

STUDIES IN ZEN

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"Again, son of a good family, I will give you another illustration. Suppose the Tathagata 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 the people of this world as to the exquisite taste, delicious flavour, 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 Prajnaparamita."

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 Prajnaparamita as realized by the Bodhisattva is the true cause of all his expressions. When this emancipation is realized he can aptly give expression to it and skilfully illustrate it."¹

From this it is evident that whatever apt expressions and skilful contrivances the Bodhisattva may use in his work among us, they must come out of his own experience, and also that, however believing we may be, we cannot cherish real faith until we experience it in our own lives and make it grow out of them.

Again, we read in the *Lankavatara Sutra*: "The ultimate truth (*Paramartha*) is a state of inner experience by means of Noble Wisdom (*Aryavijna*), and as it is beyond the ken of words and discriminations it cannot be adequately expressed by them. Whatever is thus expressible is the product of conditional causation to the law of birth and death. The ultimate truth transcends the antithesis of self and not-self, and words are the products of antithetical thinking. The ultimate truth is Mind itself, which is free from all forms, inner and outer. No words can therefore describe Mind, no discriminations can reveal it."²

¹ An abstract from the Chinese translation of the *Gandavyuha Sutra*, popularly known as the 'Forty-volume Kegon' by Prajna, a Professor of the Tripitaka during the T'ang dynasty.

² See my English translation of the *sutra*.

Discrimination is a term we frequently come across in Buddhist philosophy. It corresponds to intellection or logical reasoning. According to Buddhism, the antithesis of "A" and "not-A" is at the bottom of our ignorance as to the ultimate truth of existence, and this antithesis is discrimination. To discriminate is to be involved in the whirlpool of birth and death, and as long as we are thus involved, there is no emancipation, no attainment of Nirvana, no realization of Buddhahood.

We may ask: "How is this emancipation possible? And does Zen achieve it?"

When we say that we live, it means that we live in this world of dualities and antitheses. Therefore to be emancipated from this world may mean to go out of it, or to deny it by some means, if possible. To do either of these is to put ourselves out of existence. Emancipation is, then, we can say, self-destruction. Does Buddhism teach self-destruction? This kind of interpretation has often been advanced by those who fail to understand the real teaching of Buddhism.

The fact is that this interpretation is not yet an "emancipated" one, and falls short of the Buddhist logic of non-discrimination. This is where Zen comes in, asserting its own way of being "outside the Scripture" and "independent of the letter". The following *mondo* will illustrate my point:

Sekiso (Shih-shuang) asked Dogo:¹ "After your passing, if somebody asks me about the ultimate truth of Buddhism, what shall I say?"

Dogo made no answer but called out to one of his attendants. The attendant answered: "Yes, master"; and the master said: "Have the pitcher filled with water." So ordering, he remained silent for a while, and then turning to Sekiso said: "What did you ask me about just now?" Sekiso repeated his question. Whereupon the master rose from his seat and walked away.

Sekiso was a good Buddhist student and no doubt understood thoroughly the teaching as far as his intel-

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Fas. XV, "Sekiso".

basis of all things. The Mind may be regarded as the last point we reach when we dig down psychologically into the depths of a thinking and feeling subject, while the Nature is the limit of objectivity beyond which our ontology cannot go. The ontological limit is the psychological limit, and vice versa; for when we reach the one, we find ourselves in the other. The starting point differs; in the one we retreat inwardly, as it were, but in the other we go on outwardly, and in the end we arrive at what might be called the point of identity. When we have the Mind, we have the Nature: when the Nature is understood, the Mind is understood; they are one and the same.

The one who has a thoroughgoing understanding of the Mind and whose every movement is in perfect accordance with the Nature is the Buddha—"he who is enlightened". The Buddha is the Nature personified. Thus we can say that all these three items—Nature, Mind, and Buddha—are the different points of reference; as we shift our positions, we speak in terms of respective orders. The ideal of Zen as expressed in its four-line declaration is directly to take hold of Reality without being bothered by any interrupting agency, intellectual, moral, ritualistic, or what not.

This direct holding of Reality is the awakening of Prajna, which may be rendered as "transcendental wisdom". Prajna awakened or attained is Prajna-paramita (in Japanese *Hannya-haramitsu*). This transcendental wisdom gives the solution to all the questions we are capable of asking about our spiritual life. Wisdom is not, therefore, the intellect we ordinarily know; it transcends dialectics of all kinds. It is not the analytical process of reasoning, it does not work step by step; it leaps over the abyss of contradiction and mutual checking. Hence *Paramita*, "reaching the other shore".

As the awakening of Prajna is the leaping over an intellectual impasse it is an act of Will. Yet as it sees into the Nature itself, there is a noetic quality in it. Prajna is both Will and Intuition. This is the reason why Zen is

strongly associated with the cultivation of the will-power. To cut asunder the bonds of ignorance and discrimination is no easy task; unless it is done with the utmost exertion of the will, it can never be accomplished. To let go the hold of a solitary branch of the tree, called intellect, which outstretches over a precipice, and to allow ourselves to fall into a supposedly bottomless abyss—does this not require a desperate effort on the part of one who attempts to sound the depths of the Mind? When a Zen Buddhist monk was asked as to the depths of the Zen river while he was walking over a bridge, he at once seized the questioner and would have thrown him into the rapids had not his friends hurriedly interceded for him. The monk wanted to see the questioner himself go down to the bottom of Zen and survey its depths according to his own measure. The leaping is to be done by oneself; all the help outsiders can offer is to let the person concerned realize the futility of such help. Zen in this respect is harsh and merciless, at least superficially so.

The monk who was trying to throw the questioner over the bridge was a disciple of Rinzai (Lin-chi), one of the greatest masters in the T'ang history of Zen in China. When this monk, who was still a stranger to Zen, asked the master Rinzai what was the ultimate teaching of Buddhism, the master came down from his seat and, taking hold of the monk, exclaimed: "Speak! Speak!" How could the poor bewildered novice in the study of Zen, thus seized by the throat and violently shaken, speak? He wanted to hear the master "speak" instead of his "speaking" in regard to this question. He never imagined his master to be so "direct", and did not know what to say or do. He stood as if in ecstasy. It was only when he was about to bow before the master, as reminded by his fellow-monks, that a realization came to him as to the meaning of the Scripture and the demand to "speak". Even when an intellectual explanation is given, the understanding is an inner growth and not an external addition. This must be much more the case with the Zen understanding. The basic principle, therefore, underlying the

whole fabric of Zen is directed towards the self-maturing of an inner experience. Those who are used to intellectual training or moral persuasion or devotional exercises no doubt find in Zen discipline something extraordinary which goes against their expectations. But this is where Zen is unique in the whole history of religion. Zen has developed along this line ever since the T'ang era when Baso (Ma-tsu) and Sekito (Shih-t'ou) brought out fully the characteristic features of the Zen form of Buddhism. The main idea is to live within the thing itself and thus to understand it. What we generally do in order to understand a thing is to describe it from outside, to talk about it objectively as the philosopher would have it, and to try to carry out this method from every possible point of observation except that of inner assimilation or sympathetic merging. The objective method is intellectual and has its field of useful application. Only let us not forget the fact that there is another method which alone gives the key to an effective and all-satisfying understanding. The latter is the method of Zen.

The following few examples illustrate the Zen method for the understanding of Buddhism. Zen, being a form of Buddhism, has no specific philosophy of its own except what is usually accepted by the Buddhists of the Mahayana school. What makes Zen so distinctive is its method, which is the inevitable growth of Zen's own attitude towards life and truth.

Shodai Yero (Chao-t'i Hui-lang, 738-824), who wished to know Zen, came to Baso, and Baso asked: "What made you come here?"

"I wish to have a knowledge of the Buddha."

"No knowledge can be had of him; knowledge belongs to the devil."

As the monk failed to grasp the meaning of this, the master directed him to go to Sekito, a contemporary leader of Zen, who he suggested might enlighten the knowledge-seeking monk. When Yero came to Sekito, he asked: "Who is the Buddha?"

"You have no Buddha-nature," the master said.

"I am not doing anything," replied Yakusan.

"If so, you are sitting in idleness."

"Sitting in idleness is doing something."

"You say you are not doing anything," Sekito pursued further; "but what is that anything which you are not doing?"

"Even the ancient sages know not," was the conclusion given by Yakusan.¹

Sekito (700-790) was one of the younger disciples of Yeno (Hui-neng) and finished his study of Zen under Gyoshi, of Seigen. He was once asked by his monk, Dogo: "Who has attained to the understanding of Yeno's doctrine?"

"One who understands Buddhism."

"Have you then attained it?"

"No, I do not understand Buddhism."²

The strange situation created by Zen is that those who understand it do not understand it, and those who do not understand it understand it—a great paradox, indeed, which runs throughout the history of Zen.

"What is the essential point of Buddhism?"

"Unless you have it, you do not understand."

"Is there any further turning when one thus goes on?"

"A white cloud is free to float about anywhere it lists—ininitely vast is the sky."³

To explain this in a more rational manner I may add that Buddhism teaches that all is well where it is; but as soon as a man steps out to see if he is all right or not, an error is committed which leads to an infinite series of negations and affirmations, and he has to make peace within. To Eckhart every morning is "Good Morning" and every day a blessed day. This is our personal experience. When we are saved, we know what it is. However much we inquire about it, salvation never comes.

