Zen :
A Trinitarian Critique

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초록

비그리스도인이나 현대적인 그리스도인들은 타종교들에 대해 토론할 때 그 기준으로 성경을 사용하는 것을 거부한다. 그것은 성경이 전(前)과학적, 비객관적, 그리고 비중립적인 주장을 편다고 간주하기 때문이다. 물론 모든 그리스도인들은 성경이 비중립적이라는 데 동의한다. 그러나 이것은 성경이 비객관적이라는 의미는 결코 아니다. 만약 성경의 하나님이 참으로 존재하시고 성경이 그의 말씀이라면, 성경은 종교에 관하여 유일하고도 객관적인 관점을 제공한다고 보아야 한다.

따라서 기독교적인 관점에서 볼 때, 기독교적 사상은 종교에 관한 토론들의 표준으로 간주된다. 인간과 하나님에 대한 성경의 가르침은 그리스도인의 출발점이 되어야 한다. 성경의 해석은 비그리스도인들의 종교에 대한 해석과는 근본적으로 다르기 때문에, 그리스도인들은 비그리스도인들의 신념을 드러내는 글들을 액면 그대로 받아들일 수 없다.

기독교와 그 이외의 종교들이 지니고 있는 근본 성질의 차이점을 잘 보여주는 성경의 교리들 중에서, 삼위일체 교리만큼 중요한 것은 아마도 없을 것이다. 그 안에서 하나와 여럿이 근본적인 조화를 이루고 있는 삼위일체 하나님에 대해서 이 세상이 창조되었기 때문에, 인간의 마음 역시 하나와 여럿의 조화라는 개념을 통하여 사유하도록 창조되었다. 비록 죄로 인한 인간의 타락으로 세상과 인간의 마음 속에 있는 근본적인 조화가 깨졌지만, 이 조화가 완전히 망쳐진 것은 아니었다. 사실 모든 인간은 사유할 때 어떤 형식으로든 하나와 여럿의 문제를 고려해야만 한다. 어떤 특정한 사유체계나 혹은 종교가 하나와 여럿의 문제를 어떻게 풀려고 하느냐를 평가하는 것이 핵심적인 사안이다. 따라서 우리는 삼위일체 교리를 가지고 비기독교적인 종교체계들을 평가할 수 있다.

Trinitarianism is the heart of the Christian confession of faith, and, therefore also, the heart of the Christian worldview. If we know that nothing can be more important for our understanding of Christianity itself than a deep appreciation of the meaning of the Trinity, then clearly we should also be persuaded that no truth could be more important for a Christian approach to the comparative study of religion. But, of course, such a conviction contradicts the modern way of thinking.

For most modern men a truly scientific methodology in the study of religion must meet two conditions common to scientific study in general. The method must be neutral and objective. What this means in practice may be illustrated by the somewhat crude expression of Swedish theologian Krister Stendahl: "I do not have the right to visit his holy of holies insulated by the rubber soles of my globetrotter shoes."[1] This is Stendahl's way of saying that Christians should not approach the study of non-Christian religions with the presuppositions of Christianity. He rejects the idea that Christians should judge other religious in terms of Christian categories of thinking. If, for example, some Christians are disturbed by the fact that Buddhism denies the existence of God, Stendahl answers that such Christians are seeking to impose their "Western concepts of creation, being, and significance upon a drastically different theology that begins and ends with a deep, inspired understanding of 'nothingness,' nirvana."[2]

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1) *The National Geographic Society, Great Religions of the World,* The National Geographic Society, Washington D.C., 1971, 1978, p. 7. I do agree with Stendahl in one respect - as a description of Stendahl's brand of Christianity a pair of well-worn, odoriferous globetrotters is perfectly appropriate.
2) Ibid.

Now if Christianity is God-revealed truth, using Christian concepts as the standard of truth is not imposing "Western concepts." In the first place, the concepts of the Christian religion are not Western. If we must use a cultural term to describe them, they are Middle-Eastern and Jewish. But if the teaching of the Bible is revealed by God, Christian ideas are not to be defined as Jewish any more than as Western. The whole idea of revealed truth means that the teaching of the Bible stands above culture, though not outside of it or unrelated to it.

This means further that from a Christian perspective the two conditions for the scientific study of religion suggested above contradict one another. If, in order to be scientific, I must be neutral - in Stendahl's coarse language, take off my globetrotter shoes - the ironic result is that I can no longer be objective. For God is truth and to follow the revelation of Himself given in Holy Scripture is the only objective way to pursue truth. To Stendahl and to modern men in general, objectivity and fairness require neutrality. To someone who believes that the Bible is God's truth, honesty and objectivity require commitment.

