



Beyond ZEN

D. T. SUZUKI AND THE MODERN
TRANSFORMATION OF BUDDHISM

EDITED BY JOHN BREEN,
SUEKI FUMIHIKO AND
YAMADA SHŌJI

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**Edited by John Breen,
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PREFACE

JOHN BREEN

By pretty much any measure, D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) was a great man. He had an abundance of charisma, and charmed audiences in Japan and the West throughout his long and eventful life. He was a prolific writer, speaker, and translator, and his books, essays, and lectures have exerted a profound and enduring impact on the way Westerners, especially, came to view not only Zen and Mahāyāna Buddhism but Japanese culture also. Suzuki's output was at times difficult. This was a consequence of his positioning himself on the borders between Zen and Pure Land Buddhism, priest and layperson, scholar and popularizer, Japan and America, and, of course, the Japanese and English languages. His work was controversial, too. Scholars of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have raised awkward questions about the political sympathies of this man of peace.

Suzuki died in 1966 at the age of ninety-five, having lived in Japan and the United States through one of the most tumultuous periods in world history. Academic and more popular interest in his work continues unabated to this day. What has been missing till now, however, is a comprehensive assessment and contextualization of his life and legacy. Now seems the perfect moment for reflection and taking stock. The fiftieth anniversary of his death has just passed; the copyright on his literary output has now expired; and his selected works have recently been published by a major American university press. We are in a position to know and to understand more than ever about Suzuki's intellectual and practical engagement with religion, philosophy, and culture. This volume's editors took an important first step by hosting an international conference on Suzuki at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) in 2016. "Reflections on D. T. Suzuki: Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of His Death" was the first time the leading Suzuki scholars had gathered in one place to reflect critically on the man and his legacy. Scholars, both seasoned and young, Anglophone and Japanese, came to Nichibunken from America, Australasia, and Europe, as well as from across Japan to engage in a two-day exchange of scholarly views. The present volume had its beginnings in that event.¹

Unfortunately, it did not in the end prove possible to represent here all those Suzuki experts who presented papers at the 2016 conference. The editors would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their contributions: professors Stefan Grace (Taishō University), who expertly summed up the achievements of the two-day conference; Iwamoto Akemi (D. T. Suzuki Museum), who spoke on “Daisetsu’s Zen, Mahāyāna Buddhist Thought, and the Doctrine of Early Indian Yogācāra”; Moriya Tomoe (Hannan University), who offered “An Analysis of D. T. Suzuki’s ‘Subjective’ Discourses on Religion and Their Relation to Social Criticism”; and Wayne Yokoyama (Hanazono University), who addressed the topic of “Suzuki’s Work on Saichi’s Poems: Another Lifework left Incomplete.”

Sueki Fumihiko wrote the bulk of the introduction to this volume, which develops reflections on Suzuki, his life, and his work that Sueki shared at the conference and published subsequently in the journal the *Eastern Buddhist*.² Sueki’s chapter, “How to Read D. T. Suzuki? The Notion of ‘Person,’” is a reworking of parts 4 and 5 of that essay. It is reproduced here with permission from the editor of the *Eastern Buddhist*. Note that the essays by John Breen and Yamada Shōji are not full-length chapters but brief “columns” of the sort that are increasingly fashionable in Japanese publications. Finally, as is well known, Suzuki styled himself in multiple ways: D. T. Suzuki, Suzuki Daisetsu (Daisetz), Suzuki Daisetsu (Daisetz) Teitarō, and Suzuki Teitarō Daisetsu (Daisetz). We have not sought to impose uniformity here, and so Suzuki appears in this book under a wide variety of names.

This book adheres to established convention in using the modified Hepburn system of romanization for Japanese, and Pinyin for Chinese. Japanese and Chinese personal names are presented in the customary fashion, so that family name is followed by given name. Macrons indicating long vowels have been employed throughout, except in the case of well-known place names such as Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka. Finally, the editors would like to thank Kurita Hidehiko for his help with the footnotes, references, and index.

Notes

1. For details of the event, see John Breen, “Reflections on D. T. Suzuki,” *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 47, no. 2 (2016): 101–106.

2. See Sueki Fumihiko, “Reading D. T. Suzuki with a Focus on His Notion of ‘Person,’” *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 47, no. 2 (2016): 1–26. The editors of this volume would like to thank the editor of *Eastern Buddhist* for permission to reproduce material here.

ABBREVIATIONS

- BA: Bakhmeteff Archive
- MBA: Matsugaoka Bunko Archive
- MBKN: *Matsugaoka Bunko kenkyū nenpō*
- MECW: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Marx-Engels Collected Works*, 50 vols. (New York: International Publishers, 1975)
- OMB: Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (London: Luzac, 1907)
- RAC: Rockefeller Archive Center
- SB: Akamatsu Tesshin and Fukushima Hirotaka, eds., *Shin bukkyō*, 4 vols. (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1982)
- SDS: Suzuki Daisetsu, *Suzuki Daisetsu senshū* 鈴木大拙選集, 26 vols. (13 + 8 [zoku] + 5 [tuikan]). Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1952–1958.
- SDZa: Suzuki Daisetsu, *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū*, 32 vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1968–1971; 1980–1983)
- SDZb: Suzuki Daisetsu, *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū: Zōho shinban*, 40 vols., edited by Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, Yamaguchi Susumu, and Furuta Shōkin (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999–2003)
- SMC: Sano Manabu, *Sano Manabu chosakushū*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Sano Manabu Chosakushū Kankōkai, 1958)
- SSR: D. T. Suzuki, “Selections from Shin shūkyō ron,” in *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki*, vol. 3, *Comparative Religion*, edited by Jeff Wilson and Tomoe Moriya, 3–28 (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016)
- T: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō
- ZSS: Zen Studies Society Archive

INTRODUCTION

SUEKI FUMIHIKO AND JOHN BREEN

With the year 2016 marking the fiftieth anniversary of his death, scholars have been turning a fresh eye to D. T. Suzuki. This reappraisal has significance not only for our knowledge of Suzuki, but also for the study of modern Japanese thought and religion.¹

In the past, Suzuki scholarship was carried out by researchers who were taught or otherwise influenced by him, such as Furuta Shōkin (1911–2001), Kirita Kiyohide, Ueda Shizuteru (1926–2019), and Akizuki Ryōmin (1921–1999). They focused on uncovering and organizing materials related to Suzuki, as well as honoring the man and his work. We can see this as a first period in Suzuki research. However, starting around the 1980s, a flurry of critical studies appeared in response to existing research, with its slant toward eulogizing Suzuki. This development began outside Japan, and included Brian Victoria's *Zen at War* (1997), as well as the work of Robert Sharf and Bernard Faure. These scholars directed their criticisms toward Suzuki's war cooperation and nationalism.² At its root, this was also a criticism of the European and American Buddhist world, where till now Suzuki has been regarded as "absolute," and where his theories had been taken literally as a correct understanding of Zen. These critiques constituted a second period in the history of research on D. T. Suzuki.

In recent years, a new way of appraising Suzuki—which duly takes on board the earlier criticisms—has emerged. This is the third period, and it is ongoing. It is defined by the recent discovery of new materials, and new publications and exhibitions as well. At the same time, a new generation of scholars has galvanized research on Suzuki, and huge progress is being made. With regard to the discovery of new materials, one can cite the publication of Suzuki's manuscripts held at Matsugaoka Bunko. Also, a clearer picture has emerged of Suzuki's activities in the United States during his later years. In addition, various writings by Suzuki have been released in the pocket paperback format, which is more accessible than, say, his complete works. These include the publication by Kadokawa Bunko in 2010 of a complete version (with chapter 5) of *Nihonteki reisei* 日本の靈性 (Japanese spirituality) with a commentary by Sueki Fumihiko; Moriya

Tomoe's new anthology of Suzuki's writings, *Zen ni ikiru* 禅に生きる (Living in Zen), published by Chikuma Gakugei Bunko in 2012; Iwanami Bunko's publication in 2016 of Japanese-language translations of *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* and *The Training of the Zen Buddhist Monk* as well as *Jōdokei shisōron* 浄土系思想論 (On Pure Land thought); and the publication by Kōdansha Bungei Bunko in 2016 of Suzuki's translation of Emanuel Swedenborg's *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell: From Things Heard and Seen* (Jp. *Tenkai to jigoku* 天界と地獄), not to mention his biography in Japanese of Swedenborg, *Suedenborugu* スエデンボルグ, published by Kōdansha in 2016. These works, along with the commentaries contained therein, have provided us with a multiplicity of new perspectives. In the United States, the University of California Press has published four volumes of the *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki* with Richard Jaffe as series editor. In 2023 Columbia University Press will publish Suzuki's 1952–1953 Columbia Seminar Lectures in a book edited by Richard Jaffe.

In commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Suzuki's death, Tama Art University Museum (Tama Bijutsu Daigaku Bijutsukan) hosted the exhibition *Daisetz and Matsugaoka Bunko* from July 2 to September 11, 2016, featuring materials held by Matsugaoka Bunko. The museum displayed important Suzuki-related items previously not shown to the public, such as early modern woodblock prints of Buddhist images. The International Research Center for Japanese Studies hosted an international symposium from December 5 to 6, 2016, and delegates raised a number of new issues from a global perspective. Furthermore, the D. T. Suzuki Museum (Suzuki Daisetsu-kan), which opened in Kanazawa in 2011, is becoming a new hub for Suzuki research.

A special feature of recent scholarship is that its center has gravitated to a new generation of scholars temporally removed from Suzuki, who can adopt a more objective perspective. Moreover, scholars now hail from a variety of fields—not only Chan/Zen studies—and bring to their research on Suzuki a wide range of interests. In the United States, a new generation of scholars, such as Richard Jaffe, is spearheading Suzuki research. Similarly, in Japan, too, new Suzuki theories are being published one after another. A first tendency of this latest research is a reexamination of Suzuki as a mystic. The work of Wakamatsu Eisuke, Andō Reiji, Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, and Nakajima Takahiro is notable in this regard.³ A second tendency is to be found in a new type of critical research, which focuses not on Suzuki's ideological and political positions but on his ideas about Buddhism from a contemporary Buddhist studies or Chan/Zen studies perspective. From the Buddhist studies side, we can point to Sasaki Shizuka, and from the world of Chan/Zen studies, Kinugawa Kenji.⁴ Ogawa Takashi, also from the latter field, adopts a rather more positive view of Suzuki's work than others do.⁵ And while

research on Suzuki's thought typically gets caught up in Suzuki the man, Yamada Shōji has offered a new objective perspective by examining Suzuki's reception overseas and the life of his son, Alan.⁶

Suzuki's Life and Works: A Periodization

Suzuki was born in 1870 in Kanazawa City, and passed away at the age of ninety-five at St. Luke's International Hospital in Tokyo in 1966. Setting aside his youthful years of study and religious training, Suzuki wrote and lectured as an active intellectual for seventy years. His translation into Japanese of Paul Carus' *The Gospel of Buddha* in 1895 marked the start of his endeavors. For the decade and more between 1897 and 1908, he lived in the United States, devoting himself to research under Paul Carus. After returning to Japan via Europe in 1909, he taught English as a professor at Gakushuin University in Tokyo, and then in 1921 he became a professor at the Shin sect-affiliated Otani University in Kyoto; he worked there until 1960. After World War II, while often returning to Japan, he based himself in the United States from 1949-1958, where he continued to give lectures at a variety of places, including Columbia University.

In this way, Suzuki's activities consisted of two long periods in the United States. He was active in Japan before first leaving for the United States, between these two periods overseas, and again after returning to Japan toward the end of his life. However, the times preceding his first American period and following his second were comparatively short. Thus, we can see 1909 to 1949 as the major period of his activity in Japan. With that said, the situation is somewhat more complicated. For, even after returning to Japan, Suzuki published important works in English during the 1920s and 1930s, which were very well-received in Europe and the United States. If we focus on his literary output, we can divide his life into four periods.

First Period: This period extended from the 1890s to the 1910s, before Suzuki went to the United States; the duration of his residence there; and his professorship at Gakushuin after returning to Japan. While also writing about Zen, Suzuki adopted a wider perspective, focusing on Buddhism in general but also on Emanuel Swedenborg. During this time he published a Japanese translation of *The Gospel of Buddha* (*Budda no fukuin* 仏陀の福音; 1895); *Shin shūkyō ron* 新宗教論 (A new theory of religion; 1896); his English translation of *The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* (Ch. *Dasheng qixinlun* 大乘起信論; Jp. *Daijō kishinron*; 1900); his own English monograph, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (1907); as well as a Japanese translation in 1910 of Swedenborg's *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell: From Things Heard and Seen*.

Second Period: This second period of English-language writings spanned the 1920s and 1930s after Suzuki moved to Otani University. Even though he was in Japan, he wrote his major works in English. This he probably did with the help of his wife, Beatrice. In addition to books on Zen that became popular in the United States and Europe, namely *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927, 1933, 1934) and *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (1938), he also produced an English translation and study of the *Lankavatara Sutra* (1932), which would become his doctoral dissertation.

Third Period: This period in Japan was marked by an output of Japanese-language writings from the end of the 1930s until after World War II, when Suzuki began to base his activities once more in the United States. During this period he wrote his major Japanese works, such as *Mushin to iu koto* 無心と言ふこと (What is no-mind?; 1939), *Jōdokei shisōron* (On Pure Land thought; 1942), *Nihonteki reisei* (Japanese spirituality; 1944), *Myōkōnin* 妙好人 (1948), and *Rinzai no kihon shisō* (Basic thought of Rinzai) 1949). That Suzuki wrote now in Japanese is perhaps to be explained by Beatrice's death in 1939, and also by the difficulty of writing for an overseas audience as war approached. Many of Suzuki's works during this period were academic in nature. He brought them together in volumes 1 (1943) and 2 (1951) of *Zen shisōshi kenkyū* 禅思想史研究 (Research on Chan / Zen intellectual history).

Fourth Period: This was a period extending from the 1950s till Suzuki's death that included lectures and talks in the United States, and such publications in English as *Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist* (1957) and *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (1960). Suzuki's lectures and talks in the United States have been reconstructed from the drafts held at Matsugaoka Bunko, and were published in 2013 by Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan as *Zen hakkō* 禅八講 (Eight lectures on Zen), and *Suzuki Daisetsu Koronbia Daigaku seminā kōgi* コロンビア大学セミナー講義 (DT Suzuki's Columbia University seminar lectures).⁷ In the last few years of his life, Suzuki also worked on the translation into English of canonical works such as the *Kyōgyōshinshō* (Teaching, practice, faith, and realization) and the *Biyan lu* (Jp. *Hekiganroku*; Blue cliff record). These translated works have also recently been published.⁸

Diversity and Unity in Suzuki

Suzuki was a prolific writer throughout his long life. For this reason, evaluations of him vary considerably depending on which aspect of Suzuki is made the focus of attention. His way of writing was not always the same. Not only did it change over time, he also had diverse readers in mind depending on whether he wrote in

English or in Japanese. This, in turn, led to differences in the way he was received. In Europe and the United States, where Zen itself was not known, he was greeted passionately as the evangelist of a completely new culture. In contrast, in Japan, there was always traditional Buddhism, of which Zen was one part. However, with modernization came the need to reinterpret this traditional Buddhism, and Suzuki played a major role in this project. His position therein was somewhat ambiguous.

Suzuki had no academic qualifications from Japan, having withdrawn from Tokyo Imperial University. He did not receive a formal education in the United States. He taught for many years at the Buddhist Otani University after returning to Japan, but this is an institution affiliated with the Shin sect's Ōtani branch; it is not a Zen university. It was from Otani that he received his PhD in 1934 for his research on the *Lankavatara Sutra*. Subsequently, he carried out cutting-edge academic research, including his studies of early Chan Dunhuang texts. Nonetheless, he was not necessarily regarded as part of the modern Buddhist studies mainstream. Always placing himself in an ambivalent position—researcher and popular educator; Zen and Pure Land; Japan, Europe, the United States—his identity was fluid, and it is difficult to place him with confidence. This contrasts with Suzuki's close friend Nishida Kitarō, who had a clear position as a philosopher in the academic space of Kyoto Imperial University. This ambivalence about Suzuki has made research difficult.

Are the diversities that comprise Suzuki never to be reconciled? For David L. McMahan, Suzuki was a representative figure of “Buddhist modernism”:

Suzuki wrote that Zen in its essence was an *experience* that transcended the particularities of any religion. Not only was the liberating experience of *satori* the essence of Zen, it was the essence of all religion, though found in its purest form in Zen. Suzuki therefore de-emphasized not only Zen's intimate connection to the history of Buddhism but presented everything except the “Zen experience” as peripheral. This emphasis on the authority of personal intuitive experience over tradition, ritual, and social life would become a prominent feature of some versions of Buddhist modernism.⁹

The above passage accurately captures the essence of modern Buddhism. The substance of the social role of Japanese Buddhism even in modern times has been in the form of funerary rites and grave management, as the term “funeral Buddhism” indicates. This is, indeed, how Buddhism built its economic foundations. However, upon these foundations Buddhism constructed an elite-level

discourse that trumpeted pure belief and Zen experience as its superior aspects. Suzuki was a layperson his entire life; he never joined a temple as a monk. This fact enhanced his emphasis on pure experience. He then transplanted this elite Buddhism overseas. If we call this “Buddhist modernism,” then we can certainly see Suzuki as one of its representatives.

A reverse perspective is possible. The Christianity that was introduced into modern Japan had its European American historical and societal background removed, and Protestantism in particular pushed modernity to the fore by emphasizing only pure faith. This purification was most thoroughgoing in the nonchurch movement (*mukyōkaishugi* 無教会主義), which had not existed in either Europe or the United States. Buddhism in Europe and the United States on the one hand, and Christianity in Japan on the other, were in the same position. McMahan writes the following regarding the trope employed by the Buddhist modernism that Suzuki spread: “Suzuki also promoted one of the common—if overly simplistic—tropes of Buddhist modernism: that the ‘East’ was intuitive, aesthetic, and spiritual, while the ‘West’ was technological, rational, and material.”¹⁰

This “East versus West” schema lives on to today even as it has changed its shape in various ways. The discourse can be found not only in Europe and the United States but also in Japan. What is notable about the Japanese case is the relationship between the “East” and “Japan.” Often times “Japan” is understood to represent the “East”; it becomes an expression of Japanese cultural nationalism. In a similar way, “Great East Asia”—in the phrase “Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” (*Daitōa kyōeiken* 大東亜共栄圏)—really meant “Japan.” The adjective “Nihonteki” (Japanese) in the title of Suzuki’s 1944 book *Nihonteki reisei* (Japanese spirituality) has a similar ambiguity about it.

If we accept then that Suzuki is basically a “Buddhist modernist,” what does this mean in practice? McMahan points to Suzuki’s emphasis on the “Zen” religious experience. How then might we place this in Suzuki’s thought? In recent years, Suzuki’s early writings, such as *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* and his research on Swedenborg, have been attracting attention. It has been suggested that his early writings can help us understand what we might call Suzuki’s fundamental thought as it ran consistently from his early through to his later periods. Andō Reiji, for example, has examined Suzuki’s early period thought from this perspective.¹¹ It has now become possible to think of a consistent strain running through what has been a multidimensional image of Suzuki. Suzuki wrote *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism* in 1907 as the culmination of the work he did under Paul Carus. Sasaki Shizuka has offered a detailed critical appraisal in his translator’s afterword to the Japanese-language edition of this book.¹² This book

is known for the harsh criticism leveled at it shortly after publication by Louis de La Vallée Poussin, an authority in Buddhist studies at the time.¹³ Sasaki, agreeing with de La Vallée Poussin's critique, lists several more issues before pointing out, "Almost all of the concepts comprising this book, which Suzuki presents as fundamental elements, are mistaken."¹⁴

However, Sasaki also states, "A person with even a little interest in the doctrines of Japanese Buddhism will probably affirm many of the ways of thinking introduced by Suzuki in this book as Mahayana Buddhist thought."¹⁵ In other words, while Suzuki's arguments might not constitute a proper understanding of Mahayana Buddhist thought as it originally appeared in India, they are not necessarily inadequate as a traditional Japanese understanding of Mahayana Buddhism. Suzuki's ideas about Mahayana Buddhism took as their basis the *Dasheng qixinlun*, which he had translated into English as *The Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*, and emphasized concepts such as suchness (Ch. *zhenru*; Jp. *shinnyo*), the womb of the Tathāgata (Ch. *rulai zang*; Jp. *nyoraizō*), and the Dharma body (Ch. *fashen*; Jp. *hosshin*). However, Suzuki's stance goes beyond the scope of Japan's Mahayana Buddhism in certain aspects: "Individual existences have no selfhood or self-essence or reality. . . . The world of particulars is the work of Ignorance. . . . When this veil of Māya [*sic*] is uplifted, the universal light of Dharmakāya shines in all its magnificence. Individual existences then as such lose their significance and become sublimated and ennobled in the oneness of Dharmakāya."¹⁶

Here we can see that Suzuki's understanding of Mahayana Buddhism accommodated Vedic elements, such as the notions of "self-essence" (*atman*) and illusion (*māyā*). Regarding this point, Sasaki states, "The Japanese Buddhism itself on which Suzuki based his thought was alien to original Indian Mahayana Buddhism. It was closer to Vedānta and other Hindu philosophy than it was to Buddhism."¹⁷ Certainly, in some respects, womb of the Tathāgata thought is the foundation of Japanese Buddhism as a whole. This position has been subject to criticism by the critical Buddhism (*hihan Bukkyō* 批判仏教) movement.

However, one does not find expressions like "the universal light of Dharmakāya shines in all its magnificence" in a traditional Japanese Buddhist context. Rather, as Andō Reiji has pointed out, this coincides with "the truth of the 'spiritual world' that Suzuki saw through his Swedenborg experience."¹⁸ Andō believes this "spiritual world" (*reikai*) eventually led to Suzuki's idea of *reisei* (spirituality) that he develops in *Nihonteki reisei*.¹⁹ This is certainly a plausible approach. In this way, we can understand the consistent thread that Suzuki pursued throughout his life to be the intellectualization of religious experience. His friend Nishida Kitarō would shift his thought from the idea of pure religious

experience to the ontological notion of “place” (*basho*), but Suzuki maintained for his whole life a focus on matters related to religious experience. In his English-language writings, Suzuki wrapped this “spiritual” religious experience in the keyword “Zen,” to which he connected “Japan.” Moreover, as McMahan points out, Suzuki “articulated some of the difficult themes of Zen using the vocabulary of Idealist, Romantic, and Transcendentalist thinkers of the nineteenth century.”²⁰ This led Europeans and Americans to read the underside of their modernity into Zen. This is a typical example of Orientalism. We might suggest that Suzuki ended up glorifying “Japan” and “Zen” in order to meet the expectations of the West.

The contributors to this volume interrogate Suzuki Daisetsu on Zen and Mahāyāna, on nationalism and international relations, on war and peace, and on family and friends. Their chapters are arranged in broadly chronological sequence the better to expose aspects of diversity and unity in Suzuki’s literary output from the last decades of the nineteenth century through to the second half of the twentieth century. James Mark Shields’ chapter “From Postpantheism to Trans-materialism: D. T. Suzuki and New Buddhism” examines Suzuki’s thoughts on pantheism as he articulated them in his 1896 work, *Shin shūkyōron* (A new interpretation of religion).

It was here that Suzuki developed a theory of “postpantheism,” as an ideal form of religion. Shields uses *Shin shūkyōron* as a portal through which to examine the problems and possibilities of pantheism as an archetypal catchword, and a frustratingly vague principle for Japanese Buddhist modernism. Mark Blum also comes to grips with the early Suzuki, and selects for his analysis *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism* (1907), a book Suzuki never published in Japanese. Suzuki in the early nineteen hundreds identified himself with Mahāyāna rather than with Zen per se, and Blum reads this early work as an apologetic for a specifically Mahāyāna form of protestant Buddhism. His chapter is styled “Suzuki Daisetz Attempts a Mahāyāna Protestant Buddhism: Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism as True Religion.”

The temporal focus of Judith Snodgrass’ chapter, “The Suzuki Contribution to the Anglophone Press of Interwar Japan,” shifts from the turn of the century to the interwar years, the 1920s and 1930s. She explores the engagement of D. T. Suzuki and his wife, Beatrice, with two English-language journals, *Eastern Buddhist* and *The Young East* and, more generally, with the International Buddhist Society. Snodgrass offers the reader a critical exploration of the role of the two Suzukis in promoting knowledge of Mahāyāna Buddhist culture, philosophy, and faith as the basis of world peace. Brian Victoria takes an altogether

different tack on Suzuki in this same period in his chapter “Was D. T. Suzuki a Nazi Sympathizer?” The question he poses about Suzuki’s possible Nazi sympathies is, no doubt, unthinkable to many. Victoria’s purpose is to make sense of the claim by Suzuki’s editor, Handa Shin, that Suzuki’s writings “strongly influenced the military spirit of Nazi Germany.” James Dobbins further complicates our understanding of Suzuki during this same period in his chapter “D. T. Suzuki and the Welfare of Animals.” He challenges the assumption that Suzuki’s ideas about animals sprang naturally from his Buddhist values and practices. Rather, Dobbins argues, it was American influence as received through his wife, Beatrice, that first led Suzuki to an understanding of the preciousness and wholeness of animals.

There follow four essays that locate Suzuki in the space between wartime Japan and the postwar. Richard Jaffe, in “D. T. Suzuki and the Two Cranes: American Philanthropy and Suzuki’s Global Agenda,” argues the importance of US industrial wealth and spiritual restlessness in sustaining Suzuki’s activities in America before and after the war. He focuses first on Charles Crane, an admirer of Hitler and the new Germany, who sustained Suzuki in the 1930s as he set about presenting Buddhism to a broad American public. It was, Jaffe shows, another Crane, nephew Cornelius, who financed Suzuki’s activities in the 1950s. Roman Rosenbaum’s “Transnationalizing Spirituality: D. T. Suzuki’s Zen Textuality” engages with D. T. Suzuki as “one of the most culturally influential thinkers of the twentieth century.” Rosenbaum credits Suzuki with rendering Zen emblematic of world culture, but also sees him as the embodiment of a “transcendental spirituality” that extended across all of the world’s religions. Suzuki’s distinctive role as literary translator was key to his influence. Sueki Fumihiko, in his chapter “How to Read D. T. Suzuki? The Notion of ‘Person,’” explores the key concept of “Person” as Suzuki developed it in two books, the 1944 *Nihonteki reisei* and the 1949 *Rinzai no kihon shisō*. Sueki demonstrates that Suzuki’s take on “Person” shifted radically from the former volume, where passivity and dissolution of self were key, to the latter, in which “Person” had become dynamic. Sueki finds an explanation for the shift in the influence of the *Record of Linji*. John Breen, meanwhile, explores the rationale underlying Suzuki’s unforgiving take on Shinto before, during, and after the war in his essay “Suzuki Daisetz, Spirituality, and the Problem of Shinto.”

Alice Freeman’s chapter is the first of four to deal exclusively with postwar Suzuki. In “Suzuki Daisetz’ Spiritual Japan and the Question of Buddhist War Responsibility,” she shows both that the Occupation was a pivotal moment in the transmission of Zen to the West as a religion of peace, and that Suzuki was a vital player here. Freeman argues that this same process of transmission served to

conceal from the American gaze critical questions about Zen war responsibility. Roy Starrs, in his chapter “D. T. Suzuki’s Theory of Inspiration and the Challenges of Cross-Cultural Transmission,” explores Suzuki’s 1959 English essay “Zen and Haiku,” which proposed that poetic inspiration was an equivalent of Zen enlightenment. Starrs argues that, in the world of poetry at least, Suzuki presented to his readers an exaggerated and stereotypical interpretation of the East / West cultural divide. Ben Van Overmeire offers a critical reflection on literary articulations of Zen in the postwar West in his chapter, “D. T. Suzuki’s Literary Influence: Utopian Narrative in American and European Memoirs of Zen Life.” He shows that the work of renowned Western practitioners such as Philip Kapleau in his *Three Pillars of Zen* was shaped less by reality than it was by Suzuki’s utopian narratives of Zen monastic life. Finally, in his essay “D. T. Suzuki and American Popular Culture,” Yamada Shōji explores the role of media, especially popular magazines, in the dissemination of Suzuki’s Zen across America. Taken together, the chapters offer the reader a compelling, provocative, and multidimensional appraisal of the life and legacy of an extraordinary man.

Notes

1. For a fuller critical examination of the history of research on Suzuki, see Sueki Fumihiko, “Daisetsu hihan saikō,” *MBKN* 24 (2010): 19–35.

2. On these criticisms of Suzuki and Zen, see the article in Japanese by Paul Swanson, “Zen hihan no shosō (Zen kenkyū no genzai),” *Shisō* 960 (2004): 124–134.

3. Wakamatsu Eisuke, *Reisei no tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2015); Andō Reiji, *Daisetsu* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2018); Yoshinaga Shin’ichi, “Reisei kaifuku e no tsuyoi kikyū: Suzuki Daisetsu saikō,” in *Suedenborugu o yomitoku*, ed. Nihon Suedenborugu Kyōkai (Yokohama, Japan: Shunpūsha, 2006); Nakajima Takahiro, “Nihon no shūkyōteki shikō ni okeru shinpi: Suzuki Daisetsu to Izutsu Toshihiko o megutte,” in *Hikaku shisō kara mita Nihon Bukkyō*, ed. Sueki Fumihiko (Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin, 2015); Kikufuji Akimichi, *Suzuki Daisetsu no Myōkōnin kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2017); Mizuno Tomoharu, *Sekaiteki jikaku to Tōyō: Nishida Kitarō to Suzuki Daisetsu* (Tokyo: Kobushi Shobō, 2019).

4. Sasaki Shizuka, “Yakusha atogaki,” in *Daijō Bukkyōron*, ed. Suzuki Daisetsu (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016); Kinugawa Kenji, “Zengaku satsuki,” *Hanazono Daigaku bungakubu kenkyū kiyō* 48 (2016): 87–142.

5. Ogawa Takashi, *Rinzairoku: Zen no goroku no kotoba to shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008); Ogawa Takashi, *Goroku no shisōshi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

6. Yamada Shōji, *Tōkyō bugiwugi to Suzuki Daisetsu* (Kyoto: Jinbun Shoin, 2015).

7. Suzuki Daisetsu, *Zen hakkō* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2013); Suzuki Daisetsu, *Korōbia Daigaku seminā kōgi*, trans. Shigematsu Sōiku and Tokiwa Gishin, 2 vols. (Kyoto: Hōjōdō Shuppan, 2017).

8. D. T. Suzuki, trans., *The Hekigan-roku* (Kamakura, Japan: Matsugaoka Bunko, 2012); D. T. Suzuki, trans., *Shinran’s Kyogyoshinsho* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

9. David L. McMahan, "Buddhist Modernity," in *Buddhism in the Modern World*, ed. David L. McMahan (New York: Routledge, 2012), 164–166.
10. McMahan, "Buddhist Modernity," 166.
11. Andō, *Daisetsu*.
12. Sasaki, "Yakusha atogaki."
13. Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Review of *Outline of Mahayana Buddhism*, by Daisetz Taitaro Suzuki," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1908): 885–894.
14. Sasaki, "Yakusha atogaki," 484.
15. Sasaki, "Yakusha atogaki," 485.
16. Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (London: Luzac, 1907), 179.
17. Sasaki, "Yakusha atogaki," 485.
18. Andō Reiji, "Kaisetsu," in *Tenkai to jigoku*, by Emanuel Swedenborg, trans. Suzuki Daisetsu (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2016), 556.
19. Andō, "Kaisetsu," 558.
20. McMahan, "Buddhist Modernity," 166.

PART I

D. T. Suzuki at the Turn of the Century
(c. 1890–c. 1920)

From Postpantheism to Transmaterialism

D. T. Suzuki and New Buddhism

JAMES MARK SHIELDS

In a work titled *Worlds Apart: A Handbook on World Views*, we read the following passage: “The essence of [D. T.] Suzuki’s pantheism is that the world of particulars is both finite and infinite, relative and absolute, illusory and real. What one needs to do in order to see Reality in all its fullness is to free himself [*sic*] from logic, words, concepts, abstractions—in short, anything that keeps him from personally experiencing what is neither being nor nonbeing. When this occurs Nirvana is attained—one becomes one with the One.”¹ To give some context: this book, published in 2003, covers seven major theses about God, nature, and reality, including “theism,” “atheism,” “polytheism,” “deism,” and something called “finite Godism”—in addition to “pantheism” and “panentheism.” The last two categories are distinguished by the fact that the former posits a “world that *is* God” while the latter indicates “a world *in* God.” The chapter on pantheism takes up thirty-two pages, a full ten of which are on Suzuki (other sections include Advaita Vedanta and the work of actress and self-help guru Shirley MacLaine.). The authors of this text rely heavily on Suzuki’s *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1934), but also cite his *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (1934) and his much earlier work *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism* (1907).

But to return to the passage itself, here it is suggested that pantheism provides a balance between more extreme metaphysical, epistemological, and ontological claims (some, less forgiving, would call this a cop-out from making *any* claims). Also, note the emphasis here on *direct personal experience*, which must be nonlinguistic, and immediate or concrete. Finally, see how the authors have included the classical Buddhist term for awakening—Nirvana (capitalized, no less)—unselfconsciously conflating a particular set of teachings and practices (Buddhism, or, in this case, Zen) with a pantheistic worldview.

I begin with this passage not to ridicule it but to show how Suzuki has come, by the twenty-first century, to stand as a symbol not only for Zen but also for Buddhism more generally, and, in this case at least, for something even broader—pantheism—a “worldview” of seemingly universal resonance. (The editors of *Worlds Apart* claim that “probably no one else has done more to influence the

West toward an Eastern form of pantheism than has Suzuki.”²) In this chapter, I examine select passages from Suzuki’s early work, *A New Interpretation of Religion* (*Shin shūkyōron*, 1896), in order to flesh out some more of the details of Suzuki’s pantheism in relation to (a) classical Western formulations and typologies; (b) the work of several figures associated with the New Buddhist Fellowship, a lay Buddhist movement of late Meiji Japan in which pantheism (*hanshinron*) was frequently invoked if not always clearly elucidated;³ and (c) an understanding of pantheism as an antimetaphysical and perhaps “phenomenological” approach to Buddhist liberation. To be perfectly frank, here I am self-consciously *using* Suzuki to dig further into the problems and possibilities of pantheism as an archetypal catchword of Japanese Buddhist modernism.

Typologies of Pantheism

The English term “pantheism” dates back at least three centuries, first appearing in 1704 in *Letters to Serena* by the controversial freethinker and early deist John Toland (1670–1722). In *An Encyclopedia of Religions*, published in 1921—around the time Suzuki was writing the essays that would lead to his inclusion in the above text as a spokesperson for the pantheistic worldview—we get a sense of some of the lingering “fears” of pantheism as a doctrine, fears that combine philosophical, religious, and moral concerns.⁴ The *Encyclopedia* lists six forms of pantheism: materialistic, ontological, dynamic, psychical, ethical, and logical. Though a few of these are associated with significant philosophical names, such as Spinoza, Leibniz, and Hegel, the tone of the short article makes it clear that *none* of these forms can ultimately cohere with orthodox Christianity, given the latter’s emphasis on the “personality” and the “will.” Indeed, the preceding entry suggests that “panentheism” is the only form that can work with Christian doctrine, since panentheism maintains the central place and transcendence of God, unlike the “degenerate” forms of pantheism, which, however high their philosophical pedigree, risk embarking on the slippery slope toward secular materialism / atheism.

This fear about pantheism can be attributable, in part, to the legacy of Baruch (aka Benedict) Spinoza (1632–1677), the Western thinker most readily associated with the doctrine, whose works, such as *Ethics* and *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, were, from early on, charged with heresy and atheism. It is sometimes said that pantheism “views the world as God and God as the world.” If so, it is not hard to see that, once God is all, and “nothing exists that is not God,” then God is, in effect, nothing. Otherwise put, God dissolves into Nature. And indeed, Spinoza himself infamously made the formulation *Deus sive Natura*: “God is not other

than Nature.” Yet, for all the overwrought anxiety about the effect of “Spinozism,” one can see why not only orthodox Christians and Jews but even secular liberal thinkers saw danger in Spinoza’s formulations. In the eyes of twentieth-century philosopher Charles Hartshorne, classical Western pantheism leaves no place for freedom and the will, and is ultimately committed to a fatalistic determinism.⁵

Spinoza, unlike some pantheists, rejected emanationism, the idea that things of the world are mere emanations or derivations of some more basic or causal power. In some important ways, Spinoza’s pantheism is in direct opposition to the sort of “absolute” or “idealist” pantheism that one finds in, for instance, the pre-Socratic thinker Parmenides or the Indian *Upaniṣads*, where the most crucial takeaway is that the world of forms is illusory compared to the One or Being that is behind them. For Spinoza, and for his predecessors, such as Epicurus and Lucretius, it is the *particulars* themselves that take on greater significance—even sacredness—in recognition of their mutual interdependence. As “modes” or “moments” of infinite substance (i.e., God), the things or the world partake fully of the qualities of that substance.⁶ This is a distinction that, I believe, is important when we consider the New Buddhist appropriation of pantheism.

In a recent work Matthew Stewart has argued that Spinoza be considered a fundamental source of ideas for radical political thought, including but not limited to many of the democratic ideals that gave birth to the American Revolution. In Stewart’s view, Spinoza’s pantheism brings to fruition a lengthy minority tradition in Western thought dating back to Epicurus and Lucretius, and extending through the writings of Giordano Bruno (1548–1600), Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), and Toland. Pantheism, Stewart concludes, far from being a Romantic relapse into obfuscation and mysticism, is actually the foundational cosmology of the European Enlightenment, at least in its more radical forms.⁷ In contrast to the authors of *Worlds Apart*, for whom pantheism is often if not always imbued with religiosity, Stewart sees pantheism as fundamentally secularist and even antireligious at heart.⁸ In this view, pantheism defines an approach to the world and others that is ineluctably *political* in its implications; more specifically, its “immanentism” acts as a universal acid, clearing the ground for the possibility of radical democracy.⁹

In any discussion of the influence of Western thought on Suzuki, some attention must be paid to Paul Carus (1852–1919), the German American writer who acted as host and philosophical mentor for the young Suzuki upon his first extended stay in the United States. Though best known for his *Gospel of Buddha* (1894)—which Judith Snodgrass calls “an archetypical Orientalist exercise using Buddhism to promote [a] post-Kantian Christian monism”¹⁰—Carus also published a work titled *The Religion of Science* in 1893, the year of the World’s Parliament of

Religions. Here he expressed his conviction that “science” was a necessary scourge of orthodox religious belief, and yet the final result would be not irreligious materialism but rather a higher “religion of science.”¹¹ Though Carus claims to reject pantheism in favor of an Aristotelian monism of the “superreal,”¹² his monism is perhaps better understood as a monistic form of pantheism—or, as one critic aptly put it, “pantheism robbed of its mystical adorations.”¹³ The roots of Carus’ monism lie in the work of Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919), who sought to combine Darwinian evolution with a materialistic interpretation of Spinoza and Bruno. (Thankfully, Carus did not follow Haeckel into his social Darwinism and scientific racism.)

Suzuki’s Pantheism: *Shin shūkyōron*

Let us turn now to an examination of Suzuki’s interpretation of pantheism as it appears in *Shin shūkyōron*, published in 1896, just prior to Suzuki’s sojourn with Carus in the United States and a few years following the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions. In this text, written as a response to questions raised by Parliament chair John Henry Barrows to Suzuki’s teacher, Shaku Sōen (1860–1919), we see the young Suzuki struggling with all the many and various currents shaping not only Buddhist modernism in Japan but also Western thought in the final decades of the nineteenth century. In thinking about the “true meaning” or “essence” of religion along Zen Buddhist lines, Suzuki, like Nakanishi Ushirō (1859–1930) and Shaku Sōen before him, makes central use of the term “pantheism.”

In this work, as elsewhere, Suzuki also employs the term “God,” though it is clear that in using such a term he intends not the deity of orthodox Abrahamic religions but rather something closer, perhaps, to Spinoza’s *Deus sive Natura*. Yet, the appeal to a source or locus of transcendence even while rejecting God as Creator, Lawgiver, or Savior gives Suzuki’s pantheism a flavor of *panentheism*, even shading into the quasi-Unitarianism of Nakanishi. After criticizing those who would too readily dismiss religion (and uphold a purely secular philosophy and materialistic science) due to the “nonsensical stories” and pointless rituals of typical religions, Suzuki argues that such discussions miss the point that while these superficial aspects of religion change with time and place, the “essence” of religion “has never been changed throughout history.”¹⁴ Moreover, he asserts, along with many of his New Buddhist peers, that this timeless essence of religion always includes a rational as well as an irrational (or emotional) aspect, and thus must be approached with a combination of “intellectual analysis” and “religious emotion.” Ultimately, in Suzuki’s formulation, the “supernatural” elements of

religion must align with our “experiences” (*keiken*)—experiences that involve the mind, the senses, and the emotions. What distinguishes “religion” from “philosophy” and “science,” he argues, is that the former is “a reality,” while the latter two are “explanations” of that reality. This is an interesting gambit on Suzuki’s part, and one that draws us back into his reflections on pantheism. Religion in this understanding is, we might say, a firsthand illumination or *realization* of the reality of nature as a kind of living force or dynamic. Perhaps religion is nothing more or less than *phenomenology*. And yet, since “religion” in this sense is simply another name for a kind of perfected awareness of the reality of things/nature, it cannot—or at least cannot alone—be a means for dispelling ignorance. This is where philosophy and science come back into play.¹⁵

Mapping this onto Buddhism, “religion” becomes a synonym for awakening or enlightenment, while the teachings—the Dharma—are cognates of philosophy and science. But this is perhaps a too-traditional reading of Buddhism. Following his inclinations toward Zen, Suzuki, even in this early work, tends to collapse practice into awakening, so that it becomes possible for “religion” (later this would be “Zen”) to stand on its own without “Dharma” (in the sense of ideas/teachings): “Religion exists in firsthand comprehension [of things as they are] and is where one attains realization through practicing the teachings.”¹⁶

Suzuki goes further in *Shin shūkyōron* to assert that he has “no doubt about the presence of a great principle that is consistent throughout Heaven and Earth,” one that “controls the orbital motions of the celestial bodies” and “maintains the existence of landscapes and nature.” To this point, Suzuki might be referring to the physical laws of the universe, including gravity, but he goes on to add that this “principle” has also “firmly founded the moral principles of every life.” Here it would seem clear that Suzuki is invoking the neo-Confucian, and more broadly East Asian Buddhist, concept of Principle (Ch. *li*; Jp. *ri*). The connection between pantheism as a cosmological assumption and ethics or morality is one that remains underdeveloped in Suzuki’s work—just as, arguably, it is underdeveloped in neo-Confucian and Zen writings.

Having said that, Suzuki’s critique of Western theism is rooted less in rational or scientific skepticism about the supernatural than in what we might call an aesthetic (and potentially moral) critique of such traditions: namely, that by distancing God from the world they “regard everything in the universe as a kind of solid rock or cast iron which is wastefully dull and without warmth.” Here Suzuki begins to draw the outlines of his “post-pantheistic” perspective: “In the Christian sense, I am not a theist but an atheist, not an atheist but a pantheist, *not a pantheist but something that has a broader meaning than that*” (my emphasis). While atheism trumps theism (which is stuck in “primitive” delusion), and

pantheism tops atheism (due to its lack of negativism), even pantheism has a weakness: “[Pantheism] cannot explain the reason why evil prevails and disasters occur. If everything were all sacred, there would be no wicked or catastrophic elements, hence no good, evil, or fortunate elements. Both morality and immorality would disappear, and the world would see only chaotic mechanical force; supposing the working of such a force here, there would be no meaning or difference in the universe, so vast and vague.”¹⁷

Here Suzuki seems to be adopting Hegel’s pointed critique of Spinoza, famously taken up by Pierre Macherey in his *Hegel or Spinoza*, where Macherey takes Spinoza’s side.¹⁸ Hegel called out Spinoza’s pantheism for its tendency toward stasis, and its consequent sterility. Suzuki’s critique of classical pantheism also exudes the traditional religious critique of “materialism,” whereby pantheism *removes* meaning from the world, and thus encourages nihilism.

Suzuki wants to insist that there *is* a meaning or “ideal” to life, and that the evolution of the universe and the development of humanity must have a purpose—or at least a “policy.” “No, no—there are good and evil, right and wrong, half and full, healthy and unhealthy, prosperity and decline, evolution and degeneration, erecting and sweeping out, Heaven and Hell, Buddha and demons, each [side] of these pairs stand together and influences the other. Are these not our true experiences?”¹⁹

So the young Suzuki hedges his bets on pantheism, for reasons at once Hegelian and, perhaps, more traditionally religious: pantheism does not give adequate acknowledgment of change, evolution, and the contrast of opposites (e.g., good and evil, suffering and release), that drive most conceptions of “progress.” Here he invokes a classical Buddhist phrase: “Equality without difference is a bad equality” (*sabetsu naki byōdō wa aku byōdō*).

I do not intend here to enter into a full analysis of Suzuki’s “postpantheism” in relation to his later ideas regarding religion and Zen, as they appear in, for example, his writings from the 1920s and 1930s. I would, however, like to highlight some problems with Suzuki’s presentation of pantheism in *Shin shūkyōron*, which may inform our reading of his later work and the work of other Buddhist modernists. First and foremost, while Suzuki wants to uphold the significance of “difference” as a way to explain—and perhaps justify—“evil” in the world, this seems based on a terribly simplified interpretation of pantheism as developed in Western thought. The basic thrust of pantheism, as it appears, in particular, in the work of classical materialists through early modernists such as Bruno and Spinoza, is that the primary causes or moving forces of the world are themselves part of the world, rather than above and beyond it. Further, recognition of such brings joy, since we no longer need look for explanations in the realm of the

mysterious or unknown. Most significant, at least for Spinoza, is that such a “view of life” focuses our perspective on the realm of the horizontal (including other beings), and the “here and now.” There is a radical resistance to telos in this form of pantheism; here, especially, is where Spinoza departs from Hegel and his heirs, including, arguably, Marx.²⁰

In contrast, Suzuki’s “postpantheism” follows a Hegelian path, emphasizing the necessity of “opposition” through difference in order for change or progress to occur: “The tireless vital energy of the universe, indeed, lies in its relative structure. Once it loses the antithetical part of the pair, it converges in one entity and loses its *raison d’être*.”²¹ In line with the Spencerian evolutionary paradigm of the day, Suzuki fears the implications of a cosmic lack of telos.²² But is this fear justified for a Buddhist? The following section explores this issue by turning to alternative readings of pantheism in some of the work of other New Buddhists, including Sakaino Kōyō and Takashima Beihō, in addition to the later work of Sano Manabu.