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

III. AN INTERPRETATION OF ZEN-EXPERIENCE (1939)

THE philosophy of Zen Buddhism is that of Mahayana Buddhism, for it is no more than a development of the latter. But the development took place among a people whose psychology or mentality widely varies from the Indian mind whose product Buddhism is. As I view it, Buddhism, after Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu and their immediate followers, could not continue its healthy growth any longer in its original soil; it had to be transplanted if it was to develop a most important aspect which had hitherto been altogether neglected—and because of this neglect its vitality was steadily being impaired. The most important aspect of Mahayana Buddhism which unfolded itself in the mental climate of China was Zen. While China failed to perfect the Kegon (or Avatamsaka) or the Tendai system of Mahayana thought, she produced Zen. This was really a unique contribution of the Chinese genius to the history of mental culture generally, and it was due to the Japanese that the true spirit of Zen has been scrupulously kept alive and that its technique has been completed.

When it is asked what Zen is, it is very difficult to give an answer satisfactory to the ordinary questioner. For instance, when you ask whether Zen is a philosophy or a religious faith, we cannot say it is either, as far as we understand these two terms in their usual sense. Zen has no thought-system of its own; it liberally uses Mahayana terminology; it refuses to commit itself to any specified pattern of thinking. Nor is it a faith, for it does not urge us to accept any dogma or creed or an object of worship. It is true that it has temples and monasteries where images of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas (would-be Buddhas) are enshrined in some specially sanctified quarters, but the monks do not hesitate to treat them unceremoniously when they find it more useful for the elucidation of their subject matter. What the Zen masters stress most

is a certain kind of experience, and this experience is to express itself in ways most characteristic of Zen. Those ways, they consider, constitute the essential features of Zen as differentiated from the other schools of Buddhism, as well as from all religious or philosophical thought-systems of the world. What modern students of Zen have to do is to make a thorough examination of Zen-experience itself and of the ways in which the experience has expressed itself in history.

2

To study Zen means to have Zen-experience, for without the experience there is no Zen one can study. But mere experience means to be able to communicate it to others; the experience ceases to be vital unless it is adequately expressible. A dumb experience is not human. To experience is to be self-conscious. Zen-experience is complete only when it is backed by Zen-consciousness and finds expression in one way or another. In the following I will attempt to give a clue to the understanding of Zen-consciousness.

Daian (died 883), the Zen master of Dai-i San, once gave this to his congregation: "(The conception of) being and non-being is like the wistaria winding round the tree."

Sozan, hearing this, lost no time in undertaking a long journey, for he wished to find out the meaning of Daian's most enigmatic statement. Seeing the master engaged in making a mud-wall, he approached and asked: "(The conception of) being and non-being is like the wistaria winding around the tree; did you really say that?"

The master said: "Yes, my friend."

Sozan queried: "When the tree is suddenly broken down and the wistaria withers, what happens?"

The master threw up his mud-carrying board and laughing loudly walked away towards his living quarters. Sozan followed and protested: "O Master, I come from

a remote district three thousand *li* away, I have sold my clothing to pay for the travelling expenses, and this for no other purpose than to get enlightened on this subject. Why do you make fun of me?"

The master felt pity for the poor monk and told his attendant to gather up money enough for his return trip. He then turned toward Sozan, saying: "Some day you may happen to see a master who is known as 'One-eyed Dragon' and he will make you see into the matter."

Later, Sozan came to Myosho and told him about the interview he had with Daian of Dai-i San. Myosho said: "Daian is all right through and through, only he misses one who really understands his mind." Sozan now proposed the same question to Myosho, saying: "What happens when the tree is broken down and the wistaria withers?" Myosho said: "You make Daian renew his laughter!" This made Sozan at once comprehend the meaning of the whole affair, and he exclaimed: "After all there is a dagger in Daian's laughter." He reverentially bowed in the direction of Dai-i San.

3

In this account, what strikes one most is the disparity between the question and the answer, for as far as our common sense or logic allows us to see, no connection whatever exists between the statement concerning being and non-being and the master's laughter or, as is given later on, Yengo's repetition of his own master. The question in regard to being and non-being is a philosophical one dealing with abstract ideas. All our thoughts start from the opposition between being and non-being; without this antithesis no reasoning can be carried on, and therefore the question is a fundamental one: "What will become of our thought-system when the conception of being and non-being is wiped out?" When the tree dies, naturally the wistaria withers. Being is possible only with non-being, and conversely. This world of particulars is

enough to resort to such an abstraction as being and non-being, while his practical-mindedness is shown by transforming this abstraction into the relation between concrete objects such as the wistaria and the pine tree. Even this practical-mindedness of Sozan was thoroughly upset by Daian's ultra-practicalness: the throwing up of the mud-carrier, and the laughter, and the hurried departure for his room. Daian was all action while Sozan was still on the plane of word symbolism; that is, he was still on the conceptual level, away from life itself.

4

As long as we are gregarious animals, and therefore social and rational, everything we experience, be it an idea, an event, or a feeling, we desire to communicate to one another, and this is possible only through a medium. We have developed various mediums of communication, and those who can command them at will are leaders of humankind: philosophers, poets, artists of all kinds, writers, orators, religionists, and others. But these mediums must be substantiated, must be backed by real personal experiences. Without the latter, mediums are merely utilized and will never vibrate with vitality.

Some mediums are more readily counterfeited than others, being subject to all devices of ingenious simulation. Language as one such medium lends itself most easily to misrepresentation, intentional or otherwise. The highest and most fundamental experiences are best communicated without words; in the face of such experiences we become speechless and stand almost aghast.

Another consideration on the subject of means of communication is that however eloquent a medium may be it will not have the desired effect on anyone who never had an experience somewhat similar in kind although fainter in intensity. Like a pearl thrown before swine, the eloquence is wasted. On the other hand, if two people have had an experience of the same nature, the lifting of

a finger will set the whole spiritual mechanism in vibration, and each can read the other's inner thought.

The Zen master is an adept in the use of a medium, either verbal or actional, which directly points to his Zen-experience and by which the questioner, if he is mentally ripe, will at once grasp the master's intention. The medium of this kind functions "directly" and "at once", as if it were the experience itself—as when deep calls to deep. This direct functioning is compared to one brightly burnished mirror reflecting another brightly burnished mirror which faces the first with nothing between.

5

In the case of Daian and Sozan, the latter was still a captive in the prison of words and concepts, and not capable of grasping reality at first hand. His mind was filled with ideas of being and non-being, of trees and wistarias, of birth and death, of the absolute and the conditioned, of cause and effect, of *karma* and Nirvana; he had no direct, non-mediated understanding of reality; and this was indeed the reason why he brought himself before the amateur mason, after travelling over a distance of several thousand *li*. The mason master was a master indeed in every sense of the word. He never argued with the logician who was entangled like the wistaria round the problem of being and non-being. He did not talk about the absolute; he never resorted to a dialectic of contradiction; he never referred to a fundamental assumption lying behind the antithesis of being and non-being. What he did was simply to throw down his mud-carrier, give a hearty laugh, and hurry to his private quarters.

Now let us ask: Was there anything funny about Sozan's question? We human beings are always worried over the disruption of things we see, especially about the dissolution of this carnal existence, and about the life to come after it, if there should be one. This seems to be quite

for the most fundamental experience, have an insatiable longing for a spiritual rest which may not necessarily yield to logical treatment. In other words, we cannot wait for a perfect thought-system which will solve most satisfactorily all the mysteries of life and the world; we impatiently aspire for something more practical and of immediate utility. Religion talks of faith, teaching that God somehow takes care of us, all the intellectual difficulties notwithstanding. Let the antithesis of being and non-being remain as it is; for what is beyond our intellectual comprehension may best be left in the hands of God. The faith that somehow or other things are all well with God, in whom we have our being, delivers us from doubts and worries.

The Zen way of deliverance, however, is not that of religion; to be free from doubts and worries, Zen appeals to a certain inner experience and not to a blind acceptance of dogmas. Zen expects us to experience within ourselves that the suchness of things—the antithesis of being and non-being—is beyond the ken of intellectual painting or dialectical delineation, and that no amount of words can succeed in describing, that is, reasoning out, the what and why of life and the world. This may sound negative and may not be of positive use to our spiritual life. But the real trouble with us whenever we try to talk about things beyond intellection is that we always make our start from intellection itself, although this may be natural and inevitable; therefore, when Zen-experience and other such things are talked about they sound empty as if they had no positive value. But Zen proposes that we effect a complete *volte-face* and take our stand first on Zen-experience itself and then observe things—the world of being and non-being—from the point of view of the experience itself. This is what may be designated as an absolute standpoint. The usual order of things is hereby reversed; what was positive becomes negative and what was negative becomes positive. “Emptiness” is reality and “reality” is emptiness. Flowers are no longer red, and the willow leaves are no longer green. We are no longer a

plaything of *karma*, of "cause and effect", of birth and death; values of the changing world are no longer permanent ones; what we consider good or bad from the worldly point of view is neither good nor bad, for it has only a relative value. Logically, too, the antithesis of being and non-being holds good only for our relative knowledge, for our discursive understanding. After the Zen-experience, an entirely new order of things takes place, a complete change of front is effected, and the result is that a relative world of changes and multiplicities is contemplated *sub specie aeternitatis*. This in a way may be considered the meaning of "No paintings, no delineations can do justice to it".

10

Can we say, then, that Zen teaches a kind of mystical contemplation of life and the world? Before this is answered, let me make a further remark about Yengo and Goso, who also had a great deal to do, as we saw, with the problem of being and non-being.