There can be no reconciliation of these views. For Stendahl and modern men in general, religious commitment not only can be put on and off like a pair of shoes, religious convictions must be set aside in comparative study, for faith in the Biblical God interferes with an accurate and fair appraisal of non-Christian religion. The modern approach, however, contradicts the teaching of Christ, who taught that commitment is the way to truth: "If you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"(Jn. 8:31-32). If Christianity is true, faith in and obedience to the words of the Bible are the essence of a truly objective appraisal

of non-Christian religion.

Ⅰ. A Trinitarian Approach

Because Christians believe that the revelation of God in the Bible is objective and absolute truth, they also believe that this revelation has been made clear to all men - including those who deny it. Futhermore, they believe God's revelation is important to the psychological motives underlying every worldview. Paul said, "that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen ··· "(Rm. 1:19-20). Paul speaks of God revealing Himself to the world with such clarity that all men know of God. Paul also says that men resist that knowledge and seek to escape it. They are said to "suppress the truth by unrighteousness"(Rm. 1:18). Paul says that they have no excuse for their ignorance of God(Rm. 1:20), and that they knew God(Rm. 1:21). Thus, in the Biblical view, "religion" is of two sorts, that which is based upon God's Self-revelation and that which attempts to sublimate the knowledge of God.

1. Christianity Normative

If I have properly stated the implications of Paul's teaching about the non-Christian's knowledge of God, then we come to the study of non-Christian religion with at least the following three presuppositions. First, the Bible and Biblical categories of thought are relevant to the study

of non-Christian religion. As men created in God's image and living in God's world, non-Christians face precisely the same ultimate philosophical and religious dilemmas that Christians do. To be specific, we expect that in a world that is created by a Triune God, there would be a complex and wonderful manifestation of the harmony of the One and the Many that characterizes His being. In a world perverted by sin, we would expect a distortion of that harmony, so that the notion of "the One and the Many" becomes both a philosophical and a practical problem.

Second, since non-Christian religion represents an attempt to escape the knowledge of God revealed in and to all men, Biblical categories will appear in distorted and often difficult-to-recognize forms. A rose by any other name may indeed smell as sweet, but calling it by another name contributes no little confusion to the conversation, nor will everything called a rose have the same fragrance. This means that Christian study of non-Christian religion will necessarily involve difficult problems of "translating" non-Christian concepts and practices into the overall framework of the Biblical picture of man.

Third, Paul's statements imply an attempt on the part of the non-Christian - not necessarily a self-conscious attempt - to escape from the knowledge of God by means that amount to self-deception. This means that although Christian study of non-Christian religion must take into account the professed self-understanding of non-Christian and the professional studies of religious experts, we cannot accept their opinions at face value. In particular, we expect profound inconsistency to characterize their attempts to have truth without the God of truth, and to find love apart from the God who is love.

2. Trinity Inescapable

Since every doctrine of the Bible is included in the knowledge of God, any doctrine of the Bible provides a standard by which we may examine non-Christian religion. But some doctrines are more important than others, some doctrines provide clearer guidelines than others. The doctrine of the Trinity, so often neglected in Christian discussions of worldview issues, provides an important starting point for the investigation of non-Christian religion, for every worldview and religion must deal with the problem of the One and the Many.

Every worldview faces the fact that life involves both unity and diversity in every realm and must find some explanation for the way things are.[3] Thus, in the past some philosophers have suggested that the world is made up of an infinite number of indivisible particles that are the ultimate substance and all appearance of unity is an illusion. Others have suggested that the world is a fundamental unity, and all the diversity in the world is an illusion.

God's Word, the Holy Scripture is the only place where man can find the solution to the problem of the One and the Many. Speculation about the nature of reality does not lead men to the answer. God has revealed Himself as Triune. Through that revelation, man finds that in the Triune God there is an ultimate harmony of the One and the Many that transcends our comprehension. But just as He has revealed the ultimate

3) In the words of Roman Catholic philosopher, Louis De Raeymaeker, "[P]ilosophy seeks above all for a solution to the problem of the one and the many, which is presented moreover under various forms ···" *The philosophy of Being : A Synthesis of Metaphysics*, B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo., 1954.

answer to the problem in Himself, He has also revealed to us the way to live so that we may, as much as possible in a world of sin, discover the harmony of the One and the Many in our everyday lives. The Biblical ethic is concrete and specific without limiting modern men to an ancient lifestyle. The Bilbical worldview provides an approach to knowledge in which principles and details are brought together in the comprehensive plan of a sovereign God.