(New) Buddhist Pantheism

In a short article published in 1900, in the very first volume of *New Buddhism* (*Shin bukkyō*), the journal of the New Buddhist Fellowship (*Shin Bukkyō Dōshikai*), Sakaino Kōyō asks the question: What is it that lies at the foundation of Buddhism, and, more importantly, New Buddhism?²³ “We New Buddhists wish to establish Buddhism on the basis of a pantheistic worldview. A pantheistic perspective shall be the foundation of Buddhism. Upon this foundation, the Buddhism of the future can be continuously improved and purified. This is what we are calling New Buddhism.”²⁴

What, exactly, does Sakaino mean by a “pantheistic worldview/perspective”? In fellow New Buddhist Tanaka Jiroku’s formulation, which consciously mimics a famous line from the *Heart Sutra*, pantheism implies that “everything is divine and divinity is everything” (*issai soku kami, kami soku issai*).²⁵ It is also, Tanaka argues, a standpoint that affirms the Buddhist critique of the “self.”²⁶ For Sakaino, who seems more resistant to cosmological abstractions, pantheism provides a “this-worldly” and secure foundation for a holistic and inclusivist perspective when it comes to the objects or focus of belief.²⁷ As he puts it later in the same essay, “Standing on a pantheistic foundation, we New Buddhists are a religious organization that seeks freedom of belief.”²⁸ In the end, we might say that pantheism for Sakaino is less an ontological or metaphysical claim than it is a methodological and ethical stance: “Our pantheism is not simply a matter of being satisfied with some lofty philosophical theory. We

believe that pantheism harmonizes nicely with ethics, as well as the latest theories of moral philosophy.”²⁹

Sakaino would develop this idea several years later in a piece titled “Hanshinteki shinkō no dōtokuteki hōmen” (the ethical direction of pantheistic faith) by suggesting that, while the philosophical aspects of pantheism can indeed be difficult, at its most basic and evocative level, the doctrine means nothing more or less than a willingness to take the following classic Chinese insight seriously: “The myriad things of heaven and earth are of one source” (*Tenchi ittai banbutsu dōkon*).³⁰

The New Buddhist conception of pantheism suggests the capacity to find some sort of deeper resonance or significance in the “things” of the world—including but not limited to what we call “nature.” Again, New Buddhist pantheism seems less an ontological claim about the nature of reality than a “pragmatic” trope or heuristic designed to emphasize the “this-worldly,” universalist and possibly “trans-humanist” aspects of Buddhism as they reconceived it in the early twentieth century—without going so far as to reject the “nonmaterial” realm in its entirety. In two pieces published consecutively in the November and December 1902 editions of *Shin bukkyō*, Sakaino employs the term “transmaterialism” (*chōbusshitsushugi*) to refer to the same idea, going so far as to include it as one of the “four pillars” of New Buddhism, along with this-worldliness (*genseshugi*), a spirit of equality (*byōdō no seishin*), and a commitment to universal brotherhood (*isshidōjinshugi*).³¹ “To say that Buddhism is ‘trans-materialist’ is to say that the primary purpose of Buddhism is to address matters of a mental or spiritual nature. This is the primary objective for us New Buddhists. And yet, although this may sound like New Buddhists have disdain for concrete materiality, it is not the case that we merely prize the spirit and disdain material things.”³²

Despite their this-worldly focus and calls for social reform, the New Buddhists often expressed hesitation about adopting a purely materialist perspective, a hesitation that finds clearest expression in a critique of their socialist peers. In a 1908 piece titled “Busshitsuteki bunmei o toki tobaku ni oyobu” (the risk of advocating for material civilization), Sakaino argues that, despite the fact that the New Buddhists and socialists belong to the same “species” (*dōsei*), New Buddhists cannot accept the “interpretation of practical human life” of their socialist friends, who, he argues, tend to “parrot the songs of French socialists and Russian nihilists.”³³ The insinuation is clear: the problem of socialism in Japan—and perhaps particularly for Buddhists—is that it relies too heavily on a (Western) materialist understanding of human flourishing, and thus cannot provide a critical brush sufficiently broad to deal with the breadth of problems facing modern Japan. Of course, accusations of “crude

materialism” are frequently based on simplifications or misreadings of Marx, but Sakaino’s hesitation, one shared by most of the New Buddhists, is plausibly justified on the basis of “orthodox Marxist” interpretations of socialism, which tend toward economism and reductionist materialism. As I have argued elsewhere,³⁴ for this reason I believe it worthwhile to revisit Sakaino’s concept of “transmaterialism,” which he argues must be one of the four “pillars” of New Buddhism, along with a principle of this-worldliness, a spirit of equality and a spirit of freedom.

In a short essay published in March 1910, titled “*Rei ka niku ka*” (Spirit or flesh?), New Buddhist Fellowship cofounder Takashima Beihō (1875–1949) presents his own take on the issue. After accepting the evolutionary thesis that human beings are creatures with two basic and fundamental instincts—that is, to preserve themselves as individuals and their species—he goes on to argue from this premise that humans are dual-natured, with an equally strong “internal” urge toward preserving their physical existence and an “external” need to protect others, particularly their offspring.³⁵ Thus, Beihō reasons, a strictly “materialist” thesis is incorrect, in that it neglects the human instinct for species preservation, which manifests itself in the strongest human emotion: love (*ren’ai*).³⁶ From this point, Beihō makes a fairly typical “leap of difference,” arguing that human beings, unlike, say, “dogs and monkeys,” have a spiritual as well as a fleshly aspect (*rei no hōmen to niku no hōmen to ga aru*). “Without belittling the fleshly aspect,” it is the spiritual side that allows us to become “fully human,” in the sense that it provides human life with “value” (*kachi*) and “significance” (*igi*).³⁷ While this last step is not an unusual one to make for religious critics of evolution, naturalism, or materialism, several points bear notice here. First, though he does not spell out the connection, Beihō seems to leave open the possibility that the “spiritual” aspect of human being has “evolved” from the “natural” instinct toward species preservation; that is, that emotions like love and compassion are evolutionary epiphenomena that have become fundamental to human nature over the course of evolution.

Along similar lines, it is important to note that the “spiritual” aspect of human being is rendered here in purely emotional and humanistic, as opposed to transcendental and conventionally “religious,” terms.³⁸ Indeed, Beihō blurs conventional distinctions further by referring to his goal as a “greater naturalism” (*ōi ni shizenshugi*): “Thus, with our spiritual nature, we must love the natural beauty of reality [*jitsuzai no fūkō*]. We must love the Buddha and the gods, which are other names for that reality. To put it in modern terms, facing toward the natural beauty of reality we must implement a greater naturalism. By using our knowledge and our faith, we must satisfy the hunger and thirst of our divine

nature. While human beings cannot live without bread, they also cannot live by bread alone. This harmony between spirit and flesh is the foundation on which human life can begin.”³⁹

Although Beihō does not employ the term here, this vision fits very well with the larger New Buddhist discourse on pantheism as an appropriate “middle way” between theism and atheism, spiritual idealism and “vulgar” materialism. It is also a plausible reading of the early Marx’s attempt to forge a “practical humanism” rooted in a naturalism that overcomes the distinction between materialism and idealism—though of course Beihō, writing in 1910, would not have had access to Marx’s *Paris Manuscripts*.⁴⁰ Resolutely this-worldly, naturalistic, and pragmatic in focus, the “spiritual” element of humanity appears to be a capacity for humility, wonder, compassion, and “love,” ideals that are emphasized within traditional Buddhist teachings and that, for Beihō and the New Buddhists, are too easily lost within a purely materialist perspective. In addition, it is likely that Beihō and his fellow New Buddhists, being broadly educated intellectuals conversant with current trends in thought and culture, were influenced by literary naturalism, which was itself connected to progressive and occasionally radical political ideologies—particular those of an anarchist sensibility. Young progressives and revolutionaries of late Meiji and Taishō were inspired by the work of Japanese naturalists such as Shimazaki Tōson (1872–1943), Tayama Katai (1872–1930), Kunikida Doppo (1871–1908), and Arahata Kanson (1887–1981). Infusing images and motifs from Western thinkers such as Henri Bergson (1859–1941) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), these authors appealed to both the power and beauty of nature as a “source” for personal and sociopolitical transformation. Suzuki Sadami has gone so far as to claim that “vitalism” (*seimeishugi*) was a fundamental concept not only for progressives but also for Taishō literary and intellectual culture more broadly conceived.⁴¹

It turns out that Suzuki and the New Buddhists were not alone in looking to pantheism as a potential “middle way” for a postwar, progressive—and possibly Marxist—appropriation of Buddhism. Twenty-five years following his dramatic *tenkō*, ex-communist-turned-Buddhist Sano Manabu (1892–1953) would use the same term in making a similar argument. In a chapter from his 1958 book *Bukkyō to shakaishugi* titled “Busshin ichinyo shisō no atarashii sugata” (the new shape of matter-mind unity thought), Sano argues that “human beings demand a worldview that is able to bring together and unify knowledge of nature as well as human life. However, this is not for the purposes of mere idle speculation, but rather because we want to make life more beautiful and abundant—that is, it emerges from a demand for practical action. It is from this demand that materialism—which interprets nature, and idealism—which appreciates the

spirit, are born. And yet, *busshin ichinyo* thought is not a product of compromise between materialism and idealism.⁴²

As Sano explains, it is necessary to go beyond the limits of both materialism and idealism so that one sees that matter and spirit are unified. Furthermore, “this recognition of the essence of the world in things as they are is pantheistic thought.” Rather than being a type of isolation or stasis, the *ichinyo* perspective allows for “generation” (*seisei*), “flow” (*ryūdō*), “mutability” (or impermanence; *mujō*), and “unceasing development” (*taezaru hatten*), concepts familiar to traditional Buddhist thought but interpreted here in a modernist and “progressive” manner.

And yet, Sano argues, despite its centrality to East Asian philosophy and religion, previous forms of *busshin ichinyo* thought contain the following weaknesses: (1) an overemphasis on meditation, disconnected from action; (2) a focus on individual, personal practice at the expense of developing a person’s worldview as a member of society; (3) an interpretation of *busshin ichinyo* as a kind of tranquility, with little understanding of its unceasing dynamism (while similarly downplaying the significance of contradictions in favor of harmony); (4) a “naturalistic” fancy by which immersion in nature leads to a flight from the world; (5) and an emphasis on the laws of karma, by which the regularities and necessities of nature are neglected, leading to a lack of scientific development.⁴³ By squarely facing up to these issues—while reconnecting with fundamental Mahāyāna teachings such as the “mutual benefits philosophy of the bodhisattva”—*busshin ichinyo* can serve as the foundation for a unique form of East Asian Buddhist socialism.⁴⁴

As such, Sano belatedly brings together two important tropes of the New Buddhists: *busshin ichinyo* and “pantheism,” while emphasizing, as they did half a century previous, the “social” and even socialistic implications of these concepts. Indeed, these five critical points are very much in line with Ichikawa Hakugen’s Marxist-inspired critique of traditional and modern Buddhism.⁴⁵ And yet, as I argue in my book *Against Harmony*, Sano’s perspective is limited by an emphasis on ethnoparticularism, and the fact that his “national socialism” resolves itself in a higher unity known as the state or *kokutai*—though this aspect is less evident, for obvious reasons, in the postwar period.

One way of putting this is that, due to his outright rejection of the socialist political (if not theoretical) perspective on social change, Sano cannot provide adequate “resistance” to political power or hegemony, and is in danger of lapsing into a sterile Japanism.⁴⁶ In this sense, despite his more overtly political perspective, Sano’s interpretation of *busshin ichinyo* is resonant with the early work of Suzuki and Nishida Kitarō, who similarly sought to “resolve” the problem of

subject and object by developing a Buddhist-inspired epistemology that purports to dissolve the distinction between subjectivism and objectivism.⁴⁷ Here, however, we begin to move into a quite different realm of inquiry than that favored by the New Buddhists and most of their progressive heirs, as *busshin ichinyo* becomes a mode of “merging” with the world or nature, rather than a more nuanced, nonreductive way of addressing the contradictions and problems that arise in modern, material society.

Rethinking Pantheism as Phenomenology

But let us return to pantheism as a possible “middle way” between a reductive materialism and an abstract or world-denying idealism. Here I believe Jay Garfield’s invocation of *phenomenology* is of use in helping us to elucidate some of the complexities involved as we work through the implications of this line of thought. To begin, Garfield argues that the classical Madhyamika authors and their heirs in some East Asian traditions brought to bear “one of the most radical attacks on one aspect of the Myth of the Given to have ever been advanced in world philosophy.” “It is not simply an argument that reality—whatever it may be—is not given to us as it is; rather, it is the claim that we can make no sense whatsoever of the very notion of reality that is presupposed by any form of that myth. The dependence, however, is not absolute, and does not yield an idealism; it is rather causal, involving an interplay between the subjective and objective aspects of the reality we enact.”⁴⁸ The second sentence draws us to the crux of the matter: “reality” is a byproduct, as it were, of our interactions with the world. On one level, this leads to a “soft” materialism, rooted in commonsense pragmatism (with its own possible dangers), since the only world is the world that we inhabit—or, to use Garfield’s more dynamic and constructivist term—the world we *enact*. Garfield poses the question at this stage: is this still metaphysics? His answer, correct in my view, is no, at least not in the sense in which we usually use the word. In short, “the attempt to find a determinate reality beyond the apparently ethereal *lebenswelt* may well be doomed to failure.”⁴⁹

Of course, Garfield is well aware of, and makes a point of highlighting, the similarities between this Buddhist phenomenological perspective and the Western skeptical traditions extending from the classical schools through Hume and filtering into the work of Kant and Schopenhauer, and arguably Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Wittgenstein (none of whom could be called “pantheists” in the strict sense).⁵⁰ And yet, there is a difference with most of these thinkers in that Buddhist philosophers, for reasons at least partly soteriological, are committed to

emphasizing that the entities and properties with which we interact are those that have significance for us, those about which we care, that stand out from and are framed by backgrounds, or that constitute the backgrounds that give significance to that which stands out. . . . Buddhist philosophy . . . is aimed at solving a particular problem, that of the omnipresence of suffering. . . . The choice of the *lebenswelt* as the site of metaphysics is thus not a retreat from reality, but a focus on the reality that matters to us. Its metaphysics is the metaphysics that can make a difference.⁵¹

There are many subtleties at work here, but I suggest that this emphasis on *significance* further heightens the pragmatist aspect of this perspective, albeit a pragmatism with a distinctive, Buddhistic telos—that of liberating beings from suffering.⁵²

Another important aspect of this phenomenological view, especially with respect to the New Buddhist attempt to infuse a pantheistic perspective into modern Buddhism, is the social component. As Garfield informs us, “The *lebenswelt*, especially in the Mahāyāna tradition, is a social world, a world in which conventions can be constituted. One of the central meanings of *convention* (*samvṛti*, *vyāvahāra*) . . . is *agreement*, or *mundane* practice. For this reason, from a Mahayana perspective, not only are our salient social practices and linguistic meanings conventionally constituted, but so too is our ontology.”⁵³ Here we begin to hear notes of Marx, as well as his twentieth-century heirs who take seriously the possibility of the “social construction of reality.”

Finally, there is a fascinating move in certain Madhyamaka thinkers (and, by extension, much of East Asian Buddhist thought) toward what Siderits calls *global antirealism*.⁵⁴ In this scenario, the residual antirealism of the early Abhidharma is pushed further, such that the contrast that upheld the Abhidharmic critique of realism is lost, allowing realism in through the back door: “It makes sense to see Mādhyamikas, in virtue of this radical extension of anti-realism, to have recovered a robust realism regarding the ordinary, conventional world, albeit a modified *kind* of realism. . . . To be real on this understanding is hence not to *possess*, but to *lack*, *ultimate reality*.”⁵⁵ Here phenomenological pragmatism—and possibly pantheism understood along the lines of New Buddhist “transmaterialism”—becomes a middle way between the “nihilism” that seeks to undercut the reality of the conventional world (as does the early Abhidharma and, Garfield suggests, modern scientific reductionism), and the more ordinary, naïve reification of the world as it is.⁵⁶

Garfield sees this move as a potentially significant contribution to contemporary Western metaphysics. “Taking Madhyamaka seriously—whether in its

Indo-Tibetan or Chinese guise—is to take seriously the possibility that metaphysics is directed not at a deeper analysis of reality but at extirpating the need for such a deeper analysis.” With this extirpation, perhaps, goes the temptation toward “weak nihilism,” whereby the world of appearance is depreciated in favor of something deeper or more “real,” thereby allowing for a reaffirmation of “ordinary life.”⁵⁷

Through the foregoing, wide-ranging analysis of “pantheism” as it emerges in the early works of Japanese Buddhism modernism, including D. T. Suzuki, the New Buddhist Fellowship, and Sano Manabu, and in relation to Western thinkers such as Spinoza, Hegel, and Marx, we arrive at the following conclusions: “In modern Western thought, *pantheism* remains a powerful if controversial undercurrent; recent re-evaluations of the work of Spinoza point to some of its radical implications for metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics; Stewart argues for an ‘immanentist’ pantheism as a neglected but still fertile foundation for radical democracy.” Pantheism (Jp. *hanshinron*) also has significant valence within Japanese Buddhist modernism, particularly the work of scholars and lay Buddhist activists who articulated the outlines of a New Buddhism from the 1880s through the 1940s; for these thinkers, it provided a “middle way” between materialism and idealism, as well as between theism and atheism.

In early works such as *Shin shūkyōron* (1896), D. T. Suzuki developed a particular interpretation of “postpantheism” as an ideal form of or approach to religion; Suzuki’s postpantheism, which can be interpreted as a *phenomenological* approach to religion, struggles to avoid the danger of a static, and potentially nihilistic, “materialism,” eventually (I argue) lapsing into Hegelian assumptions about change and “evolution.”

The lay Buddhist activists associated with the New Buddhist Fellowship shared many of the above concerns, though they were more inclined than Suzuki to accept the radical “this worldliness” of pantheism as a foundation (or “essence”) for (New) Buddhism; “transmaterialism” is another term employed to suggest an approach that avoids the traps of reductionism and essentialism, what Marx might call a “practical humanism.”

In the postwar period, lapsed radical turned Buddhist Sano Manabu further developed these connections between pantheism, Buddhism, and Marxism, but Sano himself got caught in the same Hegelian trap of attempting to dissolve contradictions and distinctions in the name of harmony, rendering his Marxist-infused Buddhist pantheism ineffective as a basis for critical resistance against the status quo.

One way out of this Hegelian trap is to sidestep questions of ontology and metaphysics entirely, a move that we might make by following Garfield's suggestion to consider certain forms of Buddhist thought as both *phenomenological* and *pragmatic*; that is, that reality is *enacted* through engagement with others and the world, with the caveat that the primary purpose of such engagement—and thus the *significant reality*—must be the Buddhist telos of liberating beings from suffering.

Of course, this is a move that Suzuki never makes in his work, perhaps due to his emphasis on the “experience” of awakening as one that transcends “ethics” (and “religion”) as normally conceived. But it is one that helps ameliorate Suzuki's concern that pantheism, in its lack of cosmic telos, must be a bridge to chaos.

Notes

This is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented to the symposium “Reflections on D. T. Suzuki: Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of his Death,” held at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), Kyoto, Japan, December 5–6, 2016.

Parts of the section titled “(New) Buddhist Pantheism” have been adapted from James Mark Shields, *Against Harmony: Progressive and Radical Buddhism in Modern Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 2017), 105–115, 235–243.

1. Norman Geisler and William D. Watkins, eds., *Worlds Apart: A Handbook on World Views*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 93.

2. Geisler and Watkins, *Worlds Apart*, 85.

3. The best Japanese source on Buddhism and/as pantheism is Masai Keiji (1883–1979), *Bukkyō to hanshinron* (Tokyo: Dōbōsha, 1977). Masai notes the work of two of his contemporaries, scholar Ui Hakuju (1882–1963) and scholar (and Sōtō Zen priest) Kimura Taiken (1881–1930), who were also interested in elucidating this connection (6).

4. Maurice A. Canney, *An Encyclopedia of Religions* (London: Routledge, 1921), 277.

5. Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese, *Philosophers Speak of God* (New York: Humanity Books, 1953), chap. 4.

6. See Geisler and Watkins, *Worlds Apart*, 78–79. In distinguishing types of pantheism, *Worlds Apart* classifies Spinozan pantheism as modal, as opposed to absolute (Advaita), emanational (Plotinus), developmental (Hegel), multilevel (Radhakrishnan), or permeational (Daoism, Zen, *Star Wars*).

7. Matthew Stewart, *Nature's God: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014), 166–167.

8. “Although America's revolutionary deists lavished many sincere expressions of adoration upon their deity, deism is in fact functionally indistinguishable from what we would now call ‘pantheism’; and pantheism is really just a pretty word for atheism. While deism could often be associated with moderation in politics, it served principally to advance a system of thought that was revolutionary in its essence and effects” (Stewart, *Nature's God*, 5–6).

9. See Peter Gratton, “Spinoza and the Biopolitical Roots of Modernity,” *Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 18, no. 3 (2013): 91–102.

10. Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 11.

11. Martin Verhoeven, "The Dharma through Carus's Lens," in *The Gospel of Buddha according to Old Records*, by Paul Carus (LaSalle: Open Court, 2003), 28.

12. See Verhoeven, "Dharma through Carus's Lens," 28.

13. The critic was Henry Collin Minton; see Harold Henderson, *Catalyst for Controversy: Paul Carus of Open Court* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), 62.

14. SSR, 9.

15. SSR, 10.

16. SSR, 11.

17. SSR, 21.

18. "Against Hegel's view of the geometric method of *Ethics* as a formalism precluding the movement of thought, Macherey offers evidence of a method that is only apparently geometric and Cartesian and instead expresses an immanent philosophy that is not subordinated to the guarantee of an a priori truth: in Spinoza's work truth emerges through exposition rather than being fixed at the outset as a set of formal principles" (Susan Ruddick, "Introduction," in Pierre Macherey, *Hegel or Spinoza* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), ix).

19. SSR, 21.

20. See Macherey, *Hegel or Spinoza*, 52–53.

21. SSR, 22.

22. SSR, 22.

23. Sakaino's article (SB 2, 9 [Aug. 1901], 325), titled "Katō hakase ni kotau" (Reply to Dr. Katō), is directed against the prominent Meirokusha founder and president of Tokyo Imperial University Baron Katō Hiroyuki (1836–1916).

24. SB 2, 9 (Aug. 1901), 325.

25. SB 2, 10 (Sept. 1901), 350. Tanaka goes on to cite two famous passages from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* (*Dai hatsu nehan kyō*): "All beings without exception have Buddha-nature" (*Issai shujō shitsu u busshō*), and "Plants, trees and soil—all will attain buddhahood" (*Sōmoku kokudo shikkai jōbutsu*); 351.

26. SB 2, 10 (Sept. 1901), 355.

27. See in this regard Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), 122–130; also, on pantheism and "freedom" in the work of Andō Shōeki, see Tetsuo Najita, "Andō Shōeki—The 'Forgotten Thinker' in Japanese History," in *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies*, ed. Masao Miyoshi and Harry D. Harootunian (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 74.

28. SB 2, 9 (Aug. 1901), 329; for more on pantheism, see SB 1, 5 (Nov. 1900), 140; SB 2, 6 (May 1901), 289–295; SB 2, 12 (Nov. 1901), 386–390; SB 4, 12 (Dec. 1903), 916–919; SB 8, 2 (Feb. 1907), 371–381; SB 8, 7 (July 1907), 454–461.

29. SB 8, 2 (Feb. 1907), 381; also, SB 2, 6 (May 1901), 289–295.

30. SB 8, 7 (July 1907), 454, 461.

31. SB 3, 12 (Dec. 1902), 675.

32. SB 3, 11 (Nov. 1902), 655.

33. SB 9, 3 (March 1908), 551.

34. See Shields, *Against Harmony*, chap. 7.

35. SB 11, 3 (March 1910), 262.

36. It bears noting that Beihō's argument here aligns with the Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin's well-known critique of individualistic (and social Darwinistic) interpretations of evolution. See Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution* (Sydney: Wentworth Press, 2016).

37. SB 11, 3 (March 1910), 262.

38. In fact, Beihō's perspective here is arguably not far from the Marxian conception of "human exceptionalism," rooted in the basic insight that while human beings share with animals the basic drives for food, sex, and shelter, they have the unique ability to produce their own subsistence, which gives birth to economics, society, and "socialized" humanity (see MECW 3, 42–43). The difference is that Marx develops his analysis by looking at the distorting impact of ideology and specific economic factors such as private property.

39. SB 11, 3 9 (March 1910), 263.

40. In both the *Paris Manuscripts* (aka *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*) and *The Holy Family*, Marx asserts that communism is a form of "real" or "practical" humanism rooted in naturalism, and by virtue of the latter, serves as the unifying truth of idealism and materialism (see, e.g., MECW, 3, 296).

41. See Suzuki Sadami, *Nihon no "bungaku" gainen* (Tokyo: Sakuhinsha, 1998).

42. Sano Manabu, *Sano Manabu chosakushū*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Sano Manabu Chosakushū Kankōkai, 1958), 3:611 (hereafter SMC).

43. SMC 3:614.

44. SMC 3:651.

45. Ichikawa Hakugen, *Bukkyōsha no sensō sekinin* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1970), 150–154.

46. Moreover, in his insistence on the prior necessity of a "revolution in human nature" (*jinsei kakumei*), Sano misses a basic point of Marxist materialism; i.e., the recognition that fundamental change at the level of individual consciousness is difficult, if not impossible, without corresponding sociopolitical and economic change. Sano's charge, familiar to religious critics of socialism since Tolstoy, that "socialists are satisfied with superficial, institutional resolutions" (*gaimen no seidoteki kaiketsu dake ni manzoku suru* [SMC 3:733]) rings hollow—at least if one reads Marx carefully.

47. This connection becomes more evident when we examine the work of Tokyo Imperial University psychologist Hashida Kunihiro (1882–1945), who in the 1930s developed the concept of *kansatsu* as a Japanese equivalent to Western science's "observation."

48. Jay Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism: Why It Matters to Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 35.

49. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 36.

50. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 37.

51. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 39.

52. Interestingly, this also happens to be the telos of the "liberal" pragmatism developed by Richard Rorty in various essays (see, e.g., Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989]). One might also think here of Roget T. Ames and David L. Hall's pragmatic interpretation of the *Daodejing* as a text focused on "making life significant"; see Roget T. Ames and David L. Hall, eds., *Dao de jing: "Making This Life Significant"—A Philosophical Translation* (New York: Random House, 2003).

53. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 39.

54. See, e.g., Mark Siderits, *Studies in Buddhist Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 13–38.

55. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 63–65. Citing the famous couplet from the *Heart Sutra*, Garfield concludes, “The emptiness of any phenomenon simply is a property of that thing, and so is dependent upon it, and so is impermanent, and so is itself empty, and so is itself merely conventionally real” (63).

56. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 63.

57. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism*, 80. Coupled with what Garfield calls the Madhyamaka “deflationary” phenomenological take on consciousness, by which “reference to internal representations, qualia, phenomenal properties and other such ghostly mediators of our experience drop away, [o]ntology becomes cleaner, perhaps more naturalistic, and certainly more public, less private” (161–162).

CHAPTER TWO

Suzuki Daisetz Attempts a Mahāyāna Protestant Buddhism

Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism as True Religion

MARK L. BLUM

Buddhism, when rightly understood in the spirit of its founder, is something quite different from what it is commonly supposed to be by the general public.

—Daisetz Suzuki, *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*

Life is evolution, and we, the children of the age in which the doctrine of evolution has for the first time been recognized in its sweeping importance, should not hesitate to understand the necessity of a progress from the mythological through the metaphysical to the positive and purely scientific.

—Paul Carus, *God: An Inquiry into the Nature of Man's Highest Ideal and a Solution of the Problem from the Standpoint of Science*

In 1907, just before the end of his eleven-year stay in the United States working under Paul Carus (1852–1919), Suzuki Daisetsu (1870–1966) published *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (hereafter *OMB*). This was first brought out by Luzac in London in that year, and then again in 1908 by Open Court, the publishing house where Suzuki had been employed since his arrival in the United States in 1897. Reprinted in 1963 with a prefatory essay by Alan Watts in an edition still in print today, this work has often been quoted by American Buddhists in the 115 years since its publication, especially in the Zen world where Suzuki became so influential. Sasaki Shizuka recently did a yeoman's job of translating it into Japanese, looking up all the obscure texts that Suzuki used, many of them named without citations.¹ This was published by Iwanami in 2004 to high acclaim. This was one of the first books on Buddhism that I read cover to cover as an undergraduate, and it had a deep impact on my own conception of what Mahāyāna Buddhism and indeed Buddhism as a whole was all about. It is even possible that Edward Conze assigned it in the lecture class I took from him in 1973, as it is well known that Conze thought highly of Suzuki. Reading it again now, however, I

find it truly surprising on many levels. I believe this is not merely due to the massive degree to which the general understanding of Mahāyāna Buddhism has deepened, for there were sharply critical reviews of *OMB* when it first came out (though Conze did not mention them), but also in the odd way that Suzuki chose to define Mahāyāna. To better appreciate how and why Suzuki chose to write it, below I will present my understanding of the work based on framing it within the context of Western-language understandings of Buddhism at that time, that is, between 1890 and 1910. This is a massive story unto itself, and Suzuki played an important role in it, even if it is his later work that is known to have had a greater impact.

In the intervening years since my initial reading of *OMB* as an undergraduate, I have acquired an expectation of sorts when viewing a work with a title like *OMB* that it will be a work of academic rigor aimed at an audience of peers. This time, I decided to first look at the contemporary reviews of *OMB* before plunging into the text itself. There I found the review by the Protestant cleric W. O. Carver (1909) mostly positive, and the review by the learned Buddhist scholar Louis de la Vallée Poussin mostly negative.² My own predilection is to follow Poussin, but in the end, it was by returning somewhat to my younger sensibility that *OMB* finally made sense to me beyond its many problems. This is because my presumptions about what this work would be about from the title put it into the frame wherein Poussin laid down his judgment. But that yields an inevitably harsh result because, in essence, that is not the book that Suzuki wrote. In fact, this is not a book with scholarly ambitions, it is a book with missionary ambitions.

This, in itself, appears to lie at the heart of the “Suzuki problematic,” if I may use that term. One may ask, in other words, to what extent did Suzuki’s missionary zeal get in the way of his scholarship? An entirely different perspective emerges, however, if we consider *OMB* in the context of his 1943 essay written in Japanese, “Daijō bukkyō no sekaiteki shimei: Wakaki hitobito ni kisu.”³ Here he is explicit about his felt need to serve as a missionary for Mahāyāna to the world, and that in order for this to be successful, the norms that define Japanese Buddhism must not stand in the way. In other words, in sharp contrast to a work like *Nihonteki reisei* (Japanese spirituality), where Suzuki probes the depths of Buddhism in terms of the Japanese experience, *OMB* reflects an agenda of Buddhism (here defined as “Mahāyāna”) as a projected worldwide norm *in spite of* the Japanese experience.

Given the thrust of Suzuki’s international activities, finding missionary intent in any of his English-language publications is not surprising. But over his long career Suzuki clearly evolved his own vision of what that missionary effort

should look like, and, as I will point out below, many of the themes we see in his later works are missing or receive only scant attention in *OMB*. But at the same time, many people remember Suzuki telling his audiences in America that they will never penetrate Buddhism because it is too far outside their usual processes of understanding. How and when he came to that conclusion is hard to know, but given that he was only thirty-seven when he wrote *OMB*, I think it is fair to say that we are seeing something like the conclusions arrived at by a young Suzuki at the end of his eleven-year study abroad in America, and thus *OMB* can be viewed as an important marker in his career of the end of his first sojourn abroad. Given that his translation of the *Awakening of Faith* came out in 1900, also during this period in America, it might be helpful to study these two works together, though I will confine my remarks here to *OMB* alone. This context encourages us to consider precisely what the message was that he was trying to convey in this work, or perhaps more accurately, what the religion was that he was trying to convey in this work, as well as who his intended audience was, and why he felt the need to describe Buddhism in the way that he did.

The concept known as “Protestant Buddhism” was first proposed in 1970 by Gananath Obeyesekere in a sociological evaluation of modernization efforts in Sri Lanka under British colonial rule, specifically the Maha Bodhi Society of Anagārika Dharmapāla (1864–1933, née Don David Hewavitarne).⁴ Like Suzuki, Dharmapāla was a layman (at least until the end of his life) who not only engaged in lay practice and encouraged it in others but also took a doctrinal approach as the basis in his own campaign to revitalize Theravāda Buddhism in his native country and spread its version of the Buddha’s dharma in the West.⁵ Suzuki and Dharmapala had much in common, including the fact that both traveled to the United States at the invitation of Paul Carus for the first time in 1897 (though some sources date Dharmapala’s arrival in 1896), both flirted with Theosophy for some time and then abandoned it, and, as I will argue below, both offered their audience a Protestant form of Buddhism not as European outsiders but as Asians representing their own traditions. Many people have written of the influence of William James and Carus upon Suzuki, and I agree that both were substantial, but it is my thesis here that in order to fully understand what “young” Suzuki was doing within *OMB*, we also need to consider the role that the advocates of what we might call the competing thesis of “Theravāda as true Buddhism” had upon his worldview and sense of purpose. I derive this inference from an undercurrent of a strikingly polemic agenda in Suzuki aimed at counteracting the spreading influence among Western intelligentsia at the time of this assertion of Theravāda authenticity, seen in the exclusive, sectarian perspective of people such as Dharmapāla and scholars such as T. W. Rhys Davids.

Directly related to this problem is another that I will touch on below only in the conclusion because it is not evident in *OMB*; namely, that Suzuki could not have been immune to the somewhat tense and often convoluted debate happening among Japanese intellectuals during his tenure in La Salle about the authenticity of the Mahāyāna doctrines themselves. In other words, at the same time that Suzuki is urging in the English language the non-Japanese students of Buddhism to see the authenticity, even the superiority, of Mahāyāna, at the University of Tokyo where he had been studying right before leaving for the United States a number of scholars were expressing in the Japanese language serious doubts about that very same authenticity. This gap in some sense seems to follow Suzuki, and clues to understanding it often lie in the contrast between what he chooses to write about in English and what he chooses to write about in Japanese.

Regarding the Protestant Buddhism notion itself, there has been some significant pushback to it in recent scholarship, particularly in regard to the Sri Lankan situation, and to Obeyesekere's assumption that many of its characteristic features in modern discourse not only look like Protestantism but were in fact borrowed from the rhetoric of that tradition. Some prefer the label "modernist," but this term is, if anything, even more ambiguous and culturally contextualized differently in each locale, so I do not see it adding any particular clarity to this situation. It is not my intention to argue for or against the appropriateness of the "Protestant Buddhism" label when applied to either Sri Lanka or Suzuki, but I do use the term "protestant" as an adjective here in four specific ways that echo Obeyesekere's viewpoint. Namely, a view of religion that (a) is defined primarily by its doctrines and assumes uncritically that the source of those doctrines lies in canonical scripture; (b) regards the self-identified individual as the arbiter of truth rather than professional clergy, a perspective that extends to a felt suspicion toward clerical interpretations of scripture as well as claims of authority deriving from notions of lineage held dear by professional clergy; (c) sharply distinguishes between "true religion" marked by rationality and philosophy as opposed to material, symbolic forms of religion such as ritual action, thaumaturgical claims, the religious authority of institutions, and any other form of expression identified with a religious tradition deemed irrational or superstitious by those in the rational camp; and (d) sees itself as incorporating an empirical standard of truth that is compatible with science, or for some, even anticipated science.

Based on the above formula, I would argue that *OMB* was conceived as an apologetic for what amounts to a specifically Mahāyāna form of Protestant Buddhism posited in opposition to the Theravādin form of Protestant Buddhism. We can see this in the *OMB* introduction; to wit,

What is generally known to the Western nations by the name of Buddhism is Hīnayānism, whose scriptures as above stated are written in Pāli and studied mostly in Ceylon, Burma, and Siam. It was through this language that the first knowledge of Buddhism was acquired by Orientalists; and naturally they came to regard Hīnayānism or Southern Buddhism as *the only genuine teachings* of the Buddha . . . that whatever may be learned from other sources . . . and further that the knowledge derived from [them] should in certain cases be discarded as accounts of a degenerated form of Buddhism. . . . Owing to these unfortunate hypotheses, the significance of Mahayanism as a living religion has been entirely ignored; and even those who are regarded as best authorities on the subject appear greatly misinformed and, what is worse, altogether prejudiced.⁶

Suzuki's allusion to prejudice among the "authorities on the subject" of Buddhism toward "the significance of Mahayanism as a living religion" is also striking, for although this portends an embrace of religious topics outside the protestant rubric, in actuality *OMB* rarely ventures into "Mahayanism as a living religion," significant or otherwise.⁷

We cannot fully appreciate what is going on in *OMB* without keeping in mind the choice by Suzuki to write the book in English. By doing so, he was consciously jumping into a Western discourse about Buddhism that was markedly different from the situation in Japanese, as alluded to above. By 1907 top Japanese Buddhist scholars were citing and debating Western-language Buddhist scholarship in abundance, but there are hardly any signs of the pattern happening in reverse. Very few Japanese scholars were able to publish in a European language, and even fewer Westerners read Japanese. If Suzuki had elected to write *OMB* in Japanese, given substantive knowledge of Mahāyāna literature and culture in Japan and the various experimental forms of analyses going on, including the delegitimizing of the entire Mahāyāna canon, Suzuki would have anticipated a far more learned audience, and we can assume therefore that he would have conceived of a very different book. While in his later years the gap between his English- and Japanese-language writings narrowed considerably, at this time his projects were strikingly different.

OMB is presented very much as a learned introduction to the topic, but within that frame, we can discern an apologetic perspective that, to my knowledge, is simply not seen in Suzuki's Japanese-language works. His motivation for writing the book clearly reflects his feeling that English-centered Buddhist discourse was lacking in a proper appreciation of Mahāyāna Buddhism as "genuine Buddhism," and to some degree this apologetic attitude never leaves him.

With the risk of restating the obvious, it may be worthwhile here to summarize the context of how the West viewed Buddhism at the end of the nineteenth century when Suzuki entered his period of study under Paul Carus in Illinois. There was a body of literature written in the West at that time, of which Carus was a contributor, that saw in Buddhism the Comtian hope of a light to lead Christianity out of its shackled legacy of irrational theology and superstition. Buddhism was cast in a light of rationality, empiricism, and philosophic integrity. In a word, Buddhism was scientific. And this made it modern. Many saw these rational, empirical qualities as sorely lacking in Christianity, and global theologians such as Carus thus perceived in Buddhism their best hope for mankind.

But the empirically rational Buddhism they embraced was by and large limited to rationalized doctrines and meditative practices presented in the Pāli canon, ignoring the larger mythic and cosmological frame in which various states of existence, fantastical conversations by deities or demons, or past-life stories are presented, not to mention the ritualistic way Theravāda Buddhism actually functioned.⁸ This attitude pervades the writing of influential scholars such as Max Müller (1823–1900) and Hermann Oldenberg (1854–1920), but perhaps the most salient voice in this effort was Thomas William Rhys Davids (1843–1922), the founder of the Pali Text Society.

Inherent in this view of the Pāli canon was the presumption of a philosophical core that embodied the original form of the religion. This recognition extended to scriptures of Indic origin as a whole; their antiquity and provenance gave them authenticity, whereas the practitioners of Buddhism, including Theravādin Buddhists, seemed to have drifted far afield from that fountainhead. In this regard, Pāli and Sanskrit texts had an authority as “original” that “translations” into Chinese or Tibetan could not match.⁹ This was in a very real sense a tool by which the Europeans could hold up a standard to judge the credibility of the living Buddhism practiced within British colonies such as Ceylon and Burma, which they typically found lacking and which in turn justified their own viewpoint as arbiters of what was “genuine Buddhism.” One senses in *OMB* a certain indignation at this presumption of authority understood best by European non-Buddhists, particularly in its dismissal of Mahāyāna literature as having been corrupted by what they saw as the influence of too much of what the Buddha had sought to exclude.

Dharmapala is an obvious figure of note in this context because he is a local intellectual who, like Suzuki, is Asian. I don’t know if Suzuki had a personal relationship with Dharmapala, but Suzuki’s Zen master, Shaku Sōen (1860–1919), attended Dharmapala’s lectures during the three years he spent as a

bhikkhu in Sri Lanka from 1887 to 1890, and Sōen, Dharmapala, and Paul Carus were all at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, as was Hirai Kinza (1859–1916).¹⁰ Suzuki was not at the Parliament, but the fact that he mentions Dharmapala twice in *OMB* suggests that he discussed him often during his time with Sōen and Carus. Given the apologetic nature of *OMB* and the similar status of Dharmapala and Suzuki as dedicated lay practitioners and self-styled spokesmen of their respective forms of Buddhism, their common appeal to a English-speaking audience, and their common exploitation of an implied authenticity as native voices in contrast to Western scholars such as Carus and Henry S. Olcott who had the temerity to publish *Gospel of Buddha* and *Buddhist Catechism*, respectively, it seems fair to infer some degree of rivalry between them, at least in regards to Suzuki.

Another important influence was the World's Parliament of Religions itself. Although Suzuki was not in attendance, this event spurred a number of influential Japanese Buddhist thinkers, such as Inoue Enryō, Kiyozawa Manshi, and Hirai Kinza, to invest in presentations that explained their version of Buddhism to the world under the rubric of “Eastern Buddhism,” distinguished from Southern (Theravāda) and Northern (Vajrayāna) Buddhism.¹¹ Inoue indeed wrote a detailed manifesto to the Kakushū Kyōkai, the pansectarian equivalent of today's Zennihon Bukkyō Kyōkai (aka Zennichibutsu), urging their support for sending a delegation. Noteworthy in this regard was one of the presentations made by a member of that delegation, *Outlines of the Mahāyāna as Taught by Buddha* by Kuroda Shintō, a forty-five page monograph that shares the introductory apologetic premise of Suzuki's *OMB*. Another one of the participants, Ashizu Jitsuzen emphasized the *trikāya* doctrine and used it to frame Mahāyāna as having a clear, consistent cosmology in which the universe as we know it is a manifestation of *dharmakāya*. Both notions are reflected in the *OMB* presentation of the *trikāya* teaching as well as Suzuki's notion of “the will of *dharmakāya*” as an explanation of the physical universe.

Let us return to T. W. Rhys Davids, who, not coincidentally, heavily criticized the World's Parliament presentations of both Kuroda and Ashitsu after they were published. As the leading Pāli scholar in Britain if not the whole of Europe in this period between the World's Parliament and the writing of *OMB*, Rhys Davids played a major role in defining “original Buddhism” and/or “true Buddhism” for the European-American audience, and in doing so creating the tools that Dharmapala used to advocate for his vision of why the doctrinal aspect of the Pāli canon was the definitive source to which Westerners *and* modernist Sri Lankans alike needed to devote their attention.

It is my argument that Rhys Davids helped shape the Orientalist discourse defining “true Buddhism” in a way that was not only Protestant-sounding but actually embodied nearly the identical judgmental arguments of Protestant missionaries working in Sri Lanka. Rhys Davids was clearly a deep believer in the credo that Theravāda was the only legitimate form of Buddhism, because of both its perceived greater antiquity and what he saw as its rational purity. In *Theravāda Buddhism and the British Encounter*, Elizabeth Harris illustrates the striking similarity between the Orientalist perspective of Rhys Davids and the Methodist missionaries Daniel Gogerly (1792–1862) and Robert Spence Hardy (1803–1868). Gogerly and Hardy were not only leaders of the Methodist mission in Sri Lanka but were also both dedicated scholars of Buddhist materials in Sri Lanka, seeing their understanding of Buddhist thought as a vital tool in their conversion efforts. Rhys Davids called Gogerly “the greatest Pāli scholar of his age.” Hardy’s expertise was in Sinhala translations from Pāli and Sinhala narrative writing. Hardy’s early writings in the 1830s expressed a harsh critique of Buddhism as an idolatrous “offence against God,” but his more academic works on Sri Lankan Buddhist culture published in the 1850s ended up embarrassing him because they generated positive interest in Buddhism in people such as Schopenhauer and Wagner, particularly *A Manual of Buddhism in Its Modern Development*, published in 1853. This caused him to reverse course and return to his earlier dismissive stance to further his missionary objectives.

It is not surprising to read that Gogerly felt that “the hidden doctrines of Buddha should be used to prove to Buddhists that they cannot call themselves wise.”¹² But given the later writings of Rhys Davids, it is revealing to see the same conclusion about the relationship of scripture to religion: “Both Gogerly and Spence Hardy privileged textual study over knowledge gained from Buddhist practitioners and then used this study to challenge practitioners. . . . Gogerly’s conviction was that the texts, although not an exact record . . . , embodied authenticity whereas the practice of the people did not.”¹³ In other words, the method for converting the pagan Buddhists of Sri Lanka employed by Gogerly and Hardy was to show them that the Buddhism they were familiar with was not the actual teaching of the Buddha, which the Orientalist missionaries insisted could lie only in the Pāli canon. Therefore, if they could not discern the Buddha’s intent from directly reading the Pāli scriptures, whatever rewards they expected from their religion amounted to superstitious fantasy.