When Yengo asked Goso concerning the breaking down of the tree and the withering of the wistaria, Goso emphatically declared: "You are caught in your own trap." The truth is that the Zen-experience by itself is not enough; it must be elaborated by means of Zen-consciousness or Zen-dialectic, if it is to be articulate and communicable not only to others but to oneself. The experience needs to be rationalized, as it were; it wants to speak out. It wants to assert itself, to be conscious of itself; and to do this, Zen has its own way, has opened up quite a unique one—absolutely unique, we may say. Where no paintings, no drawings can portray a perfect world of Zen-experience, how can we speak of being and non-being, of tree and wistaria, of birth and death, of synthesis and antithesis, of immanence and transcendence, of destruction and construction, of breaking down and withering and being reduced to nothingness? All these

ideas and categories are so many instruments we have devised for our own convenience in this world of action and work; but unless we know how to make use of them as occasion requires, they turn against us and trap us; that is, we are ensnared and enslaved by them. When the Zen-experience is not properly made articulate it becomes an instrument of mischief. The experience is a double-edged sword, requiring careful handling, and in this handling Zen follows its own tradition, which first originated in the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism and later managed to follow up the channel of Chinese psychology.

II

I am not certain whether Zen can be identified with mysticism. Mysticism as it is understood in the West starts generally with an antithesis and ends with its unification or identification. If there is an antithesis, Zen accepts it as it is, and makes no attempt to unify it. Instead of starting with dualism or pluralism, Zen wants us to have a Zen-experience, and with this experience it surveys a world of suchness. It has adopted Mahayana terminology, it is true, but it has the tendency to resort to concrete objects and happenings. It does not reduce them to oneness—which is an abstraction. When all things are reduced to oneness, it asks to what this One is reducible. If all comes from God, lives in God, and returns to God, Zen wants to know where this God is or lives. If the whole world with all its multiplicities is absorbed into Brahman, Zen asks us to point out the whereabouts of Brahman. If the soul survives the body, Zen calls on you to locate the soul or to bring it out before us.

A master was asked where he might be found after his death, and he said: "Lying on my back in the wilderness, my limbs pointing straight up to the sky!" When another master was asked about the immutability of Nirvana, he replied: "The fallen leaves follow the running

stream while the autumnal moon rises above the solitary peak." Another appeared in the pulpit apparently ready to give a sermon, but as soon as he mounted it, he declared that his discourse was over, saying: "Fare well!" After a while he resumed: "If there is any who has no understanding yet, let him come out." A monk made an advance toward the master and bowed down reverentially, whereupon the master, raising his voice, said, "How painful!" The monk stood up and was about to propose a question, but the master cried "Ho!" and drove him out. When another monk approached, saying: "What is the most wonderful word [expressing the highest truth]?", the master merely remarked: "What say you?" Going carefully over all these *mondo* (dialogues), where do we find traces of mysticism in Zen? The masters give no hint whatever as to the annihilation or absorption of the self in the absolute, or the casting of the world into the abyss of Nirvana.

12

Mystics, I believe, generally agree with this characterization of God: "God is not an 'object' for human understanding. He utterly transcends knowledge, and everything one says of Him is untrue." " 'Be still,' Eckhart says in a sermon, 'and prate not of God (i.e. the Godhead), for whatever you prate in words about Him is a lie and is sinful.' 'If I say God is good, it is not true; for what is good can grow better; what can grow better can grow best. Now these three things (good, better, best) are far from God, for He is above all,' i.e. all such distinctions. No word that voices distinctions or characteristics, then, may be spoken of the Godhead. Eckhart's favourite names are: 'the Wordless Godhead'; 'the Nameless Nothing'; 'the Naked Godhead'; 'the Immovable Rest'; 'the Still Wilderness, where no one is at home.'" (Rufus Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London 1909), pp. 225-226.)

However mystical one may be, one cannot avoid using

the term "God" or "Godhead" or some concept corresponding to it. But this is not so with Zen. Zen avoids, not necessarily deliberately but unavoidably I believe, abstract terms. When the question arises concerning such terms, the Zen master turns them down, making the questioner realize the fact that they have no direct hold on life. Zuigan Shigen asked Ganto (A.D. 829-887): "What is the original eternal reason?"

Ganto: "Moving!"

Zuigan: "What about it when moving?"

Ganto: "It is no more the original eternal reason."

This made Zuigan reflect for some time over the matter. Ganto continued: "When you assert, you are still in the world of senses; when you do not assert, you sink into the ocean of birth and death!"

Ganto does not wish to see his disciple stay with the original eternal reason, nor does he want him to lose the sight of it. He knows that Zen is neither to assert nor to deny, that Zen is the suchness of things. The Zen masters are not mystics and their philosophy is not mysticism.

13

In this respect, Kwasan's answer, which he gave uniformly to the various questions regarding Buddha, Mind, and Truth, is significant.

Kwasan (died 960) used to quote the passage from Sojo's work, *The Sacred Treasure*: "Learning-and-disciplining is called (the stage of) Hearing; non-learning (the stage of) Approximation; and when these two (stages) are transcended, we pass on to (the stage of) Truth."

A monk came up and asked: "What is the stage of Truth?"

The master said: "I know how to beat the drum."

Another time a monk asked: "What is the first principle?"

"I know how to beat the drum."

The master's response was the same when he was

of view we like to take. Zen has added nothing to the sum-total of reality, nor has it subtracted an iota of it. Zen is radical realism rather than mysticism.

We must remember here, however, that Zen does not mean to ignore our moral thoughts, aspirations, and feelings which determine the value of life while on earth. Zen is essentially concerned with the thing most fundamental and most primary, and as to what relates to our worldly lives it leaves all this where it properly belongs. Everything that exclusively belongs, as it were, to the dualistic sphere of existence is taken up by moral philosophy, religion, political science, and other fields of human consciousness, while Zen aims at taking hold of what underlies all these phenomenological activities of the Mind.

15

Rudolf Otto, while referring to Fichte's mysticism together with Eckhart's, which he differentiates from Sankara's, writes: "Thus the true relationship of the man who is saved is for Fichte, as it was for Eckhart: To know that he is one with the One, life with the Life, not united but absolutely unified, and *at the same time*, to stand in this world of multiplicity and division, not straining after its dissolution, but with Eckhart, working righteousness in it, and with Fichte, completing in it the living deed of ethical culture, and thus with both teachers bringing into this very world of non-being and of death, Being and Life. He must do this in such a way that his transcendental possession is itself the very source of power and the impelling force to moral and cultural activity."¹

Even with Eckhart and Fichte, we observe that the basis of their philosophy lies in the dualism of being and non-being, of life and death, oneness and multiplicity.

¹ *Mysticism, East and West*, trans. by Bertah L. Bracey and Richarda C. Payne (New York 1932), p. 230. By permission of The Macmillan Co., Publishers.

At times, it is true, they seem to go beyond the antithesis, but as their thought primarily revolves around the dualistic axis, they always return to it after they have made a so-called mystical excursion into the fields of identity. Zen, on the other hand, always keeps itself in the suchness of things, where this world of multiplicity and discrimination is at once the transcendental world of emptiness (*sunyata*) and non-discrimination (*avikalpa*). Zen, therefore, tries to guard most jealously against our consciousness getting tipped to one side or to the other. This is not a deliberate balancing. In the beginning of Zen-life there may be something of the sort, but the object of its discipline is to transcend all such artificialities and to have the principle of suchness work out its own activity.

16

When Hofuku (died 928) and Chokei (853-932) took a walk in the mountain, Hofuku pointed at it and said: "Look here, this is no other than the Holy Peak itself!" Chokei replied: "Fine, just as you say, but what a pity!" Zen is loath to see its experience lopsided, for it is sure to end in a lame Zen-consciousness. Chokei's remark points to this.

Hyakujo (754-814) was asked: "What is the most wonderful fact in the world?" He answered: "I sit here all by myself on the top of Mount Daiyu." The monk bowed to him, and Hyakujo struck the monk. This striking is significant, betraying the spirit of Zen, for Zen aspires to independence, self-mastery, freedom from every form of one-sidedness which means restraint and conditionality.

When Baso (died 788) was asked: "What is the first principle of Buddhism?" he struck the monk, saying: "If I did not strike you thus, all the world would be laughing at me." When another monk came to him with this: "What is the idea of Bodhidharma coming from the West?", Baso told him to come forward and he would

let him know. The monk as he was told stepped forward. Baso lost no time in giving him a slap over his ear and said: "The secret's already out."

When these Zen incidents are observed from the point of view of relativity and dualism, they appear to have no sense whatever; but when looked at from the inside, as it were, there looms up the big character, "Zen", which is the key to all the "mysteries" so far cited. What Zen dislikes most is mediation, deliberation, wordiness, and the weighing of advantages. Immediacy is impossible as long as we are onlookers, contemplators, critics, ideamongers, word-manipulators, dualists, or monists. All these faults are corrected and Zen is revealed when we abandon our so-called common-sense or logical attitude and effect a complete about-face, when we plunge right into the working of things as they move on before and behind our senses. It is only when this experience takes place that we can talk intelligently about Zen-consciousness from which the Zen-incidents or Zen-dialogues making up the annals of Zen are produced.

17

Zen therefore is not mysticism, although there may be something in it reminding one of the latter. Zen does not teach absorption, identification, or union, for all these ideas are derived from a dualistic conception of life and the world. In Zen there is a wholeness of things, which refuses to be analysed or separated into antitheses of all kinds. As they say, it is like an iron bar with no holes or handles to swing it about. You have no way to take hold of it; in other words, it cannot be subsumed under any categories. Thus, Zen must be said to be a unique discipline in the history of human culture, religious and philosophical.

Zen often speaks of a flash of lightning as if it valued an instantaneous or instinctive action in dealing with the fundamental problems of life. When somebody asks you

about Buddhahood or Godhead, you strike the questioner, saying: "What a blockheaded fellow of a monk!" There is no time lost between asking and striking, and you may think this is an immediacy, which is Zen. But the fact is far from it. Zen has nothing to do with rapidity or immediacy in the sense of being quick. A flash of lightning refers to the non-mediating nature of Zen-experience.