When Christians consider non-Christian religions, one of the basic questions they must ask is, "How does this religion approach the problem of the One and the Many?" The answer to the question will be found in such things as a particular religion's conception of the individual, the social structure and groups endorsed by the religion, and similar subjects that attempt to deal with the problem of unity and diversity in human society. The answer will also be found in that religion's approach to the problems of knowledge. But above all, the particular answer to the problem of the One and the Many found in any religion will be seen in its conception of the ultimate. Not all religions are consistent in the wat they deal with the problem of the One and the Many, especially syncretistic religions like Buddhism and Hinduism may be confusing. But all religions do deal with the problem, and in all religions that do not confess the Trinitarian God, contradictions appear which reveal the basic defects of that religion, defects that have profound philosophical and ethical consequences.

II. Critique of Zen

Whether or not this approach to the study of religion is fruitful is best demonstrated by an attempt to employ it. I have chosen Zen Buddhism as the particular religious philosophy to examine for two reasons. First, it seems to me that Buddhism as a whole is simply too broad to deal with in a short article. Second, Zen has won greater popularity in recent years than other forms of Buddhism and there is an abundant amount of excellent material available in English.

What is Zen? Zen Buddhism is the Japanese version of what some consider the most distinctively Chinese sect within Buddhism, Ch'an. The early history of Zen in Japan is extremely complex, but for purposes of simplicity, it may be said that Myôan Eisai(1141-1215) was the founder of Japanese Zen. It was not, however, until over 100 years later in the second half of the Kamakura period that Zen temples were established in Japan. From the time that the Hôjô family brought Chinese Zen masters to Japan in the thirteenth century, Zen spread gradually to all of Japan, exerting profound influence on Japanese culture, including art and politics. In the twentieth century, Zen Buddhism became well known in the West largely due to the efforts of one man, Suzuki Daisetsu Teitaro(1870-1966).[4] His writings in English are my primary source.

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4) In the Forward to Philip Kapleau's *The Three Pillars of Zen*, Huston Smith quoted three men. First, on his deathbed C. G. Jung was said to have been reading Charles Luk's *Ch'an and Zen Teachings: First Series.* He reportedly asked his secretary to write the author that "he was enthusiastic ··· When he read what Hsu Yun said, he sometimes felt as if he himself could have said exactly this! It was just 'it'!" Second, Martin Heidegger was quoted as follows: "If I understand [Dr. Suzuki] correctly, this is what I have been trying to say in all my writings." Third, historian Lynn White wrote: "It may well be that

1. The Assertion of Monism

Scholars who do not personally hold to Zen typically characterize it as pantheistic. Zen is commonly seen to be a monistic faith, a religious sect which holds to the ultimacy of the One as opposed to the Many. Suzuki, however, denies this in no uncertain terms, in spite of the fact that much of what he has written seems to confirm the usual understanding. Assertions that seem only consistent with monism appear in discussions of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

1) In Metaphysics

Zen metaphysics is perhaps most succinctly set forth in the words "not-two." But even when he uses this expression, Suzuki is quick to assert that it implies no monism. Not-two, it is claimed, is not the same as one.[5] But when Suzuki discusses the relationship of Zen with Western mysticism, it is more difficult to escape the obvious implications of his thinking. Consider the following:

> We are possessed of the habit of looking at Reality by dividing it into two ···. It is all due to the human habit of splitting one solid Reality into two,

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the publication of D. T. Suzuki's first *Essays in Zen Buddhism* in 1927 will seem in future generations as great an intellectual event as William of Moerbeke's Latin translations of Aristotle in the thirteenth century or Marsiglio Ficino's of Plato in the fifteenth." See: Philip Kapleau, *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment*(revised and expanded edtion) Anchor Books, New York, 1980, p. xi.

