universal salvation, while the Hīnayāna adhered to the 'self' aspect. As Karma worked, according to the

Hīnayānists, apparently impersonally but in point of fact individualistically, this life of pain and suffering was to be got rid of by self-discipline, by moral asceticism, and self-knowledge. Nobody outside could help the sufferer out of his afflictions; all that the Buddha could do for him was to teach him the way to escape; but if he did not walk this way by himself, he could not be made to go straight ahead even by the power and virtue of the Buddha. 'Be ye a lamp and a refuge to yourselves' (*attadīpa-attasarana*) was the injunction left by the Buddha to his Hīnayāna followers, for the Buddha could not extend his spiritual virtue and attainment over to his devotees or to his fellow-beings. From the general position of the Hīnayānists, this was inevitable:

'Not in the sky,
Not in the midst of the sea,
Nor entering a cleft of the mountains,
Is found that realm on earth
Where one may stand and be
From an evil deed absolved.'¹

But the Mahāyāna was not satisfied with this narrowness of spiritual outlook; the Mahāyāna wanted to extend the function of Karuṇā (love) to the furthest end it could reach. If one's Prajñā (wisdom) could include in itself the widest possible system of universes, why could not Karuṇā too take them all under its protective wings? Why could not the Buddha's wish (*praṇidhāna*) for the spiritual welfare of all beings also efficiently work towards its realization? The Buddha attained his enlightenment after accumulating so much stock of merit for ever so many countless kalpas (eons). Should we conceive this stock of merit to be available only for his own benefit?

Karma must have its cosmological meaning. In fact, individuals are such in so far as they are thought of in connection with one another and also with the whole system which they compose. One wave good or bad, once stirred, could not help affecting the entire body of water. So with

¹ *The Dhammapada*, p. 127. Translated by Albert J. Edmunds.

the moral discipline and the spiritual attainment of the Buddha, they could not remain with him as an isolated event in the communal life to which he belonged. Therefore, it is said that when he was enlightened the whole universe shared in his wisdom and virtue. The Mahāyāna stands on this fundamental idea of enlightenment, and its doctrine of the Tathāgatagarbha or Ālayavijñāna reflects the cosmological interpretation of Karma.

II

The Development of the Idea of Sin in Buddhism

As long as Hīnayāna Buddhism restricted the application of Karma to individual deeds, its followers tried to overcome it by self-discipline. Life was pain, and pain was the product of one's former misconduct, and to release oneself from it, it was necessary to move a force counteracting it. Things thus went on quite scientifically with the Hīnayānists, but when the Mahāyānists came to see something in Karma that was more than individual, that would not be kept within the bounds of individuality, their scheme of salvation had to go naturally beyond the individualism of the Hīnayānistic discipline. The 'self-power' was not strong enough to cope with the problem of cosmological Karma, and to rely upon this self as segregated from the totality of sentient beings was not quite right and true.

For the self is not a final fact, and to proceed in one's own religious discipline with the erroneous idea of selfhood will ultimately lead one to an undesirable end and possibly bear no fruit whatever. A new phase was now awakened in the religious consciousness of the Buddhist which had hitherto been only feebly felt by the Hīnayānists; for with the cosmic sense of Karma thus developed there came along the idea of sin.

In Buddhism sin means ignorance, that is, ignorance as to the meaning of the individual or the ultimate destiny

of the self. Positively, sin is the affirmation of the self as a final *svabhāva* in deed, thought, and speech. When a man is above these two hindrances, ignorance and self-assertion, he is said to be sinless. How to rise above them, therefore, is now the question with the Mahāyānists.

Calderon, a noted Spanish dramatist, writes, 'For the greatest crime of man is that he ever was born.' This statement is quite true, since sin consists in our ever coming into existence as individuals severed from the wholeness of things. But as long as this fact cannot be denied from one point of view, we must try to nullify its evil effects by veering our course in another direction. And this veering can take place only by identifying ourselves with the cosmos itself, with the totality of existence, with Buddhata in which we have our being. The inevitability of sin thus becomes the chance of devoting ourselves to a higher plane of existence where a principle other than Karmaic individualism and self-responsibility reigns.