Zen-experience, one may say, is a kind of intuition which is the basis of mysticism. We have to be careful, however, about the use of the term "intuition". If we make it presuppose the existence of an antithesis of some form, Zen is not this kind of intuition, which we may designate as static or contemplative. If Zen-experience is an act of intuition, it must be distinguished from the static form, and let us call it dynamic or actional. The following Zen-incidents may, I hope, help one to understand what I mean by dynamic intuition which is Zen-experience.

18

So some more Zen-incidents are given here, in order to indicate which way Zen-consciousness tends. They are culled at random from a Zen work known as *The Transmission of the Lamp*. When these incidents are perused thoughtfully and without bias one may be able to come in touch with an invisible thread running through them.

1. An officer once visited Gensha (834-908), who treated him to a dish of cake. The officer asked: "They speak of our not knowing it while using it all the time. What is this 'it'?" Gensha looked as if he were not paying attention to the questioner, for he innocently picked up a piece of cake and offered it to the officer to eat. The latter finished it and repeated the question. The master said: "There you are! It is daily made use of and yet you know it not!"

2. One day Chosa had all his monks work in the field to gather wood. The master said: "You all partake of my power." "If so, why do we all have to work in the

riya's *The Religion of the Sumurai* at pp. 179-80, and in Dr. Suzuki's First Series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* at pp. 296-7 of the first edition and pp. 310-11 of the second.

DR. SUZUKI'S REPLY

One of my first impressions after reading Dr. Hu Shih's learned and instructive paper on Zen Buddhism in China is that he may know a great deal about history but nothing about the actor behind it. History is a kind of public property accessible to everybody who is at liberty to handle it according to his judgment. To this extent history is something objective, and its materials or facts, though these are quite an indefinite element in the make-up of history, are like scientific objects ready to be examined by the students. They are not, of course, subject to planned experiments. On the other hand, the actor or creator, the man who is behind history, eludes the historian's objective handling. What constitutes his individuality or subjectivity cannot be made the object of historical investigation, because it refuses to manifest itself objectively. It can be appreciated only by himself. His is a unique existence which can never be duplicated, and this uniqueness in its metaphysical sense, or in its deepest sense, can be intuited only by the man himself. It is not the historian's business to peer into it. In fact, however much he may try, he will always be frustrated in his attempt. Hu Shih fails to understand this.

A further impression is that, vis-à-vis Zen, there are at least two types of mentality; the one which can understand Zen and, therefore, has the right to say something about it, and another which is utterly unable to grasp what Zen is. The difference between the two types is one of quality and is beyond the possibility of reconciliation. By this I mean that, from the point of view of the second type, Zen belongs in a realm altogether transcending this type of mind and, therefore, is not a worthwhile subject on which to waste much time. Men of the

first type know very well where this second type is entrenched, because they were there themselves prior to their attainment to Zen.

It is my opinion that Hu Shih, who represents the second type of mentality, is not properly qualified to discuss Zen as Zen apart from its various historical settings. Zen must be understood from the inside, not from the outside. One must first attain what I call *prajna*-intuition and then proceed to the study of all its objectified expressions. To try to get into Zen by collecting the so-called historical materials and to come to a conclusion which will definitely characterize Zen as Zen, Zen in itself, or Zen as each of us lives it in his innermost being, is not the right approach.

Hu Shih, as a historian, knows Zen in its historical setting, but not Zen in itself. It is likely that he does not recognize that Zen has its own life independent of history. After he has exhausted Zen in its historical setting, he is not aware of the fact that Zen is still fully alive, demanding Hu Shih's attention and, if possible, his "unhistorical" treatment.

2

Hu Shih seems upset by my statement that Zen is irrational and beyond our intellectual comprehension, and he tries to show that Zen can be understood easily when it is placed in its historical setting. He thinks that when Zen is so placed, it is found that the Zen movement in the history of Chinese Buddhism was "only a part of a larger movement which may be correctly characterized as internal reformation or revolution in Buddhism". Let me see if he is right.

My contention is twofold: (1) Zen is not explainable by mere intellectual analysis. As long as the intellect is concerned with words and ideas, it can never reach Zen. (2) Even when Zen is treated historically, Hu Shih's way of setting it in a historical frame is not correct,

because he fails to understand what Zen is. I must strongly insist that Zen must first be comprehended as it is in itself; only then can one proceed to the study of its historical objectifications, as Hu Shih does.

I will discuss the second point first.

Hu Shih does not seem to understand the real significance of "sudden awakening or enlightenment" in its historical setting. He makes a great deal of Tao-sheng's allusion to this term and thinks that here is the beginning of Zen thought. But "sudden enlightenment" is the very essence of Buddhist teaching, and all the schools of Buddhism, Hinayana and Mahayana, Yogacara and Madhyamika, even, in my opinion, the Pure Land sect, owe their origin to Buddha's enlightenment-experience which he had under the Bodhi tree by the River Nairanjana so many centuries ago. Buddha's enlightenment was no other than a "sudden enlightenment". Among the *sutras* in which this experience is emphasized, I may mention the *Vimalakirti*, the *Lankavatara*, and the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*. Though the last-mentioned is a disputed *sutra*, it is one of the most important works on Zen.

In the history of Zen, Yeno (Hui-neng or Wei-lang in Chinese) comes foremost, and it may be better in more than one sense to consider him the first Patriarch of Zen in China. His message was really revolutionary. Though he is described as an illiterate son of a farmer, living in the Lingnan district far away from the centre of T'ang culture and civilization, he was a great pioneer spirit and opened up a new field in the study of Buddhism, upsetting all the traditions which preceded him. His message was: *dhyana* and *prajna* are one; where *dhyana* is, there is *prajna*, and where *prajna* is, there is *dhyana*; they are not to be separated one from the other.¹ Before Hui-neng the two were regarded as separate; at least their identity was not clearly affirmed, which resulted in the practice of emphasizing *dhyana* at the expense of *prajna*. Buddha's all-important enlightenment-experience

¹ Cf. *The Dhammahada*, verse 372.

came to be interpreted statically and not dynamically, and the doctrine of *sunyata* (emptiness), which is really the cornerstone of Buddhist thought-structure, became a dead thing. Hui-neng revived the enlightenment-experience.

According to *The Records of the Lanka Teachers and Disciples*, Tao-hsin (Doshin), popularly known as the fourth Patriarch of Zen in China, was a great master of Zen, and under his successor, Hung-jen (Gunin), the fifth Patriarch, there were ten or eleven great masters, one of whom was Hui-neng (Yeno). Tao-hsin and Hung-jen, however, did not make the distinction and the identity of *dhyana* and *prajna* quite clear. Perhaps there were yet no impelling circumstances to do so. But under Hung-jen this changed, for among the rivals of Hui-neng there was Shen-hsiu (Jinshu), who was an outstanding figure almost overshadowing Hui-neng. Shen-hsiu was a contrast to Hui-neng in every way—in learning, monkish training, and personality. Hui-neng stayed in the South, while Shen-hsiu went to the capital under imperial patronage. It was natural that Shen-hsiu and his teaching were more esteemed. Hui-neng, however, did not make any special effort to compete with Shen-hsiu, doing his own preaching in his own way in the remote provincial towns. It was due to Shen-hui, one of the youngest disciples of Hui-neng, that the differences between Hui-neng's school and Shen-hsiu's were brought to the surface and the great struggle started for ascendance and supremacy, as described so well by Hu Shih.

Shen-hui's emphasis, however, on the doctrine of sudden enlightenment does not exactly reflect the true spirit of Hui-neng. It is rather a side-issue from the doctrine of the identity of *dhyana* and *prajna*. According to my "historical understanding", the identity-doctrine comes first and when this is grasped sudden enlightenment naturally follows. Shen-hui probably had to emphasize sudden enlightenment because of strong opposition from Shen-hsiu's followers. Shen-hui's position

is better understood from Tsung-mi's comment on Shen-hui in which Tsung-mi characterizes Shen-hui's teaching as "The one character *chih* is the gateway to all secrets". Here *chih* means *prajna*-intuition and not "knowledge" in its ordinary sense. When *chih* is rendered—as it is by Hu Shih—as "knowledge", all is lost, not only Shen-hui and Hui-neng but also Zen itself. *Chih* here is the key-term which unlocks all the secrets of Zen. I will return to this later.

That *dhyana* is no other than *prajna* was Hui-neng's intuition, which was really revolutionary in the history of Buddhist thought in China. Chih-i was a great Buddhist philosopher, and Fa-tsang was a still greater one. The latter marks the climax of Buddhist thought as it developed in China. Fa-tsang's systematization of ideas expounded in the Buddhist *sutra*-group known as the *Gandavyuha* or *Avatamsaka* (Kegon in Japanese and Hua-yen in Chinese) is one of the wonderful intellectual achievements performed by the Chinese mind and is of the highest importance to the history of world thought. Hui-neng's accomplishment in the way of Zen intuition equals, indeed, in its cultural value that of Chih-i and Fa-tsang, both of whom are minds of the highest order, not only in China but in the whole world.

What, then, is the identity-doctrine of Hui-neng? How did it contribute to the later development of the various schools of Zen Buddhism? To answer these is more than I can manage in this paper.¹ Let me just refer to Shen-hui. While Shen-hui was engaged in discussion with Ch'eng, the Zen master, on the subject of identity, Shen-hui remarked to Wang Wei, who was the host: "When I am thus talking with you I am the identity of *dhyana* and *prajna*."² This gives the doctrine in a nutshell, or it may be better to say that Shen-hui himself stands here as the practical demonstrator of it. From this identity naturally follows Ma-tsu's famous dictum:

¹ I have treated these problems in the third volume of my "History of Zen Thought". The book is in Japanese and is still in MS.

² Suzuki's edition of *Shen-Hui-Sayings* [or *Discourses*], pp. 31-2.