5) See: Daisetz T. Suzuki, "Basic Thoughts Underlying Eastern Ethical and Social Practice" in *Philosophy and Culture - East and West: East-West Philosophy in Practical Perspective,* ed. Charles A. Moore, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1968, p. 429.

and the result is that my 'have' is no 'have' and my 'have not' is no 'have not'. While we are actually passing, we insist that the gap is impassable.[6]

In a later passage, Suzuki makes comments that can only be interpreted as monistic, in spite of his attempts to escape that label:

Where distinctions are you cannot find 'the One' or 'Being', but when you are 'that One', 'wholly that One', all distinctions or all different things may be left as they are and will all be parts of that One and offer you no hindrances, to use Kegon phraseology. To tell the truth, however, distinctions can never remain as distinctions if they were not 'made part of that One', though as far as I am concerned I do not like the term 'parts' in connection with the One. 'All different things' are not parts but they are the One itself, they are not parts as if they, when put together, would produce the whole. 'Parts' is a treacherous term.[7]

2) In Epistemology

What Zen is primarily concerned with is satori - the experience of enlightenment. In Suzuki's words, "The essence of Zen Buddhism consists in acquiring a new viewpoint of looking at life and things generally ···. [T]here is no Zen without satori, which is indeed the Alpha and Omega of Zen Buddhism ···. Satori may be defined as an intuitive looking into the nature of things in contradistinction to the analytical or logical understanding of it. Practically, it means the unfolding of a new world hitherto unperceived in the confusion of a dualistically-trained

6) Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki, *Mysticism Christian and Buddhist*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1957, Unwin paperback, 1979, p. 57.
7) Ibid., p. 59~60.

mind."[8] Because of its central epistemological concern, Zen is best probably understood through its theory of knowledge.

According to Suzuki, Buddhists distinguish between two basic approaches to knowledge: Prajñā and vijñāna. Suzuki explains the distinction between them as follows:

> *Prajñā* is ever seeking unity on the grandest possible scale, so that there could be no further unity in any sense; whatever expressions or statements it makes are thus naturally beyond the order of *vijñāna. Vijñāna* subjects them to intellectual analysis, trying to find something comprehensible according to its own measure. But *vijñāna* cannot do this for the obvious reason that *prajñā* starts from where *vijñāna* cannot penetrate. *vijñāna,* being the principle of differentiation, can never see *prajñā* in its oneness, and it is because of the very nature of *vijñāna* that *prajñā* proves utterly baffling to it.
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> To illustrate this point let us see what kind of statements *prajñā* will make when it is left to itself without the interference of *vijñāna.* One statement which is very common is: "I am not I, therefore I am." This is the thread of thought running through the Buddhist *Sûtras* known as the "Prajñā-pāramitā," consisting of six hundred "volumes" in Chinese translation. *In the Diamond Sûtra,* belonging to the Prajñā-pāramitā class, we have this: "What is known as *prajñā* is not *prajñā,* therefore it is known as *prajñā.*" When this is rendered into popular language it takes form: "I am empty-handed, and, behold, the spade is in my hands." "When a man walks on the bridge, the bridge flows, while the water does not."[9]

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8) D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series,* Rider and Co., London, 1950, reprint, 1985, pp. 229~230.

9) Suzuki Dizets Teitaro, "Reason and Intuition in Buddhist Philosophy" in Charles A.

Suzuki, thus, makes a distinction between a rational approach to knowledge based upon logic, an approach to knowledge that operates with words and distinctions between things, and an irrational approach to knowledge that is based upon an experience. *Prajñā*-intuition takes us directly to the One by means of a transrational experience. This is the only way the One can be known because any approach involving logic or words would also inescapably depend upon making distinctions and thus never really lead to the One. The world of the Many, on the other hand, is known by logic and verbal reasoning. *Vijñāna* may be used to describe types of knowledge as different as common sense, philosophy, or physics, but in any case it is immersed in the manyness of things.

Suzuki believe these two types of knowledge are related and underneath the apparent differences there is a more basic unity:

> I stated at the beginning that *prajñā* takes in the whole, while *vijñāna* is concerned with parts. This needs to be explained in more detail. If parts are mere aggregates, unconnected and incoherent masses, *vijñāna* cannot make them the subject of intellectual analysis. The reason *vijñāna* can deal with parts is that these parts are related to the whole, individually and collectively, and as such they present themselves to *vijñāna*. Each unit(or monad) is associated with another unit singly and with all other units collectively in a net-like fashion. When one is taken up, all the rest follow it. *Vijñāna* understands this and can trace the intricacy of the relationship existing among them and state that there must be an integrating principle underlying them. Not only this, but *vijñāna* can also formulate what such

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Moore, ed., *The Japanese Mind, Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture,* Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1967, p. 67.