When Karma was conceived to be controllable by the self, the task of releasing oneself from its evil effects was comparatively an easy one, for it concerned after all the self alone; but if it is sin to believe in the ultimate reality of an individual soul and to act accordingly, as if salvation depended only on self-discipline or on self-enlightenment, the Mahāyānist's work is far greater than the Hīnayānist's. As this goes beyond the individual, something more than individual must operate in the Mahāyānist heart to make its work effective. The so-called self must be aided by a power transcending the limitations of the self, which, however, must be immanently related to it; for otherwise there cannot be a very harmonious and really mutually-helping activity between the self and the not-self.

In fact, the idea of sin, and hence the feeling of pain and suffering, is produced from the lack of a harmonious relationship between what is thought to be 'myself' and what is not. The religious experience with the Mahāyānists is to be described in more comprehensive terms than with the Hīnayānists.

A Reality Beyond Self

Buddhatā or Dharmatā is the name given by the Mahāyānists to that which is not the self and yet which is in the self. By virtue of this, the Mahāyānists came to the consciousness of sin and at the same time to the possibility of enlightenment. Buddhatā is the essence of Buddhahood, without which this is never attained in the world. When the Buddha is conceived impersonally or objectively, it is the Dharma, law, truth, or reality; and Dharmatā is what constitutes the Dharma. Dharmatā and Buddhatā are interchangeable, but the experience of the Mahāyānists is described more in terms of Buddhatā.

With the conception of Buddhatā, the historical Buddha turns into a transcendental Buddha; he ceases to be merely the Muni of the Śākyas; he now is a manifestation of the eternal Buddha, an incarnation of Buddhatā; and as such he is no more an individual person limited in space and time; his spirituality goes out from him, and whatever power it has influences his fellow-beings in their advance or development towards Buddhahood. This will take place in proportion to the intensity of desire and the sincerity of effort they put forward for the attainment of the goal. The goal consists in getting cleansed of sin, and sin consists in believing in the reality of self-substance (*svabhāva*), in asserting its claims as final, and in not growing conscious of the immanency of Buddhatā in oneself.

The cleansing of sin is, therefore, intellectually seeing into the truth that there is something more in what is taken for the self, and conatively in willing and doing the will of that something which transcends the self and yet which works through the self.

This is where lies the difficulty of the Mahāyānist position—to be encased in what we, relative-minded beings, consider the self and yet to go beyond it and to know and will what apparently does not belong to the self. This is almost trying to achieve an impossibility, and yet if we do

not achieve this, there will be no peace of mind, no quietude of soul. We have to do it somehow when we once tumble over the question in the course of our religious experience. How is this to be accomplished?

That we are sinful does not mean in Buddhism that we have so many evil impulses, desires, or proclivities, which, when released, are apt to cause the ruination of oneself as well as others; the idea goes deeper and is rooted in our being itself, for it is sin to imagine and act as if individuality were a final fact. As long as we are what we are, we have no way to escape from sin, and this is at the root of all our spiritual tribulations. This is what the followers of Shin Buddhism mean when they say that all works, even when they are generally considered morally good, are contaminated, as long as they are the efforts of 'self-power', and do not lift us from the bondage of Karma. The power of Buddhata must be added over to the self or must replace it altogether if we desire emancipation. Buddhata, if it is immanent—and we cannot think it otherwise—must be awakened so that it will do its work for us who are so oppressed under the limitations of individualism.

The awakening and working of Buddhata in mortal sinful beings is not accomplished by logic and discursive argument, as is attested by the history of religion. In spite of the predominantly intellectual tendency of Buddhism, it teaches us to appeal to something else. The deep consciousness of sin, the intensity of desire to be released from the finality of individual existence, and the earnestness of effort put forward to awaken Buddhata—these are the chief conditions. The psychological experience resulting therefrom will naturally be connected with the feeling of passivity.

A New Phase of Buddhism

Buddhism, whose intellectual tendency interpreted the doctrine of Karma individualistically in spite of its teaching of non-ego (*anatta*), has at last come to release us all from

the iron fetters of Karma by appealing to the conception of Buddhatā. Finite beings become thus relieved of the logical chain of causation in a world of spirits, but at the same time the notion of sin which is essentially attached to them as limited in time and space has taken possession of their religious consciousness. For sin means finite beings' helplessness of transcending themselves. And if this be the case, to get rid of sin will be to abandon themselves to the care of an infinite being, that is to say, to desist from attempting to save themselves, but to bring about a spiritual state of passiveness whereby the ground for the entrance of a reality greater than themselves is prepared. Thus sings Wordsworth:

'Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come
But we must still be seeking.