"My everyday thought is the *Tao*" (*heijo-shin kore michi*; in Chinese, *p'ing ch'ang hsin shih tao*). This is explained by him thus: "Everyday thought means to be doing nothing special; it means to be free from right and wrong, to be free from taking and giving up, to be free from nihilism as well as eternalism, to be neither a saintly nor an ordinary man, neither a wise man nor a *bodhisattva*. My going-about, standing, sitting, or lying-down; my meeting situations as they arise; my dealing with things as they come and go—all this is the *Tao*."¹

To give a few more examples of the identity-doctrine as it developed later:

A monk asked Kei-shin of Chosha (Changsha Ching-ts'en), who was a disciple of Nansen Fugwan (Nanch'uan Pu-yuan, died 834): "What is meant by 'everyday thought'?" Kei-shin answered: "If you want to sleep, sleep; if you want to sit, sit." The monk said: "I do not understand." Kei-shin answered: "When hot, we try to get cool; when cold, we turn toward a fire."

A monk asked Kei-shin: "According to Nansen, the cat and the ox have a better knowledge of it than all the Buddhas of the past, the present, and the future. How is it that all the Buddhas do not know it?"

Kei-shin answered: "They knew a little better before they entered the Deer Park."

The monk: "How is it that the cat and ox have a knowledge of it?"

Kei-shin: "You cannot suspect them."²

This *mondo* will be understood better when I try later to distinguish two kinds of knowledge, relative and transcendental. Hu Shih may think this is a "crazy" kind of Zen methodology to make the monk realize the truth by himself in a most straightforward way.

In one sense, this way of looking at life may be judged to be a kind of naturalism, even of animalistic libertinism.

¹ Tao Yuan, *Ching Te Ch'uan Teng Lu* (*The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*), Fas. XXVIII.

² *Ibid.*, Fas. X.

But we must remember that man is human, and the animal is animal. There must be a distinction between human naturalism and animal naturalism. We ask questions and wait and decide and act, but animals do not ask questions, they just act. This is where they have one advantage over us, and yet this is where they are animals. Human naturalism is not quite the same as animal naturalism. We are hungry. Sometimes we decide not to eat; sometimes we even decide to starve to death, and here is human naturalism, too. It may be called unnaturalism.

There is, however, through all these naturalistic affirmations or unnaturalistic negations, something that is in every one of us which leads to what I call a transcendental "yes" attitude or frame of mind. This can be seen in the Zen master when he asserts: "Just so", or "So it is", or "You are right", or "Thus things go", or "Such is the way", etc. In the Chinese the assertion runs: *shih mo*, or *chih mo*, or *ju shih*, or *ju tz'u*, or *chih che shih*. These do not exhaust all the statements a Zen master makes in the expression of his "yes" frame of mind, or in his acceptance of the Buddhist doctrine of suchness or thushness (*tathata*) or of emptiness (*sunyata*).¹

Strictly speaking, there cannot be a philosophy of suchness, because suchness defies a clear-cut definition as an idea. When it is presented as an idea it is lost; it turns into a shadow, and any philosophy built on it will be a castle on the sand. Suchness or *chih che shih* is something one has to experience in oneself. Therefore, we might say that it is only by those who have this experience that any provisional system of thought can be produced on the basis of it. In many cases such minds prefer silence to

¹ As regards the idea of "suchness" (*sono mama* in Japanese, *shih mo* in Chinese, and *tathata* in Sanskrit), which I hold to be the basis of all religious experience, the reader is referred to Exodus iv, 14, where God reveals his name to Moses as "I am that I am"; and also to Jacques Maritain's *A Preface to Metaphysics*, p. 93, where he expounds "the principle of identity" as "being is being". My article on "Japanese Thought", which is my contribution to *History of Philosophy Eastern and Western* (Allen and Unwin, 1952), Vol. I, pp. 597 ff., will also shed light on the idea of *sono mama* or *kannagara* in Shinto terminology.

verbalism or what we may call symbolism to intellectualization. They do not like to risk any form of misunderstanding, for they know that the finger is quite liable to be taken for the moon. The Zen master, generally speaking, despises those who indulge in word- or ideamongering, and in this respect Hu Shih and myself are great sinners, murderers of Buddhas and patriarchs; we are both destined for hell.

But it is not a bad thing to go to hell, if it does some good to somebody. So, let us go on our way and I, for my part, quote the following from *The Transmission of the Lamp* (Fas. XIV) under Yakusan Igen (Yaoshan Wei-yen, 751-834), and hope to help readers understand what I mean by the experience of suchness, or the *chih che shih* frame of mind:

One day Yakusan was found quietly sitting in meditation. Sekito (Shih-t'ou, 700-790), seeing this, asked: "What are you doing here?"

Yakusan answered: "I am not doing anything at all."

Sekito said: "In that case you are just sitting idly."

Yakusan: "If I am sitting idly, I am then doing something."

Sekito: "You say you are not doing anything. What is this 'anything' you are not doing?"

Yakusan: "You may get a thousand wise men together and even they cannot tell."

Sekito then composed a stanza:

Since of old we have been living together without
knowing the name;
Hand in hand, as the wheel turns, we thus go.¹

¹ "Thus" in the original Chinese is *chih mo* (*shimo* in Japanese). This term coupled with *jen-yun* is the essence of this *gatha*. "*Jen-yun*", here translated "as the wheel turns" or "as the wind blows", has nothing to do with fatalism. "*Jen-yun*" frequently goes with "*t'eng-t'eng*" (sometimes *teng-teng*). This combination "*jen-yun t'eng-t'eng*" is full of significance, but it is very difficult to give the idea in a few English words. In short, it is "Let thy will be done" without the accompaniment of "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "*T'eng-t'eng*" is going around almost jubilantly, at least in a fully relaxed state of mind, with no fear, no anxiety, no anguish.

Since ancient times even wise men of the highest grade failed to know what it is;

How then can ordinary people expect to have a clear understanding of it in a casual way?

Sometime later, Sekito remarked: "Words and actions are of no avail."

To this Yakusan said: "Even when there are no words, no actions, they are of no avail."

Sekito said: "Here is no room even for a pinhead."

Yakusan then said: "Here it is like planting a flower on the rock."

And Sekito expressed his full approval.

When Beirei Osho (Mi-ling, the teacher)¹ was about to pass away, he left this in part for his disciples: "O my pupils, carefully think of the matter. Ultimately, it is 'just this and nothing more,' *chih che shih!*"

A monk asked Risan Osho² (Li-shan, the teacher): "What is the idea of Daruma (*Tamo*) coming from the West?"

Risan answered: "I do not see any 'What'."

The monk: "Why so?"

Risan said: "Just so and nothing more" (*chih wei ju tz'u*).

Chih ju tz'u, *shih mo*, and *chih che shih*—all these are the Zen masters' attempts to express what goes beyond words or what cannot be mediated by ideas. When they wish to be more expressive, they say: "It is like planting a flower on the rock", or "A silly old man is filling the well with snow", or "It is like piling vegetables into a bottomless basket". The more they try to express themselves, the more enigmatic they become. They are not doing this with any special pedagogic purpose. They are just trying to give expression to what they have in mind. Nor are they exponents of agnosticism. They are just plain Zen masters who have something to say to the rest of their fellow-beings.

Into whatever historical setting Zen may fit, and in whatever way the historian may deal with it, as revolutionary or iconoclastic or anti-traditional, we must remember

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Fas. VIII, under "Beirei".

² *Ibid.*, under "Risan".

that this kind of treatment of Zen never does clarify the self-nature (*svabhava* or *svalaksana*) of Zen. The historical handling of Zen cannot go any further than the objective relationships with other so-called historical factors. When this is done, however skilfully and ingeniously, the historian cannot expect to have done with Zen in every possible way. The fact is that if one is to understand *what* Zen is *in itself* it has to be grasped from within. Unfortunately, Hu Shih seems to neglect this side of the study of Zen.

3

This neglect on the part of Hu Shih is shown in his dealing with Tsung-mi's characterization of Shen-hui. Tsung-mi (Shu-mitsu) sums up Shen-hui's teaching as being centred in one Chinese character "*chih*", which is regarded as "the gateway to all mysteries (or secrets)". Hu Shih translates *chih* as "knowledge" and takes it as best characterizing Shen-hui's intellectualistic approach. This statement proves that Hu Shih does not understand Zen as it is in itself, apart from its "historical setting".

知
 Shen-hui's *chih* does not mean intellectual knowledge, but is rather what I have called "prajna-intuition".¹ It may take many pages to explain my position in regard to *chih*, but I have to do it because it is the central notion of Zen. And when one knows what *chih* is, one knows something of Zen.

When Buddhist philosophers talk much about suchness or thusness, and when the Zen master raises his eyebrows, or swings his stick, or coughs, or rubs his hands, or utters the "*Ho!*" cry (*kwatz* in Japanese), or just says "Yes, yes", or "You are right", or "Thus we go", almost

¹ See my paper on this in *Essays in East-West Philosophy: An Attempt at World Philosophical Synthesis*, Charles A Moore, ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 1951), pp. 17-48.

[This is the preceding article in this Volume.—Ed.]

ad infinitum, we must remember that they all point to something in us which may be called pure self-consciousness, or pure experience, or pure awakening, or intuition (rather, *prajna*-intuition). This is the very foundation of all our experiences, all our knowledge, and defies being defined, for definition means ideation and objectification. The "something" is the ultimate reality or "*subjectum*" or "emptiness" (*sunyata*). And what is most important here is that it is self-conscious, though not in the relative sense. This self-consciousness is *chih*, and Tsung-mi and Shen-hui quite rightly make it the gateway to all Zen secrets.