> principles are, as is done by philosophy and science. But *vijñāna* cannot do this over the entire field of realities; its vision is limited to limited areas, which cannot be extended indefinitely. They have to halt somewhere.
> *Prajñā* vision, however, knows no bounds; it includes the totality of things, not as a limited continuum, but as going beyond the boundlessness of space and the endlessness of time. *Prajñā* is a unifying principle. It does this, not by going over each individual unit as belonging to an integrated whole, but by apprehending the latter at one glance, as it were. While the whole is thus apprehended, the parts do not escape from entering into this vision by *prajñā*. We can better describe this experience as the self-evolution of *prajñā* whereby the whole is conceived dynamically and not statically.[10]

The significance of this for Zen metaphysics is clear. The One is ultimate and only the knowledge of the One is, in the final analysis, true knowledge. But, of course, if Zen Buddhists stopped with assertions like those above, they would have in effect granted the multiplicity of things for they seem to be accepting the distinction between the One and the Many. Suzuki, therefore, also says:

> To speak more logically, if this is allowable with *prajñā*-intuition, everything connected with *vijñāna* also belongs to *prajñā; prajñā* is there in its wholeness; it is never divided even when it reveals itself in each assertion or negation made by vijñāna. To be itself *vijñāna* polarizes itself, but *prajñā* never loses its unitive totality. ··· [W]e may say this: *not unity in multiplicity, nor multiplicity in unity; but unity is multiplicity and multiplicity is unity.* In other words *prajñā* is *vijñāna*, and *vijñāna* is *prajñā*;

10) Ibid., pp. 96~97.

only, this is to be "immediately" apprehended and not after a tedious and elaborate and complicated process of dialectic.[11]

Not merely the ultimacy of the One - which leaves the distinction between the One and the Many intact - but the *identity* of the One and the Many is the way of a truly consistent monism.

3) In Ethics

What this means for Zen ethics should be clear: "Sin is the outcome of knowledge, which consists in discrimination, and, because of this, time is cut into three: past, present, and future. And then there is memory, recollection, and when this is projected into the future we have eschatology, anticipation, and anxiety."[12] Of course, the distinction between good and evil is one of the "sinful" distinctions that knowledge brings.

Suzuki explains the Zen idea of freedom as innocence, which is defined as being true to one's nature. Sincerity in Zen excludes effort to be sincere, for as long as one is trying to be sincere he is striving for something that he is not rather than just being what he is. And since sincerity is just being true to oneself, to strive for sincerity is of the essence of insincerity. Suzuki explains the same idea in different words when he writes:

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11) Ibid., pp. 74~75(italics in the original).

12) Daisetz T. Suzuki, "Zen and Parapsychology" in *Philosophy and Culture - East and West: East-West Philosophy in Practical Perspective,* ed. Charles A. Moore, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1968, p. 742.

> In other words, freedom is self-identification, which means to be itself, to be in the state of as-it-is-ness, or suchness(*tathatā*). To be a pine tree is the truth of the pine tree; when it tires to be a bamboo, it suffers as the desire violates its free nature. The dog barks "bow-wow" and cat cries "miaow," each is in the sate of absolute freedom, of innocence. As soon as knowledge enters its mind, the dog desires to cry "miaow," and cat "bow-wow" - which brings all suffering in its trail - which is hell. Why? Because knowledge breeds the consciousness of the self, and it is this consciousness that breaks up the primary state of identity - innocence - in which we all were in the Garden of Eden. When identity is broken up, discrimination and dichotomization take place in every possible form: A and not-A, yes and no, good and evil, friends and foes, hate and love, past and future, here-now and space-time, etc.[13]

What this means in practical terms is illustrated by babies and animals, both of whom are innocent of self-consciousness. Responsibility, however, is not altogether eliminated as the following quote illustrates:

> Now we shall consider the case of a hungry lion. He is a ferocious wild animal. He has no scruples against attacking a pack of deer peacefully grazing in the field. He will choose a ground of vantage and suddenly rushing into the group pounce upon one which happens to be not quick enough to avoid the enemy. ··· In this he has no vain desire to prove his prowess against the weaker. His biological urge makes him act in the way he naturally displays. He has neither pride nor remorse nor the feeling of anything that he ought not to have done. He is perfectly innocent of all these human feelings. He has absolutely no repentance, as he has no sense of duty

13) Ibid., p. 742.