—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away.'

We can thus say that Karma is understood by the Mahāyānists rather cosmologically, or that the super individualistic aspect of Karma came to assert its importance more than its individualistic aspect. Nāgārjuna's attempt to nullify Karma is the negative side of this evolution which has taken place in the history of Buddhism. As long as Karma was conceived individualistically by Hīnayānists, there was no room for them to entertain a feeling of passivity. But with the Mahāyānist interpretation of Karma a sense of overwhelming oppression came to possess the minds of the Buddhists, because Karma was now understood to have a far deeper, stronger, and wider foundation than hitherto

thought of. It grew out of the cosmos itself, against which finite individuals were altogether powerless. This feeling of helplessness naturally turned the Mahāyānists towards a being who could overcome the enormity of Karma-force.

There was another factor in the religious consciousness of the Mahāyānists which made them ever persistent in applying for the super-individualistic powers of Buddhata. By this I mean the feeling of compassion (*karuṇā*) going beyond individualism. This is an annoying feeling, to say the least; it goes directly against the instinct of self-preservation. But there is no doubt that its roots are deeply laid, and in fact it makes up the very foundation of human nature.

Compassion then walks hand in hand with sorrow, for a compassionate soul is always sorrowful when he observes how ignorant and confused the world is, and grows conscious of something in himself that makes him feel his own participation in universal confusion and iniquity. The sense of sin is the outcome of all this. Perhaps here lies one of the reasons why the practice of asceticism has a strong appeal to the religiously-minded, who feel a shadow of penitence not always realizing exactly why they do. When the overwhelming force of Karma is thus combined with compassion, sorrow, and even sin, the attitude of the Buddhist towards himself assumes an altogether different aspect; he is no more a self-reliant individualist, he now wants to identify himself with a power that holds in itself the whole universe with all its multitudinousness.

III

The Psychology of Passivity

Passivity is essentially psychological, and to interpret it metaphysically or theologically is another question. The feeling that one has been cleansed of sin is passive as far as

the sinner's consciousness is concerned. This subjectivism may be objectively verified or may not. But to say that in this consciousness there is absolutely no other feeling than passivity is not correct.

This feeling, which came upon us indeed quite abruptly or without our being conscious of every step of its progress, is no doubt predominant especially when we know that with the utmost voluntary efforts we could not induce a state of liberation. But when the feeling is analysed and its component factors are determined, we realize that this passivity is made possible only when there is something intensely active within ourselves. Let this active background be all blank, absolutely colourless, and there is not even a shadow of passivity felt there. The very fact that it is felt to be passive proves that there is a power on our side that prepares itself to be in a state of receptiveness. The exclusive 'other-power' theory which is sometimes maintained by advocates of the Shin school of Buddhism as well as by the Christian quietists is not tenable.

While a man is attached to individualism, asserting it consciously or unconsciously, he always has a feeling of oppression which he may interpret as sin; and while the mind is possessed by it, there is no room for the 'other-power' to enter and work, the way is effectively barred. It is quite natural, therefore, for him to imagine that with the removal of the bar he became altogether empty. But the removal of the bar does not mean utter emptiness, absolute nothingness. If this is the case, there will be nothing for the 'other-power' to work on.

The abandoning of the 'self-power' is the occasion for the 'other-power' to appear on the scene; the abandoning and the appearance take place simultaneously; it is not that the abandoning comes first, and the ground remaining empty there is a vacancy, and finally the 'other-power' comes in to claim this vacuity. The facts of experience do not justify this supposition, for nothing can work in a vacuity. On the contrary, there must be a point to which the 'other-power' can fix itself, or a form into which it can, as it were, squeeze

itself; this self-determination of the 'other-power' is impossible if there is nothing but an absolute emptiness of passivity. The suppression of the self does not mean its utter annihilation, but its perfect readiness to receive a higher power into it. In this receptivity we must not forget that there is a power which receives, which has been made passive. The absolute 'other-power' doctrine is not psychologically valid, nor metaphysically tenable.