I should like to have Hu Shih remember that knowledge, as the term is generally used, is the relationship between subject and object. Where there is no such dichotomous distinction, knowledge is impossible. If we have something of noetic quality here, we must not designate it as knowledge, for by doing so we get into confusion and find ourselves involved in contradictions. When the self becomes conscious of itself at the end of an ever-receding process of consciousness, this last is what we must call self-consciousness in its deepest sense. This is truly the consciousness of the self, where there is no subject-object separation, but where subject is object and object is subject. If we still find here the bifurcation of subject and object, that will not yet be the limit of consciousness. We have now gone beyond that limit and are conscious of this fact of transcendence. Here can be no trace of selfhood, only unconscious consciousness of no-self, because we are now beyond the realm of the subject-object relationship.

Shen-hui calls this *chih*, which is no other than *prajna*-intuition, or simply *prajna* in contradistinction to *vinana*, "discriminatory knowledge". Here is the irrationality of Zen beyond the comprehension of human understanding. *Chih* is the absolute object of *prajna* and at the same time is *prajna* itself. The Chinese Buddhist philosophers frequently call it, tautologically, *pan-ju chih chih-hui* (*hannya no chiye* in Japanese), for they want to have

chih-hui, as it is ordinarily understood, sharply distinguished from *prajna* (*pan-ju*).

The professional philosopher or historian may reject the existence and reality of *chih* as we have it here, because he, especially the historian, finds it rather disturbing in his objective and "historical" treatment of Zen. The historian here resorts to strange tactics. He summarily puts aside as "fabrication" or fiction or invention everything that does not conveniently fit into his scheme of historical setting. I would not call this kind of history objective but strongly coloured with subjectivism.

I am now ready to present a piece of Zen epistemology. There are two kinds of information we can have of reality; one is knowledge *about* it and the other is that which comes out of reality itself. Using "knowledge" in its broadest sense, the first is what I would describe as knowable knowledge and the second as unknowable knowledge.

Knowledge is knowable when it is the relationship between subject and object. Here are the subject as knower and the object as the known. As long as this dichotomy holds, all knowledge based on it is knowable because it is public property and accessible to everybody. On the contrary, knowledge becomes unknown or unknowable when it is not public but strictly private in the sense that it is not sharable by others.¹ Unknown knowledge is the result of an inner experience; therefore, it is wholly individual and subjective. But the strange thing about this kind of knowledge is that the one who has it is absolutely convinced of its universality in spite of its privacy. He knows that everybody has it, but everybody is not conscious of it.

Knowable knowledge is relative, while unknown knowledge is absolute and transcendental and is not communicable through the medium of ideas. Absolute

¹ In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding on the part of the reader, I add this: The experience is altogether private inasmuch as it is a form of feeling, but at the same time there is in it an element of universality. It is at once unsharable and sharable. It has in itself no paradox, but as soon as it expresses itself we encounter a paradox. *

knowledge is the knowledge which the subject has of himself directly without any medium between him and his knowledge. He does not divide himself into factors such as subject and object in order to know himself. We may say that it is a state of inner awareness. And this awareness is singularly contributive to keeping one's mind free of fears and anxieties.

Unknown knowledge is intuitive knowledge. We must remember, however, that *prajna*-intuition is altogether different from perceptual intuitions. In the latter case there is the seer and the object which he sees, and they are separable and separate, one standing over against the other. They belong to the realm of relativity and discrimination. *Prajna*-intuition obtains where there is oneness and sameness. It is also different from ethical intuitions and from mathematical intuitions.

For a general characterization of *prajna*-intuition we can state something like this: *Prajna*-intuition is not derivative but primitive; not inferential, not rationalistic, nor mediational, but direct, immediate; not analytical but integrating; not cognitive, nor symbolical; not intending but merely expressive; not abstract, but concrete; not processional, not purposive, but factual and ultimate, final and irreducible; not eternally receding, but infinitely inclusive; etc. If we go on like this, there may be many more predicates which could be ascribed to *prajna*-intuition as its characteristics. But there is one quality we must not forget to mention in this connection; the uniqueness of *prajna*-intuition consists in its authoritativeness, utterly convincing and contributive to the feeling that "I am the ultimate reality itself", that "I am absolute knower", that "I am free and know no fear of any kind".¹ In one sense *prajna*-intuition may be said to correspond to Spinoza's *scientia intuitiva*. According to him, this kind of intuition is absolutely certain and infallible and, in contrast to *ratio*, produces the highest peace and virtue of the mind.

Let us see how these characterizations of *prajna*-

¹ Cf. *Dhammapada*, 153-4, 179.

intuition, which is no other than the Zen-experience, fit the masters' way of handling Zen questions. I will give just a few examples, enough to illustrate my point.

Dogo¹ asked Sekito:² "What is the ultimate Buddhist teaching?"

Sekito answered: "Unless you have it you cannot tell."

Dogo: "Is there anything further which may give me a clue?"

Sekito: "The vastness of the sky does not hinder the white cloud flying anywhere it likes."

Another time, Dogo asked: "Who has attained the teaching of the Sixth Patriarch?"

Sekito: "One who has understood Buddhism has it."

Dogo: "Do you have it?"

Sekito: "No, I do not understand Buddhism."

Superficially, this *mondo* ("question and answer") may sound strange, because Sekito was actually under Yeno (Hui-neng), the sixth Patriarch, when he was still very young, and later came to understand Zen under one of Hui-neng's principal disciples, Seigen Gyoshi.³ What makes him say, then, that he does not understand Hui-neng's teaching—that is, Zen? In the first *mondo* Sekito declares that unless one really understands what Buddhism is one cannot tell what it is, which is quite a natural thing to say. What, then, does he mean when he says that he does not know Hui-neng's teaching? His knowledge is evidently his not-knowing. This is "unknown knowledge".

A monk once asked Dai-ten (Ta-tien): "When the inside men see each other what happens?"

Dai-ten answered: "They are already outside."

¹ Tao-wu Yen-chih, 779-835, *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Fas. XIV, under "Sekito".

² Shih-tou Hsi-ch'ien, 742-55, *ibid.*, Fas. XIV.

³ Ch'ing-yuan Hang-ssu, died 740, *ibid.*, Fas. V.

Monk: "How about those who are right inside?"

Dai-ten: "They do not ask such questions."¹

One can readily see that this kind of *chih* is not knowledge that is transmissible to others, that it is subjective in the sense that it grows within oneself and is exclusively the possession of this particular person. We may call it "inside knowledge". But as soon as we say it is inside, it gets outside and ceases to be itself. You can neither affirm nor negate it. It is above both, but can be either as you choose.

Therefore, Yakusan² announced: "I have a word (*i chu tzu*) of which I have never told anybody."

Dogo said: "You are already giving yourself up to it."

Later a monk asked Yakusan: "What is the one word you do not tell anybody?"

Yakusan replied: "It is beyond talking."

Dogo remarked again: "You are already talking."

Yakusan's *i chu tzu* is no other than *chih*, "unknown and unknowable". It is the ultimate reality, the Godhead, in which there are no distinctions whatever and to which, therefore, the intellect cannot give any predicate, this or that, good or bad, right or wrong. To talk about it is to negate it. When Yakusan begins to talk about it either negatively or positively, his *i chu tzu* is no longer present. Dogo is right, therefore, in accusing his master of contradicting himself. But we can also say that Dogo has to share the same accusation he is throwing against the other. As far as human intellect is concerned, we can never escape this contradiction. Yakusan fully realizes this, but he cannot help himself inasmuch as he is also a human individual. The following records we have of him in *The Transmission of the Lamp* (Fas. XIV) show clearly where he stands:

A monk once asked him: "I have yet no clear knowledge of myself and may I ask you to indicate the way to it?"

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Fas. XIV, under "Ta-tien".

² Yaoshan Wei-yen, 754-834, *ibid.*, Fas. XIV, under "Dogo" (Tao-un).

Yakusan remained silent for a while and then said: "It is not difficult for me to give you a word (*i chu*) about it. But what is needed of you is to see it instantly as the word is uttered. Then you may have something of it. But when you are given up to reflection or intellection (*ssu liang*) to any degree I shall be committing a fault myself and shall be blamed for it. It is better, therefore, to keep one's mouth tightly closed and let no trouble come out that way."

His is an honest confession.

The *i chu tzu* is an inner experience and defies expression in words, for words are mere symbols and cannot be the thing in itself. But as words are a convenient medium we have invented for mutual communication, we are apt to take them for realities. Money represents a good which is of real value, but we are so used to money that we manipulate it as if it were the value itself. Words are like money. The Zen masters know that; hence their persistent and often violent opposition to words and to the intellect which deals exclusively in words. This is the reason they appeal to the stick, the *hossu* (*fu-tzu*), the "Ho!" and to various forms of gesture. Even these are far from being the ultimate itself; the masters have faced a very difficult task in trying to convey what they have within themselves. Strictly speaking, however, there is no conveying at all. It is the awakening of the same experience in others by means of words, gestures, and anything the master finds suitable at the moment. There are no prescribed methods; there is no methodology set down in formulas.

To get further acquainted with the nature of *chih*, or *prajna*-intuition, let me quote more from *The Transmission of the Lamp*, which is the mine of the *mondo* and other Zen materials necessary for understanding Zen as far as such records are concerned.

A monk came to Dogo Yenchi (Tao-wu Yen-chih, 779-835) and asked: "How is it that the *Bodhisattva* of No-miracles leaves no traceable footsteps?"¹

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp*. Fas. XIV.