Turning to the young Rhys Davids, we see essentially the same perspective on “true Buddhism” as that of the missionaries.¹⁴ He certainly knew the work of Gogerly, as alluded to above. In 1877 Rhys Davids wrote disparagingly of the fact that Sri Lankans call themselves Buddhists when their way of thinking has been

so “corrupted” as to call that into question: “Many of the Ceylonese so-called Buddhists, for instance, take their oaths in court as Christians, and most of them believe also in devil-worship, and in the power of the stars. Their whole belief is not Buddhist; many of their ideas are altogether outside of Buddhism.”¹⁵ But equally if not more problematic are the Buddhisms called Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. He is particularly disparaging of the bodhisattva ideal:

For from the moment that Arahatsip began to be looked down upon in comparison with Bodhisatsip [*sic*], the whole system of mental training and self-control began to be neglected and even ignored.¹⁶

In the Lotus we find that Arahatsip is explicitly condemned, and Bodhisatsip held up as the goal at which every good Buddhist has to aim; and the whole exposition of this theory, so subversive of the original Buddhism, is actually placed in the mouth of Gotama himself.¹⁷

Harris points out that as he aged, Rhys Davids used less strident rhetoric in his characterizations of Mahāyāna, but in 1896 he was still appalled at Mahāyāna religious values, which may explain why he referred to Mahāyāna sutras as “tedious,”¹⁸ why he vilified Asaṅga for inserting Hindu deities into Buddhism, and why he dismissed Tibetan Buddhism altogether not only as a “corruption” but “the exact contrary” of what he saw as “original Buddhism.”¹⁹ He never seems to have lost his irritation that the spread of Buddhism inevitably resulted in the absorption of new interpretations and non-Buddhist ideas and beliefs, which he stridently rejected as “contradictions of the Buddha’s original message.”²⁰ For Rhys Davids, there is always criticism of how Buddhism was practiced in any traditional context, including the situation in Sri Lanka.

It is worth mentioning that Suzuki at this time also manifests a standoffishness toward the actual practice of Buddhism that has a surprising resonance to Rhys Davids. I am referring to the fact that in *OMB* Suzuki simply does not venture into that aspect of the tradition. It is as if he is compelled to argue with the “original Buddhism” advocates on their terms, that is, the hermeneutics of the doctrines described in scripture.

These protestant qualities are similarly extolled by Suzuki’s mentor Paul Carus himself in his works from this period. Most relevant to this discussion are *The Religion of Science*, first published in 1893 and translated into Japanese in 1899, and *The Gospel of Buddha*, first published in 1894 and translated into Japanese by Suzuki himself in 1895. Both these works have been republished repeatedly and are still in print today. Both predate Carus’ time working with Suzuki at his two journals, and we know that Carus eventually came round to

the Suzuki view that Mahāyāna was also genuine Buddhism. But insofar as *OMB* was published immediately following the end of Suzuki's eleven-year period of working with Carus, it is natural to think of this work as constituting Suzuki's farewell statement on Buddhism not only marking the end of tenure with Carus but perhaps even serving as a statement directed to Carus.

The Suzuki Thesis: Mahāyāna as Better Theology

Turning to what Suzuki chose to include in his doctrinal approach, *OMB* consists of thirteen chapters divided into three sections, though only the latter two are named. The first section provides a kind of textbook introduction to what the project is about, presented in an "Introduction" and two chapters, named "A General Characterisation of Buddhism" and "Historical Characterisation of Mahāyānism." The second section, chapters three through eight, is labeled "Speculative Mahāyānism," and consists of discussions on religion and metaphysics, the three natures in Yogācāra, the two truths, ignorance, suchness, *tathāgatagarbha*, *ālayavijñāna*, *anātman*, the soul, Nāgārjuna and *niḥsvabhāva*, emptiness, and karma, and concludes with Suzuki's peculiar theory of karmic immortality. The third section is labeled "Practical Mahāyānism," but if anything it is even more metaphysical, with discussions on Dharmakāya, the *trikāya* doctrine, bodhisattvas and the three-vehicle doctrine, a description of the ten *bhūmis*, and *nirvāṇa*.

In the first section Suzuki wastes no time in presenting what is the core conceptual theme of *OMB*: the existence of a religious principle in the universe that is the ultimate determinate of everything we know of as "religious." He calls this force by two names, "the will of the Dharmakāya" and "the Eternal Soul." Needless to say, this kind of language is perplexing and somewhat jarring in a context that is largely a description of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist thought, and it is noteworthy that he does not attempt to provide an Indic linguistic basis for either term. There are various and sundry ways in which Suzuki weaves this notion within his Mahāyāna discourse, often in synonymous phrases, all of which seem to have been invented by Suzuki, such as "the behest of Suchness," which, when searched on the web, brings up only *OMB*. Essentially Suzuki is using different Buddhist jargon in place of traditional truth terms such as "Emptiness," "Suchness," and "Bhūtatathātā" to press the thesis that *paramārtha-satya* has agency and is active in all aspects of the phenomenal world. If we are religiously oriented, it is only a matter of time before we recognize and submit to it. One could infer from this an expansion of the Japanese Pure Land doctrine of "other-power" (*tariki*), or one could infer that Suzuki is borrowing the notion

of “God’s will” operating in the world from Abrahamic culture. Whatever the provenance of the idea, in describing how the will of the Dharmakāya dominates the world as we know it, Suzuki surprised this reader by using the phrases “thy will” (*OMB*, 48) and “thy will be done” (*OMB*, 197, 369).

One important part of this episteme is a polemic directed against the quietistic characterization of *nirvāṇa*, which Suzuki argues in chapters 1 and 13. For Suzuki, this understanding is both “pessimistic” and hopelessly Hīnayānistic. The Buddha “vigorously repudiated” this view, he argues, by quoting a series of verses from a 1902 English translation of the *Udāna* (apparently the first rendering in English) by major general D. M. Strong, a friend and contributor to Open Court, and then presenting verses on the practice of *aśubha-bhāvanā*, which includes the line “Incapable of love and sympathy are they, For on Nirvāna abides their thought” (*OMB*, 52–53). This comes from one of three verses without reference that follows after just four lines of interceding commentary affixed to the Strong quotation, so most readers will naturally assume a continuation of Strong but, in fact, this line is not found in the Strong book. Then Suzuki cites a countering argument attributed to the Buddha “against this ascetic practice of some monks” in which his disciples are exhorted to “practice love and sympathy, give joy and protection. . . . Save and deliver all beings, Let them attain the wisdom of the Great Way” (*OMB*, 53). Again, no attribution is given. It is important to note that this section of *OMB* has been cited by many later authors to advance the cause of Buddhism as a world religion.

Another striking omission in Suzuki’s many presentations on *nirvāṇa* is the absence of any mention of the word *jimiè* (J. *jakumetsu*), a common Chinese epithet of *nirvāṇa* that describes a state that is both quiet or tranquil and marked by extinction, used in different contexts to translate forms of *śama*, *śānta*, *nirodha*, and even *nirvāṇa* itself. There are many similar omissions in *OMB*. The fact that the “extinction” aspect of *jakumetsu* refers to the elimination of the *kleśas* (defilements or afflictions) rather than affect as a whole would still allow Suzuki to pursue his thesis of the active will of the Absolute aimed at bending all living beings to the Truth. I infer three things from this. First, Suzuki feels no need to address linguistic expressions in scripture that express perspectives different from what he is presenting. Second, his stance in writing *OMB* assumes at the very least that his readership will not be familiar with the technical vocabulary of the Chinese Buddhist canon, the only traditional Buddhist scriptural source he himself has access to outside English translations, given his lack of reading ability in Sanskrit, Pāli, or Tibetan. And third, without hazarding a guess about his entire oeuvre, at least in *OMB* we see a Suzuki motivated by the strong desire to present a discourse on Buddhism that is rational, personal, compassionate,

transcendent, and thus consistent with the agenda identified above as Protestant. These are the principles that define Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Another tool employed by Suzuki to advance his apologetic that is borrowed from Christian theology but not seen in Obeyesekere's description of Protestant Buddhism is the notion that religions naturally develop and evolve over time, and as such forms of expression that appear later are not necessarily illegitimate or untrue. Suzuki himself is aware of the legitimating implications in the parallelism between Mahāyāna and Christian doctrine or, say, liturgical ritual. Thus, he asks, "is Protestantism the genuine teaching of Jesus of Nazareth? . . . Jesus himself did not have any definite notion of Trinity doctrine, nor did he propose any suggestion for ritualism" (*OMB*, 12).

To return to the Obeyesekere paradigm, another powerful trope in the Suzuki toolbox was science. In his devotion to a notion of scientific empiricism as the sole determinant of "truth," Carus did not waver, and Suzuki clearly understood the persuasiveness to English-language readers of defining Buddhism as scientific, something that had been advanced by everyone translating Pāli materials, Dharmapala, and, of course, the theosophists as well, though they never gave up their appeal to spiritualism and "the mysteries." Suzuki's task in this regard, therefore, was to show that Mahāyāna was just as scientific in its thinking as his peers regarded Theravāda, and in ways that allowed for its expanded doctrines, if not its myths.²¹

Despite the absence of the word "science" in the index to *OMB*, the term is mentioned often. And the relationship between science and religion is a recurring theme. Suzuki's stance is that they are compatible in method but embody different concerns. Being dedicated to one should not imply a rejection of the other, and both sides should recognize the unique contribution of religion to satisfy the human need for a teleology. In one explicitly protestant move, Suzuki ties compatibility with science with the valorization of the intellectualization of Buddhist culture, that is, teachings. Thus, "the more severely the religious sentiment is tested in the crucible of the intellect, the more glorious and illuminating becomes its intrinsic virtue. The true religion is, therefore, never reluctant to appear before the tribunal of scientific investigation."²² In another instance, he ties the Buddhism and Science marriage specifically to the Mahāyāna message, quoting Nāgārjuna on the need for worldly truth to guide us to ultimate truth and *nirvāṇa*, and then adds his interpretation to the effect, "from this, it is to be inferred that Buddhism never discourages the scientific, critical investigation of religious beliefs. For it is one of the functions of science that it should purify the contents of a belief and that it should point out in which direction our final spiritual truth and consolation have to be sought."²³

Donald Lopez cites this same line from *OMB* in his monograph on Buddhism and science.²⁴ What Lopez does not mention is that this passage occurs in the context of Suzuki's discussion of Nāgārjuna's understanding of the two truths, and is in fact a gloss on what appears to be his own translation of the famous verse 10 from chapter 24 of the *Mūlamadhyamaka kārikās*. Here is Suzuki's translation:

If not by worldly knowledge, The truth is not understood;
When the truth is not approached, Nirvana is not attained.²⁵

Suzuki is clever to link this doctrine to science, but in its original context it is hard to see that implication. To wit, Nāgārjuna is reminding us that working through the knowledge we have is our only way to find *nirvāṇa*, also reminding his audience that *nirvāṇa* is immanent in the world. This has nothing to do with science unless one somehow infers that people naturally follow a "scientific method," perhaps in the sense of rational deductive thinking, in using their worldly knowledge to gain knowledge of *nirvāṇa*. Suzuki may be taking advantage of the gap between the Sanskrit and Chinese versions to advance his argument. Given the fact that Sanskrit words are frequently spelled inconsistently or erroneously in *OMB*, it is hard to conclude anything other than that Suzuki had a limited grasp of Sanskrit, at least at this time. But given his joint authorship elsewhere with a Pāli scholar such as A. J. Edmunds (1857–1941) during his time in La Salle,²⁶ if we compare Suzuki's translation with the Chinese translation from Sanskrit and the Sanskrit verse, which he quotes in a footnote taken from an edition published by Poussin, two anomalies appear:

Vyavahāram anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate,
paramārtham anāgamya nirvaṇam nādhigamyate²⁷
Without relying on worldly custom, the ultimate truth cannot be
indicated.
Only on account of ultimate knowledge, does one gain / grasp nirvāṇa.

Ruo buyi sudi bude diyi yi, bude diyi yi ze bude niepan
若不依俗諦 不得第一義、不得第一義 則不得涅槃²⁸
Without relying on conventional truth, one cannot obtain ultimate
truth.
Without obtaining ultimate truth, one cannot obtain nirvāṇa.

Although the Chinese translation by Kumārajīva is close to the Sanskrit, two things have changed. First is his decision to ignore the difference between *deśyate* in the first line and *adhigamyate* in the second, rendering them both as

de 得 (J. *toku*). By conflating the two under the meaning of the latter term, arrival at the goal completely pushes out the implications of process, that is, how you get there, which is arguably the dominant meaning of *deśyate* in this context.²⁹ Second is the interpretive overlay in the first line where Kumārajīva translates *vyavahāra* (verbal custom, worldly convention, or knowledge gained through sensory perception) as *sudī* (J. *zokutai*), the normative translation for *saṃvṛti-satya*, “conventional truth.”³⁰ Whether the term *vyavahāra* here refers to truth, ethical duty, or the verbal expression of knowledge is not entirely clear, and it is worth noting that in verse 6 in this same chapter, Kumārajīva translates it merely as *su* 俗. Candrakīrti’s take on *vyavahāra* was to stress the legal and customary obligations inherent in the term. But the core meaning seems to be that the only way to liberation is through the worldly normativity that we are familiar with, even if that truth is limited to our experience. But in Chinese this notion of worldly normativity is replaced by the Buddhist technical term for worldly truth, thus yielding a clear statement about the Mahāyāna view of two-truth doctrine. In Suzuki’s English translation “If not by worldly knowledge, The truth is not understood,” he stretches things even further, removing the reference to the two-truth doctrine. But instead of going in the ethical dimension suggested by Candrakīrti or the *saṃvṛti-satya* interpretation of Kumārajīva, Suzuki’s choice of adding a hermeneutic overlay of *science* shows quite clearly his felt need to put Nāgārjuna—the quintessential Mahāyāna philosopher—into the prevailing discourse of Buddhism as scientific investigation. If he had noticed the implications of the original Sanskrit, it would have in fact strengthened his argument, since *deśyate* as applied to *vyavahāra* suggests a process of inquiry into one’s situation in this world that leads to arriving at the ultimate goal.

The concluding chapter in *OMB* is titled “Nirvāna” (sic). In this section Suzuki argues for what he calls “the positive aspect of Nirvāna,” and although he explicitly states, “It is not my intention to investigate the historical side of this question; we are concerned with the problem of how the followers of Buddha gradually developed the positive aspect of Nirvāna,”³¹ his apologetic approach does include strong statements to the effect that “Mahāyāna Buddhism was the first religious teaching in India that contradicted the doctrine of Nirvāna as conceived by other Hindu thinkers who saw in it a complete annihilation of being”³² and, more relevant to our perspective here, an explicit critique of the *śrāvakayāna* as missing this entirely.

He does this by quoting from the *Cheng weishi lun*, the *Zhonglun* (Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Mūlamadhyamaka Śāstra*), the *Weimojie suoshuo jing* (Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra*), and the *Sheng siwei fantian suowen jing* (**Brahmaviśeṣacintī paripṛcchā [sūtra]*). Suzuki’s use of this

doctrinal relationship to clarify not merely the legitimacy but also the superiority of Mahāyāna is perhaps most explicit in his quotation from a strongly polemical section in chapter 8 of Kumārajīva's version of the *Vimalakīrti*. Compare the Burton Watson translation with that of Suzuki below it:

rushi jian wuwei fa ru zhengwei zhe, zhong bufu neng sheng yu fofa
如是見無為法入正位者，終不復能生於佛法。³³

In the same way, the Buddha Law can never grow in a person who has perceived the uncreated nature of reality and entered into correct understanding. [Watson]³⁴

In non-activity and eternal annihilation which are cherished by the Ārāyikas and the Pratyekabuddhas, there is no opportunity for the seeds and sprouts of Buddhahood to grow. [Suzuki]³⁵

Although the straw man in the sutra passage is later clarified as a follower of the two vehicles (*śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*), Suzuki adds that gloss here and then a dig at the “eternal annihilation” interpretation of *nirvāṇa* in Pāli literature when in fact the Chinese text does not allude to that doctrine. Again, this reflects his polemic approach in *OMB* wherein his notion of the “corrected form of Protestant Buddhism” is in fact Mahāyāna.

The apologetic stance of *OMB* also takes aim at Christianity, often done in a way that reflects Obeyesekere's adjectival use of “protestant.” Thus Suzuki unabashedly borrows from Abrahamic theology to promote his own brand and then turns around and attacks Biblical teachings. Examples are his notions of “the will of the Dharmakāya” and “the eternal soul,” which appear to be synonymous. Quoting from his own translation of the Śikṣānanda “translation” of the *Qixinlun* (*Awakening of Faith*) published seven years earlier, Suzuki creatively writes, “In it is reflected every phase of life and activity in the world. Nothing goes out of it, nothing enters into it, nothing is annihilated, nothing is destroyed. It is one eternal soul, no forms of defilement can defile it. It is the essence of intelligence” (*OMB*, 112). The term “one eternal soul” translates the phrase *changzhu yixin* (J. *jōjū isshin*), a gloss on the “one mind” concept so central to the *Qixinlun*. The advantage of calling this a “soul” (elsewhere “Soul”) may not be apparent unless the reader associates this notion of soul with Emerson's “Over-Soul,” which Emerson saw as similarly residing in every individual person and living thing in nature as well. We know that Suzuki was reading Emerson during his time with Carus in La Salle.³⁶ This begs the question of how this kind of language advances his argument that Mahāyāna is the

one true religion. The answer seems to be that Suzuki felt he had to take on the core religious paradigm of the Abrahamic religions in order to compete against them. It is fascinating that, similar to the ambiguous relationship between the Christian notion of “soul” and the conscious mind, Suzuki parses this section in an odd way so as to produce the phrase “essence of intelligence,” which he can identify with his “soul” theory. In order to do this, he violates the structure of the text, but the English-only reader would have no idea this is being done, resulting in a smooth description whereby our “eternal soul” is linked to our intelligence.³⁷

As part and parcel of this viewpoint, Suzuki liberally employs the terms “heart” and “love” in *OMB*. This is particularly jarring when he creates neologisms along these lines for Buddhist jargon normally interpreted in a way that reflects a term’s usage rather than its literal meaning. A case in point is *bodhicitta*, which Suzuki translates here as “intelligence heart.” Given that he never mentions the usual sense of *bodhicitta* as a resolve to attain liberation, this kind of language can be misleading, but he has a purpose in this, namely, to co-opt the term to show the importance of “intelligence” and “love” in the practice of bodhisattvas. Thus,

The Bodhicitta or Intelligence-heart, therefore, like the Dharmakāya is essentially love and intelligence, or, to use Sanskrit terms, *karuṇā* and *prajñā*.³⁸

And again,

A stream of love spontaneously flows from the lake of Intelligence-heart (Bodhicitta) which is fed by the inexhaustible spring of the Dharmakāya³⁹

Elsewhere cultural achievements are “karmic immortality,” and his description of the power of bodhisattva vows, which he reconstructs as “*Purvapranidhānabala* [sic],”⁴⁰ are expressions of the “free will” of Dharmakāya. In regard to the latter he has a long footnote decrying the misunderstanding of *pranidhāna* as prayer because

the Dharmakaya can by its own free will manifest in any form of existence and finish its work in whatever way it deems best. There is no need for it to utter any prayer in the agony of struggle to accomplish.⁴¹

This is yet another example where, in his own struggle to force the Mahāyāna teachings into a Biblical frame, Suzuki has forgotten or ignored the original sense of what the terms mean and ended up in what can only be called a

hermeneutic dead end. The *pūrvapranidhāna* are vows taken by bodhisattvas aspiring to become buddhas; these express aspirations of individuals still on the path. By reducing this entire process to “the will of the Dharmakāya,” the purpose of “bodhisattva vow” disappears.

Many of these Abrahamic notions also appear in Suzuki’s translation of Shaku Sōen’s *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot [Zen for Americans]*, published the previous year, 1906. This raises the question of whether they were invented by Sōen or Suzuki, or perhaps both of them working together. Any further study of *OMB* would benefit from reading these two texts together. Finally, I would like to mention that I have a PDF of *OMB* scanned from an unknown person’s copy with a number of underlined passages that reveal their importance to that reader. Wherever Suzuki defines *dharmakāya* or *bodhicitta* as “intelligence” or “love” it is underlined. This includes sections where the two terms appear synonymous because he glosses them in nearly the same way. So, however odd this Biblical language may strike our sensibilities today, it may well be that it is precisely because of Suzuki’s creative borrowing of such terminology that this book is still read today.

Salient by Its Absence

As mentioned above, one of the striking features of *OMB* is what is missing. In this category there is almost no mention of the historical way in which Mahāyāna Buddhism developed as a religion, but even within the doctrinal limitation Suzuki sets for himself here, there is no mention of the intense debate in Japan over whether or not the Mahāyāna teachings were in fact taught by the historical Buddha.

In the first category, one is struck by the near total absence of any mention of history and geography, such as where the religion expanded to outside of India, how that process unfolded, and the inevitable changes that ensued. Only three schools are discussed in any detail: Theravāda, Madhyamaka, and Yogācāra. The Chan and Pure Land schools are mentioned only very briefly, and oddly they are referred to only by their supposed Sanskrit names, as the “dhyāna” and “sukhāvati” schools, which seems to reflect an obsession with seeing Indic origins to everything Mahāyāna. Insofar as these traditions are clearly Chinese creations with strong Japanese contributions, this is just one of many instances in which Suzuki shows a kind of stubborn insistence on doing things his own way, or perhaps a deep insecurity that if not identified as having Indic origins, Chan and Pure Land may not be seen as legitimate Buddhist traditions in the eyes of Westerners.

There is scant mention of practice, only “meditation” and “recitation” in nonspecific ways. There are no rituals, art forms, or anything of symbolic

value; no funerals, no social institutions, no church-state relations, no cosmology, nothing on the internal predictions of the decline and rebirth of the religion. While Suzuki does admit that Buddhism in India absorbed some things from outside its own community over the centuries, and that this is not necessarily bad, there are no issues raised regarding the transmission of Buddhism outside India proper, no issues regarding language and translation, gender and sexuality, myth and its function, and so forth. There is no discussion of the way in which Mahāyāna was affected by other schools of Indian philosophy, and no mention of Vajrayāna. In fact, aside from the authors of texts, there are no individual Buddhists that Suzuki felt were worth mentioning in *OMB*. It is not only a Protestant-like Mahāyāna, it is a Buddhism without Buddhists. The Buddhism we encounter in *OMB* is devoid of institutions and nearly devoid of culture. But lest we be too critical on this point, both the Kuroda Shintō book mentioned above, and after *OMB* the next English volume attempting to explain Mahāyāna Buddhism, *An Introduction to Mahāyāna Buddhism* by W. M. McGovern published in 1922, were also entirely devoted to the doctrinal.⁴²

Suzuki discusses the concept of merit transfer at some length (using an incorrect Sanskrit word for this—*parivarta*—instead of the expected *pariṇāma* / *pariṇāmana*), but he completely ignores the way in which the faithful direct their merit toward mythic beings who “hear” and respond to their pleas, intervening to effect a positive postmortem future. There is also no mention of *metsuzai* (C. *mièzui*), a popular function in ancient and medieval Japan that eliminated bad karmic data to enable spiritual and/or religious advancement.

Another missing theme that we associate with Suzuki is his notion of religious experience as the arbiter of proper understanding and advancement. This is mentioned only once, and does not play a major role. Here is the one usage:

When we personally experience this spiritual fact, we no more feel the need of harboring any doubt about how or why Everything becomes transparent, and the rays of supernatural enlightenment shine like a halo round our spiritual personality. We move as dictated by the behest of Suchness, i.e., by the Dharmakāya, and in which we feel infinite bliss and satisfaction. This religious experience is the most unique phenomenon in the life of a sentient being.⁴³

By contrast, we also have descriptions like these in which personal experience is not privileged:

[Truth] does not belong to the domain of demonstrative knowledge or sensuous experience; it is unknowable by the ordinary processes of intellection, which the natural sciences use in the formulation of general laws; and it is grasped, declare the Buddhists, only by the minds that are capable of exercising what might be called religious intuition.⁴⁴

Finally, it strikes this author as noteworthy that Suzuki completely ignores the controversial theory being advanced in Japan at this time that the Mahāyāna sutras, indeed Mahāyāna teachings themselves, cannot be traced to the historical buddha but are a later accretion. This was most saliently advanced by a number of eminent scholars, such as Murakami Senshō, Washio Junkyō, Sakaino Satoru, and Anesaki Masaharu. Each of these men argued for this position before 1907, the date of *OMB*, and it is striking that *all* of them, like Suzuki himself, both came from Jōdo Shinshū families and studied at Tokyo Imperial University—some of them even taught there. Suzuki does publish an article on the controversy, but not until 1926.⁴⁵ Given his frequent letter writing to Nishida and others in Japan during his time at La Salle, it seems highly likely that he was well aware of this “movement” and the steps taken to resolve its implications, which do appear in his 1926 essay. At the time, this type of historical scholarship was clearly coming from a fusion of Buddhist studies, recently established as a university discipline, and the positioning of each of these individuals as Buddhists seeking clarification of their own religion. In some cases, this led to scholars resigning their clerical status, and some twenty years later, when Suzuki was teaching at Ōtani University, his colleague Soga Ryōjin would urge all ordained professors to give up their priestly role in order not to let traditional norms or sectarian pressure restrict them in their critical inquiry. Suzuki’s silence on this matter in a book purporting to present an academically reliable presentation of Mahāyāna Buddhism raises inevitable questions about his own positioning.

In many ways, *OMB* is a surprising book in that we see Suzuki writing with enormous confidence for someone in his mid-thirties a book that not only amounts to the first work by a major English-language publisher attempting to define Mahāyāna Buddhism but that does so in a way that is highly idiosyncratic, polemic, and critical of scholars far older and more widely read than himself. In the introduction, there is section called “Examples of Injustice to Buddhism” in which he presents a rather emotional attack on intolerance toward Mahāyāna Buddhism among Christian writers and missionaries, including complaints about three famous scholars of Buddhism in his day, all of whom Suzuki saw as prejudiced by their Christian upbringing: Monier Monier-Williams (1819–1899), Samuel Beal

(1825–1889), and L. A. Waddell (1854–1938). Of all the “mistakes” in *OMB*, this section riled Poussin the most; his review is the harshest of any I have seen.⁴⁶

For unknown reasons, Suzuki never revised this text, and it simply went on without him in a long series of reprints. Today the text is in the public domain, but Amazon and Scholars Choice still offer it in print-on-demand editions. As mentioned above, it continues to be read, consulted, and quoted by students of Buddhism, and as the recent translation into Japanese shows, it is of great interest to scholars of Suzuki Daisetz himself.

It takes Sanskrit as the sacred language for Buddhism, yet it is full of Sanskrit misspellings.⁴⁷ Because so many of the ideas in the book are new and not continued or clarified later by Suzuki or by anyone else, and because so much of the history of Mahāyāna Buddhism is left out, I do not see a great deal to be gained in our understanding of Mahāyāna Buddhism by a more detailed analysis of its contents. However, when it comes to Suzuki studies, it is a work full of paradox and suggestion that calls forth further analysis of his state of mind. In addition to Sōen and his former teacher, Imakita Kōsen, about whom Suzuki wrote an essay by that name,⁴⁸ there are a host of other individuals who no doubt influenced his thinking at this time. In addition to the obvious names, such as Carus, Dharmapala, and Suzuki’s new American wife, Beatrice Lane, who brought a passion for Theosophy (their home was the first Theosophy Lodge in Kyoto), our understanding of Suzuki would probably be deepened by a look into Hirai Kinza, who launched a journal about Zen called *Katsuron* 活論 in 1890; the Pāli scholar Edmunds, who led Suzuki to Swedenborg; and even the German physicist and philosopher of science Ernst Mach (1838–1916), who also contributed to *Open Court* and *The Monist*, and whose personal correspondence with Carus is partially extant.

Dharmapala suggests an intriguing area of further research into this early period of Suzuki’s life. To further investigate the influence that Dharmapala had on Suzuki at this time, one could examine the correspondence between Dharmapala and Carus during the time that Suzuki was with Carus. In addition to his 1897 trip, Dharmapala came again to the United States in 1902 and stayed until 1904 in order to establish a branch of the Maha Bodhi Society in the United States. Since this second trip overlapped with Suzuki’s tenure at Open Court, it is highly likely that the two met face-to-face. Both Dharmapala and Suzuki also published brief articles in a short-lived Japanese American journal based in San Francisco called *Light of Dharma* that was in existence only between 1901 and 1907. Thomas A. Tweed writes of the massive reception Dharmapala received when he gave a talk in 1902 to the Theosophy Lodge in San Francisco, an event whose fame must have spread to La Salle. Given the similarity between Suzuki’s intellectual yet enthusiastic approach to Mahāyāna Buddhism in *OMB* and

Dharmapala's promotion of Theravāda Buddhism, Dharmapala's fame must have rankled Suzuki. The link that both of them had to Theosophy is of course a major factor in this story, and one wonders precisely how Suzuki regarded Theosophy in those years. Dharmapala went on a lecture tour with Henry S. Olcott in Japan in 1889 that Suzuki must have heard reports about, and Suzuki also gave a talk in 1903 at the same Theosophy Lodge in San Francisco where Dharmapala had performed so triumphantly a year earlier. I would argue that all of the above, coupled with the unusually critical tone toward Theravāda in *OMB*, suggests a certain degree of rivalry, even jealously, toward Dharmapala.

I agree with the critique by Poussin that the Mahāyāna we learn about in *OMB* is a Vedānta-like monism, wherein a unified transcendent power of liberation functions with agency in all people. The fact that Suzuki neither authorized a Japanese translation of *OMB* nor sought to revise it raises the specter of doubt within Suzuki himself regarding this work after it had circulated. At the time of its composition, however, Suzuki is unabashedly self-identifying as a "Mahāyānist" in the sense of what he understood Mahāyāna Buddhism to be, a vision of religion for the world.

Notes

1. It was common for Japanese writers at that time not to give detailed references to their sources, but it is also worth mentioning that Suzuki cites scriptures only in the Chinese canon; however, this work was written long before the Taishō canon, the standard reference tool now used for the Chinese-language Buddhist world, was published.

2. W. O. Carver, "Review of *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*," *Review and Expositor* 6, no. 2 (1909): 321–323. Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Review of *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1908): 885–894. See comments by Edward Conze as part of his review of nine titles in *Pacific Affairs*, "Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism: By D. T. Suzuki," *Pacific Affairs* 40, no. 1/2 (1967): 170–172. See also these unsigned reviews: "Book Reviews and Notes: Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism by Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro," *Monist* 18, no. 3 (July 1908): 477–478; "Book Reviews and Notes: Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism by Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro," *Open Court* 22, no.1 (1908): 63–64.

3. Suzuki Daisetz, "Daijō bukkō no sekai-teki shimei: Wakaki hitobito ni kisu," *Ōtani gakuhō* 24 (1943): 1–14; *SDZb* 32:420–435. A translation by Wayne S. Yokoyama titled "The International Mission of Mahayana Buddhism" was published in the *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 39, no. 2 (2008): 79–93.

4. Gananath Obeyesekere, "Religious Symbolism and Political Change in Ceylon," *Modern Ceylon Studies* 1 (1970): 43–68; reprinted in *The Two Wheels of Dhamma* (Chambersburg, PA: American Academy of Religion, 1972).

5. It is worth noting that in the modern period "Theravāda" became an umbrella term for either the types of Buddhism described in the Pāli canon and/or all forms of Buddhism that were not considered Mahāyāna, specifically the Buddhism practiced in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. See Peter Skilling, "Theravāda in History," *Pacific World* 11 (2009): 61–93;

Peter Skilling, Jason Carbine, Claudio Cicuzza, and Santi Pakdeekham, eds., *How Theravāda Is Theravāda? Exploring Buddhist Identities* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 2012).

6. OMB 11; italics mine.

7. Margaret Dornish has a different view of this issue but seems to be using the term “living religion” in a different sense, namely, as something relevant today as opposed to a historical curiosity. My point here is that Suzuki rarely ventured into how Buddhism was *actually* being practiced in Japan, and when he did, he was highly critical. See Suzuki Daisetz, “The International Mission of Mahāyāna Buddhism,” translated by Wayne Yokoyama, an essay Dornish was probably not aware of at the time of her essay. See Margaret Dornish, “Aspects of D. T. Suzuki’s Early Interpretations of Buddhism and Zen,” *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series), 3, no. 1 (1970): 47–66.

8. There are numerous allusions to cosmology in the Pāli canon in texts such as the *Aggañña Sutta*, *Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta*, a list of twenty-five buddhas of the past given in the *Buddhavaṃsa*, and so on.

9. Today we know that both Pāli and Sanskrit Buddhist texts were not only translations as well but that many were added to the canon as accretions.

10. For more on how Japanese Buddhists prepared for and presented themselves at the World’s Parliament of Religions, see Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

11. Olcott was unable to attend, but the Theosophy Wiki states that he appointed Annie Besant as “special delegate” representing the society, and also that as part of their delegation Dharmapala “represented Buddhism.”

12. Elizabeth Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism and the British Encounter: Religious, Missionary, and Colonial Experience in Nineteenth-Century Sri Lanka* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 61, quoting Arthur Stanley Bishop, ed., *Ceylon Buddhism: Being the Collected Writings of Daniel John Gogerly, Wesleyan Minister, Sometime President of the Ceylon Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, etc.*, 2 vols. (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room / London: Kegan Paul, 1908), 2:204–205.

13. Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism*, 65.

14. Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism*, 63. See Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism*, 137, for an excellent overview of the career and perspective of Rhys Davids.

15. Thomas William Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Being a Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gautama, the Buddha* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1877), 7.

16. Thomas William Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Its History and Literature* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1896), 202.

17. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Its History*, 203.

18. “Readers of the Maha Yana books, tedious as these have so often been called, and rightly called”; Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Its History*, 205.

19. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Its History*, 208–209.

20. Harris, *Theravāda Buddhism*, 137.

21. Suzuki does not deal with the prevalence of myth in Mahāyāna scripture in OMB. When it comes up, it is treated as literary creativity.

22. OMB, 84.

23. OMB, 97. Suzuki refers to something called *The Mādhyamika*, from which he quotes the Sanskrit, which I cannot identify. The unidentified verse is 24:10 in the *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā*:

“Without relying on worldly knowledge, ultimate truth is not understood; Without understanding ultimate truth, nirvāṇa is not attained” (*Vyavahāra anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate / Paramārtham anāgamyā nirvāṇam nādhigamyate*).

24. Donald Lopez, *Buddhism and Science: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 23–24.

25. OMB, 97.

26. For example, Albert J. Edmunds and Suzuki Teitaro, “The First Buddhist Council,” *Monist* 14, no. 2 (January 1904): 253–282.

27. La Vallée Poussin (1903–1913), 494, 12–13.

28. Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō (hereafter given as T) 30.33a2–3.

29. The form *deśyate*, from the root √*diś*, was normally translated in Chinese as *shuo* (J. *setsu*), “to teach or to point out verbally.” I am grateful to James Marks for showing the implications of *deśyate* in situations such as this in which something is identified or proposed.

30. Edgerton glosses *saṃvṛti-satya* as “common sense truth”; Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, vol. 2 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953), 541.

31. OMB, 339.

32. OMB, 340.

33. Taishō No. 475; 14.549b7–8.

34. Burton Watson, trans., *The Vimalakīrti Sūtra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 95.

35. OMB, 351.

36. James C. Dobbin, ed., *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki: Pure Land* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 2:xiv.

37. This entire passage is composed in a parallel pattern of elegant four-character phrases, and in order to get the reading he wants, Suzuki has to ignore this pattern. Thus although the text is normally printed with this punctuation: 一切世間境界之相皆於中現。不出不入不減不壞常住一心。一切染法所不能染。智體具足無邊無漏功德爲因。熏習一切衆生心故 *yiqie shijian jingjie zhi jie yu zhongxian. buchu buru bumie buhuai changzhu yixin. yiqie ranfa suo buneng ran. zhi ti juzu wubian wulou gongde wei yin. xunxi yique zhongsheng xin gu* (T#1667; 32.0585b17–20), Suzuki wants to break it after 智體 *zhi ti* to highlight that word. The result is that the next sentence becomes the awkward construction 具足無邊無漏功德爲因 *juzu wubian wulou gongde wei yin*, a ten-character phrase in which 具足 *juzu* has to function as subject; this leads to the awkward Suzuki rendering “its numerous immaculate virtues which inhere in it.” Compare with Paramārtha tr. at T#1666; 32.0576c23.

38. OMB, 296.

39. OMB, 330.

40. This looks like a back translation from *běnyuàn lì*, a common term in the Chinese canon, but it is hard to find the expected Indic form *pūvaprāṇidhāṇabala* that Suzuki is expecting. Perhaps *prāṇidhibala* is more likely.

41. OMB, 237.

42. William Montgomery McGovern, *An Introduction to Mahāyāna Buddhism, with especial Reference to Chinese and Japanese Phases* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Trubner, 1922).

43. OMB, 121.

44. OMB, 99.

45. Suzuki Daisetz, “Daijō hibussetsu to Zen,” *Daijō Zen* 3, no. 2 (1926): 6–11. *SDZa* 19:511–516. Translated by Mark L. Blum as “Zen and the Assertion That Mahāyāna Was Not Preached by the Buddha” in Mark L. Blum, ed., *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki*, vol. 4, *Buddhist Studies* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021), 111–117.

46. La Vallée Poussin, “Review of *Outlines*,” 885–894.

47. Note that Paul Carus also spells “nirvāṇa” as “nirvana” in *Gospel of Buddha according to Old Records* (Chicago: Open Court, 1894).

48. Suzuki Daisetz, *Imakita Kōsen* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1946); repr., Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1963. *SDZb* 26:163–379.

PART II

D. T. Suzuki in the Interwar Years
(c. 1920–c. 1941)

The Suzuki Contribution to the Anglophone Press of Interwar Japan

JUDITH SNODGRASS

The International Buddhist Society (IBS, Kokusai Bukkyō Kyōkai) was formed in Tokyo in December 1933, just months after Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations. The Suzukis, Daisetz Teitaro (1870–1966) and his wife Beatrice (1875–1939), figured prominently in the announcement of the new society, positioned alongside such illustrious figures as the society's president, senior statesman and philosopher Inoue Tetsujirō (1855–1944); internationally renowned Sanskrit scholar Takakusu Junjirō (1866–1945); leading intellectual Anesaki Masaharu (1873–1949), at that time a member of the International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations; and an impressive list of Japan's foremost Buddhist scholars.¹ The announcement appeared in the *Young East* (June 1934), the English-language journal revived by the IBS to be its mouthpiece. Beatrice became a regular contributor to it; Daisetz did not. He would, however, publish five books in English in the same year, the start of a prolific period of output. These are the books that would be the basis of the post-war popularization of Zen. They were first published during this period.

I see the IBS as the confluence of two trajectories. In this new society, arguably the earliest international representative of modern global Buddhism, Suzuki's long-term mission of introducing Japanese Mahāyāna to the West became aligned with a government program of fostering cross-cultural understanding and positive images of Japan by promoting Japanese culture in European languages.² This was the stated mission of both the IBS and its companion organization, the Society for International Cultural Relations (Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, KBS). The KBS was founded early the following year and also fostered Suzuki's English promotion of Buddhism, subsidized his lectures in Japan and abroad, and promoted his publications.³ Given Western interest in Buddhism at this time and the centrality of Buddhism to Japanese culture—both its material culture and ways of thinking—the Suzukis' English-language writings were a perfect fit, all the more so because of the networks they had already

established, particularly through the *Eastern Buddhist*, the English-language journal they had coedited since 1921. Both had published extensively on Buddhism in English by the time the IBS was founded.

Daisetz Suzuki began writing on East Asian Mahāyāna Buddhism in English in the 1890s and continued to do so throughout his long life. My concern here is with the publications of the interwar period, the critical decades spanning the highpoint of Japan's recognition as a world power, beginning after the First World War, when Japan participated in the Versailles peace talks and became a member of the international peace-keeping body, the League of Nations, and ending with the outbreak of war in the Pacific in December 1941. This period encompasses the uneasy decade of the 1920s; Japan's withdrawal from the league in March 1933, triggered by international reaction against the outbreak of hostilities in Manchuria; and the outbreak of war in China in the late 1930s. This story begins, however, in mid-1917, at the height of the Great War in Europe, when Daisetz Suzuki published articles on Zen in another English journal, *New East*. Pervading contextual factors are the postwar search for enduring peace, the negotiation of Japan's place in the world, and the belief that both depended on increased Western understanding of Japan. Japanese Buddhism had a role to play in all three.

Throughout this period, English-language publications took on a particular significance. Public opinion was an important force, a consequence of mass participation in politics. The vision of international governance presented by the League of Nations prompted the generation of further multinational organizations, committees, and conferences, such as the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, on which Buddhist scholar and statesman Anesaki Masaharu represented Japan, and the Washington conference on disarmament in the Pacific. US president Woodrow Wilson spoke at the time of the "policing power of international public opinion," a new moral force in world politics based on an idealized, educated, and responsible public of the societies of "civilized" and independent nations.⁴ Under this vision, managing public opinion became an integral part of foreign policy.⁵ The problem for Japan was that if it were to have an influence abroad, Japanese opinion needed to be accessible in the languages of the dominant European powers, as very few non-Japanese understood the Japanese language.⁶ In 1921, the Foreign Ministry created an Information Bureau to manage the newspapers and political press, forming an information network based on the *Japan Times* with the aim of making Japan better understood and "to have it held in greater respect by the English speaking world."⁷ Encouraged by increased Western interest in Buddhism, and firm in the belief that Buddhism held the answers to the ills of the world, the Buddhist press played

a role in this. The *Young East* was founded in June 1925 to present a Japanese Buddhist perspective on world affairs as part of an engaged Buddhist practice.⁸

The *Eastern Buddhist* had a quite different agenda but was also a product of its time. My aim is to situate Suzuki's English writings in the geopolitical context from which they emerged, considering the extent to which the historical contingencies of this period shaped the work and facilitated the continuation of his lifelong mission of promoting the understanding and appreciation of Japanese Mahāyāna Buddhism in the West. My intention is not in any way to detract from his achievements, but rather to contribute to a more rounded understanding of Daisetz Suzuki and his work, and one that enriches his legacy.

The Beatrice Factor

It became increasingly apparent as I examined Daisetz Suzuki's interwar writings that Beatrice's role could not be ignored. Since most studies of Suzuki's work have focused on either his formational period with Paul Carus at La Salle or on the postwar popularization of Zen, little has been written about her. The Suzukis had met in the United States, but did not marry until December 1911, when Beatrice came to Japan. Beatrice therefore does not figure in the former; and, as she died in Japan in July 1939, she is also absent from the latter. The Suzukis were nevertheless partners in the project of disseminating Mahāyāna Buddhism to the West. Suzuki acknowledges Beatrice's assistance in the production of his English-language books. It does her an injustice, however, to assume she was simply a handmaiden, a native-speaking editorial assistant and business manager. She not only coedited the *Eastern Buddhist* but contributed extensively and distinctively to it, and published widely on Buddhism and Japanese culture beyond it.

Beatrice Suzuki was already an experienced journalist and writer before she married. She was exceptionally well educated. She had graduated from Radcliffe before completing a master's degree from Columbia University in 1908.⁹ This was at a time when very few women undertook tertiary education, and her thesis, "The Public Care of the Aged Poor in the United States," indicates her commitment to social welfare. She was a journalist and poet, publishing in the *Boston Mail* and elsewhere around the turn of the century.¹⁰ She had traveled in England and Europe, was fluent in German, and had an already established interest in Eastern religion and spirituality.¹¹ In short, she brought commitment, skills, and experience to the partnership. More than this, her articles on Shingon iconography and teaching would supplement Daisetz' work on the Zen and Pure Land schools. Without detracting in the least from what she learned about Mahāyāna

Buddhism from Daisetz, her interest in Theosophy and spirituality directed her to esoteric Buddhism rather than Zen. As she observed, “The Shingon ritualism is quite an absorbing study for those who are interested in occultism generally.”¹² Beatrice’s personal papers include several handwritten books of notes she made at Koyasan, the Shingon monastic center where she spent her summers and took instruction from leading scholars. (The English-speaking Mr. Akizuki translated for her.) The articles and books she wrote were therefore a distinctive addition to Western knowledge of Japanese Mahāyāna Buddhism. Her work complemented his in other ways as well. Her particular genius was in making Japanese Buddhism accessible to nonspecialist, general readers, a skill well used in the *Eastern Buddhist* and in the *Young East* in the second stage of its existence as official organ of the IBS.

Strengthening the Anglo-Japanese Alliance: Zen in the *New East*

Daisetz Suzuki began introducing Mahāyāna Buddhism to the West during his first stay in the United States (1897–1909). While in Chicago, he wrote numerous papers (at least twenty-four titles) and published two books, *Aśvaghōṣa’s Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* (1902) and the groundbreaking monograph *Outlines of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (1909).¹³ His first paper on Zen, “The Zen Sect of Buddhism,” appeared in the *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* in 1907. His publications in Japanese during this time—promoting a living Buddhism relevant to a modern society—were also prolific.