Absolute Passivism and Libertinism

The doctrine of absolute passivity is frequently productive of disastrous consequences in two ways. The one may be called negative as it tends to quietism, laziness, contemplative absorption, or all-annihilating Dhyāna or Nirodha; while the other is decidedly positive, being quite aggressive and self-assertive in its practical functioning as is shown, for instance, by the doctrine and the life of the advocates of the Free Spirit in the fourteenth century. When the 'I' is completely annihilated and altogether replaced by God, it is not then the 'I' that thinks, desires, and moves about, but God himself; he has taken complete possession of this 'I', he works through it, he desires in it. The following¹ is an extract from Ruysbroeck's *The Twelve Beguines*, in which he gives quite clearly the position of the Free Spirit sect in Belgium:

'Without me, God would have neither knowledge nor will nor power, for it is I, with God, who have created my own personality and all things. From my hands are suspended heaven, earth and all creatures. Whatever honour is paid to God, it is to me that it is paid, for in my essential being I am by nature God. For myself, I neither hope nor love, and I have no faith, no confidence in God. I have nothing to pray for, nothing to implore, for I do not render honour to God above myself. For in God there is no distinction, neither Father nor Son nor Holy Spirit . . . since

¹ Quoted in A. Wautier D'Aygalliers' *Ruysbroeck the Admirable*, p. 46.

with this God I am one, and am even that which he is . . . and which, without me, he is not.'

Another writer quotes the following dialogue¹ between a Free Spirit brother and his questioner :

'What is freedom of the Spirit?' Conrad Kanner is asked by Ebernard de Freyenhause, the inquisitor.

'It exists when all remorse of conscience ceases and man can no longer sin.'

'Hast thou attained to this stage of perfection?'

'Yes, so much so that I can advance in grace, for I am one with God and God is one with me.'

'Is a brother of the Free Spirit obliged to obey authority?'

'No, he owes obedience to no man, nor is he bound by the precepts of the Church. If any one prevents him from doing as he pleases, he has the right to kill him. He may follow all the impulses of his nature; he does not sin in yielding to his desires.'

Antinomianism upholds a life of instinct and intuition, and it works in either way, good or bad, according to the fundamental disposition of the agent. All religious life tends towards antinomianism, especially that of the mystic. It grows immoral and dangerous when the reason is too weak to assert itself or is kept in the background in too subordinate a position. This frequently takes place with those whose sense of passivity and so-called spiritual freedom are allied with each other as they are apt to be, and the result is inimical. D'Aygalliers (pp. 46-47) describes the view of certain followers of the Free Spirit as follows :

'Hence they go so far as to say that so long as man has a tendency to virtues and desires to do God's very precious will, he is still imperfect, being preoccupied with the acquiring of things. . . . Therefore, they think they can never either believe in virtues, or have additional merit or commit sins. . . . Consequently, they are able to consent to every desire of the lower nature, for they have reverted to a state of innocence, and laws no longer apply to them.

¹ A. Allier, *Les Frères du Libre-Esprit*, quoted by A. Wautier D'Aygalliers in his *Ruysbroeck*, p. 43.

Amida's all-embracing love takes in all sinful mortals with their sins and defilements even unwashed, is full of pitfalls unless it is tempered by sound reasoning and strong moral feeling. The injunctions such as 'Take no thought of your life', or 'Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself', are fine, and Buddhists too will wholeheartedly uphold the truth contained in them; but at the same time we must realize that this kind of momentarism is a life essentially at one with that of the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, and harbour the possibility of sliding headlong into the abyss of libertinism or antinomianism.

True religion, therefore, always shuns absolute subjectivism, and rightly so. Still, we can ill afford to ignore the claims of the mystic so simply and innocently expressed in the following life of a pious Buddhist, where there is nothing of the aggressive assertions of Brothers of the Free Spirit.

Kichibei was a wealthy farmer of Idzumo province, but when his religious consciousness was awakened he could no more rest satisfied with his old conditions. He sold all his estate and with the money thus realized he wandered about from one place to another to get instructed in Shin Buddhism. Later he sold out even his godowns, furniture, and house itself; thus freeing himself from all earthly treasures, he devoted himself to the study of Buddhism, that is, he was never tired of travelling far and near listening to the religious discourses of Shin teachers.