> and responsibility. He has simply executed what his nature demands. ··· As long as the world is so constituted and one life subsists on another, it is like a gale passing over a garden, everything in its passage has to give itself to the raging force of Nature. There is here no killer, no killing, and no killed. The lion is just as innocent as the atmospheric commotion. If there is anyone who is responsible for all this carnage, the Creator is the one and nobody else.[14]

Although he does not present it as such, the above statement inadvertently reveals more than the idea of freedom and suchness, it reveals the underlying motive of Zen. Like all non-Christian thought, it is an attempt to escape responsibility for sin and to lay the responsibility on God Himself. Zen is, therefore, rightly compared to existentialism, which states:

> In order not to be overcome with self-hatred, one's innocence must be proclaimed, an impossibly bold step for one man alone, for self-knowledge will prevent him. But at least one can declare that everyone is innocent, though they may be treated as guilty. God is then the criminal.[15]

2. The Denial of Monism

As the above demonstrates, Suzuki describes Zen in terms that can only be called pantheistic. In metaphysical passages he can refer to the ultimate reality as the One, even though he may prefer an expression like

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14) Ibid., pp. 740~741.

15) Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, Vintage Books, New York, 1956, p. 83.

"not two." Zen epistemology is clearly and emphatically monistic. Zen ethics, too, relies upon standard monistic reasoning. In spite of what seems to be Zen's obvious pantheism, however, Suzuki denies that Zen is pantheistic:

> Another mistake we often make about *prajñā* is that somehow it tends toward pantheism. For this reason, Buddhist philosophy is known among scholars as pantheistic. But that this is an incorrect view is evident from the fact that *prajñā* does not belong in the category of *vijñāna* and that whatever judgement we derive from the exercise of *vijñāna* cannot apply to *prajñā*. In pantheism there is still an antithesis of subject and object, and the idea of an all-permeating God in the world of plurality is the work of postulation. *Prajñā*-intuition precludes this. No distinction is allowed here between the one and the many, the whole and the parts. When a blade of grass is lifted the whole universe is revealed there; in every pore of the skin there pulsates the life of the triple world, and this is intuited by *prajñā*, not by way of reasoning but "immediately." The characteristic of *prajñā* is this "immediacy." If we have reasoning to do here, it comes too late; as the Zen masters would say, "a speck of white cloud ten thousand miles away."[16]

While Suzuki disallows that Zen is pantheistic, the justification that he offers is nothing if not pantheistic. What he is saying, in effect, is that when pantheism is taken seriously it cannot be called pantheism because *"pantheism" is an academic label for a philosophy that can be defined by words. To allow that Zen is pantheism would be admitting that it can be categorized accurately by human language. This involves an

16) Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, "Reason and Intuition in Buddhist Philosophy" in Charles A. Moore, ed., *The Japanese Mind, Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture*, Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1967, p. 74.

acceptance of the Many(words) as a legitimate approach to the One and may even imply that the Many are more ultimate. At any rate, it reduces the One to the level of the Many and to the realm of human logic.

Zen cannot tolerate academic labels and definitions because it claims to transcend words and offer an absolute and direct experience of the ultimate One. Suzuki's denial of pantheism, then, amounts to a statement that a truly consistent pantheism must reject any label that would place it within a specific logical framework. When scholars define Zen as pantheism, they make Zen just another philosophy among the Many, whereas it claims to be the road to freedom from all dualism. Thus, in accordance with its pantheistic logic, the label pantheism must be denied by Zen.

3. The Embarrassment of Monism

From a Trinitarian perspective, the most obvious philosophical problem of monism is its inability to arrive at a concrete particular. In monistic systems, individual things lack substantial reality and ultimate meaning. This is true not only for "things," but also for persons, who are not finally different from animals, plants, or things. In monism, only the "not-two" is the really real. Individual things are real because they are identical with the ultimate. According to Zen, the individual is identical with the One, therefore with the ultimate. According to Zen, the individual is identical with the One, therefore it has meaning.

Assertions that individual things have meaning in themselves are not wanting, but they do not make sense in a theory that must deny words and logical reasoning as a means of expressing ultimate truth - and, of

course, the convenient fact is that since the truth of Zen is said to transcend words, these assertions do not have to make sense! The proof that Zen is monistic and the fundamental problem of its philosophy are one and the same - Zen cannot tolerate a concrete particular.

But philosophical critique, as Suzuki himself no doubt would have agreed, is a never-ending battle of words. Is there not anything that illustrates the meaning of the philosophical critique and perhaps makes it easier to follow? I think the answer is to be found in those places where Suzuki has, perhaps in spite of himself, dealt with, or sought to escape, ethical issues that are unavoidably concrete and particular. For example, Suzuki cannot escape commenting on the concrete realities of history, especially where they impinge upon the history of Zen. Where he does avoid historical comment, the silence is deafening.