Though he continued to publish prodigiously in Japanese, Daisetz wrote almost nothing in English between 1909 and 1921, when the newly founded *Eastern Buddhist* presented a platform. The little he did publish is, however, significant.¹⁴ There was a brief paper, “Zen and Meditation,” that appeared in a short-lived journal called the *Mahayanist* (July 1915–September 1916), published in Kyoto by two Westerners who had come to Japan to study Buddhism: Mortimer T. Kirby and William Montgomery McGovern. Both took ordination in Japan in 1915.¹⁵ Their presence in Japan, the existence of the journal, and the international membership of the Mahayanist Society they formed around it speak of the growing Western interest in Buddhism at the time.¹⁶

Even more significant were the six short articles on Zen that appeared in the *New East* from late 1917 through 1918.¹⁷ The *New East* was not a Buddhist journal, but, as its subtitle described it, “A Monthly Review of Thought and Achievement in Eastern and Western Worlds.” It began in June 1917, at the height of the First World War, funded by the British government and commercial

circles in London as a vehicle for fostering closer bonds between the people of Britain and their ally, Japan, who, they feared was drifting closer to Germany.¹⁸ It was to bring news of the devastations of war to the people of Japan, presumably with the aim of enlisting sympathy and greater support; and to “sap prejudices” and “remove misapprehensions” about Japan among the people of Britain by showing the humanity and cultural sophistication of the Japanese. It was to be bilingual to overcome language barriers.¹⁹ Western contributors included Theodore Roosevelt, Lord Curzon, H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, and even the pioneering sexologist Havelock Ellis, who offered a rather progressive paper on the ideal Western marriage. Writing on behalf of Japan were such luminaries as Bernard Leach, Nitobe Inazō (1862–1933), Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), Langdon Warner, William Elliot Griffis, Anesaki Masaharu, and a number of leading statesmen and politicians as well as top literary figures. The content included extensive surveys of the press in both countries, and key articles on current affairs, as well as poetry, literature, photographs, and drawings. As the title suggested, the focus was on Japan as a *modern* power, culturally different from Britain but to be taken seriously and on equal terms. The *New East* was pioneering in providing access for non-Japanese to information on Japan and, more importantly, to Japanese thought and opinion as revealed in the Japanese press.

The *New East* was very ably edited by J. W. Robertson-Scott, a principled British journalist, formerly a writer on foreign and colonial politics for the *Spectator*, who had retired in protest against events in Britain.²⁰ It was serendipitous that such a highly qualified journalist was in Japan at the time to take on the task. His commitment to peace is apparent: the war news that was a key part of the journal’s brief was presented as a lesson for the East in what to avoid. Its cultural content was liberal and intellectual, its circulation significant. The first issue, reprinted to meet demand, went to seventeen thousand issues. When funding was abruptly withdrawn only eighteen months later, in December 1918, with the war over and the journal’s “soft power” function redundant, it had three thousand paying subscribers. The *New East*, read by people of influence around the world, was a fortuitous platform for Suzuki’s work.

The theme of Buddhism and Japanese culture that would be such a feature of Suzuki’s writings of the 1930s is evident from the start. His articles in the *New East* present Zen less as a religion than a means of understanding Japan, Japanese ways of thinking, and Japanese culture. They met the *New East* desire to teach the people of Great Britain “not merely the exterior of Japan but the innermost heart and soul of her people.”²¹ Robertson-Scott was impressed, suggesting that the papers be published as a book. Suzuki declined at the time but would later agree. The papers were later reworked into more substantial essays for the *Eastern*

Buddhist. These in turn were compiled and published as the first in the series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927). In 1934, that is, shortly after the founding of the IBS, the original *New East* essays appeared as *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* in response to the need at that time for a simpler, more accessible introduction than that offered in the 1927 book. That is, the essays were republished when once again a crisis in international relations precipitated a need to foster a Western understanding of Japan.

The *New East* is significant because of the way it seeded Suzuki's later works, and also because of the way it illustrates the political use of the press at the time. With British government funding, culture and ideas were deployed in both directions to encourage positive public opinion and, hopefully, to influence international policy. Though unquestionably political in intent, it was a journal of integrity; its mission was to increase world peace and East-West understanding.

The Eastern Buddhist: Continuing the Mission

The Eastern Buddhist Society, hosted by Ōtani University, was formed in 1921, bringing Beatrice and Daisetz Suzuki onto an executive committee with prominent Shin Buddhist scholars Sasaki Gesshō, Yamabe Shugaku, and Akanuma Chizen. The constitution of the society reproduced in an editorial in the inaugural issue of the journal placed it firmly in the interwar context, as does the content of the journal particularly in its early years.²² The society's stated objective was "solely to expound the spirit of Mahāyāna Buddhism and disseminate its knowledge among non-Buddhist people," but the imperative for doing so at that time was clearly articulated in terms of the war and its aftermath. The flaws in Western modernity that had given rise to the Great War, the "world catastrophe," as the Eastern Buddhist Society editorial put it, had not been resolved. It spoke of the costs of war and the tensions that continued in its aftermath as evidence of the need for greater focus on the spiritual. "We have suffered too much from sordid industrialism and blatant militarism. Some higher idealism must be infused into our lives."²³ The society aimed to do this by sharing knowledge of Buddhism, particularly of Eastern Mahāyāna Buddhism, "Buddhism in its perfect form," through the translation and dissemination of texts in modern Japanese and European languages, and publishing the results of academic studies. The *Eastern Buddhist* was to be the vehicle for this project.

There is a clear convergence of the society's aims with Daisetz' ongoing mission. In his contribution to the editorial announcing the function of the journal, Daisetz echoed the concerns of his earliest writings: to address the neglect of

Mahāyāna Buddhism by Western scholars and to correct the misunderstandings that persisted as a consequence of this. “If our humble attempt succeeds even to a modest extent in dispelling some of the misunderstandings entertained by foreign critics concerning the true spirit of Mahāyāna, we shall be content with the result.” He had made the same laments in 1909, but they now took on the added imperative of establishing world peace. Because Mahāyāna is “a living force molding the destiny of the East,” he wrote, and has “deeply affected the Oriental outlook on life . . . without some knowledge of Buddhism the East may remain forever an enigma to the West.”²⁴ The editorial speaks of Japan’s international obligation and commitment to global citizenship: Japan, as a modern nation, cannot “stand apart from the rest of the world,”²⁵ a sentiment that would be articulated even more strongly a few years later in the *Young East*.

To a certain extent then, the *Eastern Buddhist* was to do for Mahāyāna what the *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* (JPTS) did in promoting knowledge of Theravāda. A major difference, however, was that the latter functioned as a forum for specialist Pāli scholars to exchange notes on research, recent translations, and the location of archives and manuscripts. The *Eastern Buddhist* would serve these functions, but its aim of introducing Mahāyāna Buddhism more widely demanded that it also be accessible to nonspecialists. More than this, while the JPTS was essentially a journal of philology, focusing, as its name indicates, on the early texts of Buddhism, the Eastern Buddhist Society’s commitment to showing that Japanese Mahāyāna was a living religion, a modern Buddhism that should be a force in the contemporary world, demanded that it speak to current concerns. Its content therefore was necessarily much broader.

The *Eastern Buddhist* call for a revival of the spiritual struck a chord among Western readers. The unprecedented devastation of the war had caused not a few in the West to turn to the East seeking alternatives. America’s pioneering Buddhist, Dwight Goddard, was among them. Goddard, a successful engineer, greatly disillusioned by the brutality of war, became a missionary, was sent to China, and then traveled to Japan, where he spent a year in a Zen monastery and studied with D. T. Suzuki.²⁶ The Buddhist Society of London was founded by Christmas Humphreys in 1924. Beatrice’s article in the *Eastern Buddhist*, “New Buddhist Movements in Germany,” reports on the surge of interest there in the 1920s. She cites the emergence of new publications—a quarterly journal and several books—aiming to teach Buddhism “to be used for these times of spiritual and social problems.” One writer spoke of Buddhism as the hope for the future of the West.²⁷ William Stede, Pāli scholar and one-time president of the Pāli Text Society, wrote in the *Eastern Buddhist*, “The war, and after that the continuation of war in peace[,] have crushed all idealism to the ground.”²⁸ What the world

needed, he continued, was the application of the Buddhist principles of *mettā* (love), *karunā* (compassion), *upekkhā* (equanimity), and *muditā* (sympathy), universal love and universal brotherhood.²⁹

The German and British examples here both support the *Eastern Buddhist* aims but indicate the challenge it faced: though there was growing interest in Buddhism, in the absence of easily accessible information on Mahāyāna in European languages, Westerners turned to Theravāda. As Beatrice commented in her review of the German book, it is an excellent book as far it as it goes, but treading the path of individual freedom is selfish; what is needed is the Mahāyānist Bodhisattva ideal that works for the salvation for the whole world.³⁰

The notes section of the 1925 issue reproduced a paper by Bruno Petzold, a German expatriate convert to Tendai, delivered at the Far Eastern Buddhist conference held in Tokyo in November that year. His paper, “Mahāyāna Will Link East and West,” endorsed the *Eastern Buddhist* mission and related it to specific Buddhist concepts. Petzold’s key points were that the Buddha’s teaching of the shared Buddha nature and respect for all beings would overcome the prejudices of race, nation, and religion that had given rise to the war, and that the teaching of the Middle Way would mediate between the extremes of capitalism and communism. He proposed the establishment of an Institute of Mahāyāna Buddhism as the best way to harmonize East and West.³¹ Petzold exemplified Suzuki’s belief that Westerners would recognize the value of Japanese Mahāyāna Buddhism once they were introduced to it. Here was a Westerner reiterating much of what Suzuki had himself argued. Petzold would become a regular contributor to both the *Eastern Buddhist* and the *Young East*.

The *Eastern Buddhist*’s engagement with contemporary issues is most clearly evident in the November–December issue of 1921, which carried four papers on the Washington disarmament conference taking place at that time: Ōtani Kwoyen’s “The First Steps to World Peace,” Ōtani Sonyu’s “The Washington Conference from the Buddhist Point of View,” Mochidzuki Shinko’s “On the Possibility of Permanent Peace,” and Suzuki’s “Why do We Fight?”³² The editorial “Why Not a League of Religions?,” specifically endorsed by the whole Eastern Buddhist Society executive, called for a League of World Religions to take an active role in the search for permanent peace. The papers shared a general mood of cautious optimism—hope for success in establishing permanent peace—but also a realistic doubt that this would be possible without fundamental change. Mochidzuki recalls the “over-sanguine hopes” that were held for the League of Nations and sees the Washington Conference as “a sort of American substitute for the League” springing from the same desires and therefore subject to the same obstacles. Disarmament was not a realistic solution. Diplomacy and

statecraft would not be enough. Wars would continue to erupt because states and nations exist and diplomacy would always work in the interest of individual nations. World peace would only be possible, he argued, when these barriers were overcome. The world needed to look at spiritual answers such as Buddhism's teaching of the oneness of all things in the shared Buddha nature. Only then would harmony prevail. While he concluded, as one would expect, with a Buddhist answer to world problems, the article is an astute assessment of the political situation.

The *Eastern Buddhist* was an impressive achievement, as the recently republished collected papers show.³³ Each issue offered the translations, new academic work, and notes on the profession and on activities among Buddhists in Japan that the constitution promised, as well as the accessible introductions to key aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism that its mission demanded. Beatrice's "What Is Mahāyāna Buddhism?" appeared in the first issue. The second focused on distinguishing Mahāyāna from Theravāda. Murakami Senshō addressed this directly with his paper "Mahāyāna Buddhism."³⁴ Daisetz and Beatrice wrote on the distinctive Mahāyāna conceptions of "buddha"³⁵ and "the bodhisattva path" upon which the reform agenda was based.³⁶ Both Suzukis were skilled in writing for a nonspecialist audience; Beatrice particularly so. Her articles on the temples of Kyoto and Kamakura written under the pseudonym Seiren (Blue Lotus) appeal at the level of informed tourist guides even as they unobtrusively introduce knowledge of Buddhist history and culture. Her article on Fudō Myōō referred to above is an informed introduction to Buddhist iconography addressing Western misunderstanding of the fierce guardians of Buddhism. Her book *Nōgaku* (1927) used the traditional theatre to teach Buddhist thought. The academic content of the *Eastern Buddhist* was strong. Daisetz Suzuki's essays on Zen were supplemented by articles on Pure Land, Tendai, and other forms of Buddhism by various Japanese scholars. Beatrice's articles on Shingon Buddhism were pioneering. Monthly notes and editorials reported on developments in Mahāyāna Buddhist research, publications, and events, and book reviews directed readers to further research. Articles by Western scholars (L. Adams Beck, aka Elizabeth Louisa Moresby; Bruno Petzold; Robert Cornell Armstrong; William Stede; and James Bissett Pratt among them) testify to the growing interest in Buddhism in the West and the wide reception of the *Eastern Buddhist*.

The *Eastern Buddhist*'s success is evident in the responses from readers, letters of appreciation, and number of journals submitted in response to its offer of exchange. By the end of the first year of publication there were already subscribers in America, England, France, Norway, Holland, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, Burma, India, the Straits Settlement, China, and Japan. Letters

came from a predictable range of academics, Western Buddhist organizations, and Theosophical societies. British Buddhists Christmas Humphreys, A. C. March, and C. A. F. Rhys Davids were early respondents. The impression it made on Humphreys would be particularly significant, leading in time to Suzuki's lectures in London and the publication of his books in England. Western interest was consolidated by the publication in 1927 of *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. Alan Watts' *Outline of Zen Buddhism*, inspired by it, appeared in 1932. Dwight Goddard's two books appeared around the same time: *The Buddha's Golden Path* (1930) and *A Buddhist Bible* (1932). Goddard's preface to the latter acknowledged Suzuki as his teacher and contained a list of Suzuki's publications for further reading. Ruth Fuller Everett (later Sasaki) studied in Japan with Suzuki in 1930. By the early 1930s, there was sufficient interest among people wanting to study in Japan to warrant investment in a hostel for foreign students at Enpukuji.³⁷ In the mid-1930s, Humphreys approached Suzuki to fill the demand for a short, accessible overview of Mahāyāna. This resulted in Beatrice's *Mahāyāna Buddhism: A Brief Outline*. In all, while there was not the popular following we see for Zen in the 1950s, the 1920s and 1930s formed the foundational period in which the texts that would be read at that time were being written or were at least starting to take shape. Although they were not alone in the mission, the work of the Suzukis was central to it.

The Young East of the 1920s: "The Cuckoo on Tiensin Bridge"

In June 1925, the *Young East: A Monthly Journal of Buddhist Life and Thought* joined the *Eastern Buddhist* in its mission of taking Mahāyāna to the West. It was, however, a quite different journal. For a start, it was not an academic journal, in spite of the outstanding credentials of its founders (Takakusu Junjirō, professor of Sanskrit at the Imperial University of Tokyo, and Watanabe Kaigyoku of Tōyō University). The title was deceptively bland. The "Buddhist Life" it spoke of was the work of education, reform, and social action being undertaken by Buddhists: not meditative retreat but Buddhism applied to everyday, worldly life. Its "Buddhist thought" was not Buddhist philosophy, but rather in keeping with the need to insert a Japanese perspective into the international debate, what Japanese Buddhists were thinking about world affairs. Unlike the *Eastern Buddhist*, the *Young East* was not concerned with disseminating textual knowledge of Buddhism. It nevertheless complemented it in its commitment to Buddhism as a living force in modern society.³⁸ This, combined with its forthright presentation of current Japanese opinion, created a wide and diverse

readership, extending the audience for the Mahāyāna message beyond the spiritually inclined, a significant matter when, in a second phase of its career, it became the journal of the International Buddhist Society.

The *Young East* emerged with a clearly articulated manifesto for healing the ills of the world at a time when it was becoming clear that the systems put in place immediately after the war were inadequate. In his editorial in the *Eastern Buddhist* welcoming the new publication, Suzuki compared it to “the voice of the cuckoo on Tiensin bridge.” This was a classical reference of political portent “indicating in which way the current of thought-air is flowing among intellectual people here.”³⁹ The cuckoo, in this case, signaled a change in Japan’s position between East and West that was triggered by the American Immigration Law of 1924. Though the United States may not have intended it as such, the Japanese saw it as a racist insult, one of many over the decades, and particularly painful coming at this time, just four years after the recognition of Japan’s status as a world power, and partner in the League of Nations. It came on top of a number of other incidents, most spectacularly, the failure of Japan’s racial equality proposal at Versailles (1919). Japan may have been a world power, but it was still not regarded as an equal. The extent of the journal’s coverage of the Exclusion Law, as it was referred to in Japan, indicates its importance.⁴⁰ Another factor was the Anglo-Japan Alliance. This had come to an end in 1923, and within a very short time, the British, who remained in partnership with Japan as members of the league, announced plans to build an immense naval base at Singapore. Under the heading “British Menace to Japan,” Itō Masanori, the naval expert who had reported on the Versailles Peace Conference and the Washington Arms Limitation Conference, described it as an insult to Japan, “cold water thrown on the memory of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.”⁴¹ As he noted, Singapore was only half as far from Japan as Pearl Harbor.

The *Young East* attitude was liberal and international, and its manifesto stressed that it was not “anti-Western.” However, the continuing international tensions after “the war to end all wars” showed that the world faced a crisis. In an article titled “The Meaning of the Young East,” Nakanishi Ushirō, elder statesman of the Meiji period Shin Bukkyō movement, wrote, “Western civilization is no longer the exclusive possession of the white race,” and “Orientals” as participants in it, have both a right and a responsibility to contribute to finding a solution to the current crisis. He expressed “deep and permanent” gratitude toward the West, and to Christianity for its contribution to Western civilization, the benefits of which Japan shared. However, this civilization had also given rise to inequalities in wealth and power, “bringing in its train communism and socialism and class strifes which threaten to involve mankind in merciless and bloody

feuds of unprecedented magnitude.”⁴² Zumoto Motosada, a cosmopolitan intellectual and founder of the *Japan Times* (1897), reiterated this commitment to international citizenship in his address to the League of Nations in 1926: “Japan has fully accepted her position as a responsible and important member of the family of civilized nations. She has irrevocably identified herself in every way with the broad and general interests of world civilization. Scrupulously loyal to the League of Nations and to the high ideals of world peace which it embodies, Japan imposes upon herself the role of harmonizer between the civilizations of East and West.”⁴³ Like Suzuki and the writers in the *Eastern Buddhist*, the *Young East* saw the spread of the culture, philosophy, and faith of Mahāyāna Buddhism as the only hope for enduring peace.⁴⁴ However, its mission was to do this by applying Buddhist principles to real-world problems as a model for emulation. The “great mission for East and West” was to begin with a Japan-lead reinvigoration of Asia through education, social, and political reform based in the principles of Eastern Buddhism such as was already underway in Japan. This would result in a strong regional Asian cultural power that could in turn exert a positive influence on the West.

While not neglecting the philosophy that was the central concern for the *Eastern Buddhist*, the *Young East* focus was on providing a basis for social and political reform. The roots of the tensions that had given rise to the Great War, as the *Young East* saw it, lay in Western “prejudice and pride in regard to race, religion, and politics.” The problem would be overcome by applying the Buddha’s teaching of respect and compassion for all beings. As Takakusu wrote, “All religions teach peace and good will but those based on discrimination and exclusiveness, on the idea that one race or religion is superior to others, will fall to war.”⁴⁵

In real-world terms, the mission was an integrated project based on the application of Buddhist principles, beginning with a continuation of the reforms in such areas as education, health, and labor reform to provide “sound moral ideas” and the “means of making a decent living” across Japanese society. The lead article in the first issue of the journal, “What Buddhists Are Doing in Japan,” set the agenda. The next step was a reinvigoration of Asia through the localization of this model. A program for China listed famine relief; disaster relief; medical aid to those wounded in war; promotion of industry by establishing factories; land reclamation; aid for the elderly, the crippled, and helpless widows; road works and street lighting; free ferry services; and public utilities for travelers.⁴⁶ The resulting strong Asian region united on Buddhist principles would then constitute a moral force between the irreconcilable powers of capitalism and socialism and would contribute to the attainment of international justice and world peace.

As utopian as it may sound, this vision of a Japan-led Asian regional power mediating between the Western spheres of influence reflected the role Japan was playing at this time as a member of the League of Nations,⁴⁷ and resonated with the “Asian Monroe doctrine” then current, the idea that Japan should play a role of leadership in Asia parallel to that of the United States in the American sphere.⁴⁸

The revival the *Young East* proposed was neither “otherworldly” nor a return to the past. The *Young East* called on “our Asian brothers and sisters” to throw off “the chains of moribund traditions,” to “put fire to the dead or dying leaves and welcome in their place fresh buds full of life and vigour,” and to “bring back to life the old East, the sick East, the dying East.”⁴⁹ The journal was to be a tool in the realization of the mission, a forum, carrying reports on developments throughout the region.

The *Young East* message had a strong appeal among social reformers in both East and West. There were regular reports from Ceylon, China, and India. Hindu nationalists picked up on the world prestige of Buddhism at this time; the Indian origin of Buddhism was a source of pride because of the international esteem in which it was held. Independence activists saw it as vehicle for social cohesion. Sarojini Naidu, president of the Indian National Congress, appeared at a Buddhist celebration. Lala Hardayal, a radical Indian thinker living in exile at the time because of conflict with British colonial authority, articulated a vision of a rationalist, Marxist Buddhism developed from his readings of English-language sources as the answer to India’s social problems. This, incidentally, was decades before B. R. Ambedkar’s socialist Buddhism and the mass conversion of *dalits* in 1955 that precipitated the late twentieth-century Buddhist revival in India. The *Young East* mission also appealed to socially concerned Westerners, people as diverse as American author and journalist Poultney Bigelow, coowner of the *New York Evening Post*; prominent New Zealand politician William Barnard;⁵⁰ and the black American poet Ethel Trew Dunlap, a member of the Universal Negro Improvement Association.

“Buddhist Thought”: The *Chūō Kōron* Factor

A striking feature of the *Young East* is the prevalence of articles on politics and current affairs that are not normally associated with a Buddhist journal. The editor of the New Series (1975) described the 1925 journal as “an English version of the *Chūō Kōron*.”⁵¹ This makes sense, since Sakurai Gichō, its founding editor, also financed the *Young East*. The *Chūō Kōron* remains one of Japan’s foremost journals, offering high-quality political and social criticism, literature, and historical articles of contemporary relevance. When it was founded in the Meiji

period, Japan's future depended on understanding the West, and it assisted this by publishing translations of key articles from the *Times of London*, the *Evening Post*, and the *Daily Mail*; foreign literary works; and reports on the latest ideas. In the 1920s, when Japan's future depended on the West's understanding of Japan, the *Young East* once again aimed to assist. It was therefore very much in line with the governmental promotion of the Anglophone press Peter O'Connor speaks of. Its financial backing was private, but the status of its contributors indicated support among people of influence and strong government links, particularly with the Foreign Ministry.

Following the *Chūō Kōron* pattern—and that of the *New East—Young East* content ranged from the political to the literary. It offered English translations of key articles from the Japanese press and speeches made by Japanese statesmen to provide a window into Japanese opinion on world issues. There are statistical reports on all aspects of governance, finance, demographics, and Japan's activities abroad. The most characteristic articles were Japanese opinion pieces, such as Zumoto Motosada's "Japan and Manhood Suffrage," "Emancipation of Slaves in Nepal," and "America as Others See Her." This last, a paper on the American Immigration Law, was a transcript of a speech he made at the first meeting of the Institute of Pacific Relations (in Honolulu, June 30 to July 15, 1925). The *Young East* carried other papers from this significant event, including that of leading educator and senior statesman, Sawayanagi Masataro, on the need for Western countries to know more about the East. As he explained, the Japanese school curriculum included study of Western thought and institutions. When was the West going to return the compliment and teach its students about the East? Here, too, the message was that mutual respect based in understanding was essential for world peace.

The *Young East* regularly carried reports of events of relevance to Japan's international position such as this. Zumoto's address to the League of Nations, and Itō Masanori's response to British naval buildup, have already been mentioned.⁵² In a similar vein, and under the deceptively cultural title "When Samurai Put Their Swords Away," Yamagata Isoh, historian and editor of the *Herald of Asia*, made an ardent plea to governments around the world to listen to the people they represent, people seeking peace, not war, and agree to disarmament.

Because of this focus on high-level public opinion, the *Young East* was an accessible source of information for diplomats and others who needed to know what was happening in Japan. It was therefore read by people beyond those interested in Buddhism as such and added to what was already a well-targeted audience for the project of influencing world public opinion, Western Buddhists.

Non-Asian Buddhists tended to be people of a certain social standing. Beatrice's article on Buddhism in Germany speaks of a banker and a physician. Christmas Humphreys, founder of the London Buddhist Society, was a barrister. Australia's pioneering Buddhists included a prominent architect and the first practicing female solicitor. New Zealand's Bill Barnard was a prominent lawyer, a long-term senior parliamentarian with a strong commitment to world peace and social reform. W. H. Solf was a German diplomat. They were the perfect audience for a project seeking to change public perceptions of Japan: leaders of society, and, significantly, people who were open to respect Eastern thought. The *Young East* brought together diverse international communities, taking the message of Buddhism as a force in modern life to an extended, and influential, audience.

The *Young East* ceased publication in March 1930. Financial problems began with the death of its patron, Sakurai Gicho, in 1926. Takakusu and Watanabe struggled on but could not sustain the journal. The global financial crash of 1929 no doubt also had an impact. The last issue under the founding editors was volume 4, number 10, on March 8, 1930. Watanabe died in 1933.

The International Buddhist Society and the Post-Geneva Mission

Hostilities broke out in Manchuria in 1931. Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in March 1933 and looked for alternative paths to continue the work of world citizenship and international influence. The *Young East*, with its established international readership and its mission for world peace, was the ideal vehicle for this project. The newly formed International Buddhist Society resurrected it in mid-1934. As mentioned above, the IBS's aims and activities were similar to those of the government-sponsored Society for International Cultural Relations (the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai), formed about the same time as "an internationalist institution seeking to promote peace and security through promotion of cultural exchange on a global scale."⁵³ Both contributed to the government program of cultural internationalism that sought to maintain a position of world influence for Japan.⁵⁴ Both organizations offered a range of activities aimed at fostering positive images of Japan abroad. They maintained libraries and information centers; organized receptions, exhibitions, lectures, and the exchange of professors, students, and cultural matter; offered guides for foreign tourists in Japan; and so on. Both maintained active programs of publication. A major difference between them was the Buddhist factor. Certainly, the KBS brief included Buddhism—it funded lectures by Suzuki and promoted his publications—but its focus was much broader. By reviving the *Young East*, the IBS took

over an already well-established international network of Buddhists. It embraced an already formed and strategically important audience.

The continuity was obviously important to the IBS. In spite of the four-year lapse in publication, the July–September 1934 issue appeared simply as the next in the sequence: volume 4, number 11. The inaugural editorial spoke of the journal springing into new life after a period of “wintering.” The content of the *Young East* in this new phase did, however, change significantly. The Asian content and contribution that was central to the founding period disappeared, as did the concern for social action and the reflections of statesmen and the Japanese press on world affairs. An exception is Anesaki Masaharu’s radio address from Geneva, which endorsed the IBS commitment to promoting knowledge between East and West as essential to world peace.⁵⁵ The *Young East* under the IBS focused on disseminating knowledge of Buddhism as manifested in Japanese society and culture. That is, it shared the *Eastern Buddhist*’s aims but spoke more specifically to a nonspecialist audience.

Suzuki had written in 1922 of the problem of meeting the needs of both popular and professional audiences in the *Eastern Buddhist*. The ideal, he wrote, would be to have two journals, a monthly directed to a popular audience, and a more scholarly quarterly: “The present magazine is a kind of hybrid, not scholarly enough on the one hand and not quite suited to the popular taste on the other. Some of our foreign friends write that some of the articles in the *Eastern Buddhist* are too technical and calculate too much knowledge of Buddhism on the part of the reader.”⁵⁶

The *Young East* under IBS editorship eased this dilemma. In spite of the academic weight of the IBS executive, it was a consciously popular journal. Its revival had been underwritten by a large donation from professor Entai Tomomatsu, who had become a national star through the success of his radio broadcasts presenting Buddhism in terms that ordinary people could understand and relate to.⁵⁷ His compiled lectures became a best-selling book, selections from which were translated and serialized in the *Young East*. The content was therefore a mixture of informed, accessible articles on Buddhism leavened with light pieces on Japanese customs and culture, short poems, and photographs of beautiful Japan. A typical issue, volume 5, number 1 in spring 1935, offered a seasonal article, “Cherry Blossom Time in Nippon,” a translation of a lecture by Tomomatsu, a solid introduction to Mahāyāna by Beatrice Suzuki (“Mahāyāna and the Layman”), the radio broadcast by Anesaki Masaharu in Geneva already mentioned, and an overview of Japanese Buddhism by Bruno Petzold (this was the first episode in a serialization of the manuscript for his book, which would be published posthumously in 1979).⁵⁸

We also see the topical story “Chuken Hachi—A Faithful Dog” (Hachi had died in March 1935). This would become a favorite, eventually made into a film starring the American Buddhist Richard Gere in 2009. There were also two short pieces by Westerners extolling the virtues of Buddhism and the need for East-West understanding.

From 1935 the masthead became simply “A Magazine of Culture.” Under the IBS editorship, however, the *Young East* offered a substantial introduction to Buddhism. Though the articles were consciously nontechnical, less academic than those of the *Eastern Buddhist*, they were written by scholars. Beatrice Suzuki, as we have seen, had had years of experience writing on Buddhism for Westerners, and continued writing for the *Eastern Buddhist*. Anesaki, as well as being Japan’s representative on the League of Nations subcommittee for International Cultural Exchange, was also a pioneer authority on comparative religion. He had been visiting professor at Harvard in 1913–1915 and had written several of the standard introductory texts on Buddhism.⁵⁹ Petzold had published regularly in the *Young East*, and in the *Eastern Buddhist*. In the following issue Takakusu Junjirō contributed the first of a series of papers, “Buddhism: The Fountainhead of Intellect: Being an Exposition of Dharma for the Beginner.” His lectures at the University of Hawai‘i (1938–1939) were subsequently published as *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* (1947). The Buddhist content of the *Young East* under the IBS was solid. Book reviews, announcements of new publications, and advertisements from publishers set paths for further study.

Beatrice Suzuki was in her element. She contributed regularly, applying the skills she had honed over a decade of writing in the *Eastern Buddhist*, striking just the right note to introduce Buddhist ideas to intelligent Western readers. Her papers continue the *Eastern Buddhist* mission of presenting Buddhism as a living presence, a preoccupation signaled by her book *Buddhism and Practical Life* (1933);⁶⁰ “Those Men” (Buddhist salvation applies to all, not just the select); “Mahāyāna Buddhism and the Layman” (the difference between Theravāda and Mahāyāna is that Mahāyāna applies to active everyday life, not withdrawal from it); “The Place of Compassion in Mahāyāna Buddhism” (the bodhisattva path of social action in contemporary application); “Buddhism as Escape and Transformer”; “The Problem of Personality according to Shingon Buddhism”; “The Ideal of the Bodhisattva in Mahāyāna Buddhism”; and “Albert Schweitzer: A Christian Bodhisattva.” Her papers would be collected and published shortly after her death as *Impressions of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (1940), which took its place alongside her other book, *Mahāyāna Buddhism: A Brief Outline* (1938).⁶¹

D. T. Suzuki, Cultural Internationalism, and the Publication of Zen

There are no articles by Daisetz Suzuki in the IBS journal. He nevertheless made a very substantial contribution to its program of using the Anglophone press to foster positive views of Japan through his English-language books, articles in the *Eastern Buddhist*, and public lectures. Richard Jaffe comments on his “staggeringly impressive flurry of activity” between the ages of fifty-one and sixty-nine.⁶² That is, between 1921 and 1939, the period from the founding of the *Eastern Buddhist* through the high period of the IBS. Many of Suzuki’s most influential books, books that would be republished and become the basis of the globalization of Zen of the second half of the twentieth century, were first published in these years. Among them are the three volumes of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927, 1934, 1935), the three volumes on the Lankavatara Sutra (1930, 1932, and 1933), the critically edited *Gandavyuha Sutra* (with Hokei Idzumi, 1934 to 1936), and what Suzuki referred to as “a triptych of smaller works” that “those who may find my *Essays* too bulky or elaborate may prefer.”⁶³ The first of these appeared in 1934 as *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*.⁶⁴ It was based on the brief articles from the *New East* (1917). The preface tells us it was directed to “those who wish to have just a little preliminary knowledge of Zen.”⁶⁵ The companion volumes *Training of a Zen Buddhist Monk* (1934) and *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (1935) came out soon after.

Impressive as the list is, it is only part of Suzuki’s activity in this time. Professor Kirita’s bibliography lists articles in *Aryan Path*, *Buddhism in England*, and *Monumenta Nipponica*, all English-language publications.⁶⁶ As always, Suzuki published prolifically in Japanese as well as English, and after a visit to China in 1935 began work on Chinese manuscripts.⁶⁷ As his reputation grew, he gave an increasing number of public presentations, such as the series at the KBS-sponsored Oriental Culture Summer School. This was published as a pamphlet, *Buddhist Philosophy and Its Effects on the Life and Thought of the Japanese People*. It also produced a very substantial article in *Eastern Buddhist*, “Zen and the Japanese Love of Nature.” A lecture for foreigners in Kyoto in 1931 had produced an earlier paper on the theme, “Buddhist, Especially Zen, Contribution to Japanese Culture.” The papers echoed sentiments expressed in the first issue of the journal: it is essential to understand something of Buddhism to understand the cultural life of the Japanese people. The difference is that now Suzuki speaks of Zen rather than of East Asian Buddhism more generally. The mission remains the same, as he goes on to explain: “This does not of course mean that Zen is everything in the moulding of the character and culture of the Far Eastern people; but what I mean is that

when Zen is grasped we can to some degree of ease get into the depths of their spiritual life with all its varied expressions.”⁶⁸ This stream of research on Buddhism and on understanding Japan culminated in the highly influential book *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, which first appeared in 1938. The theme, however, runs through Suzuki’s work since at least the *New East* papers of 1917. From Suzuki’s perspective, the historical contingencies that created a need to foster understanding of Japan through English-language publications were opportunities to disseminate Eastern Buddhism—his long-standing mission—and, because of his personal commitment to it, Zen.⁶⁹

It may be useful to consider Daisetz’ period of intense activity in two phases, the first starting from 1921, when the Suzukis moved to Kyoto, the second from the early 1930s. His appointment as professor of Buddhist philosophy at Ōtani University in 1921 brought Daisetz’ teaching in line with his research. The Eastern Buddhist Society placed him among colleagues who shared the mission of making Mahāyāna Buddhism better known; its journal, the *Eastern Buddhist*, provided a platform to disseminate the results of his labors. Suzuki’s lifelong friend Ataka Yakichi provided financial support and a very substantial house near campus. Everything was in place to facilitate Suzuki’s life’s work; he was both supported and encouraged in his mission.

The second period coincides with the government policy of cultural diplomacy we see encapsulated in the IBS and KBS. It covers the years between Japan’s departure from the League of Nations and its entry into the Pacific War. The IBS came into existence at a time when Suzuki’s English-language essays were starting to move beyond journals; its agenda and support precipitated the development and publication of the work as books. In both periods, historical contingency created a serendipitous confluence of missions. The *Eastern Buddhist* sits in a long history of Japanese Buddhists presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West through publications in English, but, as I have argued above, the mission took on world importance around 1920.

Can we see a similar parallel in Ataka Yakichi’s part in this? By Suzuki’s account, they had long shared the dream of making Mahāyāna better known; both studied with Shaku Sōen; both were followers of Zen.⁷⁰ But by 1920, might Ataka have found additional motivation in a commitment to Japan’s international position? He was by this time a wealthy Osaka industrialist involved in international trade. He was progressive and civic-minded. As a prominent citizen, he led the foundation of Konan Women’s University. He was president of the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry and vice president of the Japan-American Society of Kansai. Ataka fits the profile of the cosmopolitan, liberal internationalist such as those who supported the *Young East* and the IBS mission.

Might he have been inspired by the example of other wealthy Japanese internationalists around 1920? Shortly before the Eastern Buddhist Society was formed, Baron Iwasaki and Baron Mitsui each donated five hundred British pounds to the Pāli Text Society.⁷¹ Could Ataka have been making a similar gesture closer to home? Did he see an opportunity to combine the fulfilment of his lifelong dream aligned with the international imperative of negotiating Japan's role as an international citizen? He supported the *Eastern Buddhist* initiative in the 1920s, was on the board of the KBS in the 1930s, and funded the publication of Suzuki's books of this period.

What made 1934 crucial in Suzuki's career was the combination of an already established international audience for knowledge of Japan and Japanese Buddhism, and the opportunity created by the program of cultural diplomacy supported by the government and by people of influence. Buddhism's role in the search for enduring peace and in negotiating Japan's place in the world evident in the 1920s moved into the broader public domain of national culture. The IBS and the prominence of the Suzukis on its council encapsulated the conjunction. The reason Daisetz did not publish in its journal may simply be that he was too busy with related projects. The IBS's agenda and influential backing would nevertheless explain the rapid publication of so many titles in 1934 and the years immediately following. The material for the books was at hand. The two volumes on Zen essays and the triptych of more popular books on Zen built on articles that had appeared earlier in the *Eastern Buddhist*. The international crisis and Buddhism's role in its solution provided the imperative. Ataka's generosity once again provided the means.

The End of an Era

Beatrice died in July 1939. The last interwar issue of the *Eastern Buddhist* appeared that same month; publication would not resume until 1949. The last issue of the *Young East* as a journal of cultural internationalism was the special issue edited by Jack Brinkley in February 1941 titled "Buddhism as Seen by Westerners."⁷² The issue is of relevance here because of what it tells us of the state of Buddhism in the West at the end of the decade. The three papers contributed represent three major categories of Western interest. Karl Kinderman's "Plotinus and Japanese Buddhism: The Congeniality of Classical Antiquity with Eastern Thinking" typified academic interest in Buddhism and comparative philosophy. Len Bullen's "The Buddhist Technique of Living" spoke of the application of Pāli-derived Western Buddhist practice to well-being and personal improvement. William Barnard's paper, "Buddhism in New Zealand," however, was closely aligned with the mission of both the *Eastern Buddhist* and the *Young East*. It

showed his commitment to world peace through the application of Buddhist principles. Like many in the West, he had begun his study of Buddhism reading Pāli texts but was now “enquiring into the philosophy of Zen.” He had met Suzuki when he visited Japan five years earlier (in 1935 or 1936) and had been very impressed by him. As he wrote, “The differences of race and mental background disappeared as I listened to the doctor. We were simply two men gravely concerned about the Dharma which indeed is meant to inspire and illuminate all men whatever their race or language.”⁷³ Barnard also recalled a conversation he had with a Japanese politician who was a Buddhist. What would be the attitude of a confirmed Buddhist, he asked, if he found himself at variance with his country’s policies? The conversation took place before the outbreak of war in China; the Japanese politician replied that he could not imagine such a thing. The question may have been of concern to Barnard, himself a senior politician, when he wrote of the meeting in 1941. At this later date, New Zealand and Japan were both at war, though not yet with each other. Barnard’s paper concluded with a call for peace through Buddhism that could have been lifted from either the *Young East* or the *Eastern Buddhist*:

Buddhism has linked in striking ways the diverse races of Asia. May it prove the means of bringing about understanding and sympathy between the peoples of Asia and other continents. It seems to me that there is a duty on us all so as to use it that we may forge bonds which “though light as air are as strong as links of iron” between the races of Asia and those of Europe and America—of Australia and New Zealand. This I feel will be the cordial hope of members of the International Buddhist Society as it is of the writer.⁷⁴

Barnard’s Buddhism is the universal religion of peace propagated by Suzuki, the *Eastern Buddhist*, and the *Young East*. It “knows not Englishmen or Germans, or Chinese or Japanese but simply human beings.”⁷⁵

Notes

I am grateful to the Osaka University Graduate School of Languages and Culture for funding a visiting Research Professorship in October 2015, which enabled preliminary research, and to Professor Yoneyuki Sugita for his support.

1. Editorial, “International Buddhist Society,” *Young East* 4, no. 11 (July–September 1934): 1–6. Republished with photographs in *Young East* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1937): 42–43.

2. Iriye Akira, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1997).

3. Founded March 1934. On its activities, see Jessamyn Abel, "Cultural Internationalism and Japan's Wartime Empire: The Turns of the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai," in *Tumultuous Decade: Empire, Society, and Diplomacy in 1930s Japan*, ed. Masato Kimura and Tosh Minohara (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 17–43.

4. Akami Tomoko, *Japan's News Propaganda and Reuters' News Empire in Northeast Asia 1870–1934* (J. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Republic of Letters, 2012), 113–115.

5. Akami, *Japan's News Propaganda*, 119.

6. Peter O'Conner, *English Language Press Networks of East Asia, 1918–1945* (Folkstone, UK: Global Oriental, 2010), 63.

7. O'Conner, *English Language Press Networks*, 63.

8. Judith Snodgrass, "The Young East: Negotiating Japan's Place in the World through East Asian Buddhism," in *Japan Viewed from Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Yoneyuki Sugita (London: Lexington Books, 2015), 101–108.

9. Adele S. Algeo, "Beatrice Lane Suzuki and Theosophy in Japan," *Theosophical History* 11, no. 3 (2005): 3–16.

10. My sincere thanks to Mrs. Ban of the Matsugaoka Bunko for allowing me access to an early scrapbook of Beatrice's maiden years that contains cuttings of these articles, photographs, and other memorabilia. I am indebted to professor Kirita Kiyohide for his introduction to the archive and his generosity in sharing his research, and to Wayne Yokoyama for enabling both.

11. Beatrice's scrapbook contains a newspaper cutting concerning an address she gave at a Baha'i retreat in California, attended by the Japanese Reverend Hori Kentoku, and a Mr. Jinarajadasa, both of whom spoke on Buddhism. Among Beatrice's papers is a notebook of about one hundred pages called "Lessons from Baba" dated December 2, 1902.

12. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "Fudō the Immovable," *Eastern Buddhist* 2, nos. 3–4 (1923): 133.

13. Judith Snodgrass, "Publishing Eastern Buddhism: D. T. Suzuki's Journey to the West," in *Casting Faiths: Imperialism and the Transformation of Religion in East and Southeast Asia*, edited by Thomas Dubois (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 46–72.

14. I am ignoring two other papers in 1915, one a reprint of a 1909 paper, and a paper on Fudō Myōō in the *Open Court* that appears to be an earlier version of Beatrice's "Fudō the Immovable," though published under his name.

15. See Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Three Boys on a Great Vehicle: 'Mahayana Buddhism' and a Trans-National Network," *Contemporary Buddhism* 14, no. 1 (2013): 52–65.

16. My thanks to Professor Yoshinaga for sharing membership lists and contents of the journals.

17. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, "Zen, the Spiritual Heritage of the East," *New East* 1, no. 1 (1917): 69–71; D. T. Suzuki, "Illogical Zen," *New East* 1, no. 2 (1917): 72–74; D. T. Suzuki, "Is Zen Negation?" *New East* 1, no. 4 (1917): 54–58; D. T. Suzuki, "Practical Zen," *New East* 2, no. 3 (1918): 247–250; D. T. Suzuki, "'Satori': Acquiring a New Viewpoint," *New East* 2, no. 5 (May 1918): 473–475; D. T. Suzuki, "Zazen and Koan," *New East* 3, no. 2 (1918): 292–295.

18. Nakami Mari, "J. W. Robertson-Scott and His Japanese Friends," in *Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits*, ed. Ian Nish (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2:170–171.

19. In practice, only key articles appeared in both languages. Apart from the cost and difficulty of duplicating everything, as Robertson-Scott observed, most of the influential Japanese at whom it was targeted could read English. He chose a clear font to facilitate this.

20. Robertson-Scott's long editorial "Sayonara: A Speech before Seppuku" outlines his experience as a journalist in Britain for the *Spectator* and the *Times*, his contributions to intellectual journals (*Quarterly Review*, *Nineteenth Century*), his eight or nine books, his "Quixotic resignation" from the London dailies, and his refusing a seat in parliament; J. W. Robertson-Scott, "Sayonara: A Speech before Seppuku," *New East* 3, no. 4 (1918): 319–329.

21. Earl Curzon of Kedleston, "Japan and Great Britain: Conditions in Which the Alliance Can Continue," *New East* 1, no. 1 (June 1917): 6.

22. "Editorial: Organization of the Eastern Buddhist Society and Publication of the Eastern Buddhist." This editorial appears in three parts: a statement of the aims of the Eastern Buddhist Society above the names of Gessho Sasaki, Shugaku Yamabe, Chizen Akanuma, Beatrice Lane Suzuki, and Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki (80–81); the articles of the society (82); and a section titled "The Eastern Buddhist" that speaks specifically of the aims of the journal (83–85). This last is unsigned but shows the hand of the Suzukis.

23. "Editorial," *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 1 (1921): 80.

24. "Editorial," 84.

25. "Editorial," 85.

26. Robert Aitken, "The Christian Buddhist Life and Work of Dwight Goddard," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 16 (1996): 4.

27. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "The New Buddhist Movement in Germany," *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 3 (1921): 229–230.

28. William Stede, "A Deeper Aspect of the Present European Situation," *Eastern Buddhist* 3, no. 2 (1924): 154.

29. Stede, "Deeper Aspect," 154.

30. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "New Buddhist Movement," 262.

31. Bruno Petzold, "Notes," *Eastern Buddhist* 3, no. 4 (1925): 391.

32. Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki, "Why Do We Fight?" *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 4 (1921): 270–281.

33. Michael Pye, ed., *Eastern Buddhist Voices*, 5 vols (Sheffield, UK: Equinox, 2011–2015). These themed volumes of essays from the *Eastern Buddhist* are: *Beyond Meditation: Expressions of Japanese Shin Buddhist Spirituality*; *Listening to Shin Buddhism: Starting Points of Modern Dialogue*; *Interactions with Japanese Buddhism: Explorations and Viewpoints in Twentieth-Century Kyoto*; *Buddhist Temples of Kyôto and Kamakura* by Beatrice Lane Suzuki; and *Lay Buddhism and Spirituality*.

34. Murakami Senshō, "Mahāyāna Buddhism," *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 2 (1921): 95–108.

35. D. T. Suzuki, "Buddha in Mahāyāna Buddhism," *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 2 (1921): 109–122.

36. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "The Bodhisattvas," *Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 2 (1921): 131–139.

37. "Notes," *Eastern Buddhist* 6, no. 2 (1933): 194–195.

38. On *Young East*'s reform activities, see Judith Snodgrass, "Engaged Buddhism in 1920s Japan: The *Young East* Mission for Social Reform, Global Buddhism and World Peace," in *A Handbook of Asian Religions*, ed. Bryan Turner and Oscar Salemink (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2014): 158–173. On its role in international relations, see Snodgrass, "The *Young East*."