Many, many years passed like that and his neighbours used to remark, 'Kichibei goes around in sandals made of gold,' meaning that all his money and property had gone into his religion. He did not at all mind his poverty, saying, 'Enough is the living for the day.' At seventy he was still peddling fish to get his daily livelihood, though his earning was no more than a few *tōbyaku* (pennies). When a neighbouring child brought him one day a bunch of flowers, he was very grateful. 'By the grace of Amida I live this day to make him this flower-offering'; he went up to the altar. The

child was rewarded with two pieces of *tōbyaku*, the whole earning of the day.¹

Is not such a Buddhist a good follower of Jesus too? He had no thought for the morrow, and in these modern days of economic stress how would he have fared? In spite of all this, there is something most captivating in a life like Kichibei's. Rolle speaks of 'a contemplative man [who] is turned towards the unseen light with so great a longing that men often consider him a fool or mad, because his heart is so on fire with the love of Christ. Even his bodily appearance is changed, and is so far removed from other men that it seems as if God's child were a lunatic.'² 'God's fool' or 'God's lunatic' are expressive terms. Kichibei was surely changed in his appearance and had become a splendid lunatic.

The Passive Life Described

The psychological state of such religious belief can be explained in the language of Madame Guyon as follows:³

'I speak to you, my dear brother, without reserve. And, in the first place, my soul, as it seems to me, is united to God in such a manner that my own will is entirely lost in the Divine Will. I live, therefore, as well as I can express it, out of myself and all other creatures, in union with God, because in union with His will. . . . It is thus that God, by His sanctifying grace, has come to me All in All. The self which once troubled me is taken away, and I find it no more. And thus God, being made known in things and events, which is the only way in which the I AM, or Infinite Existence, can be made known, everything becomes in a certain sense God to me. I find God in everything

¹ *Anjin Shōwa*, XVIII.

² *The Amending of Life*, edited by H. L. Hubbard (1922), p. 91.

³ A letter to her brother Gregory as quoted in Thomas C. Upham's *Life and Experience of Madam Guyon*, p. 305 et seq.

it no longer has a will of its own, is never strictly inert. Under all circumstances and in all cases, there is really a distinct act on the part of the soul, namely *an act of co-operation* with God; although in some cases it is a simple co-operation with what *now is*, and constitutes the religious state of submissive acquiescence and patience; while in others it is a co-operation with reference to what *is to be*, and implies future results, and consequently is a state of movement and performance.

'Bossuet: I think, Madame, I understand you. There is a distinction undoubtedly in the two classes of cases just mentioned; but as the term *passively active* will apply to both of them, I think it is to be preferred. You use this complex term, I suppose, because there are two distinct acts or operations to be expressed, namely the act of preparatory or *prevenient* grace on the part of God, and the co-operative act on the part of the creature; the soul being passive, or merely perceptive, in the former; and active, although always in accordance with the Divine leading, in the other.'

'Passively active', or 'actively passive', either will describe the mentality of the quietist type of the mystic. He is not generally conscious of his own active part in his religious experience, and may wish to ignore this part altogether on the ground of his religious philosophy. But, as I said before, there is no absolutely passive state of mind, for this would mean perfect emptiness, and to be passive means that there is something ready to receive. Even God cannot work where there is nothing to work on or with. Passivity is a relative term indicating a not fully analysed state of consciousness. In our religious life, passivity comes as the culmination of strenuous activity; passivity without this preliminary condition is sheer inanity, in which there will be no consciousness from the very first, even of any form of passivity.