"Leaving no footsteps" has a specific meaning in Zen. This is what is expected of a highly trained Zen master. We ordinary people leave all kinds of footmarks by which our inner life can be detected and assessed. And this inner life is always found to be tainted with selfishness and motives arising from it and also with intellectual calculations designed for their execution. To leave no traces thus means in Christian terms to be above creaturely mindedness. It is, metaphysically speaking, to transcend both affirmation and negation, to be moving in the realm of oneness and sameness, and, therefore, to be leading a life of purposelessness (*anabhogacarya*) or of unattainability (*anupalabdha*). This is one of the most important notions in the philosophy of Zen. To trace the tracelessness of the Zen master's life is to have an "unknown knowledge" of the ultimate reality. Now let us see what answer was given by Dogo Yenchī (Tao-wu Yen-chih). It was simply this:

"One who goes with him knows it." ("Him" means the "*Bodhisattva* of No-miracles".)

The monk asked: "Do you know, O master?"

Dogo said: "I do not know."

The monk wanted to know the reason for his ignorance.

"Why do you not, master?"

The master gave up the case. "You do not understand what I mean."

Now Dogo is no agnostic. He knows everything. He knows the monk through and through. His no-knowledge (*pu-chih*) is not to be "approached intellectually". It is of the same category as his *pu shih* when he answered Goho's (Wu-feng's) question: "Do you know Yakusan, the old master?" Goho wanted to know the reason, asking: "Why do you not know him?" Dogo said: "I do not, I do not." His answer was quite emphatic, as we see from his repetition of negation. This is a most flagrant repudiation of the "historical" fact, because Dogo was one of the chief disciples of Yakusan. This was well known among

into existence, or that "To say that God created the world yesterday or tomorrow would be foolishness, for God created the world and everything in it in the one present Now."¹

Mathematics has this: $0=0$, $1=1$, $1+1=2$, and so on. Zen has these too, but it has no objection to the following either: $0=1$, $0=2$, $1+1=3$, etc. Why? Because zero is infinity and infinity is zero. Is this not irrational and beyond our comprehension?

A geometrical circle has a circumference and just one centre, and no more or less. But Zen admits the existence of a circle that has no circumference nor centre and, therefore, has an infinite number of centres. As this circle has no centre and, therefore, a centre everywhere, every radius from such a centre is of equal length—that is, all are equally infinitely long. According to the Zen point of view, the universe is a circle without a circumference, and every one of us is the centre of the universe. To put it more concretely: I am the centre, I am the universe, I am the creator. I raise the hand and lo! there is space, there is time, there is causation. Every logical law and every metaphysical principle rushes in to confirm the reality of my hand.

4

History deals with time and so does Zen, but with this difference: While history knows nothing of timelessness, perhaps disposing of it as "fabrication", Zen takes time along with timelessness—that is to say, time in timelessness and timelessness in time. Zen lives in this contradiction. I say, "Zen lives." History shuns anything living, for the living man does not like to be grouped with the past, with the dead. He is altogether too much alive for the historian, who is used to digging up old, decayed

¹ *Meister Eckhart: A Modern Translation*. Raymond Bernard Blakney (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1941), p. 214.

things from the grave. It is different with Zen. Zen makes the dead live once more and talk their life anew, although in fact there is no resurrection in Zen, because there is no birth, no death; we all live in timelessness. *Chih* means to become aware of this grand fact, which, however, does not seem to concern the historians.

Science teaches us abstraction, generalization, and specialization. This has warped our view of human beings to the extent that we put aside the living concrete and substitute for it something dead, universal, abstract, and, for that reason, existentially non-being. Economists speak of the "economic man", and politicians of the "political man"; perhaps historians have produced the "historical man". These are all abstractions and fabrications. Zen has nothing to do with the dead, with abstractions, logic, and the past. I wonder would Hu Shih agree with me in this statement?

By this time, I hope my meaning is clear when I say that Zen is not exhausted by being cosily placed in a historical corner, for Zen is far more than history. History may tell much about Zen in its relation to other things or events, but it is all *about* Zen and not Zen in itself as every one of us lives it. Zen is, in a way, iconoclastic, revolutionary, as Hu Shih justly remarks, but we must insist that Zen is not that alone; Zen still stands outside the frame.

For instance, what is it that makes Zen iconoclastic and revolutionary? Why does Zen apparently like to indulge in the use of abusive terms, often highly sacrilegious, and to resort to unconventionalities, or to "the most profane language", even when they do not seem absolutely necessary? We cannot say that Zen followers wanted to be merely destructive and to go against everything that had been traditionally established. To state that Zen is revolutionary is not enough; we must probe into the reason that makes Zen act as it does. What is it, then, that incited Zen to be iconoclastic, revolutionary, unconventional, "profane", and, I say, irrational? Zen is not merely a negative movement. There is something very

positive and affirmative about it. To find this, I may have to be a kind of historian myself.

Zen is really a great revolutionary movement in the world history of thought. It originated in China and, in my opinion, could not arise anywhere else. China has many things she can well be proud of. This I mean not in the sense of cultural nationalism but on the world level of the development of human consciousness. Until about the time of Hui-neng (died 713) Buddhism was still highly coloured with the Indian tint of abstract thinking. The Chinese achievements along this line were remarkable indeed, and I think such Buddhist philosophers as Chih-i and Fa-tsang are some of the greatest thinkers of the world. They were Chinese products, no doubt, but we may say that their way of thinking was stimulated by their Indian predecessors and that they were the direct descendants of Asvaghosa, Nagarjuna, Asanga, and others. But it was in Zen that the Chinese mind completely asserted itself, in a sense, in opposition to the Indian mind. Zen could not rise and flourish in any other land or among any other people. See how it swept over the Middle Kingdom throughout the T'ang and the Sung dynasties. This was quite a noteworthy phenomenon in the history of Chinese thought. What made Zen wield such a powerful moral, intellectual, and spiritual influence in China?

If any people or race is to be characterized in a word, I would say that the Chinese mind is eminently practical, in contrast to the Indian mind, which is speculative and tends toward abstraction and unworldliness and non-historical-mindedness. When the Buddhist monks first came to China the people objected to their not working and to their being celibate. The Chinese people reasoned: If those monks do not work, who will feed them? No other than those who are not monks or priests. The laymen will naturally have to work for non-working parasites. If the monks do not marry, who are going to look after their ancestral spirits? Indians took it for granted that the spiritual teachers would not engage in manual labour,

and it was most natural for them to be dependent upon laymen for their food, clothing, and housing. It was beneath their dignity to work on the farm, to chop wood, to wash dishes. Under these social conditions Zen could not arise in India, for it is one of the most typical traits of Zen life that the masters and disciples work together in all kinds of manual activity and that, while thus working, they exchange their *mondo* on highly metaphysical subjects. They, however, carefully avoid using abstract terms. They utilize any concrete objects they find about them in order to be convinced of the universality of truth. If they are picking tea leaves, the plants themselves become the subject of discourse. If they are walking and notice objects such as birds or animals, the birds or animals are immediately taken up for a lively *mondo*. Not only things living or not-living but also the activities they manifest are appropriate matter for serious inquiry. For Zen masters, life itself with all its dynamism is eloquent expression of the *Tao*.

Therefore, if the master is found making his own straw sandals, or plastering the wall, or reading the *sutras*, or drinking tea, a monk will approach and ask questions. Likewise, when the master catches his disciples engaged in cutting grass, gathering wheat, carrying wood, pounding rice, or pushing a wheelbarrow, he presses them for answers by asking questions which are apparently innocent but are inwardly full of deep metaphysical or spiritual meaning. Joshu's¹ treating all equally with a cup of tea regardless of the monk's status is one of the most noted examples. The master may ask casually whence a monk comes and, according to the answer he advances, the master deals with the monk variously. Such may be called the practical lessons of Zen.

If Zen had developed along the intellectual line of speculation, this would never have happened. But Zen moves on *prajna*-intuition and is concerned with an absolute present in which the work goes on and life is lived.

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Fas. X, under "Chao-chou Ts'ung-shen".

Around this absolute present all Zen study is carried on. The moral value of anything or any work comes afterwards, and is the later development when the work already accomplished comes out as an object of study detached from the worker himself. The evaluation is secondary and not essential to the work itself while it is going on. Zen's daily life is to live and not to look at life from the outside — which would alienate life from the actual living of it. Then there will be words, ideas, concepts, etc., which do not belong in Zen's sphere of interest.

The question of profanity or sacredness, of decorum or indecency, is the result of abstraction and alienation. When a question comes up, Zen is no longer there but ten thousand miles away. The masters are not to be detained with idle discussions as to whether a thing is conventionally tabooed or not. Their objective is not iconoclasm, but their way of judging values comes out automatically as such from their inner life. The judgment which we, as outsiders, give them is concerned only with the bygone traces of the Zen life, with the corpse whose life has departed a long time ago. Zen thus keeps up its intimate contact with life. I would not say that the Indian mind is not like this, but rather that the Chinese mind is more earth-conscious and hates to be lifted up too high from the ground. The Chinese people are practical in this sense, and Zen is deeply infused with this spirit. Hui-neng never stopped pounding rice and chopping wood, and Pai-chang (Hyakujo)¹ was a great genius in organizing the Zen monastery on this principle of work.

5

Hu Shih is no doubt a brilliant writer and an astute thinker, but his logic of deducing the Zen methodology or irrationalism and "seeming craziness" out of the economic necessity of getting support from the powerful

¹ Ibid., Fas. VI, under "Pai-chang Hui-hai".

patrons is, to say the least, illogical and does not add to his rational historicism. While referring to "these new situations and probably many others", Hu Shih does not specify what those "probably many others" were. Probably he did not have time to go over the "historical setting" of those days when "many others" came up and forced the Zen masters to resort to their "mad technique" instead of carrying on the old method of "plain speaking".

But can we imagine that the Zen masters who really thought that there were no Buddhas and no *bodhisattvas*, or that, if there were any, they were no better than "murderers who would seduce innocent people to the pitfalls of the Devil", could not be free to refuse any form of patronage by the civil authorities? What logical connection could there be between the Zen masters courting the patronage of the powers and their invention of "some other subtle but equally thought-provoking way of expressing what the earlier masters had said outspokenly"?