39. D. T. Suzuki, "Notes," *Eastern Buddhist* 3, no. 4 (1926): 384.

40. Editorial, "Japanese Buddhists' Answers to the American Exclusion Questionnaire," *Young East* 1, no. 3 (August 1925): 67–69; Sawayanagi Masatarō, "Japan and the Pacific

Question,” *Young East* 1, no. 4 (1925): 99–105; Zumoto Motosada, “America as Others See Her,” *Young East* 1, no. 5 (1925): 150–153; and Yamagata Isoh, “My American Impressions,” *Young East* 1, no. 5 (1925): 137–143. These exemplify the mood.

41. Itō Masanori, “British Menace to Japan: Danger of the Singapore Scheme,” *Young East* 1, no. 11 (1926): 346–348.

42. Nakanishi Ushirō, “The Meaning of the *Young East*,” *Young East* 1, no. 2 (1925): 40–44.

43. Zumoto Motosada, “Japan and the Pan-Asiatic Movement,” *Young East* 2, no. 7 (1926): 226.

44. “To Our Friends and Readers,” *Young East* 1, no. 1 (1925): frontispiece.

45. Takakusu Junjirō, “Eight Fundamental Principles of Buddhism (Part 3),” *Young East* 2, no. 12 (1927): 402–404.

46. Tai-Sue (Taixu), “A Statement to Asiatic Buddhists,” *Young East* 1, no. 6 (November 1925): 181–182.

47. Thomas Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914–1938* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2008).

48. George H. Blakeslee, “The Japanese Monroe Doctrine,” *Foreign Affairs* 11, no. 4 (July 1933): 671–681. Claims came to a head with Japan’s withdrawal from the League of Nations.

49. “To Our Friends and Readers.”

50. Barnard was a member of parliament from 1928 to 1943, and Speaker of the House from 1936 to 1943.

51. Editorial, “Rejoice at the Glad Tidings,” *Young East* (New Series) 1, no. 1 (Winter 1975): 1.

52. Itō, “British Menace to Japan.” Zumoto was a leading internationalist intellectual and pioneer in English-language publications. He had founded the *Japan Times* in 1897. Matsunaga Tomoko, “The Role of English Media in Modern Japan: Through the History of English-Language Newspapers Issued by Zumoto Motosada,” *Lifelong Education and Libraries* 10 (2010): 71–77, <http://hdl.handle.net/2433/122310>.

53. Abel, “Cultural Internationalism.”

54. Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*.

55. Anesaki Masaharu, “East and West,” *Young East* 5, no. 1 (1935): 18–23.

56. “Editorial,” *Eastern Buddhist* 1, nos. 5–6 (1922): 387.

57. Murano Senchu, “A History of the *Young East*,” *Young East* (New Series) 1, no. 1 (Winter 1975): 30–33.

58. Bruno Petzold (1873–1949) had been correspondent in Paris, London, and China before moving to Japan in 1910.

59. Among his books are *Buddhism and Its Art in Relation to Buddhist Ideals* (1915); *Nichiren: The Buddhist Prophet* (1916); *Katam Karaniyam* (1924); *History of Japanese Religions* (1928); *Art, Life and Nature in Japan* (1933); and *The Religious Life of the Japanese People* (1938).

60. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, *Buddhism and Practical Life*, trans. Yokogawa Kenshō (Nagoya, Japan: Shindo Kaikan, 1933). Bilingual transcript of a lecture Beatrice presented in Nagoya on October 22, 1932, simultaneously translated by Yokogawa Kenshō, professor of world religions at Ōtani University. Beatrice’s *Nōgaku* appeared in 1932.

61. Several of Beatrice’s papers from the *Young East* would be reproduced in the *Cultural East*, a postwar journal edited by D. T. Suzuki and R. H. Blyth.

62. Richard M. Jaffe, introduction to *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki: Zen*, ed. Richard M. Jaffe (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 1:xi–lviii.

63. Preface to *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, by D. T. Suzuki (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1935), 11.

64. D. T. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1934). Republished with forward by C. G. Jung by Rider and Company, 1948.

65. The preface to Suzuki's *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (8) speaks of the need to provide for a nonspecialist audience, and hence endorses the value of Beatrice's writings.

66. Kirita Kiyohide, "A Chronological Bibliography of D. T. Suzuki's Articles Published in Magazines and Newspapers," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Letters Hanazono University* 27 (1995): 184–186.

67. Kirita, "Chronological Bibliography of D. T. Suzuki's Articles" and Kirita Kiyohide, "A Chronological Bibliography of D. T. Suzuki's Books," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Letters Hanazono University* 28 (1996): 169–188.

68. D. T. Suzuki, "Zen and the Japanese Love of Nature," *Eastern Buddhist* 7, no. 1 (1936): 75.

69. While acknowledging certain flaws, Jaffe insightfully indicates how Suzuki used aspects of Japanese culture to explicate Zen concepts. Richard M. Jaffe, "Introduction to the 2010 Edition," in *Zen and Japanese Culture*, by Daisetz T. Suzuki (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), vii–xxviii).

70. They were much the same age (Suzuki 1870–1966; Ataka Yakichi 1873–1949) and were at school together. Both are now buried at Tōkeiji, alongside R. H. Blyth and other luminaries of the Zen circle.

71. "Donation List," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 3, no. 1 (1920): 61.

72. Jack Brinkley, ed., "Buddhism as seen by Westerners," special issue, *Young East* 8, no. 4 (February 1941). John Brinkley (1887–1964) the Japanese-born son of pioneering publisher Frank Brinkley, was a contributing editor to the journal; Bando Shojun, "Obituary of Brinkley," *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 1, no. 1 (1965): 140. This would be his last issue before serving with the British army in India. The *Young East* lost another key member of its English-speaking staff, Lewis Bush, to outbreak of war. Bush was seconded to the British Navy in Hong Kong from spring 1941 and subsequently spent time as a Japanese prisoner of war. He recalls the experience in his memoir, *Clutch of Circumstance* (Tokyo: Tokyo News Service, 1956). The journal continued to appear, though less regularly, until 1944, but these final issues were appropriated to the war effort, the subject of another paper.

73. William Barnard, "Buddhism in New Zealand," *Young East* 8, no. 4 (1941): 43.

74. Barnard, "Buddhism in New Zealand," 45.

75. Barnard, "Buddhism in New Zealand," 43.

Was D. T. Suzuki a Nazi Sympathizer?

BRIAN A. VICTORIA

For D. T. Suzuki's many admirers, the possibility that Suzuki was a Nazi sympathizer is simply unthinkable. Nevertheless, I am not the first to suggest a link existed between Suzuki and the Nazis. In a book titled *Bushidō no Shinzui* (The essence of Bushidō), published in November 1941, Handa Shin, Suzuki's wartime editor, wrote, "Dr. Suzuki's writings are said to have strongly influenced the military spirit of Nazi Germany."¹

I confess that when I first read Handa's comments, I, too, was incredulous. Could Handa's words possibly be true? Seeking an answer to this question led to multiple visits to Germany and Austria in 2012 and 2013 in order to gather materials and participate in conferences and discussions with leading European religious historians of the Nazi era. This was coupled, of course, with related research in Japan. The results of my research follow.

Suzuki's Initial Contact with Nazism

Suzuki's earliest direct connection to Nazis can be traced to his visit to Europe in 1936. That year Suzuki first went to England, where he delivered a series of lectures that he would subsequently publish in Japan in 1938 as *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (republished in an enlarged US edition in the postwar era as *Zen and Japanese Culture*).² Following the conclusion of his lecture tour in England, Suzuki went to Paris to conduct bibliographical research, and then on to visit a distant relative living at the time in Rüdesheim am Rhein, a small village on the Rhine River west of Wiesbaden.³

In connection with his visit to Rüdesheim, Suzuki published a series of articles in the Buddhist newspaper *Chūgai Nippō* under the title "From a Spot on the Banks of the Rhine" (*Rain kahan no ichigū kara*). The initial articles in the series consisted of a fairly ordinary travelogue in which Suzuki described such things as visits to local churches and reflections on the cultural implications of the stone-based architecture of Germany versus the wood-based architecture of Japan. However, Suzuki then described the political situation he

encountered in Germany, including comments on the Nazi movement and his thoughts about it.

Inasmuch as I have already written at length about Suzuki's view of the Nazis as revealed in a series of articles, I will not repeat that here. The relevant item, titled "D. T. Suzuki, Zen and the Nazis," includes a complete translation of Suzuki's views on the Nazis and is freely available on the website of the *Asia-Pacific Journal* 11, no. 43 (October 21, 2013), <http://apjpf.org/2013/11/43/Brian-Victoria/4019/article.html>. Some readers may wish to read Suzuki's views in their entirety before proceeding.

On first reading, Suzuki's article devoted to a description of the Nazis appears to be no more than an explanation of why his relative was favorably impressed. Nevertheless, Suzuki makes it clear that he was not blind to certain defects in Nazism, most especially its oppressive treatment of German Jews. Nevertheless, it is in his discussion of the Jews that we first see a pattern emerging that will characterize Suzuki's entire discussion of the Nazis. The pattern is this: at first glance Suzuki appears to oppose this or that aspect of the Nazis' actions or policies, but then, just at the point where one might expect him to forcefully condemn those policies, he offers what amounts to an excuse or apology for them.

In the case of the Jews, Suzuki forthrightly states that the Nazis have enacted "a very cruel policy." Further, he clearly empathizes with the plight of a formerly wealthy, now impoverished, Jewish poet-refugee he met while in London. "I felt sorry for him. . . . This is truly a regrettable situation," Suzuki laments. Yet, Suzuki also states, "When looked at from the point of view of the current and future happiness of the entire German people, it may be that, for a time, some sort of extreme action is necessary in order to preserve the nation. From the point of view of the German people, the situation facing their country is that critical."

Although certainly not uniquely Japanese, Suzuki employs a very traditional Japanese psychocultural apologia here and throughout this article, that is, yes, the Nazis are taking some harsh, disagreeable actions, but, unfortunately, given the extreme situation Germans find themselves in, *shikata ga nai*, that is to say, "it can't be helped," even if "as regards individuals" it leads to some regrettable results.

Let me stress that I am not the first investigator to note Suzuki's attitude in this respect. Sueki Fumihiko wrote the following in a 2008 Japanese-language paper titled "Nihon Bukkyō to sensō: Suzuki Daisetsu o chūshin toshite" (Japanese Buddhism and war: Principally D. T. Suzuki): "While in Germany Suzuki expressed approval of the Nazis. As for the persecution of the Jews, [Suzuki wrote]: 'It appears there are considerable grounds for this, too.'"⁴

I quote Sueki's comments because all too often in the emotional debate over Suzuki's wartime record, charges of "mistranslation" and "sentences taken out of context" have been bandied about in an attempt to discredit any suggestion of Suzuki's wartime complicity. In this case, however, the conclusions reached by Sueki, a highly respected scholar of Japanese Buddhism, have simply been rendered into English. It is, of course, at least theoretically possible that both this scholar and the present author are wrong. Hopefully, this possibility will be recognized as highly unlikely by the end of this essay.

Nazis as Totalitarians

A further example of the aforementioned pattern can be seen with regard to Suzuki's treatment of the "totalitarian" nature of the Nazis in his *Chūgai nippō* article. Are Nazis totalitarians? Yes, they are, Suzuki says, but then adds, "While it is true that Nazis and Fascists also insist on totalitarianism, in one sense it can be said that theirs is a form of resistance to communist actions. Or it can also be understood as turning the communists' methods to their own advantage."

So, according to Suzuki, both the Russian communists and the Nazis are totalitarians, but there is one major difference—the Nazis have been forced to adopt this strategy in order to counter the Soviet menace, that is, it is not an inherent feature of Nazi ideology. In fact, to the contrary, it is actually a method of turning the communists' violent strategy back on themselves. These words are directed toward the people of a country, that is, Japan, in which one of its chief martial arts, that is, judo, is based on exactly the same premise—utilizing the size and strength of an opponent to one's advantage.

Suzuki defenders point out that in much of his commentary he is merely serving in the role of an amanuensis, faithfully recording the Nazis' rationale for their actions without interjecting his own opinion. Yet there were a number of times in his commentary when Suzuki clearly expressed support for certain of the Nazis' actions, for example, bringing order and stability to Germany. Suzuki wrote,

[My relative told me] before Hitler arrived on the scene there were many political parties in Germany. As a consequence, political affairs were unable to find a direction and citizens became more and more depressed as time went on. They were at their wit's end, wondering what was to become of them. Hitler, however, was able to unite the people and lead us with a definite goal in mind. Thus, we have never experienced a greater sense of relief than we have today. While we don't know much about

politics, we have never enjoyed greater peace of mind than we have now. Isn't that reason enough to praise Hitler?

This is what my relative told me, and I agree this is quite reasonable.

More importantly, Suzuki also demonstrated that he was equally capable of registering his opposition to some policies, that is, at least those of Soviet communists. "Taking their claims to be absolute, they butcher those who oppose them without hesitation. This is something that others and I can in no way approve of." Yet, by comparison, never once does Suzuki unequivocally voice his opposition to any Nazi action or policy.

On the contrary, in one fashion or another, Suzuki always provides either a rationale, or extenuating circumstances, that serve to justify Nazi actions or claims. In the case of highly regimented Nazi youth organizations, for example, Suzuki states, "I will, however, not immediately judge the rights and wrongs of a situation in which totalitarianism is overly emphasized and everyone has to wear military uniforms." One senses Suzuki's discomfort with this rigid uniformity, yet he nonetheless states that he will not immediately judge whether it is the right or wrong thing to do. Once again, one comes away with the feeling that "it can't be helped" in light of the situation then prevailing in Germany.

Historical Background

When the *Zeitgeist* is taken into account, it is clear that Suzuki's comments condemning Soviet communism mesh perfectly with an era when Japan was about to join Germany in an anticommunist, anti-Russian pact. Phrases such as "the Nazis fiercely attack Soviet Russia" and "directly attacked the Soviet Union as their great enemy of the moment," not to mention "a truly fierce determination" would have been warmly welcomed in the Japan of that era. In short, what better ally could Japan hope for in what was not simply an international treaty but the morphing of Japan's domestic suppression of communism into an international crusade?

Suzuki addresses all of the criticisms leveled at the Nazis, that is, their oppression of the Jews, their totalitarianism, their regimentation of youth, and their fanatical hatred of Soviet communism, and he ultimately supplies a convincing rationale for all of their extremist stances within the context of the times they find themselves in. And it must not be forgotten that had Suzuki written otherwise, the newspaper *Chūgai Nippō*, given the prevailing atmosphere of the day, would not have dared to publish Suzuki's articles, let alone pay him for his services.

If this latter claim seems dubious, let me share the following interview I had with Bandō Shinji, former chief editor of *Chūgai Nippō*, held on September 30, 2013, in the newspaper's Kyoto office. Asked whether his newspaper would have published articles critical of the Nazis in October 1936, Bandō replied, "The editors of this newspaper would not have criticized the Nazis in light of the Japanese government's clear intention to create an anti-communist treaty with Germany. Had Suzuki written articles critical of the Nazis the editors would have required him to change the contents."

Bandō continued, "In fact, the editors had no need to ask Suzuki to change his articles since the contents reflected the pro-Nazi thinking of many Japanese at that time." Playing the devil's advocate, this author asked, "Wasn't Suzuki opposed to the Nazi's oppression of the Jews?" Bandō replied, "Yes, Suzuki was concerned about the plight of individual Jews but recognized that Germany was in such a precarious position that their anti-Jewish policies couldn't be helped." But didn't Suzuki try to warn the Japanese by using the word *erai*, which can mean "frightening," to describe the Nazi's hatred of Soviet communism? Bandō explained, "In the context in which Suzuki used that word, *erai* means that the Nazis possessed an 'extraordinary determination' [*naminami naranu ketsui*] to oppose Russian communism. Their determination would have been welcomed in 1936 Japan." Needless to say, Bandō is perfectly capable of reading Suzuki's articles in Japanese. Thus, in light of this and everything we have seen, the thrust of Suzuki's articles is inescapable.

As Bandō mentioned, October 1936 was just a month away from the conclusion of the anticommunist, Anti-Comintern Pact between Japan and Germany, signed in Berlin on November 25, 1936. Ostensibly the pact was directed against the Communist International (aka Comintern), but in reality, it was directed against both the Soviet Union and communism in general. It included a secret agreement that in the event of either signatory power becoming involved in a war with the Soviet Union, the other signatory power would maintain a benevolent neutrality. The pact read in part that it recognized "that the aim of the Communist International, known as the Comintern, is to disintegrate and subdue existing States by all the means at its command; [and was] convinced that the toleration of interference by the Communist International in the internal affairs of nations not only endangers their internal peace and social well-being, but is also a menace to the peace of the world desirous of co-operating in the defense against Communist subversive activities."⁵ The key element of this pact was its absolute rejection of communism on the part of both the German and Japanese governments. This was not simply an expression of foreign policy but represented key domestic policy for both nations. In Japan's case, the Japanese

Communist Party had been immediately banned after its creation in July 1922. The year 1922 also marked the unsuccessful end of Japan's Siberian intervention, begun in 1918, as part of a larger effort by the Western powers and Japan to support the White Russian forces of the tsar fighting the Bolshevik Red Army during the Russian Civil War. Further, by 1936, the Tokkō (Special Higher Police) had arrested 59,013 Japanese for harboring "dangerous thoughts"; these were primarily communist sympathizers, socialists, anarchists, pacifists, or simply labor organizers.⁶

Yet, it is significant that even in the course of condemning communism in Russia, Suzuki wrote, "Setting aside the question of communism's ideology, the people at its core are intellectuals who have never been intimately connected with the land."⁷ Is it possible that Suzuki was opposed not to communism per se but, instead, to the Soviet version of that ideology? This is at least one possible interpretation of why Suzuki suggested communism's "ideology" should be exempted from discussion.

Suzuki's Youthful Embrace of Socialism

To further understand the plausibility of this interpretation, we need to have a basic understanding of Suzuki's political orientation, at least at one period in his life. This topic has been but little studied yet is key to understanding not only Suzuki's opposition to Soviet-style communism but, even more importantly, his possible resultant sympathy for the Nazi movement. How can this be?

First, we need to understand that in his youth Suzuki had been attracted to socialism. He first described his interest in a series of letters written to his close friend Yamamoto Ryōkichi (1871–1942). On January 6, 1901, Suzuki wrote, "Recently I have had a desire to study socialism, for I am sympathetic to its views on social justice and equality of opportunity. Present-day society (including Japan, of course) must be reformed from the ground up. I'll share more of my thoughts in future letters."⁸ On January 14, 1901, Suzuki wrote Yamamoto, "In recent days, I have become a socialist sympathizer to an extreme degree. However, my socialism is not based on economics but religion. This said, I am unable to publicly advocate this doctrine to the common people because they are so universally querulous and illiterate and therefore unprepared to listen to what I have to say. However, basing myself on socialism, I intend to gradually incline people to my way of thinking though I also believe I need to study some sociology."⁹ In a February 27, 1902, letter to Yamamoto, then head teacher at the No. 2 Middle School in Kyoto, Suzuki urged the latter to teach socialist principles to his students: "Although from its inception opposition to self-seeking has been

a principle of socialism, if that is something that cannot be put into practice all at once, at least you could teach the principle of justice and clarify the great responsibility (or duty) the wealthy and aristocrats have for [the condition of] today's society. If you feel it is too dangerous to oppose the present [social] structure, then how about simply hinting at these truths?"¹⁰ Aside from indicating Suzuki's strong interest in socialism, these passages also make it clear that even as early as 1902 Suzuki was aware of the danger facing those who taught socialist principles in a Japan that even then had begun to crack down on "dangerous thoughts" imported from the West. This awareness is, I suggest, critically important in explaining why Suzuki never openly advocated socialism following his return to Japan in 1909 after more than a decade-long residence in the United States (1897–1908). Nevertheless, he did once openly express his socialist sympathies, yet only to an English-speaking audience in his 1907 book *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*:

As long as we live under the present state of things, it is impossible to escape the curse of social injustice and economic inequality. Some people must be born rich and noble and enjoying a superabundance of material wealth, while others must be groaning under the unbearable burden imposed upon them by cruel society. Unless we make a radical change in our present social organization, we cannot expect every one of us to enjoy an equal opportunity and a fair chance. Unless we have a certain form of socialism installed that is liberal and rational and systematic, there must be some who are economically more favored than others.¹¹

Needless to say, it is surprising to find a political statement of this nature in a book claiming to be an introduction to the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism, not least of all because Suzuki calls for a "radical change in our present social organization." Yet, when placed in context, this passage is no more than a public expression of his January 1901 letter to Yamamoto in which Suzuki called for society to be "reformed from the ground up" in accordance with socialist values.

Further, Suzuki's socialist sympathies could not help but have an impact on his understanding of one key Buddhist teaching—the doctrine of karma. For centuries karma had been invoked, particularly in East Asia, to explain, if not justify, a class society, that is, why some people were born "rich and noble" and others unbearably poor. Simply stated, the claim was made that the rich were rich due to the good karma they had acquired through their meritorious deeds in this and past lives. In contrast, the poor (including those born with physical impairments) were being punished for the evil deeds of their past.

In *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, Suzuki made a radical break with this traditional view, dismissing its advocates as no more than “pseudo-Buddhists.” Instead, Suzuki claimed, “No, the doctrine of karma certainly must not be understood to explain the cause of our social and economic imperfections. The region where the law of karma is made to work supreme is our moral world and cannot be made to extend also over our economic field. Poverty is not necessarily the consequence of evil deeds, nor is plenitude that of good acts. Whether a person is affluent or needy is mostly determined by the principle of economy as far as our present social system is concerned.”¹² Once the cause of poverty was assigned to “our present social system” (i.e., a capitalist society) it was but a short step, at least in that era, to view socialism as the means to eliminate what Suzuki called “the curse of social injustice and economic inequality.”

Possible Interest in Nazi Socialism

As we have seen, Suzuki was clearly opposed to Russian-style or Soviet communism under Stalin. Yet, there is no compelling evidence to suggest he abandoned his socialist sympathies following his return to Japan in 1909. One sign that he maintained them was his support for educational reform while teaching English at Gakushūin, the ultraconservative “peers school” for the children of Japan’s aristocracy. Nevertheless, he never publicly expressed his support for socialism again. Therefore, lacking evidence to the contrary, Suzuki might best be described as a “closet socialist” following his return to Japan. Yet, even if this were true, how might this help to explain a possible sympathy for the Nazis?

In terms of understanding Nazi ideology, perhaps the biggest stumbling block in contemporary thinking is the failure to fully appreciate the meaning of the term “Nazi.” Today, this term has all but lost its original meaning, instead, having become a symbol for “evil” pure and simple. Originally, however, “Nazi” was an acronym formed from the first two syllables of the German pronunciation of the word “national.” The full title of Hitler’s party was the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (G. Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei). In 1927, that is, before coming to power in 1933, Hitler described his ideology as follows: “We are socialists, we are enemies of today’s capitalistic economic system for the exploitation of the economically weak, with its unfair salaries, with its unseemly evaluation of a human being according to wealth and property instead of responsibility and performance, and we are determined to destroy this system under all conditions.”¹³ Today, of course, we have seen the horrors resulting from what Hitler claimed, however falsely, to be socialism. However, in 1936 it was still possible to see in a revived and increasingly prosperous Germany (albeit based on

regimentation, armaments production, etc.) the results of an economic and political system creating a stable, relatively egalitarian society, especially when compared with the previous state of economic chaos accompanying the end of the Weimar Republic in 1933. Given this, it is not surprising that Suzuki would endorse his relative's assertion that "Hitler . . . was able to unite the people and lead us with a definite goal in mind. Thus, we have never experienced a greater sense of relief than we have today."

In addition, it is readily understandable that the appellation "national" would have had a special resonance for Suzuki. That is to say, the Nazi variety of socialism, unlike its Soviet counterpart, claimed to be rooted in the national character, history, and values of the German people. For a nativist-oriented scholar like Suzuki, this emphasis on a culturally rooted socialism could not fail to have been attractive, for it opened the door to the possibility of a similar development in Japan, one rooted in the uniqueness of Japanese Zen and the culture he claimed it had produced.

Suzuki and Count Karlfried Dürckheim

Suzuki's 1936 articles were not the only expression of his interest in, if not sympathies for, Nazism. Suzuki also maintained a personal relationship with Count Karlfried Dürckheim (1896–1988), the Nazi's leading propagandist in Japan throughout the war years. Proof of their relationship is to be found in Suzuki's diary entries from this period. Interestingly, Suzuki maintained his diary in English, so there can be no doubt about its meaning. For example, we learn that Suzuki met Dürckheim on numerous occasions from at least the beginning of 1939 through the end of the war, for example, on January 16, 1939, Suzuki wrote, "Special delivery to Durkheim (sic), at German Embassy."¹⁴ The following day, on January 17, 1939: "Telegram from Dürkheim [sic]."¹⁵ On January 18, 1939: "Went to Tokyo soon after breakfast. Called on Graf. [Count] Durkheim [sic] at German Embassy, met Ambassador [Eugen] Otto [Ott], and Dr. [space left blank] of German-Japanese Institute. Lunch with them at New Grand [Hotel]."¹⁶ On July 14, 1942: "Telegram to Graf [Count] Dürkheim re his invitation to lunch tomorrow."¹⁷ And on February 15, 1943: "Went to Tokyo to take lunch with Graf von Dürkheim [sic] and stayed some time with him."¹⁸

Suzuki's diary does not, however, contain an entry noting his initial meeting with Dürckheim. For that we must turn to Dürckheim himself:

I was sent there [Japan] in 1938 with a particular mission that I had chosen: to study the spiritual background of Japanese education. As soon as I

arrived at the embassy, an old man came to greet me. I did not know him. "Suzuki," he stated. He was the famous Suzuki who was here to meet a certain Mister Dürckheim arriving from Germany to undertake certain studies." Suzuki is one of the greatest contemporary Zen Masters. I questioned him immediately on the different stages of Zen. He named the first two, and I added the next three. Then he exclaimed: "Where did you learn this?" "In the teaching of Meister Eckhart!" "I must read him again . . ." (though he knew him well already). . . . It is under these circumstances that I discovered Zen. I would see Suzuki from time to time.¹⁹

It is almost amusing, if the implications were not so serious, to picture the diminutive Suzuki awaiting Dürckheim's arrival at the German Embassy bedecked, as it would have been, with giant swastika-emblazoned flags. But why had Suzuki come to the embassy to meet Dürckheim in the first place? We don't know.

Be that as it may, Suzuki's contact with leading Nazis was by no means limited to Dürckheim alone. As previously noted, on January 18, 1939, Suzuki met other leading Nazis in Tokyo: "Went to Tokyo soon after breakfast. Called on Graf. [Graf] Durkheim [*sic*] at German Embassy, met Ambassador [Eugen] Otto [Ott], and Dr. [space left blank] of German-Japanese Institute. Lunch with them at New Grand [Hotel]."²⁰ On February 4, 1943, Suzuki took part in a dinner party to honor the ambassador: "Went to Imperial Hotel to attend dinner party given to Amb. Ott and his staff."²¹ And on February 16, 1943, Suzuki received "a box of fruits in recognition of my presence at a dinner party in honor of Amb. Ott of Germany."²²

In addition, Suzuki's diary contains frequent references to his lectures at German-related venues starting as early as May 28, 1938: "Lecture at German research institute for K.B.S. in the evening,"²³ followed on June 26, 1938, by "Kurokawa and Kato brought money for my lecture at German Institute."²⁴ Suzuki also lectured for the German Society on September 13, 1943, for German residents in Tokyo on October 4, 1943; for the German Club on December 10, 1943; and for the German Society, once again, on December 15, 1943.²⁵

One reason these lectures are important is because Dürckheim stated, "When I came to Japan, I didn't know anything about Zen. Very soon I met the Zen-master Suzuki, the greatest Zen-scholar of our time. I heard many of his lectures, and through him I discovered Zen."²⁶ One of Suzuki's postwar disciples and a critic of my research, Satō Gemmyō Taira, made the following claim concerning Suzuki's earlier 1936 visit to his relative in Germany: "Although Suzuki recognized that the Nazis had, in 1936, brought stability to Germany and although he

was impressed by their youth activities (though not by the militaristic tone of these activities), he clearly had little regard for the Nazi leader, disapproved of their violent attitudes, and opposed the policies espoused by the party. His distaste for totalitarianism of any kind is unmistakable.”²⁷ If so, Suzuki certainly had a very strange, in fact unbelievable, way of showing his disapproval, opposition, or distaste. The documented, historical reality is that no Zen-related figure in wartime Japan enjoyed closer connections to the Nazis than Suzuki.

Following Japan’s defeat in August 1945, Dürckheim was arrested and imprisoned in Japan as a suspected class A war criminal. Ultimately, however, he was not indicted as a war criminal and was released from Sugamo Prison in Tokyo in 1947. While still incarcerated, Dürckheim provided Albert Stunkard, a US Army medical doctor at Sugamo Prison, with a letter of introduction to Suzuki, who was living in a house on the grounds of Engakuji monastery in Kita Kamakura. Stunkard’s visit initiated a stream of American visitors to the Suzuki residence, including Philip Kapleau, then a court reporter for the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal.²⁸ It is ironic to think that it was Dürckheim, the Nazi’s decorated, chief propagandist in Japan, who thus initiated the chain of events that led to Suzuki’s fame, and the subsequent postwar “Zen boom” in the West.²⁹

As for Dürckheim, upon release from prison he was repatriated to Germany, where, hiding his Nazi past, he became known as a deeply Zen-influenced psychotherapist. Some of his disciples even regarded him as a Zen master, thanks to the Zen training he had allegedly received in Japan from both Suzuki and Sōtō Zen master Yasutani Haku’un (1885–1973). Significantly, Yasutani was one of wartime Japan’s most militaristic Zen masters and even an overt anti-Semite. As for Suzuki, he continued his relationship with Dürckheim well into the postwar era, visiting the latter’s home in Germany in 1954. Interested readers will find further details of this rich and complicated story in my article “A Zen Nazi in Wartime Japan: Count Karlfried Dürckheim, plus D. T. Suzuki, Yasutani Haku’un and Eugen Herrigel.”³⁰

The Key Link between Suzuki and the Nazis

If the above material suggests a link between Suzuki and the Nazis, there is additional evidence that is perhaps the most compelling. This author’s initial introduction to the evidence was due to an article Suzuki wrote that was published in November 1941, a month prior to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. Suzuki’s article, titled “Zen to Bushidō” (Zen and Bushidō), was included as one chapter in the book *Bushidō no shinzui* (The essence of Bushidō). As so often in the past, Suzuki described at length the Zen-infused warrior’s embrace of death. For

example, he wrote, “The spirit of Bushidō is truly to abandon this life, neither bragging on one’s achievements, nor complaining when one’s talents go unrecognized. It is simply a question of rushing forward toward one’s ideal.”³¹ Significantly, in the preface to Suzuki’s article, the book’s editor, Handa Shin, noted, “Dr. Suzuki’s writings are said to have strongly influenced the military spirit of Nazi Germany.”³²

As stated in the introduction, this author admits to having been taken aback by Handa’s comment. Could Suzuki’s writings have possibly “strongly influenced the military spirit of Nazi Germany”? In the course of researching this question, I discovered that while the word “strongly” was debatable, the word “influenced” cannot be denied. In retrospect, this is hardly surprising, inasmuch as Suzuki’s repeated and incessant promotion of the influence of Zen on Bushidō, resulting in a selfless, death-embracing, if not death-promoting, warrior code, could not help but have been welcomed in a Nazi Germany engaged in total war. Total war in this instance required both soldiers and civilians to engage in the most massive killing *and dying* military-related operations in world history.³³

Publication of *Zen and Japanese Culture*

As previously mentioned, in 1938 Suzuki published his English-language book *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, albeit only in Japan. Suzuki’s diary reveals that he quickly initiated the process for his book to be translated and published in Germany. On August 8, 1938, that is, only three months after its appearance in Japan, Suzuki wrote, “Letters to German publishers re. translation of my book.”³⁴ Even before that, on July 7, 1938, a second German count, Hermann Alexander von Keyserling (1880–1946), wrote to Suzuki from Germany as follows: “I think your last book (the one you sent me yourself) particularly enlightening for a larger public and have urgently advised my German publishers Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt Stuttgart to issue a German translation of it. Should Dr. Kilpper, the director of the house, approach you on this subject, don’t hesitate; there is no better publishing house over here and what you say about the Japanese warrior-spirit could find a comparatively very large audience in newborn Germany.”³⁵ Keyserling’s letter makes it clear that it was Suzuki who took the initiative to have his book translated into German following its publication in Japan. Additionally, Keyserling’s reference to “newborn Germany” was a characteristic description of Germany under Nazi control. Finally, and most importantly, Keyserling’s letter makes it equally clear that Suzuki could not help but be aware his book would find a “comparatively very large audience” in Nazi Germany exactly because of the way it depicted “the

Japanese warrior-spirit." Of course, Suzuki was probably already aware of this possibility in light of his own visit to Nazi Germany in 1936.

A few months later, on January 19, 1939, Suzuki wrote the following entry: "*Zen and Jap. Culture* sent to [Walter] Donat of the Jap-German Culture Institute of Tokyo."³⁶ Dr. Walter Donat, a dedicated Nazi, was the secretary-general of the Japanese-German Cultural Institute in Tokyo from 1937 onward, and was enamored with Japan's samurai culture. In 1942 Donat wrote, "The spirit of the samurai has taken possession of the whole people in its decisive battle."³⁷ What better proof of his statement could Donat ask for than Suzuki's 1938 claim, previously introduced: "The spirit of the samurai deeply breathing Zen into itself propagated its philosophy even among the masses. The latter, even when they are not particularly trained in the way of the warrior, have imbibed his spirit and are ready to sacrifice their lives for any cause they think worthy. This has repeatedly been proved in the wars Japan has so far had to go through for one reason or another."³⁸

Suzuki's connection to both Keyserling and Donat makes it clear that he was an active participant in the process that led to the translation and publication of the German edition of his book in 1941. Titled *Zen und die Kultur Japans* (Zen and the culture of Japan) in German, his book was published by Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt Stuttgart, the same publisher Keyserling recommended.³⁹ Otto Fischer, the book's translator, begins his introduction by first incorrectly describing Suzuki as a "Zen priest" before correctly describing him as "a professor at the Buddhist Ōtani College in Kyoto."⁴⁰ Fischer also noted that Suzuki was known to a German audience inasmuch as his book *Die große Befreiung* (The great liberation) had been published in Leipzig in 1939. This was the German title given to Suzuki's 1934 book *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*.

It is no exaggeration to say that Suzuki's new book was translated and published in the right place at the right time. As Hans Bieber, a historian of Nazi Germany, has noted, publications about Japan peaked in 1941–1942, many of which, like Suzuki's book, underscored the Japanese sense of heroism as perceived in Germany and the willingness of the Japanese people to sacrifice themselves (*Opferbereitschaft*).⁴¹ Thus, even before becoming publicly available, Suzuki's book was introduced in one of Germany's major newspapers. Or, more accurately, introduced in the most important newspaper in all of Germany, the *Völkischer Beobachter* (People's observer), the official newspaper of the Nazi Party with an aggregate readership of 1.2 million in 1941.

On January 11, 1942, an introduction to the German edition of Suzuki's book appeared in the Munich edition of the *Völkischer Beobachter* and featured four full pages of the book. The introduction's title said it all: "Zen and the Samurai: On the Japanese Warrior's Readiness for Death." Unsurprisingly, the Nazis'

supreme interest in Zen was its contribution to the warrior's willingness to die. The words "death," "die," and "deadly" occur no less than fourteen times in these four pages. Typical of these death-related passages is the opening sentence: "The problem of death is a great problem with every one of us; it is, however, more pressing for the samurai, for the soldier, whose life is exclusively devoted to fighting, and fighting means death to either side of fighters."⁴²

As Suzuki made clear with his reference to "for the soldier," he wanted his readers to understand that his words about Japan's past applied equally to its wartime present, for Japan had begun its full-scale invasion of China proper on July 7, 1937. Suzuki also discussed the *Hagakure* (lit. Hidden under the leaves), a classic early eighteenth-century work on Bushidō authored by Yamamoto Jōchō (1659–1719), a Zen priest and former samurai:

We read the following in the *Hagakure*: "Bushidō means the determined will to die. When you are at the parting of the ways, do not hesitate to choose the way of death. No special reason for this except that your mind is thus made up and ready to see to the business. Some may say that if you die without attaining the object, it is a useless death, dying like a dog. But when you are at the parting of the ways, you need not plan for attaining the object. We all prefer life to death and our planning and reasoning will be naturally for life. If then you miss the object and are alive, you are really a coward. This is an important consideration. In case you die without achieving the object, it may be a dog-death [*inu-jini*]⁴³—the deed of madness, but there is no reflection here on your honor. In Bushidō honor comes first."

The last sentence would no doubt have had a special resonance for members of the SS inasmuch as their motto was "*Meine Ehre heißt Treue*" (My honor means loyalty). The SS was an elite unit within Hitler's military, perhaps best known for having run the Nazis' concentration camps, among many other atrocities. Note, however, that the emphasis on honor and loyalty in both the SS and the allegedly Zen-inspired Bushidō code is not coincidental, for on November 1, 1935, Heinrich Himmler proposed to Hitler that the SS should one day become a German version of the samurai, and Hitler agreed. Himmler's ultimate goal was that in a postwar, victorious Germany the SS would form an elite force that would rule the entire country just as the samurai had once ruled Japan.

Bill Maltarich describes this development in *Samurai and Supermen: National Socialist Views of Japan* as follows: "Although Europe had always shown an interest in the samurai, with Germany leading the trend after the alliance with Japan, it was Himmler's SS who saw in this class a far flung and yet nearly

perfect analog. Just as the samurai's rigid and high-minded warrior code had, at least in the view of Japan at the time, influenced and bettered the entire Japanese people, the SS would set and was setting the example for the rest of Germany."⁴⁴

Himmler was so taken with the samurai that he commissioned a booklet on their history and values to be written and distributed to every SS member. The booklet was titled *Die Samurai, Ritter des Reiches in Ehre und Treue* (The samurai, knights of the empire in honor and loyalty). The booklet's author, Heinz Corraza, wrote at length about the importance of the samurai as the leading force in Japan's rise to world power. For his part, Himmler wrote the booklet's introduction, in which he emphasized the parallel role the SS was expected to play in Germany. He claimed readers would come to "the recognition that it is mostly minorities of the highest worth who give to the people a life that, in earthly terms, is eternal."⁴⁵

This helps explain why only four days after the initial review, on January 15, 1942, Suzuki was once again introduced in the same newspaper, this time in an article focused on one of Japan's most important prewar ultranationalists, Tōyama Mitsuru (1855–1944). The section on Suzuki stated,

The Japanese D. T. Suzuki recently wrote a book about the meaning of the Zen sect, published by Deutsche Verlagsanstalt in German. We published a section of his book describing the Japanese warrior's preparedness for death in Vol. No. 11 of the *Völkischer Beobachter*. Suzuki is a Zen priest and professor at a Buddhist university in Kyoto. If one were to attempt to characterize the Zen sect scientifically, which is difficult, one can conclude that in it Buddhism has been completely revamped to meet Japanese conditions. This is not a unique process but one that has also happened to Christianity in the past, for example with the birth of Puritanism and certain of its oriental forms.

The recent decade in particular has once again led the Zen sect to increased importance in Japan. The battle for Japan's survival is taking place against the powerful backdrop of a history that has been able to survive for two and a half millenniums in a rare concord of race, religion and politics. It is quite understandable that in this difficult time for the existence of the Japanese people, they would retreat to the intellectual roots of their history and regard them as being quite valid for their present. The outstanding national virtues of the Japanese are anchored in the Zen sect, a fact that signifies a monumental endorsement of this practical life-art.⁴⁶

In words that echo Suzuki's own writings, we learn that, as with Christianity, "Buddhism has been completely revamped to meet Japanese conditions,"

resulting in a “rare concord of race, religion and politics.” Further, “The outstanding national virtues of the Japanese are anchored in the Zen sect, a fact that signifies a monumental endorsement of this practical life-art.” And the most important of all: “It is quite understandable that in this difficult time for the existence of the Japanese people, they would retreat to the intellectual roots of their history and regard them as being quite valid for their present.” Isn’t this an accurate description of what Suzuki sought to accomplish?

The author of these words, Ernst Meunier, was a very active Nazi propagandist credited with some twenty wartime works in thirty-two publications, including two works for the Reichspropagandaleitung (Reich Propaganda Office). Given this background, it is not surprising that he would have celebrated and promoted Suzuki’s writings. This may also be connected to the fact that Alfred Rosenberg, editor of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, embraced a *völkisch*, that is, a highly ethnic-oriented, nationalistic understanding of religion. He certainly would have welcomed Suzuki’s presentation of Zen as serving to reinforce the Nazis’ own *völkisch* (folkish) understanding of religion while, at the same time, inspiring German readers, especially soldiers, to embrace an idea of death in which even “a dog-death” was honorable.

Suzuki’s book could not have been published at a more opportune time, for as historian Michael Geyer notes, by 1942 many Nazi leaders and ideologues, including Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels, and Alfred Jodl, intentionally pushed the military toward mass death as a means of protecting and preserving Nazi ideology. In their romanticized and aestheticized view, to die on the rubble of one’s dreams immortalized the dream itself.⁴⁷ Given this, Suzuki’s book proved that Hitler could not have selected a better wartime ally than Japan, an ally whose embrace of heroic death was identical to their own.

Suzuki’s defenders will no doubt claim it is unfair to hold Suzuki responsible for the way in which the Nazis misused or misunderstood his writings. But in Suzuki’s description of the influence Zen had on the samurai and Bushidō (including Japan’s modern soldiery), what was there that would have disturbed the Nazis, especially given the absence of any substantial discussion of the ethical implications of Buddhist precepts, for example, the precept forbidding the taking of life?

Suzuki, who had witnessed the fascist nature of Nazism firsthand, nevertheless wrote that “[Zen] may be found wedded to anarchism or fascism, communism or democracy, atheism or idealism, or any political and economical [*sic*] dogmatism.”⁴⁸ And for good measure Suzuki added, “[Zen] is, however, generally animated with a certain revolutionary spirit, and when things come to a deadlock[,] which is the case when we are overloaded with conventionalism,

formalism and their cognate isms, Zen asserts itself and proves to be a destructive force.”⁴⁹

It is certainly possible to debate what Suzuki meant by these passages, especially as he failed to provide any concrete examples, historical or otherwise, of their implementation. For their part, however, the Nazis would certainly have welcomed Suzuki’s use of words such as “revolutionary spirit” and “destructive force” in describing Zen. They would have regarded these words as an expression of a perfect religion for allies sharing revolutionary goals, together with the destruction such goals inevitably entailed. Again, having visited Nazi Germany in 1936, Suzuki could not help but have been aware of the welcome his words would receive.