'I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me.' This is passivism as far as somebody else, and not the self has taken possession of that which liveth, but that which liveth stays there all

the time. 'Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.' (Colos. III, 3.) Something in you is dead, which is to die sooner or later, but that which is to live keeps on living. This does not mean that you are altogether annihilated, but that you are living in the most lively sense of the word. Living is an activity, in fact the highest form of activity. Absolute passivity is death itself.¹

Passivity and Pure Land Buddhism

It is in the Pure Land school that the idea of passivity is most clearly traceable in Buddhism, though even in the Holy Path school it is not quite absent. Shinran, a great advocate of the *Tariki* ('other-power') doctrine, naturally upholds passivity in the religious life of his followers. His idea is manifest in such passages as this, in which he repudiates 'self-power' or 'self-will' (*hakarai*). 'By "self-power" is meant,' says he, 'the self-will of the [Holy Path] devotees, relying on which each of them, as he finds himself variously situated in the circumstances of life, recites the Buddha-names other [than Amida's], disciplines himself in good works other [than uttering the name of Amida]; he upholds his own will, by which he attempts to remedy all the disturbances arising from body, speech, and thought, and, thus making himself wholesome, he wishes to be reborn in the Land of Purity.'

'The "other-power" devotees, on the other hand, put their whole-hearted faith in the original vow of Amida, as is expressed in the Eighteenth Vow in which he vows to receive all beings to his Land of Purity if they only recite his name and desire to be saved through him. In this, says the Holy One, there is no human scheme because there is here only the scheme of the Tathāgata's vow. By "human scheme" is meant "self-will", and "self-will" is self-power, which is a human scheme. As to "other-power", it is a whole-hearted belief in the original vow, and as the devotee

¹ Cf. pp. 46-7 *fn.*, where St. Francis' simile of a corpse is quoted.

destroyed. The fire of love burns up in him all stain of sin, as a drop of water cast into a furnace is consumed.'

Here lies the teaching of 'other-power' Buddhism in a nutshell, and here also the signification of passivity in the psychology of Buddhism.

Ichiren-in (1788-1860) was a modern follower of the 'other-power' school; he used to teach in the following manner:¹ 'If you have yet something worrying you, however trivial it may be, your faith in Amida is not absolute. When you have a feeling of unrest, this is of course far from believing in Amida; but even when you are rejoicing as having at last found rest, this is not real rest either. To make strenuous effort because you have not yet gained a restful heart, is also not quite right. To put your belief to a test wishing to know if it is firmly resting on Amida, is again wrong.

'Why? Because all these are attempts to look into your own mind, you are turned away from Amida, you are wrongly oriented. Indeed, it is easy to say, "Abandon your self-power," but after all how difficult it is! I, therefore, repeat over and over again and say, "Don't look at your own mind, but look straight up to Amida himself." To rely on Amida means to turn towards the mirror of the original vow and see Amida face to face.'

Passivity is Accepting Life As It Is

Passivity is not self-reflection or self-examination. It is an unqualified acceptance of Amida. So long as there is a trace of conscious contrivance (*hakarai*), you are not wholly possessed of Amida. You and the original vow are two separate items of thought, there is no unity, and this unity is to be attained by accepting and not by striving. In this case passivity is identifiable with accepting existence as it is.

To believe, then, is to be and not to become. Becoming implies a dissatisfaction with existence, a wishing to change;

¹ *Anjin Shōwa*, 'Talks on Spiritual Peace'.

that is, to work out 'my will' as against 'thy will', and whatever we may say about moral ideals of perfection, religion is after all the acceptance of things as they are, things evil together with things good. Religion wants first of all 'to be'. To believe, therefore, is to exist—this is the fundamental of all religions. When this is translated into terms of psychology, the religious mind turns on the axle of passivity. 'You are all right as you are', or 'to be well with God and the world', or 'don't think of the morrow'—this is the final word of all religion.

It was in this spirit that Rinzai (Lin-chi, died 867), the founder of the Rinzai branch of Zen Buddhism, said: 'The truly religious man has nothing to do but go on with his life as he finds it in the various circumstances of this worldly existence. He rises quietly in the morning, puts on his dress and goes out to his work. When he wants to walk, he walks; when he wants to sit, he sits. He has no hankering after Buddhahood, not the remotest thought of it. How is this possible? A wise man of old says, If you strive after Buddhahood by any conscious contrivances, your Buddha is indeed the source of eternal transmigration.'¹ To doubt is to commit suicide; to strive, which means to 'negate', is, according to Buddhist phraseology, eternally to transmigrate in the ocean of birth and death.