Is the stick-swinging or the "Ho!" any subtler than the earlier masters' outspokenness? I wonder what makes Hu Shih think that the "Ho!" or "the stick" is not so "outspoken" but "seemingly crazy". To my mind, they—"Ho!" and "the stick"—are quite as outspoken, plain speaking, as saying "No Buddhas!", "No clinging to anything!", etc. Yes, if anything, they are more expressive, more efficient, more to the point than so-called "plain and unmistakable *language*". There is nothing "crazy" about them, seemingly or not seemingly. They are, indeed, one of the sanest methodologies one can use for either demonstrating or instructing students. Is it not silly to ask what a Buddha is when the questioner himself is one? What can an impatient master do to make the questioner realize the fact? An argument leads to a series of arguments. There is nothing more effective and short-cut than giving the questioner the "thirty blows" or a hearty "Ho!". Though much may depend on the questioner and the situation which brings him to the master, the master does very well in appealing to this "seemingly

crazy" method. It goes without saying that the "Ho!" and "the stick" do not always mean the same thing. They have a variety of uses, and it will take a deep Zen insight to comprehend what they mean in different situations. Rinzai (Lin-chi I-hsuan), for example, distinguishes four kinds of "Ho!".

Now let me ask who are the "earlier masters" referred to by Hu Shih? Rinzai spoke outspokenly, and so did Tokusan (Te-shan Hsuan-chien), as is confirmed by Hu Shih himself. And it was they who used the stick and uttered "Ho!". Historically, in this they are preceded by Baso (Ma-tsu), who used the fist too. The history of the "crazy" pedagogic methodology of Zen may be said to start with Baso. Sekito (Shih-t'ou), his contemporary, also noted for his Zen insight and understanding, was not as "mad" as Baso, but the spread of Zen all over China, especially in the South, dates from Baso "in the west of the River" and Sekito "in the south of the Lake". Hu Shih's "earlier masters" must be those earlier than Baso and Sekito, which means Jinne (Shen-hui) and Yeno (Hui-neng), Nangaku Yejo (Nan-yueh Hui-jang), Seigen Gyoshi (Ch'ing-yuan), etc. But Hu Shih evidently classes Rinzai, Tokusan, and Baso among those Zen masters who expounded Zen in plain outspoken language.

Hu Shih does not understand what *pu shuo po* (in translation, "do not tell outwardly") really means. It is not just not to speak plainly. I wish he would remember that there is something in the nature of *prajna*-intuition which eludes every attempt at intellectualization and rejects all plain speaking, so called. It is not purposely shunning this way of expression. As *prajna*-intuition goes beyond the two horns of a dilemma, it grudges committing itself to either side. This is what I mean when I say that Zen is beyond the ken of human understanding; by understanding, I mean conceptualization. When the Zen-experience—or *prajna*-intuition, which is the same thing—is brought to conceptualization, it is no more the experience itself; it turns into something else. *Pu shuo po* is not a pedagogical method; it is inherent in the consti-

constitution of the ancient mirror. Therefore, what he says about *pu shuo po* and also about "the golden needle" working underneath the embroidery is off the track. There is nothing pedagogical here. As to *pu shuo po* (unexplainable), I have *shuo po liao* (explained away) as above.

Now as regards the golden needle. It is not that the needle is designedly held back from the sight of the outsider. It cannot be delivered to him even when you want that done. It is something each of us has to get by himself. It is not that "I'll not pass it on to you", but "I can't pass it on to you". For we are all in possession of a golden needle which, however, becomes our own only when we discover it in the unconscious. What can be passed on from one person to another is not native to him who gets it.

Hsing-yen's (Kyogen's) story may be illuminating in this connection.¹

Hsing-yen Chih-hsian was a disciple of I-san (Kweishan Ling-yu, 771-834). Recognizing his aptitude for Zen, I-san once asked Kyogen (Hsing-yen): "I am not going to find out how much you know from book-learning and other sources. What I want you to tell me is this: Can you let me have a word (*i chu*) from you before you came out of your mother's body, before you came to discriminate things?"

"A word" (*i chu*) is something one cannot *shuo po* (explain fully) however much one may try; nor is it a thing which one can pass on to another. Zen wants us to grasp this, each in his own way, out of the depths of consciousness, even before this becomes psychologically or biologically possible. It is therefore beyond the scope of our relative understanding. How can we do it? Yet this is what I-san, as a good Zen master, demanded of his disciple.

Kyogen did not know how to answer or what to say. After being absorbed in deep meditation for some time, he presented his views. But they were all rejected by the master. He then

¹ *The Transmission of the Lamp*, Fas. XI.

asked I-san to let him have the right answer. I-san said: "What I can tell you is my understanding and is of no profit to you." Kyogen returned to his room and went over all his notes, in which he had many entries, but he could not find anything suitable for his answer. He was in a state of utter despondency. "A painted piece of cake does not appease the hungry man." So saying, he committed all his note-books to the fire. He decided not to do anything with Zen, which he now thought to be above his abilities. He left I-san and settled down at a temple where there was the tomb of Chu Kokushi (Chung, the National Teacher). One day while sweeping the ground, his broom made a stone strike a bamboo, which made a noise; and this awoke his unconscious consciousness, which he had even before he was born. He was delighted and grateful to his teacher I-san for not having *shuo chueh* (explained) what the *i chu* (word) was. The first lines of the *gatha* he then composed run as follows:

"One blow has made me forget all my learning;
There was no need for specific training and cultivation."

When I-san did not explain the *i chu* for Kyogen he had no thought of educating him by any specific device. He could not do anything, even if he wished, for his favourite disciple. As he then told him, whatever he would say was his own and not anybody else's. Knowledge can be transmitted from one person to another, for it is a common possession of the human community, but Zen does not deal in such wares. In this respect Zen is absolutely individualistic.

There is one thing I would like to add which will help to clarify Hu Shih's idea of Chinese Zen.

Hu Shih must have noticed in his historical study of Zen in China that Zen has almost nothing to do with the Indian Buddhist practice of *dhyana*, though the term Zen or Ch'an is originally derived from the Sanskrit. The meaning of Zen as meditation or quiet thinking or contemplation no longer holds good after Hui-neng (Yeno), the sixth Patriarch. As I have said, it was Hui-neng's revolutionary movement that achieved this severance.

Hui-neng's message to Chinese Buddhism was the identity of *prajna* and *dhyana*. Shen-hui (Jinne) was most expressive in giving voice to this theme. He was more intellectual in his understanding of Zen than Baso, Sekito, and others, and this was one of the reasons why Shen-hui's school lost its hold on the Chinese mind. The Chinese mind does not tend to be intellectual or metaphysical, and Zen, as the native product of the Chinese mentality, abhors this strain of intellectuality in its study. The Rinzai way of handling Zen is in better accord with the spirit of Zen and goes well with the Chinese liking for practicality and going direct to the objective. At all events, the essential character of Zen, which is based on the identity of *prajna* and *dhyana*, was pointed out in quite an intelligible manner by Shen-hui, as described in the preceding pages.

Before Hui-neng, this problem of the relationship between *dhyana* and *prajna* was not so sharply brought to a focus in China. The Indian mind naturally tended to emphasize *dhyana* more than *prajna*, and Chinese Buddhists followed their Indian predecessors without paying much attention to the subject. But when Hui-neng came on the scene he at once perceived that *prajna* was the most essential thing in the study of Buddhism, and that as long as *dhyana* practice was brought forward at the expense of *prajna* the real issue was likely to be neglected. Moreover, *dhyana* came to be mixed up with *samatha* and *vipasyana*, tranquillization and contemplation, which were a great concern of followers of the Tendai (T'ien-t'ai) school. I do not think Hui-neng was historically conscious of these things; he simply wanted to proclaim his *prajna*-intuition. The situation was accentuated when Shen-hsiu, or, rather, his followers, loudly protested against the Hui-neng movement, which was headed by Shen-hui (Jinne). There are still many Buddhist scholars who are confused about Chinese Zen and the Indian Buddhist practice of *dhyana*.

called intention behind it—may not this asking itself come out of God's will? Is it not God himself who prompts us to ask about his intention or will? If this be the case, the one who can answer the question must be God himself. When we ask such a question as if it came out of ourselves and not from the Creator, are we not putting ourselves on the wrong track? The answer and the question come out of the same root. Therefore, when the root of the question is taken hold of, the answer is already in our hands without our being conscious of the fact.

When the questioner questions himself, he has already answered himself, for the questioning is no other than the answering. God by creating a world answers his own question. Chosui understood his question when he saw it echoed back in the form of his own question. This echoing is the answer. If there were no echoing, there would be no answering the question. The knocking at the door is answered by its being opened. In fact, the knocking is the opening. John calls out to Harry, and Harry responds. The calling is the responding. When this is understood there is Zen.

Mondo, then, means mutuality, or co-responding. As long as the Originally Pure remains pure, that is, remains with itself and in itself and does not ask any question, there is no splitting, hence no answering, no mutuality, no "participation". When any question comes out at all, it sees itself reflected in the form of "the ten thousand things", in the form of "the mountains and the rivers and the great earth". Here is neither coming-out nor coming-in. The Originally Pure is no other than "the mountains and the rivers and the great earth". When the Pure calls out, the echo responds; the mountains rise, the rivers flow, and the great earth moves. God now sees himself in the mirror of "the ten thousand things". The questioning is setting up the mirror.

When Tozan (Tung-shan) came to Shozan Yecho (Shu-shan Hui-ch'ao),¹ Yecho said: "What makes you come here when you are already a recognized leader?"

¹ *Zoku Dentoroku*, Fas. IX.

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