In addition, Suzuki’s diaries reveal, as we have seen, that on two or more occasions he took the initiative to ensure his death-embracing writings on Bushidō and Zen would be available in Nazi Germany. Likewise, Suzuki also focused his Japanese-language writings on exactly the same Zen-inspired embrace of death. For example, in a lengthy article that appeared in the June 1941 issue of the Imperial Army’s officer’s journal, *Kaikōsha kiji* (Kaikō Association report), Suzuki wrote, “It isn’t easy to acquire the mental state in which one is prepared to die. I think the best shortcut to acquire this frame of mind is none other than Zen, for Zen is the fundamental ideal of religion. It isn’t simply a question of being prepared to die, as Zen is prepared to transcend death. This is called the ‘unity of life and death’ in which living and dying are viewed as one. The fact that these two are one represents Zen’s view of human life and the world.”⁵⁰

Prince Albrecht of Urach

Shortly after Suzuki’s book appeared, another Nazi expert on the Far East, Prince Albrecht of Urach (1903–1969), once again sought to explicate the “secret” of the Japanese soldier’s strength, just as Dürckheim had first done in 1939. Urach titled his booklet, published in 1942, *Das Geheimnis Japanischer Kraft* (The secret of Japanese power), and a combined total of eight hundred thousand copies of this booklet were published by war’s end. Even as late as the autumn of 1944, when most periodicals and theaters had been forced to close, a hundred thousand copies of Prince Urach’s booklet were printed. Urach had this to say about Japanese religion in general: “The Japanese are fortunate in having never experienced serious conflict between national interests and personal religious beliefs. . . . Shinto is Japan’s primeval faith, it corresponds to the Japanese character so completely that it is never discussed.”⁵¹

As for Japanese Buddhism, Urach opined, "Japanese Buddhism is much more positive and activist than Indian Buddhism. . . . There are countless very active sects of both Buddhism and Shinto that express their religious life not only in Japan itself, but go out into the areas dominated by Japan to give local people an idea of the power and strength of Japanese state religion."⁵²

The Nazi prince, however, reserved his highest praise for Zen in what can only be described as a distilled version of Suzuki's views: "The active and yet stoic Buddhism of the Zen-sect perfected and refined the ethos of the Japanese warrior, and gave him the highly ascetical note that still today is the essential feature of Japanese soldiery."⁵³ Compare this with Suzuki's own description in the German edition of his book, *Zen und die Kultur Japans*: "Zen discipline is simple, direct, self-reliant, self-denying, and this ascetic tendency goes well with the fighting spirit. The fighter is to be always single-minded with just one object in view which is to fight and not to look either backward or sidewise. To go straightforward in order to crush the enemy is all that is necessary for him. . . . Good fighters are generally ascetics or stoics, which means to have an iron will. When needed Zen supplies them with this."⁵⁴ Still further, Urach had this to say about the role of the sword in Japanese culture:

Since ancient times, the Japanese sword has not only been a means of power, but a symbol for everything that the samurai served. The sword is the symbol of justice that the samurai was obligated to defend under all circumstances. The samurai class had the duty to promote social justice as well. There are countless legends of swords that recall our myths of swords in the Nibelungen tales. There are tales of swords that act on their own, without the necessity of their owners doing anything, of swords wielded as it were by a ghostly hand that struck down dozens of enemies. Other swords drew themselves from their sheaths and struck down unjust and evil foes.⁵⁵

Compare this with Suzuki, who wrote,

The sword has thus a double office to perform: the one is to destroy anything that opposes the will of its owner, and the other is to sacrifice all of the impulses that arise from the instinct of self-preservation. The former relates itself with the spirit of patriotism or militarism, while the other has a religious connotation of loyalty and self-sacrifice. In the case of the former very frequently the sword may mean destruction pure and simple, it is then the symbol of force, sometimes perhaps devilish. It must

therefore be controlled and consecrated by the second function. Its conscientious owner has been always mindful of this truth. For then destruction is turned against the evil spirit. The sword comes to be identified with the annihilation of things which lie in the way of peace, justice, progress, and humanity. It stands for all that is desirable for the spiritual welfare of the world at large.⁵⁶

Urach repeatedly informed his readers that the modern Japanese soldier is filled with the spirit of his ancient samurai forbearers: "The spirit of the samurai lives today with the same force that enabled Japan's army, an army of the whole people, to fight its many recent battles. The first requirement of the samurai is a readiness to give his life."⁵⁷ Suzuki expressed it as "the samurai's willingness to give his life away at any moment, for . . . when the Unconscious is tapped, it rises above individual limitations. Death now loses its sting altogether, and this is where the samurai training joins hands with Zen."⁵⁸

Unlike Suzuki, Urach does not explicitly identify the Japanese warrior's willingness to die with Zen, yet he ends his booklet with the following explanation of the relationship between Germany and Japan: "National Socialist Germany is in the best position to understand Japan. We and the other nations of the Axis are fighting for the same goals that Japan is fighting for in East Asia, and understand the reasons that forced it to take action. We can also understand the driving force behind Japan's miraculous rise, for we National Socialists also put spirit over the material."⁵⁹ As Hans Bieber has noted, Urach was far from the only Nazi author to praise Zen:

Ideologists of National Socialism held Japanese Zen Buddhism in particularly high regard. They described it as a "path of utmost discipline and self-denying commitment" to "inner concentration and meditative contemplation" (*Weg härtester Zucht und selbstverleugnender Hingabe*) zu "innerer Sammlung und Versenkung"), but perceived the contemplation in question as one "leading to action" (*Tatversenkung*) which was "excellently suited to the art of combat" and which gave fighting its "unconquerable force" (*unbezwingliche Gewalt*). This interpretation of Zen Buddhism was inextricably linked to an affirmation of the existing (outer) world, including that of fighting (*Jasagen zum Weltgegebenen, ja zum Kampfe*). Thus, Zen Buddhism was not perceived as a spiritual phenomenon but as a prerequisite state of mind for the "most outstanding type of warrior"; above all, for the "aristocracy of warriors" (*für einen "hervorragenden Kriegertyp", ja "Kriegeradel"*)—that is, for the samurai. It was also treated as an integral part of a "folkish-national ethos."⁶⁰

Needless to say, there is a clear parallel between the above comments by National Socialist ideologues and Suzuki's writings. This is hardly surprising given that Suzuki's writings on Zen, translated into German, were nearly the only source of knowledge on this topic available in Germany at the time. This is attested to by Kitayama Junyū (1902–1962), a Pure Land (Jōdo) sect priest who served from 1936 to 1944 as deputy to the Japanese director of the Japan-Institut in Berlin. Junyū was probably the most prominent Japanese writer in Germany during the war, and in 1944 published a book titled *Heroisches Ethos: Das Heldische in Japan* (Heroic ethos: The heroic in Japan). Junyū explained his motivation as follows: "As a result of the fact that D. T. Suzuki published his works on Zen in English, followed by translations into other languages, the general impression in Europe is that the Zen sect is the only school of Buddhist thought to have played a role in Japanese intellectual history. This is because Suzuki devoted his works exclusively to the Zen sect of which he is a priest. Few significant works have been published about the other sects. Hence no one in Europe has access to other or better materials on Japanese Buddhism than the writings of D. T. Suzuki."⁶¹

In light of the information presented above, it is clear that Handa Shin had a basis for his claim in November 1941 that "Dr. Suzuki's writings are said to have strongly influenced the military spirit of Nazi Germany." However, given the existence of parallel voices among Nazi ideologues, the claim of Suzuki's *strong* influence may well be Handa's attempt to embellish Suzuki's role. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that in concert with the military alliance between Germany and Japan there was a parallel attempt to form a *völkisch* spiritual alliance in which, on the German side, men such as Dürckheim, Urach, and even Himmler, played leading roles.

On the Japanese side, Suzuki's public writings and actions clearly contributed to that alliance, whatever private reservations he may have harbored. Once again, just how effective or meaningful this spiritual alliance was, especially in terms of its impact on military affairs, is debatable, but at the very least the role played by these men, Suzuki included, is clear.

Was Suzuki a Nazi sympathizer? While the word "sympathizer" may be too strong, it is difficult to deny the charge that, at the very least, Suzuki took advantage of the wartime alliance between Japan and Nazi Germany to promote himself and his writings. He did this knowing full well how his descriptions of the Zen-imbued warrior-spirit would be welcomed *and made use of* in "newborn Germany." For that reason, Suzuki cannot escape the label of having been, at the very least, an opportunist—an opportunist, moreover, whose wartime writings contributed to the death of millions.

Notes

1. Quoted in Brian Victoria, *Zen at War*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 111.
2. D. T. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1938).
3. Suzuki noted that the relative he visited in Germany was not an actual blood relative. Instead, he was someone who had been so close to Suzuki for such a long time that Suzuki regarded him as a relative.
4. Quoted in Sueki Fumihiko, "Nihon Bukkyō to sensō: Suzuki Daisetsu o chūshin toshite" (Japanese Buddhism and war: Principally D. T. Suzuki) paper presented at the Kankoku Nihon Shisō-shi Gakkai, November 29, 2008, 4.
5. Quoted in an article titled "Anti-Comintern Pact," Wikipedia, accessed June 20, 2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Comintern_Pact.
6. "Tokubetsu Kōtō Keisatsu," Wikipedia, accessed August 30, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokubetsu_K%C5%8Dt%C5%8D_Keisatsu.
7. As with all quotes from Suzuki's newspaper article in this chapter, Suzuki's comments are available in Brian Victoria, "D. T. Suzuki, Zen and the Nazis / Suzuki Daisetsu Zen Nachisu (Ue)," *Asia-Pacific Journal / Japan Focus* 11, issue 43, no. 4 (2013): 1–21, <http://apjif.org/2013/11/43/Brian-Victoria/4019/article.html>.
8. Quoted in Victoria, "Negative Side," *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 41, no. 2 (2010): 106. Available on the web at <http://www.thezensite.com>.
9. Victoria, "Negative Side," 106.
10. Victoria, "Negative Side," 106–107.
11. Quoted in Victoria, "D. T. Suzuki, Zen and the Nazis."
12. Quoted in Victoria, "Negative Side," 108.
13. Quoted in John Toland, *Adolf Hitler* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 224.
14. D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VIII," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 26 (2012): 3.
15. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VIII," 3.
16. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VIII," 3.
17. D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries III," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 21 (2007): 114.
18. D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries V," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 23 (2009): 6.
19. Quoted in Brian Victoria, "A Zen Nazi in Wartime Japan: Count Dürkheim, and His Sources—D. T. Suzuki, Yasutani Haku'un and Eugen Herrigel / Senchū Nihon ni okeru aru Nachisu Zenshūto Deyurukuhaimu Hakushaku no Jōhōgen Suzuki Daisetsu, Yasutani Hakuun, Oigen Herigeru," *Asia-Pacific Journal / Japan Focus* 12, issue 3, no. 2 (2014), <http://apjif.org/2014/12/3/Brian-Victoria/4063/article.html>.
20. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VIII," 3.
21. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries V," 4.
22. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries V," 6.
23. D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VII," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 25 (2011): 60.
24. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VII," 63.

25. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries V," 30–40 inclusive.

26. Karlfried Graf Dürckheim, *Der Weg ist das Ziel: Gespräch mit Karl Schnelting in der Reihe Zeugen des Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, Germany: Lamuv, 1992), 43.

27. Satō Kemmyō Taira, "Brian Victoria and the Question of Scholarship," *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 41, no. 2, 150, .

28. For a further discussion of the Westerners who met D. T. Suzuki in the immediate postwar period, see chapter 9 of this volume: "Suzuki Daisetz's '*Spiritual Japan*' and Buddhist War Responsibility: An Alternative History of the Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952" by Alice Freeman.

29. Dürckheim was awarded the War Merit Cross, Second Class, on Hitler's birthday, April 20, 1944. He shared this honor with such prominent Nazis as Adolf Eichmann and Dr. Josef Mengele.

30. Victoria, "Zen Nazi."

31. Quoted in Victoria, *Zen at War*, 111.

32. Victoria, *Zen at War*, 111.

33. For a fuller discussion of Suzuki's writings as both a death-embracing and death-enabling spiritual practice, see Brian Victoria, "Zen as a Cult of Death in the Wartime Writings of D. T. Suzuki," *Asia-Pacific Journal / Japan Focus* 11, issue 30, no. 4 (2013).

34. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VII," 68.

35. Keyserling Papers, library of the Technische Universität Darmstadt / Germany. Count Keyserling's connection to the Nazis remains a contentious topic to the present day. On the one hand, Keyserling is widely credited with having coined the term *Führerprinzip* (leader principle). He is alleged to have asserted that certain "gifted individuals" were "born to rule" on the basis of social Darwinism. The author, however, has been unable to verify the source of this claim. The *Führerprinzip* is important because it was destined to become the fundamental basis of political authority in the governmental structures of the Third Reich and an earmark of political Fascism (see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Führerprinzip>). On the other hand, in 1931, prior to Hitler's coming to power, Keyserling wrote that "the present program of National Socialism can... only lead to a catastrophe." Quoted in "Über den Umgang der Nationalsozialisten mit Hermann Graf Keyserling," in *Deutsche Autoren des Ostens als Gegner und Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Frank-Peter Kroll, Beiträge zur Widerstandsproblematik (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2000), 54. Nevertheless, in April 1933 Keyserling offered Hitler cooperation in the "reconstruction" of Germany, although he added he didn't agree to "much that was going on today." His cooperation, he claimed, was offered as "an apostle of an understanding and constructive spirit that was above all political parties." Quoted in Ute Gahlings, *Hermann Graf Keyserling: Ein Lebensbild* (Darmstadt, Germany: Liebig, 1996), 326fn.). Like many conservatives at the beginning of National Socialist rule, Keyserling apparently believed Hitler and his movement could be restrained. While Hitler does not appear to have responded to Keyserling directly, he did order that Keyserling was not to be eliminated, yet also not allowed to gain public approval; Gahlings, *Hermann Graf Keyserling*, 69. Although Keyserling faced continued harassment during the Nazi years, in 1938 he encouraged Suzuki to have his book published in a "newborn" Germany under Nazi control.

36. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VIII," 3.

37. Walter Donat, "Japan: Die Prinzipien seiner völkischen Existenz," in *Kulturmacht Japan: Ein Spiegel japanischen Kulturlebens in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, ed. Richard Foerster (Vienna: Bibliographisches Institut, 1942), 13.

38. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism*, 64–65.
39. Suzuki, *Zen und die Kultur Japans*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1941.
40. Suzuki, *Zen und die Kultur Japans*, 9. Suzuki was never ordained as a Buddhist priest, Zen or otherwise. Instead he was a committed lay practitioner (J., *koji*) who trained under Zen master Shaku Sōen, abbot of Engakuji monastery in Kita-Kamakura.
41. See Hans Bieber, “Images of German-Japanese Similarities and Affinities in National-Socialist Germany (1933–1945),” in Sven Saaler / Kudo Akira and Tajima Nobuo, eds., *Mutual Perceptions and Images in Japanese-German Relations, 1860–2010* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).
42. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism*, 47. The quoted material extends to the bottom of page 50 in the English edition. In the German edition, *Zen und die Kultur Japans*, the quoted material begins on the middle of page 60 and extends through the top of page 63. I also wish to extend my appreciation to Sarah Panzer at the University of Chicago, who made me aware of this article and provided the newspaper clipping. I would also like to thank Hans Bieber, who informed me that the article originally appeared in the Munich edition of the *Völkischer Beobachter*.
43. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism*, 49.
44. Bill Maltarich, *Samurai and Supermen: National Socialist Views of Japan* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2005), 155.
45. Quoted in Maltarich, *Samurai and Supermen*, 226.
46. *Völkischer Beobachter*, January 15, 1942.
47. Michael Geyer, “‘There Is a Land Where Everything Is Pure: Its Name Is Land of Death’ Some Observations on Catastrophic Nationalism,” in *Sacrifice and National Belonging in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Greg Eghigian and Matthew Paul Berg (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 131–141.
48. Quoted in Suzuki, *Zen and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, 36.
49. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, 36–37.
50. Suzuki Daisetsu (also Daisetz, D. T.), “Makujiki kōzen,” *SDZb* 16:17–26. A translation of the entire article, titled “*Makujiki kōzen*” (Rush forward without hesitation), is available on the web at *Asia-Pacific Journal*, vol. 11, issue 30, no. 4 (August 2, 2013), <http://apjpf.org/2013/11/30/Brian-Victoria/3973/article.html>.
51. Albrecht Fürst von Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft* (Berlin: Franz Eher Nachfolger, Zentralverl der Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, 1942). All quotations taken from this booklet appear in the partial, nonpaginated English translation available on the Web at German Propaganda Website, accessed October 16, 2013, <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/japan.htm>.
52. Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*.
53. Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*.
54. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism*, 35.
55. Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*.
56. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism*, 66–67.
57. Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*.
58. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism*, 46.
59. Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft*.
60. Hans-Joachim Bieber, “Zen and War: A Commentary on Brian Victoria and Karl Baier’s Analysis of Daisetz Suzuki and Count Dürckheim,” *Asia-Pacific Journal / Japan Focus* 13, issue 19, no. 2 (2015): 1–15. Available on the web at <http://apjpf.org/2015/13/19/Hans-Joachim-Bieber/4319.html>.

61. Kitayama Junyū, *Heroisches Ethos: Das Heldische in Japan* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1944), 62. Note that when it came to the meaning of the sword, Kitayama was of one mind with Suzuki. He wrote, "Swordsmanship training in preparation for death is the Alpha and Omega of the Japanese hero spirit. . . . One is no longer the bearer of life but of death, standing above life and everything that happens in life, able to freely, undeterred and courageously master whatever takes place. Therefore, the Japanese heroic spirit is decisive in finding the right place to die" (119).

D. T. Suzuki and the Welfare of Animals

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Among the voluminous writings of D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) are a few essays on animals. From these it is clear that he had a sympathetic attitude toward them and expressed it using Buddhist ideas and themes. His engagement with animals, though, existed not just in the abstract in his writings but also in his actual interaction with pets and other animals in his home. Suzuki's sympathy toward them originated, it seems, not from his Buddhist outlook but from the influence of his American wife, Beatrice Lane Suzuki (1875–1939). In fact, it is uncertain whether he would have ever developed these views apart from his relationship with her. Beatrice's own ideas about animals were drawn mostly from liberal Western critiques of the mistreatment of animals, derived primarily from the antivivisection and the animal protection movements of America and Europe. Beatrice attached Buddhist beliefs to them, but the model for her action and thinking was largely Western. Beatrice exhibited these sentiments through her own eccentric behavior in Japan, where she became a relentless rescuer of stray cats and dogs, bringing scores, if not hundreds, into their home in Kyoto over the years. The burdens of animal care led to a number of minor crises in the home, and ultimately provoked a plan to establish an animal shelter in Kamakura called Jihien, near Suzuki's cottage on the grounds of the Engakuji Zen monastery. The shelter operated for a decade and a half, even after Beatrice's death in 1939, and apparently closed only amid the privations of World War II. Long after its closure, though, Suzuki continued his valorization of animals, making sympathetic statements about them in talks and articles. This, then, was one lasting influence of Beatrice on Suzuki: a lifelong appreciation of animals, which he expressed in Buddhist concepts and ideals.

Up to now Suzuki's life with animals has not been explored extensively in scholarship. In fact, it is difficult to construct this story because evidence is scattered across many types of writings in tiny fragments and oblique references. There are, of course, a handful of essays on animals by Suzuki in both Japanese and English that originally appeared in popular publications and talks. There are also a few random references to animals in his mainstream writings that give us

a glimpse into his views. In addition, Suzuki's letters and diaries contain terse references to animals, particularly those in his home, revealing his thoughts and concerns on a day-to-day basis. We find yet more information in the writings of Suzuki's wife, Beatrice, and in the memories and recollections of Suzuki's friends, colleagues, students, and relatives published after his death. Using these disparate sources, I have attempted here to recount the story of Suzuki's life with animals. I must offer a warning, though, that there are many missing pieces to this story, details that we would like to know but that are lost to history without the discovery of other sources of information.

Buddhism and Animals

Buddhism itself has a long-standing and complex view of animals, based partly on canonical sources and doctrine and partly on popular practices that developed during the religion's great traverse of the Asian continent. Perhaps the most common reference to animals in traditional Buddhist sources is as one form of rebirth. The actual term used for animal in this type of rebirth is not the early modern word *dōbutsu* but the earlier term *chikushō*, meaning "beast." The "path of the beast" is one of the "six paths" (*rokudō*) that sentient beings can transmigrate through from one life to the next: (1) as a deity (*tenjō*) in one of the heavens, (2) as a human (*ningen*) on earth, (3) as a warring fury (*ashura*) at the intersection of earth and the heavens, (4) as a beast (*chikushō*) on earth, (5) as a hungry ghost (*gaki*) also on earth, and (6) as a tormented being in one of the hells (*jigoku*). Rebirth in any of these states is not permanent, but for some it may last an extremely long time. Of the six, three are identified as unfortunate paths (*san'akudō*)—hells, hungry ghosts, and beasts—for they are karmic retribution for evil actions committed in previous lives. Beasts are considered both vicious and vulnerable, locked in a cruel world where they must fight for their survival or succumb to the violence of others. They thus live a life that is ravenous, crazed, defiled, and driven by base instincts, in contrast to humans, who have the capacity to be moral and mentally awakened.¹

Based on these assumptions, Buddhism offers a two-pronged program for how humans should treat animals. First, they should not harm them or any living being (*fusesshō*; Skt. *ahimsā*). One reason is to ensure that humans themselves are not reborn in an unfortunate state in their next lifetime—for instance, as an animal. Another reason is so that the suffering to which animals are especially prone will be lessened, as people refrain from killing or subjugating them. Second, humans should proactively come to the aid of animals, offering ways for them to escape their plight in future rebirths, and in doing so simultaneously

generate karmic merit for themselves. In premodern Japanese Buddhism, this resulted in an interesting variety of institutional practices. One is a ritual of releasing animals from captivity (*hōjōe*), particularly birds and fish, while Buddhist texts and invocations are chanted in their behalf, or sometimes allowing them to live in safe havens within temple precincts. Another is to perform ritual memorial services (*kuyō*) for deceased animals, which are occasionally conflated with ritual meals offered to hungry ghosts (*segakie*). Hence, human interaction with animals is predicated ideally on doing them no harm and assisting them in religious advancement, which redounds to the karmic benefit of humans as well.²

Another thread in Buddhist thought that does not explicitly mention animals, but is nonetheless relevant to their depiction and treatment, is the idea that even insentient and inanimate objects attain Buddhahood. This is expressed in the popular maxim, “The grass and trees and land all attain Buddhahood” (*sōmoku kokudo shikkai jōbutsu*). The implication is that, if Buddha nature (*busshō*) extends even to inanimate and inert things, then it certainly can be found in all sentient beings, including animals. This trope has the potential to present animals in a more positive light than the doctrines of karma and rebirth do, especially if the actualization of Buddhahood occurs in the here and now, as some strains of Mahāyāna thought claim.³ Suzuki was well disposed to this line of thought.

Besides normative Buddhist doctrine, Japan has had a variety of beliefs and practices concerning animals, some positive, some negative, others ambivalent and ambiguous, over the centuries. There is, for instance, a long tradition of anthropomorphizing animals in visual depictions and narrative accounts, suggesting that animals act with the same thought, intent, and emotions as humans (or, perhaps, that humans behave no better than animals).⁴ Also, Japan has maintained long-standing customs of hunting and fishing (as well as criticism of them), of meat eating and vegetarianism, of animal husbandry and maintaining service animals and keeping pets, so that it is hard to identify a single and consistent attitude toward animals throughout its history.⁵ All of these elements created the conceptual and cultural context in which Suzuki offered his own view of animals.

Suzuki on Animals

Suzuki’s explicit writings on animals are few and scattered. Virtually all of them are popular pieces such as newspaper articles and talks, and they appeared sporadically from the 1920s (when Suzuki was in his fifties) until the end of his

life (in his nineties). Prior to that time, it is difficult to document whether animals were a major concern for Suzuki. One early reference is a brief comment in a letter of January 1896 to his friend Yamamoto Ryōkichi (1871–1942), written at the Engakuji monastery in Kamakura, where Suzuki was living and pursuing Zen practices as a layman. Suzuki mentions how much he enjoys the birds that come to his garden to drink water and eat berries from the nandina bush. Instead of opening the window shades (*shōji*), he would sit quietly in his room enjoying their chirping. All of this occurred in the natural mountain setting of the Engakuji.⁶ This brief reference to animals, however, is a rarity in his early letters.

We can get a glimmer of Suzuki's attitude toward animals during this early period from passing references in his first major work, *Shin shūkyō ron* (A new interpretation of religion) published in 1896. He mentions beasts, first of all, within the standard Buddhist list of types of rebirth that sentient beings are subject to.⁷ Elsewhere Suzuki notes the descending sophistication of consciousness across various species, moving from the lofty religious consciousness of Śākyamuni Buddha to that of ordinary humans; and then down to cows, horses, dogs, and cats; then to fish and birds; then to insects and protozoa; and finally to plants.⁸ In another reference, Suzuki also contrasts humans, who form a society and live collaboratively, to animals, which run around separately and are independent of each other.⁹ The standard impulse in the animal world, he claims, is for the powerful to dominate the powerless and the clever to dominate the cleverless.¹⁰ Suzuki does observe that it is the primitive rather than the advanced religions that practice animal and human sacrifice.¹¹ He notes the importance of empathy (*dōjō*) in Buddhism, expressed in the great compassion (*daijichi*) of the bodhisattva vows. He also mentions a wide variety of virtuous Buddhist acts, including releasing animals from captivity and feeding hungry ghosts, but adds that such rituals do not necessarily contribute to the advancement of people in society, as various social works do.¹² From these references, it is hard to pinpoint an explicit appreciation of animals, or a clear-cut statement of how humans should treat them, though admittedly such was not Suzuki's purpose in writing *Shin shūkyō ron*.

Several decades later, in the 1920s and 1930s, Suzuki produced a few essays that best express his sympathetic attitude toward animals. Typically, they do not adopt a doctrinal standpoint; rather, they comment on and observe animals in contemporary society and argue for a particular point of view. The longest essay was serialized in five installments in the Buddhist newspaper *Chūgai nippō* in August 1929. The first four are preserved under their original title, "Seibutsu aigo no igi" (The significance of love and protection of living things)

in volume 31 of the *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū*.¹³ The fifth installment is inserted into a separate article, also containing material from the other installments, with the abbreviated title “Seibutsu aigo” (Love and protection of living things). It was published in a collection of essays named *Ichizensha no shisaku* (Reflections of a Zen person) in 1943, and subsequently in volume 15 of the *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū*.¹⁴

The article in both versions meanders from one observation to another, but it advances a religious, and specifically Buddhist, outlook. Suzuki notes that most people react to animals based on their likes and dislikes, or on sentimentalism. Some think that there are higher priorities in life than animals, such as social problems, class conflict, and material concerns. There are, of course, people who value animals and will pay a high price for them, as for an antique or a work of art. But it is also common for children to torment animals, catching dragonflies, for instance, and tethering them on a thread. Suzuki responds that treatment of animals should not be just a matter of likes and dislikes. When people see naughty children taking a puppy tied with a rope and dunking it in the river, their impulse is to save it. This, he suggests, comes from the light of compassion emanating from the Buddha. In fact, he maintains, the inclination to protect living things can be found in anyone with a poetic or religious or philosophical disposition.¹⁵

Suzuki further observes that the people of Kyoto have ubiquitous roadside shrines to Buddhas and *kami* where they offer incense and candles, and he maintains that their veneration of the Buddha arises from a mysterious mindset that is not just superstition. He also points out how the simplest people may have a morning glory vine growing under their eave. Once they enter the bourgeois class, their interests may extend to tea ceremony, flowers, landscaping, classical song, calligraphy, painting, and even architecture and garden design. Suzuki sees here an expression of people’s love of living things, and thus of their humanity, especially in connection to religion. A society’s treatment of animals—cows, horses, dogs, cats—reflects its religious and cultural values. A society that condones, for instance, the torment of insects and fish or the abuse of cats and dogs is culturally regressive.¹⁶

Hunting, whether for big game or small animals, is a particularly primitive practice, Suzuki continues, that demonstrates a lack of reflection. Hunting itself goes against a religious outlook, for it is based on individual pursuits rather than on concerns that transcend self and others. Suzuki thus treats hunting, as well as dog fighting, cock fighting, and bull fighting, as lacking religious reflection (*muhansei*). He suggests that one would do better to consider photographing animals in their natural habitat, or taking up hiking in the mountains and forests to

pursue a scientific curiosity, or, again, trying to capture the spirit of nature by sketching mountains and forests.¹⁷

Suzuki suggests further that Westerners love dogs and cats—particularly dogs—and that dogs are the most devoted of animals. Japanese are rather antagonistic toward them, and so dogs in Japan are more liable to bite people, rather than lick them as in the West. The more animals and humans show affection to one another, the more their wisdom will increase. Suzuki observes that a cat in London can fearlessly cross a busy street, whereas stray cats in Japan are skittish because naughty children chase them. He admits, though, that Westerners are more inclined to put an animal to sleep if it is old and infirm, compared to Japan with its Buddhist prohibition against killing. Suzuki attributes this difference to the West's rational nature. Japanese, by contrast, are more comfortable (*heiki*) allowing the animal to suffer than taking drastic measures. In Japan, Suzuki adds, Buddhist facilities for the protection of animals are established as a means to convey the Buddhist ideal of compassion to the public. There is thus a fundamental difference between East and West in their psychology toward animals. Buddhists, for their part, have compassion as the fundamental principle of their practice.¹⁸

Suzuki notes the common Buddhist practice of memorial services (*kuyō*) for deceased animals and even plants. Offerings are made to the spirits of dogs, cats, and even objects, such as worn-out writing brushes and discarded morning glories. He is quick to point out, though, that the Buddha is inherent in all these things, citing the Buddhist trope, "The grass and trees and land all attain Buddhahood." Thus, memorial offerings made to deceased animals are simultaneously offerings to the Buddha. If people support deceased things in this way, they should also support living ones. Thus, horse drivers in Japan who beat their horses have lost all sense of identification with animals. The same applies to children who attack dogs with rocks and sticks. Parents should teach them that animals are to be loved instead. And people who damage roadside plants and trees should realize that these objects too have the Buddha nature. Therefore, Buddhists, who are accustomed to performing memorial services for the spirits of animals, should have a sense of the preciousness of living things also.¹⁹

Suzuki suggests that the realization of the mystery (*shinpi*) of all living things is the basis of the psychology of those who love and protect them. And this realization accords with the idea that "the grass and trees and land all attain Buddhahood." Compassion is what springs from it. This mystery can be seen in the planting, growth, and flowering of things, and in the changing of the seasons. Once one hears the sound of life, there is no one whose heart is not captivated by this mystery. Thus, amid all the great contradictions of the world—internecine

injuries and reciprocal kindnesses—one is moved by this mystery of life, and from it is born the conviction to protect living things.²⁰

This long and rambling essay of Suzuki's, which first appeared in 1929, is his most extensive statement on the protection of animals. From it we should note, first, that Suzuki does not dwell on the classical Buddhist depiction of animals as an ill-fated form of rebirth. He acknowledges the suffering of animals but focuses instead on the love and compassion that humans should show them. Second, it is noteworthy that Suzuki titles his essay "Love and Protection of *Living Things*" (*seibutsu*) rather than of animals specifically. He places animals in a vast matrix of the mystery of life, encompassing both animate and inanimate things. It is from the encounter with and realization of this mystery, he maintains, that compassion for animals arises. In this essay, Suzuki situates animals in the mystical vision that he famously propounded in other writings as the essence of Buddhism. In Suzuki's talks and other short works on animals in later years, he frequently recycled the ideas, references, and tropes found in this essay.

Beatrice Suzuki's Radical Devotion to Animals

Suzuki's musings on animals did not arise in a vacuum. By the time of his 1929 essay, he had been living in a household filled with dogs and cats for over a decade. The reason is that his wife, Beatrice Lane Suzuki, was a fervent proponent of animal welfare and incessantly brought stray animals into their home. Hence, whenever Suzuki casually mentioned animals in his general writings, he was not speaking in the abstract. For instance, in a 1925 article on Pure Land Buddhism, he invokes the old adage, "gold coins thrown before a cat" (*neko ni koban*), the Japanese equivalent of the Western saying "pearls before swine."²¹ In doing so, Suzuki no doubt knew precisely how cats would behave. There is little evidence that pets were a prominent aspect of his life prior to his marriage to Beatrice. Her obsession with animals, though, ultimately precipitated a crisis in their household in the late 1920s.

Suzuki met Beatrice in 1906 at a lecture in New York given by his Zen master, Shaku Sōen (1860–1919), at which Suzuki was the translator. She was about to enter an MA program in social work at Columbia University, and he was working as an editorial assistant at Open Court Publishing in LaSalle, Illinois. Beatrice was a brilliant but unconventional American woman for her generation. She had graduated in 1898 from Radcliffe, the women's college affiliated with Harvard University, where she took courses from such eminent thinkers as William James (1842–1910), Josiah Royce (1855–1916), and George Santayana (1863–1952). But she was discontented with Western thought and mainstream Christian culture,

and sought alternatives in the Romantic poets, in new religious movements, and in the Orient. She inherited her questioning and assertive nature in part from her mother, Emma Erskine Hahn (1846–1927), an active member of women's clubs and progressive social movements in New York. After meeting, Beatrice and Suzuki started a regular correspondence, and grew closer to each other. When he left America in 1908 and returned to Japan in 1909, the two apparently had plans to wed. Beatrice followed Suzuki to Japan in 1911, and they married in December of that year.²² This was a brave new world for Beatrice, and she entered it intrepidly.

Over the next two decades Beatrice developed her preoccupation with animals. This occurred at various sites because of changes in Suzuki's career and in the location where they resided. At first, they lived in Tokyo, where Suzuki was professor of English at the preparatory school of Gakushūin University. But when classes were not in session, they also spent time at the Engakuji monastery in Kamakura, where Suzuki practiced Zen and collaborated with Shaku Sōen on various Buddhist projects. There they lived in the Shōden'an, a small cottage on the grounds of the monastery. This became a scholarly retreat for Suzuki throughout his career, and also an important site in Beatrice's efforts at animal protection. In 1921 they moved to Kyoto, where Suzuki was named professor of English and Buddhist philosophy at Otani University, and Beatrice taught English in its preparatory division. This was the period when Suzuki began publishing his most famous works in Japanese and English, and when the two of them collaborated as editors of the new scholarly journal the *Eastern Buddhist*. For the first few years, they lived in the southeast part of the city, but in 1926 they moved to a grand mansion near the university built for Suzuki by his old friend and wealthy patron Ataka Yakichi (1873–1949). Nonetheless, Suzuki and Beatrice would retreat to the Shōden'an in Kamakura whenever they could. In the last decade of her life, however, Beatrice would spend a month or two in late summer at Mount Kōya to escape the heat of Kyoto and to study Shingon Buddhism. In all these locations Beatrice kept animals, or transported them in between. Her preoccupation with animals occurred amid their busy lives, which involved not only their careers but also the adoption of a son, Alan Masaru, in 1916 and the arrival in the same year of her mother, Emma, who lived with them until she died in 1927.

Few sources refer to animals during the first years of their marriage. They do seem to have had pets, though, at least from 1917, for Suzuki's diaries indicate that on June 29, 1929, their twelve-year-old Persian cat Tora died.²³ We also know from a pamphlet in 1929 that Beatrice had been rescuing stray cats and dogs for fifteen or sixteen years by then, suggesting that she began in 1913 or 1914.²⁴ It is

difficult to document Beatrice's motives, but her concern for animals probably predates her arrival in Japan, and was most likely influenced by her mother, who had been president of a New York antivivisection society.²⁵ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was not unusual for high-society women in America and Britain to become involved in associations opposing animal vivisection for medical research, seeking to protect animals from abuse, and advancing animal welfare generally.²⁶ Beatrice probably brought these sentiments with her to Japan. When keeping strays at their house in the city became too much of a strain, she and Suzuki would often move the animals to the Shōden'an cottage in Kamakura.

Perhaps Beatrice's greatest ally in caring for rescued animals was their long-time housekeeper, Sekiguchi Kono (1881–1948), affectionately referred to in Suzuki's writings as Okono. She was hired in 1913, less than two years after they married, and remained in service until her death some thirty-five years later.²⁷ Though only semiliterate, she was very capable and organized, and ended up managing Suzuki's household over the years, as other servants came and went. Beatrice, though brilliant and international in outlook, did not do housework, and thus depended on others for all her daily needs. Okono and Beatrice, both very strong in character, had trouble adjusting to each other at the beginning. But Okono shared Beatrice's love of animals, and soon became indispensable in the effort to manage and maintain the animals in their home. Whenever cats or dogs had to be transported between their house in the city and the cottage in Kamakura, Okono was involved.²⁸ She also nursed sick animals and organized regular memorial services for deceased ones, performed before a home altar by a Buddhist priest.²⁹ In the end, it is doubtful that Beatrice's enterprise with animals, and Suzuki's scholarly career itself, could have succeeded without Okono. And it was animals that bonded her to Beatrice more than anything else.³⁰

Over the course of the 1920s Beatrice became obsessed with rescuing animals and somewhat eccentric in her habits. For instance, she was a stringent and uncompromising vegetarian, more so than the Japanese around her, and in the last twenty years of her life she refrained from wearing leather and fur.³¹ She also opposed trimming trees and bushes at their house. A former student of Suzuki's tells the story of visiting their home one day and finding him leaning precariously out of the third-floor window pruning a tree. He laughed and said that he could only do so while Beatrice was away.³² She also declined to use mouse poison when they had infestations, so servants would do treatments only when she was out of town. Typically there would be several vicious dogs in their yard that would threaten or attack guests.³³ Suzuki's grandniece recounts how scared she and her brother were of the dogs whenever they visited the Shōden'an cottage as

children.³⁴ Suzuki himself was apparently bitten by their dog Isabel while leaving the house in June 1938.³⁵ There was also an ever-increasing number of cats at their Kyoto residence, which were kept either inside the house or in a pen that Suzuki had built at the rear.³⁶ As for Shōden'an, Suzuki's grandnephew reported that at any one time there would be approximately twenty cats, which were put into two or three boxes and covered with a mosquito net at night.³⁷ In short, Suzuki's household gradually became chaotic and dysfunctional as Beatrice brought more and more animals into their home.

We know of this crisis from letters that Suzuki sent to Beatrice during the late 1920s. One problem he noted in 1926 was the infestation of fleas from the dogs: "This [morning] the yard is full [of fleas] and the cats' quarters too. [I never] realized that dogs will be so bad as this. I am trying every means to exterminate them. I don't think it is wise at all to keep dogs in a city house, unless they are especially well taken care of. I cannot go out as it is in the garden and enjoy the evening. The fleas are worse than mosquitoes."³⁸ Suzuki also noted in 1927 the constant turnover of household servants because of the animals and Beatrice's discontent with how they cared for them:

The chief objection I have to your keeping animals is this. As you cannot look after them yourself, a great deal is to be left to your helpers, and as they don't take so much interest in them as you do, which is quite natural, there will always be something that will go wrong, and the result will be your irritation which upsets the peace of the entire household. . . . I don't want to have the animals come into our lives so much. You rescue dogs considered lost and homeless, and keep them with us, and you don't look after them yourself, which even if you wished will be impossible. . . . Are the stray dogs as important as this? I have nothing to say against your being helpful to poor animals, but instead of keeping them with us, why not try to kill them painlessly or send them away to those Tokyo people who are interested in such work?³⁹

These problems were occurring just at a busy and difficult time for both Suzuki and Beatrice. He was deeply immersed in his research on the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*. Her mother, who was living with them, was declining in health, and their son, Alan, had become a problem child, failing in school. It may be that in these circumstances Beatrice consoled herself by compulsively rescuing cats and dogs from the streets.

The animal problem was not limited to their house in Kyoto but also extended to the Shōden'an cottage in Kamakura, as indicated in a 1928 letter by Suzuki: "I

hear those dogs going up on the porch and dirtying the floor. They are sometimes all found lying there together, ten or a dozen of them. This I don't like in Shōden. There is no way of escaping from them wherever I go. This is evidently my Karma. Two or three are all right if necessary, but ten, eleven, and twelve and more is too much."⁴⁰ Suzuki began to suggest taking "scientific" measures to control the burgeoning population, that is, to neuter the animals:

The dogs' interfering with my sleep is very bad. I hope you will have their home somewhere else, not increasing under any circumstances the present numbers of them here [at Shōden'an]—Ten—there are [also] others that I think are present here—and there is every sign of their being increased, due to their being females. They will propagate indefinitely, and where comes the money to keep them alive? Not to speak of human labor and time that is needed for it and of the trouble that they cause to the neighborhood as they are so noisy and quarrelsome at night when the mating season comes. Things must be carried on scientifically if you want to act within a reasonable sphere of doing other work. Woman is so given away to temporary feelings, too bad she has not done much abstract thinking.⁴¹

Suzuki considered it a failure of reason that Beatrice and Okono, as women, were vulnerable to their feelings for animals. And he believed it was a great loss because Beatrice had such intellectual talents and many contributions to make: "If you are going to do something before you die, you must not divide your attention so much. For instance your cats and dogs must go. One's sentimentalism must be greatly curbed or hardened. To be sentimental is all right for poets or rich people who can afford to have a number of helpers. How much of your energy and thought and money is wasted on animals you really do not know."⁴² It was not until 1928 and 1929 that he and Beatrice came up with a solution to the problem: an animal shelter in Kamakura, separate from the Shōden'an.

Jihien: Mercy Animal Shelter

The animal shelter that Suzuki and Beatrice built was named Jihien, commonly referred to in his diaries and letters as Mercy Shelter, or just as the "animal home."⁴³ This became a major enterprise for them to build and operate over the years. Beatrice lacked the managerial savvy and public diplomacy to head it, so much of the work fell to Suzuki and, especially, Okono. Its operation and oversight distracted Suzuki from his perpetual scholarly projects, but he made his

peace with it, for the shelter allowed him to deescalate the animal population in the Kyoto home and the Kamakura cottage to two or three dogs, a few cats, and a couple of birds.⁴⁴ It also satisfied Beatrice's aspiration to save and protect animals, releasing her to help Suzuki with his many English manuscripts in the 1930s and with editing the *Eastern Buddhist*. The shelter continued to operate after Beatrice's death in 1939, but it was always a financial burden to them. Ultimately the stringencies and deprivations of World War II led to its demise.

Beatrice, at Suzuki's urging, attempted to recruit a high-profile American woman living in Tokyo, Mrs. Frances Hawkes Cameron Burnett (1884–1957), as an ally in the effort to build the Mercy Shelter. She was the wife of Charles Burnett (1877–1939), the military attaché at the American embassy in Tokyo, who was posted to Japan in 1911–1914, 1919–1924, and 1925–1929. Mrs. Burnett was highly visible in social circles and events in the Tokyo expat community. Beatrice, who likewise came to Japan in 1911 and lived in Tokyo until 1921, also aspired to participate in these circles. Her human interactions centered on foreigners and English-speaking Japanese because her Japanese language ability was always limited. She and Mrs. Burnett probably became acquainted during their overlapping years in Tokyo. Since Mrs. Burnett was also deeply committed to animal welfare, Suzuki and Beatrice targeted her as a potential partner in building Mercy Shelter.⁴⁵

Mrs. Burnett owed her reputation as an animal advocate to the so-called Jindōkai (Humane Society) in Japan. This was a social organization in Tokyo with extensive foreign participation that was established in 1914 and dedicated to the humane treatment of animals. It was different from the Tokyo Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Dōbutsu Gyakutai Bōshi Kai), which began in 1902 and changed its name to the Society for the Love and Protection of Animals (Dōbutsu Aigo Kai) in 1908. That organization had been launched by Japanese Christians and Buddhists, as well as intellectuals, who felt that the country's reputation suffered because of the cruelty of the drivers of horse carts and carriages in urban areas where foreigners lived. It sought to reform and ameliorate the treatment of animals, and thus to help elevate Japan into the ranks of civilized nations. But the organization also accepted meat eating because it was a standard practice in advanced nations, and it took no stand on the vivisection of animals for medical research. Mrs. Burnett and other foreigners sought to make a stronger statement than this, and created the Jindōkai, for which she served as the chair.⁴⁶ It is noteworthy that Suzuki and Beatrice had closer ties to the Jindōkai, which was dominated by Christian foreigners, than to the Dōbutsu Aigo Kai, which included many Buddhists. No doubt this was the result of Beatrice's own affinity to the foreign community.

At first, it seems, Suzuki hoped that Mrs. Burnett and her fellow animal sympathizers might take charge of the cats and dogs that Beatrice rescued, so Mrs. Burnett was invited in April 1928 to visit the Shōden'an cottage in Kamakura where many of the animals were kept. Instead, she apparently imagined the cottage itself as a potential site for sheltering animals. Suzuki responded to Beatrice, though, that Shōden'an could not be expanded in this way and that another location would be required.⁴⁷ This triggered the plan to find a new site for the animal shelter, presumably with the financial assistance of Mrs. Burnett. Suzuki moved quickly to identify a good piece of land in Kamakura just ten-minute's walk from their cottage. In April 1929 they received a verbal commitment from Mrs. Burnett that she would "do my best for you" in support of the project.⁴⁸ Construction of the facility was apparently completed by July of that year.⁴⁹ It is no accident that Suzuki wrote his long essay "Seibutsu aigo no igi" that very month.⁵⁰ Animals were much on his mind then, and the solution to his animal problem seemed at hand.

Beatrice was very invested in this project from the beginning, but Suzuki urged her to allow Mrs. Burnett to take the limelight. Hence, the decision was made to name the facility the Burnett Animal Mercy Shelter. One complexity in recruiting her support was that the Shōden'an was located within the compound of the Engakuji. Okono wondered if Ms. Burnett might be put off by the Buddhist character of the place. For sure, Suzuki, Beatrice, and especially Okono imagined the shelter to be based on Buddhist values.⁵¹ In the long run this was not a problem, since Mrs. Burnett returned to America for good in the summer after the shelter was completed. At first the Jindōkai lent support and tried to raise two thousand yen on behalf of the shelter as a tribute to Mrs. Burnett.⁵² But some of the money Mrs. Burnett had apparently promised was not forthcoming, or seemed to require greater involvement of the Jindōkai than they had expected. At this point Okono became adamant that the shelter should remain independent, and from then on the association with the Jindōkai faded.⁵³ Nonetheless, Mercy Shelter was known to foreigners in the Tokyo area, who would acquire pets from it when they arrived in Japan, board them there when on vacation, and return them when they departed.⁵⁴

It is not completely clear what the actual facilities of the shelter consisted of. In a notice written by Beatrice soon after its completion, she described it as "a house, kennels, and yard."⁵⁵ In an article published by an antivivisection magazine in London five years later, in 1935, she said, "This is probably the only shelter for dogs and cats in Japan. It began in a simple way, but has gradually grown and now has a roomy enclosure and kennels."⁵⁶ In an essay two years later, in 1937, she elaborated, "Kennels for dogs and shelters for cats. It is in a beautiful and

quiet situation and the animals are well looked after by able caretakers and under the management of a devoted Buddhist woman who spends her time in helping to get support for the institution.”⁵⁷ Beatrice took pride in the fact that the shelter observed Buddhist *ahimsā*, nonharming, instead of condoning euthanasia as some animal sympathizers did.⁵⁸ During its first year or two of operation, Okono, the “devoted Buddhist women” mentioned above, bore most of the responsibility. Sometime around 1931 or 1932 Suzuki budgeted for a permanent caretaker, and he hired Okono’s younger brother, Ijirō, from Niigata for the position. Ijirō and his wife lived in the house on-site, and even after the war, when the shelter closed, he remained in Suzuki’s service.⁵⁹ With the shelter established, there continued a flow of animals from Kyoto to Kamakura in the 1930s, suggesting that Beatrice maintained her practice of rescuing dogs and cats.⁶⁰

From the beginning, the financing of the animal shelter was difficult for Suzuki. No doubt he and Beatrice spent a lot of their own money for its operation. But they constantly sought contributions too. In an appeal published in the *Eastern Buddhist* in 1930 and signed by Beatrice and Okono, they invited annual subscriptions in support of the shelter, as well as donations of any type.⁶¹ In November 1931, Beatrice and Suzuki also arranged a benefit symphony concert conducted by Viscount Konoye Hidemaro (1898–1973) at the performance hall of Meiji Shrine, with all the proceeds going to Mercy Shelter.⁶² The sales from Suzuki’s next book in English, the second series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, published in 1933, also contributed to its support.⁶³ Suzuki’s diaries in the 1930s include several entries about donations to the shelter, large and small, including ones in memory of Beatrice after she died in 1939.⁶⁴

During the 1930s Suzuki became fully habituated to a life with animals. It may not have been the life he would have chosen prior to his marriage to Beatrice. But his tie to her made it inescapable, so he seemed to give himself to it. He took responsibility for the animal shelter. He lived with and cared for pets. And he allowed references to animals to creep into his writings. Sometimes these references took the form of brief, but fully formed, essays. Other times they appeared as fleeting comments in works on other subjects.⁶⁵ He published, for instance, a short article titled “Seisha to dōbutsu” (Saints and animals) in 1936 based on a talk he had given the previous year to the Animal Welfare Society (Dōbutsu Aigo Kai) at Otani University, a society that Beatrice organized for her students.⁶⁶ In it he observed how saints in both Christianity and Buddhism befriend and are befriended by animals. They form a direct personal bond with each other, which, in the case of Buddhism, Suzuki attributes to the realization that “all sentient beings have the Buddha nature.”⁶⁷ In 1938, Suzuki also wrote a brief essay titled “Nehanzu” (Nirvāṇa paintings) on classical depictions of Śākyamuni Buddha on

his deathbed, surrounded by all manner of humans, deities, and creatures lamenting his passing, Suzuki linked the many animals appearing in the scene to all the other figures through the Mahāyāna truths that “all sentient beings have the Buddha nature” and that “the grass and trees and land all attain Buddhahood.”⁶⁸ These maxims became the refrain that Suzuki would invoke repeatedly when talking about animals.