A man called Jōyemon, of Mino province, was much troubled about his soul. He had studied Buddhism but so far to no purpose. Finally, he went up to Kyoto where Ichiren-in, who was a great teacher of Shin Buddhism, at the time resided, and opened his heart to him, begging to be instructed in the teaching of Shinran Shōnin. Said Ichiren-in, 'You are as old as you are.' (Amida's salvation consists in accepting yourself as you are.) Jōyemon was not satisfied and made further remonstrance, to which Ichiren repeated, 'You are saved as you are.'

The seeker after truth was not yet in a state of mind to accept the word of the teacher right off, he was not yet free

¹ Done after the sense, for a literal translation of Rinzai requires a great deal of comments.

from dependence on contrivances and strivings. He still pursued the teacher with some more postulations. The teacher, however, was not to be induced to deviate from his first course, for he repeated, 'You are saved as you are,' and quietly withdrew. It was fortunate that he was a 'tariki' teacher; for if he had been a Zen master, I feel sure that Jōyemon would have been handled in an altogether different manner.¹

John Woolman (1720-1772), a Quaker, died of small-pox, and towards the end his throat was much affected and he could not speak. He asked for pen and ink and wrote with difficulty, 'I believe my being here is in the wisdom of Christ; I know not as to life or death.' This confession exactly tallies with that of Shinran when he says in *The Tannisho*: 'I say my Nembutsu as taught by my good teacher. As to my being reborn after death in the Land of Purity or in hell, I have no idea of it.'

Shinran quite frequently makes reference to the inconceivability of Buddha-wisdom. Our being here is entirely due to it, and it is not in our limited knowledge to probe into its mystery nor is it necessary to exercise our finite will about it; we just accept existence as it is, our trust is wholly placed in the infinite wisdom of Amida, and what we have to do is to get rested with this trust, this faith, this acceptance, and with this ignorance. And the wonderful thing is that this ignorance has such a wisdom in it as to give us entire satisfaction with this life and after.²

¹ Tê-shan Hsüan-chien, who used to be a great scholar of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* before he was converted to Zen, appeared one evening in the pulpit and declared, 'I shall not allow any questioning tonight; questioners will get thirty blows.' A monk came forward, and when he was about to make bows, Tê-shan gave him a blow. Said the monk, 'When I am not even proposing a question, why should you strike me so?' The master asked, 'Where is your native place?' 'I come from Hsin-lo (=Korea).' 'You deserved,' insisted the master, 'thirty blows even before you got into the boat.' *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Vol. XV.

² There are two kinds of ignorance in Zen: the one has wisdom and trust in it, but the other is utter darkness.

Tung-shan came to see Hui-chao of Shu-shan, and the latter asked, 'You are already master of a monastery, and what do you want here?' 'I am distressed with a doubt and do not know what to do, hence my com-

The mystic knowledge or mystic ignorance and the satisfaction derived from it are also illustrated by the poem of thirty-one syllables composed by Ippen Shōnin (1229-1289). When he was studying Zen under Hōtō (1203-1298), the latter wanted to know how Ippen understood the meaning of the statement that 'As a thought is stirred there is an awakening.' Ippen's answer was in verse:

'When the Name is uttered
Neither the Buddha nor the Self
There is:
Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu—
The voice alone is heard.'

The Zen master, however, did not think Ippen rightly understood the point, whereby the latter uttered another verse:

'When the Name is uttered
Neither the Buddha nor the Self
There is:
Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu,
Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu!'¹

ing here.' The master called out, 'O Liang-chieh!' which was Tung-shan's name, and Liang-chieh replied at once, 'Yes, sir.' 'What is that?' demanded the master. Chieh failed to answer, and Hui-chao gave this judgment, 'Fine Buddha no doubt, and what a pity he has no flames!' (*The Transmission*, IX.) As he has no flames, his 'ignorance' is not illuminating. When he becomes conscious of the fact, there is enlightenment.

Hui-lang asked Shih-t'ou, 'Who is the Buddha?' 'You have no Buddha nature.' 'How about these beings that go wriggling about?' 'They rather have the Buddha-nature,' 'How is it that I am devoid of it?' 'Because,' said the master, 'you do not acknowledge it yourself.' This is said to have awakened Hui-lang to his own 'ignorance' which now illuminates. (Op. cit. XIV.)