Three illustrations will suffice. First, Suzuki cannot avoid the question of dueling when he speaks of Japanese culture because of the relationship between samurai swordsmanship and Zen. In his words, "In Japan, Zen was intimately related from the beginning of its history to the life of the samurai."[17] He also spoke of an "inner necessary relationship between Zen and the warrior's life."[18] And one of the embarrassing facts of the life of the samurai was dueling. The modern world, applying Biblical rather than traditional Eastern or Western standards of morality to the question, considers dueling to be murder. But for the samurai, dueling was a test of skill, courage, and, even, spirituality.

Suzuki apparently decided that he must defend samurai dueling

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17) Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1971 reprint; 1959, p. 61.
18) Ibid., p. 78.

because so many of the great swordsmen were famous Zen masters as well. For example, the swordsman Yangyû Tajima no kami Munenori(1571-1646) wrote about Zen and the art of swordsmanship. Suzuki after paraphrasing much of Yagyû's treatise, wrote:

> From these lengthy paraphrastic statements of Yagyû's philosophy of the sword, we can see how much of Zen metaphysics has entered into the body of swordsmanship. People of the West, particularly, may wonder how Zen came to be so intimately related to the art of killing. In as much as Zen is a form of Buddhism and Buddhism is professedly a religion of compassion, how can Zen endorse the profession of the swordsman? This is the criticism is professedly a religion of compassion, how can Zen endorse the profession of the swordsman? This is the criticism we frequently hear from the Western readers of my books. ··· While art is art and has its own significance, the Japanese make use of it by turning it into an opportunity for their spiritual enhancement. And this consists in advancing toward the realization of Tao, or heavenly Reason of the universe, or Heavenly Nature in man, or the emptiness or suchness of things. Thus the sword is no longer the weapon to kill indiscriminately, but it is one of the avenues through which life opens us its secrets to us. Hence Yagyû Tajima no kami and other masters of the profession are in fact great teachers of life.[19]

Zen's perspective is further explained in Suzuki's translation of a treatise by Takuan(1573-1645), who was Yagyû's teacher and one of the famous Zen masters of his day:

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19) Ibid., p. 160~161.

A man who has thoroughly mastered the art does not use the sword, and the opponent kills himself; when a man uses the sword, he make it serve to give life to others. When killing is the order, it kills; when giving life is the order, it gives life. While killing there is no thought of killing, while giving life, there is no thought of giving life; for in the killing or the giving life, no Self is asserted. The man does not see "this", or "that" and yet sees well what is "this" or "that"; he makes no discrimination and yet knows well what is what. He walks on water as if it were the earth; he walks on the earth as if it were water. One who has attained this freedom cannot be interfered with by anybody on earth. He stands absolutely by himself.[20]

Modern Zen masters are apparently not free to say that the Zen savants of the past erred on this issue or to recognize that Zen was too much caught up with the samurai fascination with death and the art of killing. Thus rather than condemnation for an evil practice of the past, Suzuki must still justify murder with nonsense like "the opponent kills himself."

My second illustration concerns the Zen attitude toward problems of this century. It is remarkable that living through a century that is characterized by its political theories and atrocities, Suzuki has so little to say on the subject. What he does say, however, is important;

Zen has no special doctrine or philosophy, no set of concepts or intellectual formulas, except that it tries to release one from the bondage of birth and death, by means of certain intuitive modes of understanding peculiar to itself. It is, therefore, extremely flexible in adapting itself to almost any philosophy

20) Ibid., p. 166~167.

and moral doctrine as long as its intuitive teaching is not interfered with. It may be found wedded to anarchism or fascism, communism or democracy, atheism or idealism, or any political or economic dogmatism. It is, however, generally animated with a certain revolutionary spirit, and when things come to a deadlock - as they do when overloaded with conventionalism, formalism, and other cognateisms - Zen asserts itself and proves to be a destructive forc e.[21]

Now, perhaps it is profound honestPrinceton, N.J.: y which says in the face of the foulest historical facts that Zen can be wedded with the likes of Hitler or Stalin. It is possible, of course, that though Suzuki referred to these political philosophies, he would have repudiated their representatives. But by 1959, when the revised edition of his *Zen and Japanese Culture* was published, should it not have been sufficiently clear that the history of fascism and communism was written with the blood and tears of untold numbers of men, women, and children who suffered the most outrageous oppression not merely from the inhuman leaders who have become the infamous symbols of those ideologies, but from the faceless and nameless bureaucratic monsters which those systems brought forth in abundance? And even if, in spite of the values of enlightenment, Suzuki could have been uninformed in 1959 about communism, is it at all conceivable that he was ignorant of the atrocities of Hitler and the Nazis, or that he would not have realized the complicity of the German nation in the murderous crimes of its leaders?