Beatrice likewise composed several short essays in the 1930s about animals. In some places she echoed themes found in Suzuki’s writings. She describes, for instance, the sorrow of the birds and other animals at the time of the historical Buddha’s death. She also mentions Christian saints, such as Saint Francis of Assisi, who befriended animals. Most importantly, she invokes the Buddhist rationale for loving animals: “Mahāyāna Buddhism teaches that all beings including animals have the Buddha nature and are manifestations of the One Absolute Reality, and that they will in time attain Buddhahood, so the true Mahāyāna Bodhisattva wishes to help and succor them.”⁶⁹ What is interesting about Beatrice’s essays is that the thinker who influenced her the most was the famous medical missionary to Africa, Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965). One of her essays is a short account of his life and ideas, in which she declares him to be a “Christian Bodhisattva.”⁷⁰ Another essay appropriates Schweitzer’s trademark concept of “reverence for life,” and makes it the driving principle in her own philosophy about animals.⁷¹ These essays, in short, show the eclectic and universalist nature of Beatrice’s convictions about animals, with Christian and Buddhist themes blending seamlessly with one another.

Beatrice died on July 16, 1939, after a long illness. Despite her passing, Mercy Shelter continued on, but her steady supply of rescued dogs and cats came to an end. Ultimately, what doomed the shelter was World War II itself. According to an interview that Suzuki gave in 1961, the place could not be maintained as the war wore on, and it finally came to a natural end.⁷² The disappearance of the shelter, though, did not mean the disappearance of animals from Suzuki’s life.

Suzuki and Animals Late in Life

The postwar period, when Suzuki was well into his seventies, ushered in a new and exciting phase in his life when he moved back to America for nine years, achieved fame internationally, and then returned to Japan for his twilight years. During this stage, animals did not figure as prominently in his life as in the 1920s and 1930s. But the personal sensitivities that Suzuki had developed toward animals, and the ideas that he expressed in his Buddhist interpretation of them, did persist in words and small acts during old age.

In the first few years after the war Suzuki still had pets, for when he traveled to the United States in 1949 he wrote to Furuta Shōkin (1911–2001), who was housesitting for him, asking how the cats and dogs were.⁷³ Five months later, he reminded Furuta in another letter to keep the dogs away from the flowerbeds.⁷⁴ His life in America, though, was too peripatetic to allow for pets. In his first two and a half years, he changed locations six times: first to Honolulu, then Los Angeles, then New York, then back to Japan in the summer, then to Los Angeles again, and finally to New York once more. He nonetheless maintained an awareness of and affection for animals, and enjoyed other people's pets when he had a chance to visit them.⁷⁵ His student Richard DeMartino recounts an episode in New York when Suzuki, while chatting on the sidewalk outside a restaurant, noticed a cat trying to get in the door. Suzuki unobtrusively broke away from the group and quietly let the cat in.⁷⁶ But he was not an absolutist about animals. Mihoko Okamura, his personal assistant for over a decade at the end of his life, remembers that Suzuki would pick up insects that he found in the house and release them outside. But cockroaches he would try to kill with his slipper. When asked playfully whether they too have the Buddha nature, he responded, "No. I draw the line at cockroaches. They eat the glue of my books."⁷⁷ Suzuki was not a vegetarian either, and his grandniece testifies that he enjoyed beefsteak dinners well into old age.⁷⁸ He nonetheless retained Beatrice's concern over the vivisection of animals.⁷⁹

Suzuki occasionally wrote short pieces on animals during this period, both in English and in Japanese. He submitted an article, for instance, to the *Japan Times* on September 19, 1962, on the occasion of Animal Week, in which he raises questions about why humans are indifferent to animals, and exploit them for their own needs while rationalizing their actions. He also voices concerns about meat eating and vivisection. Suzuki highlights that animals sometimes exhibit the very behavior that humans should: "Seeing the motherly love displayed by animals, be it dog or cat, one is struck by the purity of their instincts. One seems to see God or Buddha in this love of a mother animal for her offspring. Compassion moves through the heart of all creation, and I am at a loss to understand why man alone should use his so-called intelligence to justify his actions."⁸⁰ Instead of presenting animals in the traditional Buddhist trope of an undesirable type of rebirth, he treats them as models of the Buddha's compassion.

Suzuki also produced a few other short pieces near the end of his life. One was a preface to the published annual proceedings of the Japanese Animal Welfare Association (Nihon Dōbutsu Fukushi Gakkai). Reiterating earlier ideas, he wrote that humans should not only honor dead animals with memorial

offerings but should also remember living ones with actual offerings, and should inculcate love of animals in their children.⁸¹ Suzuki also provided a small Japanese tract on living things to the Cambridge Buddhist Association in 1966, which was subsequently published in English as “The Chain of Compassion.” This is largely a paraphrase of his longer 1929 essay “Seibutsu aigo no igi”: the loving treatment of animals is not just a matter of likes and dislikes; all things are connected in a chain of compassion; there is nothing that lacks the Buddha nature.⁸²

Suzuki lived the last few years of his life at the Matsugaoka Bunko in Kamakura with the assistance of Mihoko Okamura and his grandniece, Hayashida Kumino, and her family. Several years ago I asked Okamura-san if Suzuki had cats then. She replied that there were always cats around, one of which she teasingly named Jitarō as a counterpoint to his own name, Teitarō. Suzuki was famously photographed during these years cuddling cats, clearly enjoying their company. His views on cats are captured obliquely in a brief letter he wrote just a month before his death. In response to a technical question about the translation of a Chinese phrase, he replied, “I completely agree with the author’s view which says, ‘[the animals] move finished and complete.’ Our cats, for instance, are complete in themselves, I am sure. I would add that we humans are complete in our incompleteness. The human completeness consists in forever trying to realize the incomplete, and in being conscious of the incompleteness and trying to bring it to completion.”⁸³ In short, he considered his cats not an unfortunate form of rebirth but perfected beings of sorts. And his interaction with them was apparently a constant and unfolding revelation to him. This ongoing feline encounter and awakening was Beatrice’s enduring gift to Suzuki.

The Blended Origins of Suzuki’s Buddhist View of Animals

In the modern period, it has become vogue to consider the welfare of animals to be a value built into the very DNA of Buddhism, articulated from its ancient principle of *ahimsā*, nonharming. And simultaneously we have come to view Western religions as condoning the domination, subjugation, and exploitation of animals, based on the belief that God gave man dominion over the earth. Hence, there is a tendency to assume that Suzuki’s ideas about animals were simply a natural extension of his Buddhist values and practices. The historical record shows, though, that it is a much messier and more complicated issue than this. It seems that Suzuki and Beatrice lived in a Japan where the treatment of animals was, at least in the eyes of many socially progressive Western residents,

harsher and crueler than it was in America and Europe. They brought with them a strong culture of pets and a new controversial mindset that eschewed the vivisection of animals even for the advancement of medicine. Moreover, they transplanted their social organizations—movements, societies, clubs—dedicated to the protection of animals, and they motivated the Japanese to join them or to form their own. Furthermore, these Westerners found ethical, religious, and inspirational resources in their own traditions, crystalized in the 1930s by the example of Albert Schweitzer. Beatrice was a perfect product of this modern ethos and consciousness, and in Japan she searched for a Buddhist analogue to these values. It was she who awakened Suzuki to the preciousness and wholeness of animals. Thereafter, he simply entered her world and ultimately supplied it with the vocabulary and rationale to be understood in a Japanese Buddhist framework.

Animal welfare is a very peripheral issue in the overall landscape of research on D. T. Suzuki. If there is a larger point to be drawn from this study, it may be that the pattern we find here can be found in Suzuki's other presentations and elucidations of Buddhism. Across the twentieth century, Suzuki's writings were largely received as a direct distillation of Buddhism's rich and diverse teachings. But in the light of historical studies of Suzuki, we find that he engaged and confronted all manner of Western ideas and perspectives. He digested, parsed, and processed them in a highly sophisticated transcultural way of thinking, and thereby afforded Buddhism a felicitous home within this twentieth-century mindscape. This process resulted in an interpretation of Buddhism indebted as much to Western ideas as to traditional Japanese ones. His Buddhism thus represents a kind of melding of Western values and outlooks with Buddhist ones. It is unlikely that this hybrid or blended Buddhism, so well suited to modern thinking, could have arisen from Asia or the West alone.

Notes

1. Barbara A. Ambros, *Bones of Contentment: Animals and Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 35–38; and Mochizuki Shinkō, *Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten* (Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai, 1960), 5:5071–5072, s.v. “Rokudō”; and 4:3564–3565, s.v. “Chikushō.”

2. Ambros, *Bones of Contentment*, 38–43; and Mochizuki, *Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten* 9:7–8, s.v. “Ahiṃsā”; 5:4616–4617, s.v. “Hōjōe”; and 3:2907–2909, s.v. “Segakie.”

3. Mochizuki, *Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten* 4:3115–3116, s.v. “Sōmoku Jōbutsu.”

4. A popular example of this anthropomorphizing of animals can be found in the famous “frolicking animals” narrative scroll painting by Kakuyū, *Kokuho Chōjū giga maki* (Kyoto: Benridō, 1960).

5. Ambros, *Bones of Contention*, 40–44. Perhaps the most striking example of these conflicting attitudes toward animals centered around the edicts promulgated by the “dog shōgun,” Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (1646–1709), mandating humane treatment of animals, especially dogs, which were resented in his own day and quickly rescinded after his death.

6. Letter 44 (1896.1.10), in Suzuki Daisetsu, *SDZb* 36:69. *SDZ* refers to *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū*.

7. Suzuki Daisetsu, *Shin shūkyō ron*, *SDZb* 23:80–81.

8. Suzuki, *Shin shūkyō ron*, 18.

9. Suzuki, *Shin shūkyō ron*, 126.

10. Suzuki, *Shin shūkyō ron*, 129.

11. Suzuki, *Shin shūkyō ron*, 22.

12. Suzuki, *Shin shūkyō ron*, 127.

13. Suzuki Daisetsu, *Seibutsu aigo no igi*, *SDZb* 31:442–449.

14. Suzuki Daisetsu, *Seibutsu aigo*, *SDZb* 15:137–145.

15. Suzuki, *Seibutsu aigo no igi*, 442–444.

16. Suzuki, *Seibutsu aigo no igi*, 444–446.

17. Suzuki, *Seibutsu aigo no igi*, 446–448.

18. Suzuki, *Seibutsu aigo no igi*, 448–449.

19. Suzuki, *Seibutsu aigo*, 137–141.

20. Suzuki, *Seibutsu aigo*, 143–145.

21. D. T. Suzuki, “The Development of the Pure Land Doctrine in Buddhism,” in *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki*, vol. 2, *Pure Land*, ed. James C. Dobbins (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 19.

22. Ueda Shizuteru, “Sannin no jōsei to Daisetsu Sensei,” in *Daisetsu no fūkei—Suzuki Daisetsu to wa dare ka*, ed. Okamura Mihoko and Ueda Shizuteru (Kyoto: Tōeisha, 1999), 208–215.

23. D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries I,” ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 19 (2005): 145.

24. Hayashida Kumino, ed., *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1995), 30.

25. Beatrice Erskine Lane Suzuki, *In Memoriam: Emma Erskine Lane Hahn* (Kyoto: Suzuki Teitarō, 1929), 19. See also Ueda, “Sannin no jōsei,” 212.

26. Craig Buettinger, “Women and Antivivisection in Late Nineteenth-Century America,” *Journal of Social History* 30, no. 4 (1997): 857–872.

27. Hayashida, *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami*, 19.

28. Instances of this are mentioned, for example, in “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries I”: “Okono arrived from Shōden with cats,” 87 (February 28, 1926); “Started for Shōden 8:24 p.m. with Okono and three dogs and two cats,” 147 (July 17, 1929); “Sent telegram to Okono, not necessary to come if she cannot leave Shōden on account of sick cats,” 67 (July 12, 1924).

29. Suzuki’s grandnephew Rei gives an account of one such memorial service that attracted scores of people from the surrounding area, probably held in the 1930s at their nearby animal shelter, in Hayashida, *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami*, 32–34. Also, Suzuki has this interesting entry in his diaries, dated August 14, 1951 (in D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries IV,” ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 22 [2008]: 66): “Offering brought to the Dead this being the Obon season. / The animal spirits are neglected owing to Okono being no more with us, who was always particular to look after them each year with incense, candles, and

sutra reading.” We also know that memorial services to deceased animals were performed at the Tokyo Zoo, for Suzuki’s son Alan attended one such service in 1924. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries I,” 71 (October 26, 1924).

30. For a biographical sketch of Sekiguchi Kono, see Ueda, “Sannin no josei,” 246–267.
31. Ueda, “Sannin no josei,” 218, 226.
32. Ueda, “Sannin no josei,” 227.
33. Ueda, “Sannin no josei,” 227.
34. Hayashida, *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami*, 30–31.
35. D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries VII,” ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 25 (2011): 63–64 (June 25–28, 1938).
36. Ueda, “Sannin no josei,” 227; and Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries I”: “Carpenter begins work on cats ground,” 55 (November 18, 1923).
37. Ueda, “Sannin no josei,” 256.
38. Letter 388 (1926.7.20), *SDZb* 36:452.
39. Letter 398 (1927.4.14), *SDZb* 36:464–465.
40. Letter 410 (1928.1.15), *SDZb* 36:479–480.
41. Letter 418 (1928.4.18), *SDZb* 36:487–488.
42. Letter 438 (1929.1.8), *SDZb* 36:499.
43. D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries II,” ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 20 (2006): 3 (January 29, 1930); 14 (June 24, 1930); 33 (January 24, 1931); 59 (October 19, 1931); 82 (July 5, 1932), etc.
44. In addition to dogs and cats, Suzuki mentions birds in Letter 522 (1931.8.12), *SDZb* 36:569–570; and Letter 524 (1931.8.25), *SDZb* 36:573: “birds, cats, and dogs galore.”
45. Concerning Frances Burnett and her husband Charles Burnett, see Frances Hawks Cameron Burnett, *Frances Hawks Cameron Burnett Papers: A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress* (Washington, DC: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, 2009), <http://findingaids.loc.gov>; “Frances Hawks Cameron,” *Wood & Torbert Families*, accessed October 13, 2016, <http://www.woodvorwerk.com>; and “Gen. Charles Burnett,” *Find a Grave*, accessed October 18, 2016, <http://www.findagrave.com>.
46. Concerning the early animal welfare movement in Japan, see Iseda Tetsuji, *Rekishī bunken kenkyū bēsu to shita Nihonteki dōbutsu rinrigaku no kōchiku kenkyū* (Kenkyū Kadai Bangō 19520017), Heisei 19 Nendo—20 Nendo, Kagaku Kenkyūhi Hojokin (Kiban Kenkyū C), Kenkyū Seika Hōkokusho (2009), accessed March 4, 2022, <http://tiseda.sakura.ne.jp/works/kaken2009.pdf>.
47. Letter 414 (1928.4.13), *SDZb* 36:483; Letter 416 (1928.4.15), *SDZb* 36:484–485; Letter 430 (1928.9.4), *SDZb* 36:495; and Letter 438 (1929.1.8), *SDZb* 36:500.
48. Letter 441 (1929.1.16), *SDZb* 36:503; and Letter 445 (1929.4.2), *SDZb* 36:506.
49. D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries I,” 141 (April 13, 1929); and Letter 455 (1929.7.21), *SDZ* 36:512.
50. D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries I,” 147 (July 18, 1929).
51. Letter 443 (1929.3.25), *SDZb* 36:504; and Letter 414 (1928.4.13), *SDZb* 36:483.
52. Hayashida, *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami*, 30.
53. Letter 459 (1929.7.29), *SDZb* 36:515–516.
54. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, “Note: The Burnett Animal Mercy Shelter,” *Eastern Buddhist* 5, nos. 2–3 (1930): 285.
55. B. L. Suzuki, “Note,” 284.

56. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "Humane Work in Japan," *Animals' Champion and Medical Freedom Advocate* (1935): 1.

57. Beatrice Erskine Lane Suzuki, "A Plea for Animal Welfare," in *Impressions of Mahayana Buddhism* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1940), 247.

58. B. L. Suzuki, "Note," 285–286.

59. Hayashida, *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami*, 31–32. The first mention of Ijirō in Suzuki's diaries is in Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries II": "Ijirō in the evening, going over Jihiyen account," 73 (March 30, 1932).

60. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries II," 10 (April 26, 1930); 31 (January 4, 1931); 50 (July 21, 1931); 68 (February 1, 1932); 69 (February 10, 1932); 79 (June 1, 1932); 96 (November 30, 1932); 121 (June 6, 1933); and 144 (November 29, 1933).

61. B. L. Suzuki, "Note," 284–285.

62. "Burnett Animal Mercy Shelter," *Japan Times and Mail* (October 16, 1931): 6. See also Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries II": "Letters written for Okono in behalf of the Animal Home Musical entertainment," 59 (October 31, 1931).

63. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries II," 125 (July 11, 1933); 127 (July 22, 1933); 135 (September 18, 1933); and 136 (September 25, 1933).

64. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries II," 92 (October 22, 1932); and 113 (April 3, 1933); and D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VIII," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 26 (2012): 14 (March 21, 1939); 43 (September 29, 1939); 48 (November 11, 1939); and 52 (December 10, 1939).

65. In Suzuki's 1936 lecture *Shakuson sankō* (Praise of Śākyamuni), *SDZb* 27:369–370, he notes that animals were beloved by the Buddha and that Japan performs memorial services (*kuyō*) to animals and to all types of objects.

66. B. E. L. Suzuki, "Plea for Animal Welfare," 246, indicates that the Animal Welfare Society at Otani University was affiliated with the Animal Welfare Society at the University of London. This connection may have been established when Suzuki gave a talk, titled "Man and Animal, from the Buddhist Point of View," at Kings College in London on November 9, 1936, after attending the World Congress of Faiths. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VII," 37 (November 9, 1936).

67. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, *Seisha to dōbutsu*, *SDZb* 19:137–140.

68. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, *Nehanzu*, *SDZb* 19:140–143.

69. B. E. L. Suzuki, "Plea for Animal Welfare," 244–245.

70. Beatrice Erskine Lane Suzuki, "Albert Schweitzer: A Christian Bodhisattva," in *Impressions of Mahayana Buddhism*, 232–237.

71. Beatrice Erskine Lane Suzuki, "Reverence for Life," in *Impressions of Mahayana Buddhism*, 238–243.

72. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, *Watakushi no rirekisho*, *SDZb* 26:532. There is some evidence that the animal shelter may have survived for a few years after the war. In Suzuki's diaries we find the following 1948 entry, D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VI," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 24 (2010): "Iwano brought money for animals," 72 (April 13, 1948).

73. Letter 1126 (1949.11.19), *SDZb* 37:238. The letter specifically asks how the cats and dogs are at Jihien. This suggests that the shelter did not actually close during the war, or that Suzuki misspoke, intending to say Shōden'an.

74. Letter 1143 (1950.4.19), *SDZb* 37:261.

75. See for instance Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries IV," 7 (February 24, 1950) and 47 (February 25, 1951). Suzuki also enjoyed watching the squirrels in New York parks:

D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries IX," ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 27 (2013): 39 (January 19, 1953).

76. Richard DeMartino, "On My First Coming to Meet Dr. D. T. Suzuki," *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 2, no. 1 (1967): 74.

77. Mihoko Okamura, "Wondrous Activity," in *A Zen Life: D. T. Suzuki Remembered*, ed. Masao Abe and Francis Haar (New York: Weatherhill, 1986), 163.

78. Hayashida, *Ōji Suzuki Daisetsu kara no tegami*, 125.

79. Albert Stunkard, "Suzuki Daisetz: An Appreciation," *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 36, nos. 1–2 (2004): 218.

80. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, "Some Thoughts on Animal Week," *Japan Times*, 19 September 1962, 3. Suzuki published a similar article titled "'Be Kind to Animals Week' Begins" in the *Asahi Evening News* the same day.

81. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, "Suzuki Daisetsu Sensei no ji," *SDZb* 35:306–307. Suzuki's invitation to write this preface reflects the high esteem in which he was held by the Japanese animal welfare community.

82. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, *The Chain of Compassion* (Cambridge: Cambridge Buddhist Association, 1966).

83. Letter 2588 (1966.6.11), *SDZb* 39:401.

PART III

D. T. Suzuki during and after the War
(c. 1941–c. 1946)

D. T. Suzuki and the Two Cranes

American Philanthropy and Suzuki's Global Agenda

RICHARD M. JAFFE

Several years ago, in the course of doing research for a series of edited volumes of D. T. Suzuki's writings, I discovered a number of letters and other documents related to Suzuki's work in the United States and Japan during the 1950s and early 1960s. Most of these sources are letters to Suzuki from others, between those who knew him discussing his work, and correspondence from D. T. Suzuki and Beatrice Suzuki to several different US and European interlocutors. Many of these Suzuki letters were not included in the *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū*, nor have they previously been analyzed by scholars. The majority of the letters and memoranda were generated by the different US supporters and foundations that funded Suzuki from the 1930s until the 1960s. These letters, interview reports, and transcribed discussions give us a sense of the demands that were placed on Suzuki by those who provided him with funding, the reactions to his work by various audiences, and the opportunities provided Suzuki by a coterie of funding agencies, institutions, and individuals. The documents demonstrate how on multiple occasions the growing wealth of Americans helped draw Suzuki to the United States and supported his work. The documents also show how Suzuki was able to pursue his own agenda, to a large extent, while satisfying a series of shifting demands from elite funding organizations such as the Rockefeller Foundation, wealthy philanthropists of the likes of Charles Richard Crane, Cornelius Crane, Lansdell K. Christie, and Fowler McCormick, and a host of elite academic institutions. These sources reveal Suzuki's remarkable skill at navigating the currents of overlapping but occasionally contradictory pressures from these supporters, even as he strove to realize his own vision concerning the presentation of Buddhism to a wider public.

The materials that comprise the basis of this chapter are found in three archives located in New York: the Charles Richard Crane Papers in the Bakhmeteff Archive in the Special Collections Library at Columbia University; documents preserved at the Zen Studies Society, the umbrella organization that oversees the temple Shōbōji in New York City and its country monastic retreat center, Daibosatsuji; and, finally, numerous records found in the Rockefeller

Archive Center concerning support for Suzuki and other Zen institutions from 1950 to 1976. I will focus my attention on the archival sources concerning the two Cranes, Charles Richard and Cornelius. In order to augment our understanding of Suzuki's sources of financial and logistical support, I also incorporate a few relevant pieces of information from the Rockefeller Archive Center papers that I am in the process of assessing.

D. T. Suzuki and Charles Richard Crane

D. T. Suzuki's *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, which was published in Japan in 1938 and later republished in a revised and expanded version in 1959 as the widely read *Zen and Japanese Culture*, bears the dedication "To My Friend Charles R. Crane Whose Life Is an Exemplification of the Bodhisattva Ideal."¹

Although effusive, such dedicatory language was not unusual for Suzuki, who similarly praised his fellow Kanazawa friend and generous financial supporter, Ataka Yakichi (1873–1949), on the dedication page of Beatrice Suzuki's posthumously published book, *Impressions of Mahayana Buddhism*: "To Yakichi Ataka Whose Name Was Mentioned by the Author of the Present Volume Always in Association with the Bodhisattva Ideal Especially during Her Last Days at the Hospital."²

Ataka's relationship with Suzuki is relatively well known, and we have an ample archival record of correspondence between the two men, as well as numerous mentions of Ataka in Suzuki's other works. The relationship between D. T. Suzuki and Charles Richard Crane, on the other hand, is relatively understudied. Unraveling the origins of the dedication to Charles Richard Crane (1858–1939) helps us better understand the nature of Suzuki's international outreach efforts in the late 1920s and 1930s and brings into relief the network of religious leaders and seekers who sustained an interest in Buddhism, particularly Zen, during that era and brought Suzuki to the United States and Europe on the eve of World War II. While Suzuki's sojourns in the United States and travels in Europe at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth century, and his return to the global stage in the post-World War II era, have received a fair amount of scrutiny, Suzuki's international exchanges in the post-World War I era that span the Great Depression and the years of rising tension in Europe, however, have received little scholarly scrutiny. Looking at Suzuki's interchanges with American and European religionists helps illuminate this relatively neglected period in Suzuki's life and reveals connections that helped pave the way for Suzuki's post-World War II return to the United States.

The research presented in this section of the chapter is based on a cache of letters and other documents that I discovered in the Bakhmeteff Archive of Russian and East European Culture at Columbia University, which includes the Charles R. Crane Papers. A handful of the letters were mislabeled as well, which contributed to their being overlooked by scholars working on topics other than Russian studies or the Crane family.

This chapter will not allow me to do full justice to the fascinating and complicated life of Charles Richard Crane, who managed to become involved in pivotal ways in public, political, and scholarly activities that included philanthropy, progressive politics, the post–World War I construction of the modern Middle East and Eastern Europe (especially Czechoslovakia), the foundation of Russian studies, the fostering of public education in the United States concerning world affairs, and support for a variety of nonmainstream international religious figures and organizations.³ Charles R. Crane was the son of Richard Teller Crane (1832–1912), who founded what became the Crane Company, a prosperous firm that manufactured valves, elevators, and the ubiquitous (at least in many public lavatories in the United States) plumbing fixtures. Charles Crane chose, following a short stint in the company business and the death of his father, to sell out his shares in the company to his younger brother, Richard, and use the great wealth derived from company stock (a sum of at least fifteen million dollars at the time), to pursue with great vigor and dedication the range of aforementioned pursuits.⁴ Charles Crane was an adventurous traveler and, although without a formal higher education, an avid student of world affairs, especially in such regions as Russia, the Middle East, and East Asia. As one of Woodrow Wilson's most generous supporters during Wilson's presidential campaigns, Charles Crane was rewarded with a posting to China as the US minister from 1920 to 1921.

This experience deepened his interest in East Asia, but, for the most part, following that government service, Charles Crane spent the remainder of his life as a private citizen furthering international understanding and trying to influence world affairs through his philanthropic endeavors. These efforts included Crane's endowing a chair in Russian studies at the University of Chicago, support for an impoverished Russian Orthodox monastery on Mount Athos, Greece, the founding of the Institute for Current World Affairs in New York City, support for English-language schools in the new state of Turkey, lobbying for the creation of the new nation of Czechoslovakia, funding a series of public lectures on foreign affairs in the US heartland, and major support for the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, Massachusetts, not to mention an astounding number of acts of philanthropy toward foreign individuals. Crane's ongoing exposure

to world affairs derived in no small part from the steady stream of foreign adventurers, religious teachers, philosophers, and politicians that he hosted at his New York City apartment, his summer home in Massachusetts, and his date and grapefruit ranch in the Coachella Valley in Southern California, which served as Crane's winter home in the 1930s.

Charles Crane was first introduced to D. T. Suzuki by Kenneth J. Saunders (1884–1937), a scholar of Asian religions and a committed Christian who taught in the late 1920s at the Pacific School of Religion; the University of California, Berkeley; and Columbia University. Saunders wrote numerous books about both premodern and modern Asian religions and cultures, including such works as *The Story of Buddhism* (1916), *Lotuses of the Mahāyāna* (1924), *Epochs in Buddhist History* (1924), *The Gospel for Asia* (1928), and *The Heritage of Asia* (1932). Saunders was particularly interested in how religion was contributing to the changes that were sweeping across Asia in the first third of the twentieth century. His work in this area included such books as *Modern Buddhism in Ceylon* (1911), *Buddhism in the Modern World* (1922), and *Whither Asia? A Study of Three Leaders* (1933), which was an evaluation of Mahatma Gandhi, Hu Shi, and Kagawa Toyohiko, a Japanese Christian social activist who is considered one of the founding figures of the modern co-op movement.

When Charles Crane decided to take a lengthy tour of East Asia in 1930, he contacted Saunders, being familiar with his writings, and offered to buy Saunders out of his teaching for a semester and pay his travel expenses if he would be willing to accompany Crane to Japan and China serving as Crane's personal tutor concerning Asian culture, his tour guide, and his social director.⁵ In this capacity, Saunders accompanied Crane to Asia, where, in September 1930, he introduced Crane to Suzuki, who spent several days with the two Americans guiding them around Kyoto and Nara. (Precisely at this time Suzuki was working with Kozuki Tesshū to establish a Rinzai Zen practice place for international students in Kyoto.⁶) While in Kyoto at the Miyako Hotel, Crane organized what Suzuki described as a large "religio-social chat." (One letter from Saunders hints at the nature of these discussions, albeit one that took place earlier in Tokyo, where Crane talked about "Russia and Czechoslovakia and unemployment and religion"⁷). Favorably impressed with Suzuki, Crane wrote that Suzuki was "another great, but modern and very Christian in his sympathies, Buddhist scholar."⁸ In November 1930, Suzuki met Crane and Saunders again, this time to discuss what Suzuki described as his "Chinese and American lectureship."⁹ During their sojourn in Japan, Saunders also introduced Crane to Kagawa Toyohiko, the Japanese Christian working in the Kobe slums, of whom Saunders would subsequently conclude in *Whither Asia?*, "In Kagawa Asia will find a more

potent leader than either Gandhi or Hu Shi—for he is a servant of Christ the Universal Son of Man. His personality is our best symbol of the Godhead: in his ethics we find our most universal norm.”¹⁰

Upon returning to the United States, Crane and Saunders worked together to bring some of the religious and intellectual leaders they had met in Asia to the United States for lecture tours and visiting professor positions. This was one of Crane’s usual strategies for educating a wide swath of the American public about world affairs, religions, and cultures. In the past he had sponsored various scholars, for example, Paul Miliukov, to give a series of public lectures about Russian affairs and culture. In a recommendation to Crane’s staff written on December 1, 1930, Saunders suggested that funds be provided to bring both Kagawa and Suzuki to the United States. The letter, which reflects Crane’s wishes regarding Kagawa and Suzuki, is representative not only of Crane’s efforts to expand the consciousness of Americans but also his generosity. In the letter, Saunders mentions that Crane would like to bring Kagawa, who was suffering from tuberculosis, to the United States as soon as possible for treatment and rest before he embarks on his lecture tour, which was to be orchestrated by the staff of the Institute for Current World Affairs. In the letter, Saunders writes of Suzuki,

The other leader to be invited is Dr. Daisetz Suzuki, author of several important books and translations of Buddhist texts and editor and owner of the “*Eastern Buddhist*”. Mr. Crane has promised to send him to Yenching University for one term, preferably December, 1931 to May, 1932. It is suggested that the Institute may secure for him the American lectures on religion, some lectures at Columbia in connection with Japanese culture and at Union Theological Seminary, which perhaps needs to study the art of meditation, as a fly-wheel to much Scottish theology. The sane and constructive socialism of Kagawa in these times of transition would also be very useful in America as it is proving in Japan, where the government find him their most valuable ally in combating Bolshevism, or rather in sublimating the enthusiasm for social training natural in students. With this sensible change in attitude he has had much to do, and Suzuki is thoroughly alert to and in touch with the modern mind.¹¹

In the document Saunders goes on to mention that Crane will provide a salary of five thousand dollars to each of the men as well as funding Suzuki’s professorship for a term at Yenching University. Again, indicative of Crane’s largesse, Saunders concludes, “If in addition some money could be provided for really

comfortable travel and a good holiday they would go back refreshed and invigorated, which does not always happen to lecturers in the United States.”¹²

Despite making detailed plans for both Kagawa and Suzuki to come to the United States to lecture in the early 1930s, however, neither man was able to do so until middle of the decade, with Kagawa coming to the United States for an extended tour that began at the end of 1935, and Suzuki traveling across the United States lecturing in the latter half of 1936.

Another of member of Crane's circle who played a role in bringing Suzuki from Japan to the United States and Europe in the 1930s was Sir Francis Younghusband (1863–1942), the British military man who, subsequent to overseeing a violent incursion by the British military into Tibet in 1903–1904 that resulted in a massacre of thousands of Tibetans in the vicinity of the town of Guru, became deeply interested in spiritualism, telepathy, and the possibility of alien intelligence. By the 1930s, Younghusband began promoting the need for the “unity between religions” in order to overcome the exclusivism and tension between religious traditions, each of which saw itself as having “an exclusive hold on truth.”¹³ In 1934–1935, Younghusband traveled across the United States lecturing on subjects ranging from “the Dalai Lama and the Holy Himalaya to the Rhythm of the Universe.”¹⁴

By this time, Crane, who had long been drawn to Russian Orthodoxy, had also become curious about Asian and nonmainstream religious traditions, an interest that was stoked through conversations with Count Hermann Keyserling (1880–1946), a German aristocrat born in the Russian Baltic region who had made a considerable splash in the United States and across Europe with his lecture tour and books, which included *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher* (1925) and *South American Meditations on Heaven and Hell in the Soul of Man* (1932).¹⁵ Keyserling, who founded the School of Wisdom in Darmstadt, Germany, became a frequent guest and correspondent of Crane's. Keyserling's weeklong congresses (Tagungen) at the school brought together German aristocrats, politicians, and financiers with scholars and practitioners of mystical religion, for example, Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930), Leo Baeck (1873–1956), and Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941).¹⁶ Although Keyserling is largely forgotten today, during his lifetime he was considered one of the most prominent global intellectuals. Will Durant, an American historian, included a lengthy, albeit biting, analysis of Keyserling's works in his book *Adventures in Genius*. Durant concluded, “All in all, he [Keyserling] has been an activating agent in contemporary thought; not as profound and disturbing, not as original and powerful, as Spengler, not as clear and outright as Russell, not as courageous and influential as Dewey; but standing only below these three, among philosophers today, in the value of his work to his age.”¹⁷

In addition, by the mid-1930s, Crane had become something of an acolyte of Krishnamurti. Throughout the 1930s, Crane visited Krishnamurti at his center in Ojai, California, which was relatively close to Crane's estate in the Coachella Valley, taking part in retreats and conversations with the sage. In addition to providing Krishnamurti with monetary support, Crane regularly corresponded with and hosted Krishnamurti at his apartment in New York City. It is not surprising given this turn in his spiritual life, that Crane would also be interested in Younghusband's endeavors as well.

Crane greatly enjoyed his first meeting with Younghusband at the Royal Geographical Society in London in the spring of 1934 and expressed an interest in hosting Younghusband in New York when he visited the United States.¹⁸ When Younghusband returned to the United States to drum up interest in his plans to convene a World Congress of Faiths in July 1936 to further the conversation between representatives of the world's religions, Younghusband availed himself of Crane's offer of hospitality in New York City. In accepting Crane's invitation, Younghusband stated that for the upcoming congress, "I have obtained most valuable support here [in England]—including Lord Halifax and Arthur Henderson, the Dean of St. Paul's as well as of big Hindus and Muslims. I shall be glad to have good talks with you about Asia and Asiatics."¹⁹ It perhaps was in one of these "good talks"—I have no archival evidence of this—that Crane suggested Kagawa and Suzuki to Younghusband as potential speakers at the congress. In subsequent telegrams and letters to Crane, Younghusband requested Crane's assistance getting Suzuki and Kagawa to agree to participate. Although at first Suzuki declined Younghusband's invitation and then only agreed to send a paper, subsequent entreaties from Crane, who offered to pay Suzuki's expenses for the trip to London, Paris, and Berlin, and a lecture tour across the United States en route home to Japan, persuaded Suzuki to attend.²⁰ Suzuki, who was immersed in a number of projects in Japan, including a series of studies of early Chan masters that increasingly relied on materials discovered at Dunhuang, no doubt accepted Crane's generous offer at least partially in order to use the trip to Europe to examine manuscripts at the British Museum and the *Bibliothèque nationale*.²¹

At the congress Suzuki delivered an address for invited participants concerning "Ignorance and World Fellowship" in an effort to address the broad theme of achieving "World Fellowship through Religion" in the face of tensions arising from fear, suspicion, excess, or deficiency of nationalism, ignorance, and poverty. Suzuki was also one of six participants asked to give an open public lecture concerning the common theme of "The Supreme Spiritual Ideal."²² Included in this group was another individual who had received considerable support from Crane,

the Turkish woman Halidé Edib, who spoke about Islam, as well as the Polish émigré to Britain Rom Landau (1899–1974), who was a sculptor, scholar of Islam, and author of *God Is My Adventure: A Book on Modern Mystics Masters and Teachers*, which described the author's encounter with such twentieth-century religious teachers as Hermann Keyserling, Rudolf Steiner, Krishnamurti, Meher Baba, Gurdjieff, and others.²³ Following the congress, which Crane was unable to attend because he was traveling in Germany, Younghusband wrote to Crane, "Suzuki was given a tremendous ovation at the last meeting. I wish you could have been there to see it. We are greatly indebted to you for having got him for us."²⁴

Following the completion of the congress in mid-July, Suzuki remained in Europe gathering manuscripts, as mentioned above, in London and Paris. He also lectured at various venues in London and, after visiting Paris, made a brief trip to Germany. During this period, Suzuki set out a plan with Crane to give a series of lectures as he crossed the United States from New York City, where he arrived on November 20, 1936, staying in Crane's 67th Street apartment, to Crane's Coachella ranch, which Suzuki reached on December 13. In a letter sent to Crane from Europe, Suzuki outlined the subjects about which he planned to lecture. Although there is not a complete overlap with the contents of *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, which was published in 1938, there was considerable resemblance with regard to subject matter, which covered such topics as "Zen Buddhism and the Japanese Love of Nature," "Zen Buddhism and the Japanese Mentality," "Zen Buddhism and the Philosophy of the Unconscious," "Zen Buddhism and the Chinese Philosophy of Life," and "The Buddhist Interpretation of Life."²⁵ In a subsequent letter Suzuki also mentioned planning to lecture on Zen for a variety of "Japanese friends" in New York, Chicago, and California.²⁶ In the same letter, he expressed an interest in meeting Krishnamurti in California. Suzuki's awareness of Krishnamurti and his growing popularity dated back to at least 1930, when, in a letter to his wife Beatrice, Suzuki wrote about an American he had met decades earlier, Mrs. Drexler, who had written to Suzuki about Krishnamurti. Suzuki wrote of Mrs. Drexler, "She is interested in Krishnamurti and talks about his definite breaking away from Mrs. Besant. She thinks Krishnamurti is one who realised truth. In fact, the T. S. [Theosophical Society] is too mixed up not only in its teaching but in its organisation. People want something more direct and simple. But I am afraid Krishna[murti] is too Indian to appeal to the taste of modern man. He is too much of Nagarjuna. He ought to have something constructive. He may yet come to it when older."²⁷

Crane's avid interest and support for Krishnamurti and meeting others at the congress, for example, Rom Landau, who had met Krishnamurti, may also have

piqued Suzuki's interest in meeting him. During his brief visit with Crane in Southern California, however, Krishnamurti was unavailable. Suzuki did manage to meet with Rosalind Rajagopal, Krishnamurti's lover and the wife of Krishnamurti's secretary, D. Rajagopal. Suzuki also spent time with Crane at his ranch, where Suzuki instructed Crane in some breathing and meditation practices.²⁸ Following a brief stop in San Francisco, Suzuki then headed back to Japan via Hawai'i on the Japanese ship *Chichibu Maru*.

For the next several years, Suzuki remained in touch with Crane, who continued to send the Suzukis gifts of dates from the Coachella ranch. In January 1938, as Suzuki completed work on *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, he wrote to Crane, "I have finished just recently compiling my English and American lectures of 1936 in book form and expect to see it out in early Spring, and I wonder if you would kindly consent my dedicating the book to you. If you do not mind it, I should be most happy to be recipient of the honour; for my trip abroad is closely associated with you in more than one way. Without you indeed this forthcoming book would never have been conceived. Herewith you will find enclosed the contents of the book entitled 'Zen and Its Influence on Japanese Culture.'"²⁹ Crane cordially replied to Suzuki a few weeks later, writing,

I shall be honored to have the new book you are about to publish dedicated to me. I think you understand how whole-heartedly I approve of your life work and activities, so you can count on me always to support with all my power any new work you are undertaking. I have read with the greatest interest the table of contents and believe it will be of the highest value to the west to have a work of this importance, with your tradition behind, presented just now. We are certainly entering a new world about which we know little and we shall need all the light we can possibly get from the understanding Old Ones.³⁰

When the book was published in 1938, Suzuki sent copies to Crane and to Keyserling in Germany, who wrote back to Suzuki expressing his "unusual interest" in all of Suzuki's work. Suzuki did not meet Keyserling in person, but having established contact with him via Charles Crane, the two men began corresponding, and Suzuki mentions in a letter to Crane and in his diary reading some of Keyserling's books.³¹ Keyserling also wrote to Suzuki that his latest book, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence*, would be greatly appreciated in the "new Germany," which Suzuki proudly reported to Charles Richard Crane and at least one other interlocutor.³² Like "Make America great again," the phrase the

“new Germany” meant different things to different people. Keyserling’s “new Germany” was not the same as that of Hitler’s ardent supporters, but, like Paul von Hindenburg, he sought to capitalize on the populist fervor sparked by Hitler and was antidemocratic. I do not know what that phrase meant to Suzuki, but, pleased with the attention he received from Keyserling and others in Germany, he did not hesitate to promote his book with German publishers.

On the eve of World War II, dark shadows hovered over this network of spiritual seekers, prophets, and their acolytes. As Hitler rose to power in Germany, some of the actors in the above story, in particular Crane, but also Keyserling, viewed the renaissance of German nationalism and the growth of German power favorably. Crane expressed resentment toward the successes of the Jews in Germany and Russia, and demonstrated a strong anti-Semitic streak in numerous letters and statements.³³ Similarly, Keyserling, noting the contributions Jews were making to modern life, writes disparagingly of them, particularly assimilated Jews, writing in his book *Europe*, that Jews are “as necessary a part of us as certain specific parasites are to the intestinal tract.”³⁴ In addition, although writing positively about the revival of German nationalism by Hitler in 1933, Keyserling advocated for authoritarian rule by Hindenburg and his followers, fearing the populism of the Nazi movement.³⁵ Keyserling soon fell afoul of the Nazis, despite his protestations of loyalty to them, for having called them unfit to rule and intellectually bankrupt.³⁶ By 1938 the Nazis confiscated Keyserling’s passport, and by 1942 they had declared him “unworthy to represent the German spirit.”³⁷

Crane, who met Hitler in person in 1933 soon after Hitler had become chancellor, was positive about many of the changes in Germany, including those that were “putting the Jews in their place.”³⁸ His support in part stemmed from his admiration for the modernization taking place in Germany compounded by his belief that the Germans could bring a fairer treatment to Arabs and Muslims in the Middle East than they had obtained under the British and French. Like many Americans and Europeans, until late into the 1930s, Crane admired the changes in Germany.

Erik Larson and Adam Nagorski, who have chronicled the lives of Americans living for extended periods of time in Germany in the 1930s, describe how many of them continued to hold relatively positive views of their host nation, even as horrors gathered around them. In the 1930s, tragically, anti-Semitic views held sway among large swaths of the American public, even—or, especially—in elite society, government circles, and all sorts of Christian religious groups.³⁹ Lacking our retrospective knowledge, many Americans continued to hold positive or ambiguous views of Hitler until the late 1930s.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, Charles Crane maintained his favorable views of Hitler later than many of the most Pollyannaish Americans. Even after news of the Kristallnacht pogroms (November 9–10, 1938) was prominently displayed on the front pages of U.S. newspapers from coast to coast, Crane continued to write glowingly to Hitler, hoping to shape Nazi policies towards the Middle East.⁴¹ Writing to Hitler on December 12, 1938, Crane argued for German support for Arabs in the Middle East. He concluded the letter, “I hope that your great and growing responsibilities are not pressing on you too hard. Your people are going to need you for a long time at your very best. With warm personal greetings and best wishes for the welfare of your people.”⁴² The letter, written even as news of the Nazis violence against the Jews became unavoidable, reveals the depths of Crane’s callousness and antisemitism.

Perhaps it was Suzuki’s views on Zen and bushido or his nondualistic view of life and death expressed in his writings that made him appealing to Crane. Given that Crane supported Suzuki at the suggestion of Saunders years before *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* was published, however, that is doubtful. In addition to Suzuki, Crane sponsored Kagawa Toyohiko, a socialist, progressive, pacifist Japanese Christian who fell afoul of the Japanese government for protesting the invasion of China. Kagawa’s views on the matter of bushido and soteriology were quite different from Suzuki’s. (Kagawa, despite holding radically different religious perspectives from Suzuki, became an active proponent of Japanese Christian settlement in Manchukuo.⁴³) Crane was even more devoted to Krishnamurti, who certainly did not share Suzuki’s views about Zen and bushido. If Crane was drawn to Suzuki because of Crane’s anti-Semitic views, admiration for Hitler, and support for the changes taking place in Germany, why would he also promote Kagawa and Krishnamurti? In all likelihood Crane supported all three men because he thought they would bring fresh perspectives on religion and the world outside the United States to the American public, just as he hoped would so many of the other scholars and speakers he promoted for decades.