Yao-shan was sitting in meditation, and Shih-t'ou said, 'What are you doing here?' 'I am not doing anything.' 'If so, you are sitting idly.' 'Even an idle sitting is doing something,' retorted Yao-shan. 'If, as you say, you are not doing anything, what is it that is not doing anything?' Yao-shan said, 'Even the wise know it not.' (*Loc. cit.*) This 'ignorance' is of quite a different sort, is it not?

Chên-lang asked Shih-t'ou, 'What is the idea of the First Patriarch's coming from the West?' 'Ask the post over there.' 'I do not understand, sir.' 'I too fail to understand,' was Shih-t'ou's reply, which, however, lighted up Lang's 'ignorance', which in turn became illuminated. (*Loc. cit.*)

¹ *Sayings of Ippen.*

This met the master's approval. In Ippen's religion we find Zen and Shin harmonized in a most practical way. When this *sonomana* (*yathābhūtam*) idea is translated into human relations, we have the following in which self-will is denounced as hindering the work of the All-One, that is, Amida.

'When the rebellious will of your self-power is given up, you realize what is meant by putting trust in Amida. You desire to be saved and the Buddha is ever ready to save, and yet the fact of your rebirth in the Land of Purity does not seem to be so easily establishable.

'Why? Because your rebellious will still asserts itself. It is like contracting a marriage between a young man and a young woman. The parents on both sides want to see them united in marriage. The one party says, "There is no need of the bride's being provided with any sort of trousseau." But the other thinks it necessary, seeing that the bridegroom belongs to a far richer family, and it would not do for the bride not to be supplied even with one wardrobe. Both are ready and yet the sense of pride is their barrier. If the bride's family took the proposal made by the other party in the same spirit as that made by the latter, the desired end would be accomplished without further fussing.

'Quite similar to this is the relationship between the Buddha and sentient beings. The Buddha says: "Come"; why not then go to him even as you are? But here the rebellious will shakes its head and says, "With all his good will, I cannot go to him just as I am; I ought to do something to deserve the call." This is self-pride. This is more than what the Buddha requires of you, and anything extraneous coming out of your self-conceit and limited philosophy obstructs the passage of the Buddha's mercy into your hearts. For all that is asked of you is to put your hand forward, into which the Buddha is ready to drop the coin of salvation. The Buddha is beckoning to you, the boat is waiting to take you to the other shore of the stream, no fares are wanted, the only movement you are to make is to step right into the ferry. You cannot protest and say, "This

is a difficult task." Why don't you then give yourself up entirely to the Buddha's vow of salvation and let his will prevail over yours?¹

Molinos writes to Petrucci: 'One of the fundamental rules which serve to keep my soul in constant inner peace is this: I may cherish no desire² for this or that separate good, but only for that good which is the highest of all, and I must be prepared for all which this highest good gives me and requires of me. These are few words but they contain much.'³ If one asks a Shin teacher what are few words containing so much as productive of the highest good, he will at once say, 'Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu, Na-mu-a-mi-da-bu-tsu!' For this is indeed the magic sesame that carries you right to the other side of birth and death.

Ignorance and Passivity

The significant fact about religious experience, which is to be noticed in this connection, is that it always insists on abandoning all knowledge and learnedness acquired by the seeker of God or truth. Whether it is Christian or Buddhist, whether it is the Pure Land or the Holy Path, the insistence is equally emphatic.

It is evident that religious experience stands diametrically opposed to intellectual knowledge, for learnedness and scholarship do not guarantee one to be a member of the kingdom of God, but 'being like a child' not only in humbleness of heart but in simpleness of thought. The stains of vanity, conceit, and self-love which are so-called human righteousnesses are indeed 'as a polluted garment' which is

¹ Condensed from VIII-XIII of *Sayings of Shūson*, one of the modern teachers of Shin Buddhism, 1788-1860. Compiled by Gessho Sasaki, 1907.

² That the Catholic monks avow absolute obedience to their superior is also an expression of passivism in our religious life. When a man can submit himself to a life of obedience, he feels a certain sense of relief from the oppressing burden of self-responsibility, which is akin to the genuine religious feeling of peace and rest.

³ Kathleen Lyttleton's Introduction to Molinos' *Spiritual Guide*, p. 25.