My third illustration is related to the second and may be summed up in the question, Why does Suzuki say nothing to say about Japan's

21) Ibid., p. 63.

political life in the twentieth century? According to Christmas Humphreys, Suzuki, who was born in 1870, attained enlightenment in the 1890's, which means that he lived through the war between Japan and Russia, World War Ⅰ, Japan's political transformation, her invasion of Korea and China, and World War Ⅱ. During the first half of the twentieth century, Suzuki taught in various Japanese universities and traveled frequently to the West. He wrote numerous books, gave lectures and met prominent intellectuals from all over the world. In 1934, he visited Korea, Manchuria, and Chian. He spent World War Ⅱ in Kamakura writing books.

Here, then, we have a well-traveled, well-read, well-informed Zen master who lived through the worst days of the twentieth century as mature and even "enlightened" adult. The history of Japan in the first half of the twentieth century includes political assassinations beyond number in a time when Japan's political parties are described as "legal mafias,"[22] a secret police no less monstrous than that of the Nazis or Soviets, and the exploitation and cruel oppression of Japan's oriental neighbors. Concerning all of this brutal history, Suzuki has no comment, no wisdom to teach us, and no apologies for his Asian neighbors.

Ⅲ. Conclusion

Zen claims to be able to integrate the One and the Many, to be able to preserve *vijñāna* precisely by the attainment of *prajñā*. While Suzuki

22) Paul Johnson, *Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Eighties*, Harper and Row, New York, 1983, p. 183.

claims that "*Prajñā*-intuition and *vijñāna*-discrimination are equally important and indispensable in the establishment of a synthetic philosophy,"[23] the fact remains that when confronted with concrete historical particularity Zen is unable to handle problems of paramount importance such as communism and fascism, unable to give clear ethical guidance in an issue as uncomplicated as dueling, and unable to direct the Japanese nation in political wisdom. This is what we would expect if Zen insight is pantheistic and lacking in real moral content. In spite of Suzuki's denial that Zen is pantheistic, his own example is that of a man who cannot handle historical particularity. He has gained satori which allows him to say:

> If I should say "I am God" it is sacrilegious. No, not that. I am I, God is God, and at the same time I am God, God is I. That is the most important part.[24]

And yet, Suzuki cannot find the wisdom to condemn what deserves to be condemned, or to show the evil of what is patently vicious. The profound silence of this century's most prominent Zen master about matters of vital historical importance undermines the claim that Zen is a simple discipline that can be summed up as:

> To do goods,
> To avoid evils,

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23) Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, "Reason and Intuition in Buddhist Philosophy" in Charles A. Moore, ed., *The Japanese Mind, Essentials of Japanese Philosophy and Culture,* Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo, 1967, p. 85.

24) Tucker N. Callaway, *Zen Way, Jesus Way*, Charles E. Tuttle, Tokyo, 1976, p. 145.

To purify one's own heart:
This is the Buddha-Way.[25]

What Zen really means is better summed up by the Japanese political scientist Kyogoku Junichi who described the "Japanese cosmos of meaning" as pantheistic, a worldview which has the following ethical and political implication:

> [T]here is no moral restraint against the corruption of power. There is no ethic based upon moral commandments laid down by a transcendent creator-god, nor is there is the tradition of prophets who transmit the righteous anger of the creator-god to those in power. ···

Hence, the arrogance of power, the hubris that does not have to be afraid of the nemesis of the gods, and the boundless corruption of evil and power become a matter of course.[26]

What Zen recommends as the way of enlightenment - becoming one with the ultimate reality - is simply another form of the Satanic promise to Eve: "you shall be as God." Even so, for may not be obvious that Zen enlightenment is the very essence of sin. It is only with serious consideration of ethical issues - the place where philosophy confronts historical particularity - that Zen is clearly exposed as pretense. For at this point in history, "enlightenment" is not the word we use to describe

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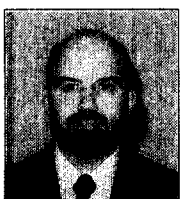
25) Eric Fromm, D. T. Suzuki, and Richard De Martino, *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis*, Souvenir Press, London, 1974, p. 76.
26) Junichi Kyogoku, "The Japanese Cosmos of Meaning" in *The Japan Times*, Sunday, March 2, 1986, p. 6.

philosophies that endorse fascism and communism. What has often been remarked of other religions and philosophies is also true of Zen: it is precisely when men aspire to deity, that they degenerate to demons.



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