Suzuki remained in touch with Crane for the next year, writing once again to him on February 8, 1939, just one week before Crane succumbed to influenza at the age of eighty on February 15, 1939. In the letter to Crane, Suzuki thanked him for another dozen boxes of dates, while remembering the beauty of the date farm.⁴⁴ I do not know if Crane was able to send a response to Suzuki before his death or if Suzuki marked his friend’s passing in any special manner. Just more than five months later, Suzuki suffered another, far greater personal loss, when on July 16, 1939, Beatrice Suzuki, his beloved companion and closest collaborator, died at St. Luke’s Hospital in Tokyo.

The dedication of Suzuki's book *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* to Charles Richard Crane is but one small detail in the career of Suzuki, who, as we know, lived a long, extremely productive life as a practitioner, advocate, and scholar of Zen. Unraveling the origin of the dedication and examining Suzuki's relationship with Crane, however, is revealing for a variety of reasons. Although a great deal of attention has been paid to Suzuki's activities in the United States and Europe at the end of the nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century and, again, in the post-World War II era, when he was extremely visible in the United States, the nature of his overseas work in the 1930s has received far less attention. The rich cache of letters related to Suzuki's relationships with Saunders, Younghusband, Keyserling, Crane, Krishnamurti, and others reveals an ongoing interest in Buddhism among an international, well-connected global circle of scholars, missionaries, and religious seekers during the years between World War I and II. Representatives of various traditions, both old and new, were in communication with each other, read each other's works, and met at such events as the World Congress of Faiths in 1936. These individuals represent the global side of the tradition of liberal religious seeking that has been described in detail in Leigh Schmidt's excellent work on American religious liberalism, *Restless Souls*.⁴⁵ Suzuki moved along the global currents of interest in Buddhism in part to advocate for Zen and, more broadly, for what he argued was its foundational role in Japanese culture, while availing himself of opportunities along the way to further his own research on such topics as the early history of Chan.

D. T. Suzuki and Cornelius Crane

The interactions between Suzuki and Charles Richard Crane that resulted in Charles' patronage until 1939 may help account for the connection that Suzuki, decades later, would forge with Charles' nephew, Cornelius Crane (1905–1962). Cornelius was one of two children of Richard Teller Crane II (1873–1931), Charles' younger brother. Although Charles possessed enormous wealth, his share of the Crane manufacturing fortune was small compared to that of his younger brother, Richard, who stepped in to take over the company when Charles demurred. The family had large estates in Chicago, Boston, and Ipswich, Massachusetts, where, in the latter location, the family built an impressive mansion, Castle Hill, that later was used as the site for the film of John Updike's novel *The Witches of Eastwick*. It was at this residence that Suzuki would spend some of his summers in the 1950s, sometimes in the company of Cornelius but, on some occasions, even in Cornelius' absence. The

family was wealthy enough that when Cornelius graduated from Harvard in 1927, his father presented him with a 133-foot yacht, named the *Illyria*, that had been built to order for them in Italy. Cornelius subsequently celebrated his graduation by fully subsidizing a Field Museum-sponsored six-man expedition that included scientists, a photographer, a doctor, himself, and a few friends, along with an eighteen-man crew. From November 1928 to October 1929, the group sailed across the Pacific, visiting the Solomon Islands, New Guinea, and other islands, taking photographs and collecting approximately eighteen thousand natural history specimens.⁴⁶

Given Cornelius' adventurous nature and curiosity, it seems odd to me that he would not have heard a word or two about Suzuki from his uncle, but I have no hard evidence that he did. Because I have been unable to track down Cornelius' papers, unlike his uncle Charles', I know far less about him at this point. Charles' grandson has told me that the two sides of the family were not particularly close, so, perhaps it is mere coincidence that the two Cranes became sponsors of Suzuki, but I find that hard to believe.

In any case, according to Susan Quinn, it was Cornelius Crane's first wife, Cathy (née, Cathalene Isabella Parker; 1906–1987), who introduced Cornelius and her husband's therapist, Karen Horney, to Suzuki.⁴⁷ Horney had cited Suzuki's *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (1938) in her book, *Our Inner Conflicts* (published in 1945), and remained keenly interested in Zen until her death in 1952. Both Cornelius and his former wife, Cathy, were patients of Horney's in the early 1950s. Cornelius took a liking to his therapist, and Horney seems to have become friends with him and Cathy, in violation of therapeutic boundaries, even while treating them. At one point, Cornelius even offered to provide funds to advertise one of Horney's books, but, wisely, she turned him down on the advice of her publisher. Given her interest in Suzuki's book, which was dedicated to Cornelius' uncle, perhaps she had broached the subject of Suzuki with Cornelius at some point. According to Horney's biographer, however, after Cathy heard Suzuki lecture at the Church of the Peace Union in New York City in 1950–1951, she mentioned this to Horney, who urged her to find a way for her to meet Suzuki. To this end Cathy arranged a dinner party that included Suzuki, accompanied by Richard DeMartino, Cornelius, and Horney. As James Dobbins has recently sketched in his article on Suzuki in the 1949–1953 period, the group bonded and, over the course of the next several years, interacted in a variety of venues: in New York, at Castle Hill, and on a summer trip in 1952 to Japan that included Horney's daughter, Brigitte, and her Japanese student in psychoanalysis, Akihisa Kondo, who had come from Japan to study with Horney.⁴⁸

Just as Cornelius grew enamored with his therapist, Horney, who died in December 1952, and with therapy, he also quickly became smitten with Suzuki and interested in Zen. With enormous wealth at his disposal, Cornelius began providing funds to support Suzuki, at some point providing a donation to help improve the facilities at the Matsugaoka Library.⁴⁹ He also may have picked up at least some of the expenses for the Horney Japan trip in the summer of 1952 and certainly hosted the small group of Zen enthusiasts at Castle Hill.

Cornelius' commitment to Suzuki financially became more formal when he began providing the salary for Suzuki's ongoing teaching of a series of courses on Chinese Buddhism at Columbia University. During his visit to Union Theological Seminary, which served as his home base for a Rockefeller Foundation-funded lecture tour in the winter of 1950 and spring of 1951, Suzuki gave three lectures on Buddhism at Columbia University. Based on Suzuki's and others' reports to the Rockefeller Foundation grant officers, the lectures drew audiences ranging in size from one hundred to three hundred people. As a result of this success, Suzuki was asked to teach a course at Columbia in the spring 1952 semester. The course, as reported by Carrington Goodrich to the Rockefeller Foundation, was "Buddhist Thought in China. To consider the development of Buddhist thought in China, and especially its culmination as contained in the Keron (Hua-yen) philosophical formulation."⁵⁰ As recorded in a summary of an interview with Suzuki by Chadbourne Gilpatric, one of the Foundation's grant officers who worked closely with Suzuki, the cost for the course was borne by the Chinese and Japanese Department at Columbia.⁵¹ When Goodrich approached the foundation for funds to continue the course, which would be held under the auspices of the Department of Philosophy through the 1952–1953 academic year, however, he was informed by Charles B. Fahs, the other grant officer working closely on Suzuki's projects, "We have already made possible his stay in New York in the winter of 1950–1951, and we do not feel we could justify an appropriation for Columbia University for a further series of lectures here."⁵² The Rockefeller Foundation, however, did agree to fund Suzuki's proposed book project, which was "introducing Keron philosophy into the Western world," by compiling, "a systematic presentation in English of Keron philosophy as finally formulated by Fa-tsang." The work was to include, as necessary, translations "from Fa-tsang's Chinese works as well as from Sanskrit Keron texts."⁵³ Although supportive of the introduction to Keron, Chadbourne Gilpatric was less enthused about the extensive translation work Suzuki proposed.⁵⁴ The Rockefeller Foundation ultimately gave Suzuki fifteen hundred dollars to support him at Claremont Graduate School in fall 1951—he was to have very limited teaching responsibilities, supposedly—and five hundred dollars in the summer of 1952 at Columbia, where he

was planning to finish the book on Keron, although by the end of the summer it was not completed. Suzuki received several extensions for the summer funds until September 30, 1953, for a variety of reasons.⁵⁵

At this point, Suzuki had an offer to continue teaching at Columbia, and a second pending offer, again with uncertain funding, from the University of Southern California. (Some faculty members at both Columbia and USC wanted Suzuki to teach and work at their institution but wanted Rockefeller to pay for his salary.) In the end, however, Columbia managed to find the funds for the 1952–1953 academic year, with the Department of Philosophy paying for the course.⁵⁶ Cornelius Crane stepped into the breach with regard to funding Suzuki's ongoing teaching at Columbia for the next academic year, 1953–1954, confirming with Horace L. Friess of the Department of Philosophy that Cornelius would "be pleased to provide the funds to the university for his salary."⁵⁷ Although the documentation is somewhat spotty for the next few years, it is clear that Cornelius continued funding Suzuki's Columbia salary, plus a research supplement, until at least June 1956.⁵⁸

During these years, Cornelius' interest in Zen grew, as he spent more time in Japan, visiting teachers to whom he was introduced by Suzuki. In 1955, Cornelius married Sawahara Mineko (1917–1991), who, although speaking little English, returned with him to the United States.⁵⁹ A patron of the arts and a painter herself, Mineko would become Cornelius' main heir. To help support his own interest in Zen and provide a means for Suzuki to remain in the United States after his employment with Columbia University concluded at the end of June 1957, Cornelius founded the Zen Studies Society, enlisting Richard DeMartino, Bernard Phillips, and George Yamaoka, a Japanese American lawyer at the Hill Betts and Nash law firm, as founding members. Along with him, the three directors of the society and its sole nonofficer, Yamaoka, were "to undertake the study of Zen Buddhism in its religious, philosophic, and psychological aspects, its influences on Oriental cultures, and its relations to world religions and philosophies, and its relevance for the life of modern man."⁶⁰ In January of the next year, after extensive legal work to ensure that the society could employ noncitizens under the US Information and Educational Exchange Act, Suzuki was made a member by the group, and on April 30, 1957, an extensive agreement between the society and Suzuki was concluded. According to that agreement, the society appointed "Dr. Suzuki as a visiting professor, lecturer and translator to lecture and translate Zen texts and do research in Zen Buddhism and related subjects under its designated Exchange-Visitor Program."⁶¹

In addition, the agreement stipulated that Suzuki was to receive a stipend of eight thousand dollars per year for a period of five years and, if both sides were

agreeable, this agreement was renewable. I should stress that the time, eight thousand US dollars was not an insignificant salary, and all of it was paid to Suzuki on a quarterly basis by Cornelius, who sent regular donations to the society via Hill Betts and Nash. Checks from the society were sent from the staff at Hill Betts and Nash to Suzuki's US bank account at the First National City Bank at 96th and Broadway in New York, which allowed Cornelius to claim the donations for Suzuki's salary and other society expenses as tax-exempt charitable donations, although it took years of legal maneuvering for this tax exemption to be sanctioned by the Internal Revenue Service.⁶² Suzuki was also subsequently made an honorary member of the society at a meeting of the directors.

The society undertook a number of activities to promulgate Zen Buddhism, with Suzuki at front and center. Suzuki lectured at the American Buddhist Academy, and the society attempted to pull together documents summarizing the key points of Zen. The society also used its exchange visitor program status and Cornelius' wealth to serve as the guarantor and source of financial support for such other representatives of Asian culture and religion as Chiang Yee and Hisamatsu Shin'ichi.⁶³

Cornelius was extremely generous with his money, providing approximately twenty thousand dollars in the next year to the society, including the eight thousand dollars for Suzuki. He also was demanding, mercurial, and imperious. In less than a year after founding the society, Cornelius sent letters to all the members, including Suzuki, announcing his resignation from the society. In a rather amusing set of similar letters, Cornelius complained about the behavior of DeMartino and Suzuki. He complained to DeMartino for failing to send a copy of his talk to be given at the Buddhist Academy for mimeographing in advance. In addition, Cornelius was disappointed that DeMartino and Hisamatsu had failed to polish up the latter's Harvard lectures, despite promising to do so. Stating that he could not work with such a "chaotic group," Crane resigned from the society but promised to continue to pay Suzuki's stipend with an annuity.⁶⁴

After writing to Yamaoka to ascertain the exact nature of the resignation and the future of his financial support from Cornelius, Suzuki sent a lengthy letter to his benefactor, defending the work he had been doing, while underscoring the importance of the financial support. Suzuki wrote that scholarly work took time, that he was hampered by a lack of stamina due to his old age, and promised to utilize his time to complete the "Zen dictionary" that was underway, while continuing his writing concerning Rinzai and Kegon. Acknowledging the importance of Cornelius' generosity, Suzuki commented, "All that I have so far been able to accomplish for the cause of Zen is due to your generosity and my old friend Ataka's (who unfortunately died soon after the War.)"⁶⁵

Although prickly, Cornelius remained steadfastly loyal to Suzuki. As promised in his resignation letter, Cornelius continued to pay Suzuki eight thousand dollars per year on a quarterly basis up until the time of Cornelius' untimely death on July 12, 1962. Although Cornelius had precipitously resigned from the society, in the end his lawyers at Hill Betts and Nash convinced him to keep it running, particularly while they were fighting to have his many contributions to the society accepted as tax exempt by the Internal Revenue Service.

Cornelius continued to pursue his Zen studies, working for a time in Japan with Nakagawa Sōen.⁶⁶ Bernard Phillips as well went to Japan to practice in 1959–1960, after receiving a twelve-thousand-dollar grant from the society. While in Japan, Phillips completed an anthology of Suzuki's writings on Zen, *The Essentials of Zen Buddhism*, and practiced intensively with Yasutani Haku'un, attending a number of *sesshin*.⁶⁷ Since the time of his resignation letter, Cornelius had expressed reservations about an overly bookish approach to Zen, commenting to Phillips, "I plan to follow my Zen studies as an individual. I certainly do not plan to work with Dr. Hisamatsu who is far too intellectual for a Zen man."⁶⁸ When in 1961 the members of the society requested that Suzuki write a brief brochure to introduce beginners to Zen, Yamaoka, Phillips, and Cornelius all found the material submitted by Suzuki—I have not seen this manuscript—wanting. Cornelius wrote to Yamaoka that "Suzuki's whole draft should be scrapped." In its place he suggested they use some of Phillips' writings. Crane concluded that "Suzuki has gotten so far off in the abstract that he has lost all contact with the Zen beginner."⁶⁹

Cornelius and Phillips' judgments reflect their frustration with Suzuki's opacity and philosophical approach to Buddhism. Others, however, although critical of Suzuki's free-form lecture style, saw great value in his presentations. As mentioned above, Suzuki proved a very popular lecturer at Columbia, drawing somewhere between one hundred and three hundred people to his first three lectures on Kegon Buddhism in 1951.⁷⁰ Horace L. Friess of Columbia's Department of Philosophy attended many of the lectures, which he felt were of significant value. In a letter of support to the Rockefeller Foundation for funds to allow Suzuki time to write up the lectures for his spring 1952 course, "The Development of Chinese Buddhism," Friess wrote, would be useful, because, although Suzuki's oral presentation was overly discursive, the subject of his lectures was worthy of careful consideration.⁷¹

The society, even after Cornelius' resignation, was kept going, for tax reasons, at least in a perfunctory manner. With Cornelius' sudden death on July 12, 1962, however, the society, although not disbanded, became dormant

until Phillips and Yamaoka revived it, much to Suzuki's dismay, with the appointment of Shimano Eido and Yasutani Haku'un as officers and members in May 1965.⁷² On August 4, 1965, Yamaoka, perhaps sensitive to Suzuki's opposition to appointing Yasutani to the organization, resigned from the society.⁷³

Despite his ongoing misgivings about Suzuki's increasingly philosophical, "abstract" approach to Zen, Cornelius continued to contribute to Suzuki, hoping that his Zen dictionary, book on Kegon Buddhism, and other works would be completed. On July 6, 1962, Yamaoka signed a two-thousand-dollar stipend check for Suzuki. Six days later, Cornelius died suddenly at the age of fifty-seven. The last check was never mailed.⁷⁴ With no provisions for the fate of the society or support for Suzuki in Cornelius' will, it was left for Mineko Crane and her lawyers to decide how to proceed with those matters. After several exchanges between Yamaoka and Suzuki by mail, Yamaoka wrote to Suzuki informing him that Mineko was unlikely to continue supporting the society following her husband's death. One year later, Yamaoka again wrote to Suzuki to discuss dissolving the society entirely, as Suzuki and Phillips were the only remaining members. Although technically not dissolved, as mentioned above, the society was dormant until it was revived by Yamaoka and Phillips in 1965.

Suzuki was not left completely without financial support for his work from US citizens interested in Zen and Buddhist art. During his long stay in the United States in the 1950s, he made a connection with Lunsford P. Yandell, who out of his interest in religion, frequently wrote to Suzuki and Thomas Merton. Yandell attended some of Suzuki's Columbia seminars in 1954.⁷⁵ Well connected with a number of wealthy government officials, lawyers, and industrialists—he wrote on one occasion to Suzuki on stationery with the letterhead of the United Republican Finance Committee for the State of New York—Yandell helped Suzuki with visa red tape in the transitional period in the 1950s and garnered donations for Suzuki from the likes of such business magnates as Fowler McCormick, Jr., of International Harvester, and Landsdell K. Christie, who had made a fortune mining iron ore in Africa. Yandell, in an October 1956 letter, suggested to Suzuki that he get in touch with Barnet "Barney" Rossett at Grove Press, which would eventually publish US paperback editions of some of Suzuki's books that had been reissued in the United Kingdom. Although never with the regularity of Cornelius' support, for at least several years following the end of Cornelius' generous stipend, Yandell continued sending funds raised from his associates to Yamaoka, who would make them available to Suzuki.⁷⁶

For almost three-quarters of a century, Suzuki's work in the United States, Europe, and, in the last decade of his life, Japan, was sustained to a substantial degree by US industrial wealth. His first visit at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries was funded by the Hegelers, who had made their fortune in smelting zinc. When Suzuki traveled to Europe and then across the United States in 1936, giving the lectures that became *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, his support was drawn from the vast Crane fortune that had been amassed manufacturing everything from elevators to valves and pipes for large-scale buildings. Following the end of the Fifteen Years War, Suzuki returned to the United States, resuming an active itinerary of lecturing that initially was funded by the petroleum-powered fortune of the Rockefellers. The success of that tour had a lot to do with the networking skills and contacts of his grant agents at the foundation, in addition to Suzuki's own charisma. Finally, for a little less than a decade, once again Crane-manufacturing-based wealth provided for Suzuki in the United States and Japan, allowing him to continue his lecturing, translating, and writing. Ironically, although some of the lectures that made their way into *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* were sponsored by the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, much of the lecturing and writing that went into that book and its post-World War II revised version, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (1959), was subsidized by the two Cranes, Charles and Cornelius. Thus, Japanese "soft power" diplomacy and Suzuki's Buddhist missionizing were facilitated by US industrial wealth and spiritual restlessness.

Much like a surfer, Suzuki rode the waves of US philanthropy, responding to the shifting demands of his patrons, while using their support to accomplish his own goals, even if, at times, those efforts were underappreciated or even challenged by his funders. Time and again, the growing wealth of the United States drew Suzuki across the Pacific. His supporters shaped his work, pushing him in some directions, dissuading him from others. Suzuki, in turn, left his mark upon the foundations that supported him, helping others, for example, Hisamatsu, DeMartino, and Gary Snyder, get grants for Zen study or teaching. As the Rockefeller and Bollingen Foundations funded young Americans such as DeMartino and Snyder to study Zen in Japan and even supported Hisamatsu's efforts at Zen reform at Hanazono University in the early 1960s, their wealth thus followed Suzuki back home across the Pacific. Support for Zen Buddhism from wealthy Americans, particularly from the Rockefellers, continued well into the 1970s, helping to fund Zen centers in California, Colorado, and New York in their early stages. US philanthropy thus played a crucial role in the globalization of Japanese Zen.⁷⁷

Notes

1. Suzuki Daisetz, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1938), v. Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* Bollingen Series 64 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), does not bear that dedication.
2. Beatrice Lane Erskine Lane, *Impressions of Mahayana Buddhism* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1940), v.
3. The most recent and authoritative source concerning Charles R. Crane is Norman E. Saul, *The Life and Times of Charles R. Crane, 1858–1939: American Businessman, Philanthropist, and a Founder of Russian Studies in America* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013).
4. Saul, *Life and Times*, 105. Charles Crane gave up his position in the company in 1913. In 2016, the worth of the stock holdings received by Charles Crane would be more than seven billion dollars. See “Seven Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a U.S. Dollar Amount—1790 to Present,” Measuring Worth.com, <https://www.measuringworth.com>.
5. Kenneth Saunders to Charles Crane, August 6, 1930, Bakhmeteff Archive (hereafter BA).
6. “Gaijin no tame no Zen dōjō: Kakuha kanchō o komon to shite kensetsu undō o susumu,” *Chūgai nippō*, November 22, 1930, 2.
7. Saunders to Mary Josephine Crane Bradley, September 22, 1930, BA. Josephine was Charles Crane’s daughter.
8. Crane to Mildred Nelson Page, October 1, 1930, BA.
9. Suzuki Diaries, September and November 1930, in D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries II,” ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 20 (2006): 23; 27. The diaries for the early 1930s are in *MBKN* 20.
10. Kenneth J. Saunders, *Whither Asia? A Study of Three Leaders* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), 220. Saunders wrote in an earlier article, “Buddhism and Christianity,” *Expository Times* 6, no. 12 (1925): 261, that Kagawa “preaches a Christianity which has affinities with the *Lotus Sutra*.”
11. Kenneth Saunders, “Notes on Two Japanese Leaders to be Invited to the United States,” December 1, 1930, BA.
12. Saunders, “Notes.”
13. Patrick French, *Younghusband: The Last Great Imperial Adventurer* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), 326.
14. French, *Younghusband*, 355.
15. Hermann Keyserling and Theresa Duerr, *South American Meditations on Hell and Heaven in the Soul of Man*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932); Hermann Keyserling and J. Holroyd-Reece, *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, vol. 2 (New York: Harcourt, 1925).
16. Rom Landau, *God Is My Adventure: A Book on Modern Mystics, Masters, and Teachers* (London: I. Nicholson and Watson, 1935), 30–37.
17. Will Durant, *Adventures in Genius* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1931), 211. Along with Rom Landau, Durant provides one of the most detailed analyses in English of Keyserling’s work.
18. Charles Crane to John Crane, March 6, 1935, BA.
19. Francis Younghusband to Charles Crane, March 5, 1935, BA.
20. D. T. Suzuki to Charles Richard Crane, April 23, 1936, BA.

21. See, for example, Suzuki's entry for July 14–15 and August 24, 1936, in *MBKN* 25. I do not believe that Kagawa participated in the congress. Younghusband also invited Krishnamurti, who declined the invitation. See Krishnamurti to Charles Richard Crane, April 3, 1936, BA. Anesaki Masaharu attended but did not deliver a paper.

22. Douglas Millard Allen, *Faiths and Fellowship; Being the Proceedings of the World Congress of Faiths, Held in London, July 3rd–17th, 1936* (London: World Congress of Faiths, 1936), 10.

23. Landau, *God Is My Adventure*.

24. Francis Younghusband to Charles Crane, July 21, 1936, BA.

25. D. T. Suzuki to Charles Crane, September 9, 1936, BA.

26. D. T. Suzuki to Charles Crane, October 7, 1936, BA.

27. D. T. Suzuki to Beatrice Suzuki, August 4, 1930, in *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū* 36:547 (hereafter *SDZ*).

28. Suzuki mentions in the diary that he gave Crane instruction in breathing and “nanso” exercises. According to Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, *nanso* refers to the melting butter meditation that was taught to Hakuin to cure his illness, which Hakuin describes in *Itsumadegusa* いつまでぐさ. See Hakuin Ekaku, *Wild Ivy: The Spiritual Autobiography of Zen Master Hakuin*, trans. Norman Waddell (Boston: Shambala, 1999), 105–107.

29. D. T. Suzuki to Charles Crane, January 7, 1938, BA.

30. Charles Crane to D. T. Suzuki, January 29, 1938, BA.

31. D. T. Suzuki to Charles Crane, August 1, 1938, BA. Suzuki Diary, 5 June 1938. D. T. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries VII,” ed. Kirita Kiyohide, *MBKN* 25 (2011): 61. Suzuki's diary entries for the latter half of 1938 have a sprinkling of references to communications with Keyserling. Suzuki even had translations made of some of Keyserling's articles. See diary entries for September 18 and December 15, 1938 in *MBKN* 25.

32. Suzuki to Crane, August 1, 1938, BA; D. T. Suzuki to Gregg Sinclair, August 1, 1938, *SDZb* 36:652–653.

33. Charles Crane to Colonel [Edward] House, 25 October 1933; Charles Crane to Bruce Hopper, February 2, 1938, BA.

34. Keyserling, *Europe* (1928), 276, cited in Durant, *Adventures in Genius*, 183–184.

35. Hermann Keyserling, “Whither Goes Germany?” *Bookman* (1933): 147–148.

36. Hugh Jedell, “Keyserling Holds Nazis Unfit to Rule,” *New York Times*, April 17, 1932, 3.

37. See the obituary for Keyserling in “Count Keyserling, Author, Dies at 65,” *New York Times*, April 29, 1946, 22.

38. Saul, *Life and Times*, 270.

39. See also Erik Larson, *In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin* (New York: Broadway Books, 2011), 30, Kindle, for comments about antisemitism in high echelons of the US Department of State.

40. Adam Nagorski, *Hitlerland: American Eyewitnesses to the Nazi Rise to Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012), 4, Kindle; Larson, *In the Garden of Beasts*.

41. Major newspapers contained such headlines as “Nazi Mobs Riot in Wild Orgy” (*Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 1938, 1) and “Nazis Smash, Loot and Burn Jewish Shops and Temples until Goebbels Calls Halt” (*New York Times*, November 11, 1938, 1).

42. Charles Crane to Adolf Hitler, December 12, 1938, BA.

43. Emily Anderson, *Christianity and Imperialism in Modern Japan: Empire for God*, SOAS Studies in Modern and Contemporary Japan (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 224–237.

44. D. T. Suzuki to Charles Crane, February 8, 1939, BA.
45. Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Restless Souls the Making of American Spirituality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).
46. Virginia-Lee Webb, "Official/Unofficial Images: Photographs from the Crane Pacific Expedition, 1928–1929," *Pacific Studies* 20, no. 4 (1997): 103–109.
47. Catherine's birth date is based on divorce settlement papers filed by Cathalene Parker Crane Bernatschke and Rudolf Bernatschke against the United States in 1940. A copy of the divorce papers is found in the Trustees of Reservations Archive and Research Center in Sharon, Massachusetts. Information about the early meetings between Horney, Suzuki, and the others is found in Susan Quinn, *A Mind of Her Own: The Life of Karen Horney* (New York: Summit Books, 1987), 400ff.
48. James C. Dobbins, "D. T. Suzuki in Transition, 1949–53" *MBKN* 30 (2016): 56–57. The gatherings of this group and their journey to Japan, as well as information about Akihisa, are found in Quinn, *Mind of Her Own*, 399–419.
49. D. T. Suzuki to George Yamaoka, January 22, 1961, in *SDZb* 39:257–261.
50. Carrington Goodrich to C. Burton Fahs, February 7, 1951, RAC Series 200r, Box 430, Folder 3702.
51. Gilpatric, Suzuki interview notes, April 7, 1952, Rockefeller Archive Center Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875 (hereafter RAC).
52. Charles B. Fahs to Carrington Goodrich, May 3, 1951, RAC Series 200r, Box 430, Folder 3702.
53. D. T. Suzuki to Chadbourne Gilpatric, November 18, 1950, RAC Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875.
54. Chadbourne Gilpatric, interview with D. T. Suzuki, April 12, 1951, RAC Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875.
55. Harold Bradley to Burton Fahs, May 16, 1951, RAC Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875; Chadbourne Gilpatric to Richard Herpers, June 11, 1952, RAC Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875; Richard Herpers to Chadbourne Gilpatric, December 30, 1952, RAC Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875.
56. Gilpatric, Suzuki interview notes, April 7, 1952, RAC Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875.
57. Cornelius Crane to D. T. Suzuki, copying Cornelius' letter to Horace L. Friess, March 3, 1953, Matsugaoka Bunko Archive (hereafter MBA).
58. D. T. Suzuki to Cornelius Crane, May 12, 1955, *SDZb* 38:175.
59. "Crane and Japanese Bride," *Chicago Tribune*, 11 July 1955, section 1, 2. Mineko's gravestone on Choate Island, Massachusetts, is inscribed with these life dates. However, some records at the Trustees of Reservations Archive and Research Center give the alternative birthdate for Mineko of 1912.
60. "Zen Studies Society Incorporation Document," April 10, 1956, Zen Studies Society Archive (hereafter ZSS).
61. Zen Studies Society to U. S. Department of Justice, undated letter, ZSS.
62. "Zen Studies Society Incorporation Document," April 10, 1956. The bank information is found in a memo from H. S. (unidentified member of the law firm) to Hill Betts and Nash, 3 March 1958. ZSS documents show numerous letters concerning the quarterly deposit of funds to Suzuki's account at First National City Bank.
63. Letter from George Yamaoka to Helen Tuohy and Francis Sogi, October 23, 1957, ZSS. See also letter from Hill Betts and Nash to Cornelius Crane, October 30, 1958, ZSS.

64. Cornelius Crane to D. T. Suzuki, April 7, 1958, ZSS.
65. D. T. Suzuki to Cornelius Crane, April 22, 1958, SDZb 39:50–52.
66. Cornelius Crane to D. T. Suzuki, June 1, 1960, MBA.
67. Cornelius Crane to Bernard Phillips, April 18, 1959; Bernard Phillips to George Yamaoka, October 18, 1960, ZSS.
68. Cornelius Crane to Bernard Phillips, April 7, 1958, ZSS.
69. Cornelius Crane to George Yamaoka, August 21, 1961, ZSS. I wonder if the piece “Self the Unattainable,” which was a posthumously published lecture in the *Eastern Buddhist* (and later included by me in Richard M. Jaffe, ed. *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki: Zen*, vol. 1 [Oakland: University of California Press, 2014], 189–195), might be Suzuki’s stab at this brochure. It previously has been considered an unpublished end piece for Bernard Phillips’ anthology of Suzuki’s writings, *The Essentials of Zen Buddhism: Selected from the Writings of Daisetz T. Suzuki* (New York: E. P. Dutton: 1962).
70. Charles Fahs, interview with Suzuki, March 9, 1961, RAC, Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875; and Charles Fahs, interview with Ryūsaku Tsunoda, May 1, 1951, RAC, Series 200r, Box 430, Folder 3702.
71. Horace L. Friess to Chadbourne Gilpatric, May 23, 1952, RAC, Series 200r, Box 310, Folder 2875.
72. ZSS meeting minutes, May 21, 1965, ZSS.
73. George Yamaoka to Board of Directors of the Zen Studies Society, August 4, 1965, ZSS.
74. The check is found in the ZSS along with records of ongoing payments to Suzuki until July 1962.
75. Lunsford P. Yandell to D. T. Suzuki, April 12, 1954, MBA.
76. See, for example, letters from George Yamaoka to D. T. Suzuki, August 20, 1962; Lunsford P. Yandell to George Yamaoka, October 23, 1962; George Yamaoka to Lunsford P. Yandell, October 18, 1963, ZSS. Also Lunsford P. Yandell to D. T. Suzuki, October 1, 1956; November 15, 1956; July 10, 1959, MBA.
77. I thank the staff members at the Bakhmeteff Archive, Matsugaoka Bunko, Rockefeller Archive Center, and the Zen Studies Society for providing me with access to their collections. In addition, I thank Mr. Thomas Crane for granting access to the Charles Richard Crane Papers in the Bakhmeteff Archive.

Transnationalizing Spirituality

D. T. Suzuki's Zen Textuality

ROMAN ROSENBAUM

Chrysanthemums originally came to Japan from China, but on coming to Japan they became Japanese. When later they were transported to Europe, they became European. Because chrysanthemums originated in China, there is no need to insist that chrysanthemums grown in Japan are Chinese chrysanthemums, or that those found in Europe are Chinese. If in each place the chrysanthemum simply manifests its own characteristics, it can be said to fulfill its chrysanthemum nature. Chrysanthemums are not to be seen with merely a regional eye; we must be able to see into the life of the chrysanthemum.¹

The Legacy and Contemporary Significance of D. T. Suzuki

One of the more personal reasons I am interested in the oeuvre of Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō (hereafter D. T. Suzuki) is that his life expired in the same year that mine began, in 1966. It was not a good year in world culture, with escalations in the Vietnam War marking yet another nadir in the clash of competing ideologies that arose out of global imperialism and colonial expansion. Apparently very little has changed since D. T. Suzuki has left us. Today in the current climate of post-truth neoliberalism, geopolitical conflict, and mass precarity, the world needs once again, it might be argued, to reconsider the thought of D. T. Suzuki. Contemporary globalized mass-consumer society routinely expropriates spirituality and philosophical discourses into a variety of different medialities, including such diverse phenomena as the televangelist movement in the United States, the quasireligious Scientology, and the Pentecostal Hillsong megachurch based in Sydney, Australia. Even traditional Buddhist discourse is nowadays exploited for economic means as exemplified by Matsuyama Daikō's best-selling *Introduction to Business Zen*, which extols the neoliberal potential of Zen Buddhism. Yet this is not a new phenomenon, and, historically, many other usages arose at the interface where philosophical and scientific discourses intermingled, and gave rise to *naikanhō*, for instance, a structured method of

self-reflection developed by Yoshimoto Ishin, who was a businessman and devout Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist.² Just as D. T. Suzuki was a contemporary of Carl Jung, so Morita Shōma was a contemporary of Sigmund Freud and developed the eponymous Morita therapy (Morita ryōhō), as a branch of clinical psychology strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism. The therapies of Yoshimoto and Morita are instances of clinical methodologies that developed at the interstice of philosophy and therapeutics, inspired by the Buddhist thought disseminated by D. T. Suzuki. Thus, his influence extends well into the contemporary era and readily amalgamates with the lifestyles of our technocratic societies, as exemplified by Apple cofounder Steve Jobs, who attended Reed College in 1972 before dropping out to travel through India in 1974, seeking enlightenment via the study of Zen Buddhism, where he also came in contact with the thought of D. T. Suzuki.³

Suzuki's intersectional thought influenced generations and emerged during a crucial juncture in world history when scientific knowledge gradually began to supplant religious mysticism. Surprisingly little has changed in the dichotomized contemporary world, where radical religious orthodoxy still often stands diametrically opposed to scientific notions of life. Suzuki wrote before, during, and after one of the most turbulent periods in Japanese history, when European encroachment clashed with Japan's territorial expansion in Asia. His influence spanned from Japan's awakening of modernity, throughout the "dark valley" of imperialism and colonization, up until the demise of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity sphere, and beyond into the postwar years. This durability suggests that Suzuki's unique brand of mythopoetic literature successfully transcended the geographic and national-cultural boundaries in the world, and his pioneering linguistic work is still influential today. Throughout this turbulent period, his groundbreaking work on literary translation and Buddhist teachings remained a steady stabilizing cross-cultural force, whose undercurrent would unite disparate people via a common philosophical discourse.

While the representation of world cultures via an East/West paradigm has long been debunked as plainly false, D. T. Suzuki's establishment of key Asian discursive formations, as well as his introduction of hitherto unheard-of esoteric concepts such as Zen, *satori*, and *koan* into Western discourse, made him one of the most culturally influential thinkers of the twentieth century. This chapter historicizes Suzuki as one of the foremost *koji* (laypersons), who introduced Zen Buddhism into English via his work as a translator and interpreter in the prewar period. His groundbreaking *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* was originally written in 1938 and today is still essential reading for the study of Japanese culture in the West.⁴ His literary output, which included many other pivotal publications, such as his *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927–1934), which

introduced the concept of Zen to the West for the very first time, placed him firmly amid the intellectual and historical trends of his time; he was both a product of them and a contributor to them.

Suzuki grew up in a period of Japanese history where fashionable slogans such as *bunmei kaika* (civilization and enlightenment) and *fukoku kyōhei* (rich nation; strong army) became the focal point of sociopolitical discourse in urbanizing Japan. Yet, in an analysis of the social psychology of Japan, Mita Munesuke and his translator, Stephen Suloway, have remarked that in those days, education was often achieved by means of direct translations, without any commentary or filtering by the authorities. This exposed a generation of children to the raw winds emanating from genuine documents of Western culture. The core group, which was educated under a translated Western primary curriculum between 1872 and 1879, were those born from 1868 to 1870. This minigeneration produced a plethora of modern Japan's deepest thinkers: Kitamura Tōkoku, Tokutomi Roka, Kinoshita Naoe, Taoka Ryō'un, Nishida Kitarō, and Suzuki Daisetsu, to name only a few.⁵ It was in this transformative climate of Westernization and *datsu-a ron* (leaving Asia theory) that Suzuki grew into the avatar for the spiritual and intellectual exchange between Japanese and Western cultures.

In 1897, during the progressive era of social activism and political reform, D. T. Suzuki went to the United States, where he was to reside for eleven years from 1897–1908. Following his stay in the United States, he traveled for nearly one year through Europe and experienced the vitality of the *belle époque* period characterized by optimism, regional peace, and economic prosperity as well as technological, scientific, and cultural innovations that would provide the stimulus and inspiration for the literary and philosophical ideas of his generation. By the time Suzuki left for the United States, Japan had established a colonial empire via the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), which was fought primarily over control of Korea; it also instigated the colonization of Taiwan in 1895. During Suzuki's stay in the United States, Japan waged the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), which resulted in the first major military victory in the modern era of an Asian power over a European nation. Russia's defeat was met with shock in the West and transformed the balance of power in East Asia. Japan's international prestige as a modern nation rose greatly. Its rapid success as a colonizing power in the global amphitheater had been engendered by rapid Westernization and modernization during the Meiji period (1868–1912). It was this idealized notion of Westernization that created the impetus for many Japanese intellectuals to explore the world and bring new knowledge back to Japan. When Suzuki eventually returned to Japan in 1909, Japan's status in the global amphitheater had

significantly increased, and she suddenly found herself embroiled in the pantheon of global superpowers.

The young Suzuki's employer, the German American philosopher Paul Carus, had a formative influence on him. And his American wife, Beatrice Lane Suzuki, a well-known philosopher, Buddhist scholar, and eventual Zen popularizer from New Jersey, also connected Suzuki to his religious experience in the West.⁶ Beatrice played a particularly crucial role in Suzuki's translation into English. In particular when looking at her own publications, such as *Mahayana Buddhism: A Brief Outline* (1959), it is evident that the choice of vocabulary and sentence structure is similar to Suzuki's own choices. This suggests her seminal influence on the authorship and editorial work of Suzuki. In fact, the more we engage with Suzuki's English oeuvre, the more Beatrice's presence appears to shift into focus. Suzuki's narratives thus also become the space where the intermedialities of Beatrice's own East Coast vernacular literature met with Suzuki's Japanese translations.

Beatrice's name is familiar to few Theosophists, yet she played an important role in Japanese Theosophy and managed the transnational Mahayana Lodge of the Theosophical Society.⁷ The Suzukis married in 1911 in Yokohama, and Beatrice became a Japanese citizen upon their return to Japan. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the prolific output of the Suzukis depended heavily on their literary interaction. When Beatrice compiled a "simple little book which, unpretentious though it is, yet aims at giving readers the main points of Mahayana," she thanked her husband for his "help and encouragement in the preparation of the book."⁸ Likewise, Suzuki wrote a major introduction to Beatrice's treatise on Mahayana Buddhism some twenty pages long that contains some remarkable observations for the reader of Beatrice:

Every minute we live contains eternity. Eternal Now is our life; we do not have to seek eternity anywhere else but in ourselves. It is the same with the idea of space. The point I occupy is the centre of the universe, and it is in me and with me that it subsists. As a fact of pure experience, however, there is no space without time, no time without space; they are also interpenetrating, and in this sense there is no profanity, as may be charged by pious Christians when I declare myself to be God, in whom time and space lie dormant as before Creation.⁹

This conspicuous passage is reminiscent of both the apotheosis of the individual and Einstein's relativity of space and time, illustrating sublimely how science and religion can intermingle to powerful effect. Beatrice similarly also acknowledges

the influence of her husband in the very first page of *Mahayana Buddhism* when she writes, “As one writer has remarked: Mahayana stands firmly on two legs, Prajna and Karuna, transcendental idealism and all-embracing affection for all kinds of beings, animate as well as inanimate.” In the footnote, we learn that it is indeed D. T. Suzuki, in *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, whom she references frequently throughout the text.¹⁰ In this way, the Suzukis complemented each other frequently not only via the borrowing of word translations such as “absolute truth” (Paramārtha-satya) but also via Beatrice’s professorship in English at Otani University, where she practiced her craftsmanship of the English language.

The Dawn of Religious Tolerance: The Historical and Ideological Context of Suzuki’s Zen Discourse in the West

Concomitant to Suzuki’s success in promulgating Buddhist spirituality lies the story of the rise of interbelief pluralism and global religious tolerance at the dawn of the twentieth century. Suzuki’s accomplishments followed in the footsteps of a long gestation period of liberalist philosophies by enlightenment thinkers at the turning point when orthodox Christianity gave way to religious pluralism.¹¹ Worldwide ecumenicalism arose out of the need of “old religions” to compete with the success of the modern scientific revolution. A philosophical corollary of this trend is evident in Nietzsche’s declaration of the death of God in the 1880s. As a result, Christian morality in Western civilization was no longer a credible source of absolute moral principles.¹² This loss of an absolute basis for morality was redolent with a sense of nihilism at the turn of the century, when European and American societies came into contact with Suzuki, who impugned this “abyss of absolute nothingness” with an overwhelming sense of fertility as the source from which “all things are produced” and to which they all shall return.¹³

A similar loss of authority was evident in the decline of Japanese Buddhism during the early years of the Meiji enlightenment, which experienced anti-Buddhist government policies in the new paradigm of dramatic social change brought about by rapid modernization and industrialization. Similarly, Shintō was also regarded by early reformist and influential thinkers such as Fukuzawa Yukichi as “derivative, ephemeral and self-serving,” suggesting that until Meiji, Shinto was dependent upon Buddhism for its doctrines and institutions, and that even the meaning of the term “Shinto” was unclear.¹⁴ Buddhist sectarianism was essentially rendered by its opponents as an invasive foreign “other” diametrically opposed to the cultural sensibility and innate spirituality of the Japanese.

In short, Suzuki lived in a time when scientific knowledge gradually supplanted religious hegemony. In order for Buddhism to survive and compete with other global religious movements, it had to embrace the rationality espoused by science.

Arguably it was Suzuki's masterful blending of religious with scientific thought that propelled the former out of the realm of myth and fantasy and married them with the realms of modern disciplines such as psychology and philosophy. We can find one remarkable example of this cross-fertilization process in Suzuki's introduction to his wife's book on *Mahayana Buddhism*. When Suzuki elaborates here on the remarkable vitality of the Chinese Sung dynasty, he laments the fact that Confucian historians disavowed the influence of Buddhism, before suggesting that through their denial of the influence of Buddhist thought they inadvertently ended up adopting it. While this may appear paradoxical at first, Suzuki elaborates that "their unconscious decidedly betrayed their consciousness; it was really a psycho-analytical case of enantiadromia."¹⁵ Without further ado Suzuki moves on to another section in his introduction to Beatrice's book, and thus leaves readers somewhat baffled. Yet this comes as no surprise to the Suzuki reader, who may well be aware of this intertextual reference to the founding father of analytical psychology, Carl Jung, who wrote a lengthy foreword to Suzuki's *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*.¹⁶ In fact, Jung defines enantiadromia in his *Collected Works*: "I use the term enantiadromia for the emergence of the unconscious opposite in the course of time."¹⁷

Jung came to realize, through personal experience, in his own life and in the lives of his patients, that this resurfacing of unconscious material habitually occurs when an extreme prejudiced tendency dominates the conscious life. Over time an equally strong countertendency builds, which eventually breaks through to our conscious control. This example must suffice to illustrate how Suzuki amalgamates scientific and religious discourse into a new cosmopolitan lingua franca via psychologizing Buddhist thought.

This cross-fertilization between science and religion, which needless to say is still evident today, was apparent after Suzuki's death in 1972, when his *Nihonteki reisei* (1944) was published by the Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkō Kai (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science). The first critical juncture in Suzuki's life came in 1893, when the peripatetic intellectual and Zen Buddhist Shaku Sōen (1860–1919) was one of four priests and two laymen who traveled to the World's Parliament of Religions in the United States. The Japanese delegation represented Rinzai Zen, Jōdo Shinshū, and Nichiren and Tendai Buddhism, as well as other esoteric schools, who participated in the first organized interfaith gathering to create a global dialogue of faiths, which led to the birth of formal interreligious

dialogue worldwide.¹⁸ Incidentally, the meeting was organized in Chicago by a layperson just like Suzuki named Charles Carroll Bonney, and the Presbyterian clergyman John Henry Barrows. The congregation of this soi-disant “parliament” for the first time undermined the supposed binarity of the stereotypical East-West paradigm and demonstrated the abundance of religious experiences in the global context. Arguably, this meeting of the different faiths of the world constituted the first interreligious dialogue on a global scale.

Although the parliament had a decisively Christian bias and was dominated by Christian denominations, it still succeeded in bringing together for the first time in history the leading representatives of the great historic religions of the world, and thus foregrounded the presence of religious alterity in a world dominated by competing spiritual traditions. This initial interreligious parliament also became a keystone for comparative religious studies and initiated the cross-cultural missionary movement that would provide an opportunity for D. T. Suzuki to move to the United States.¹⁹ In fact, Suzuki was responsible for the English translation and preparation of Shaku Sōen’s Japanese manuscript and was assisted by the writer Natsume Sōseki, who also had been invited to Engakuji to practice Zen under Shaku Sōen in 1894.²⁰ It was read to the conference by John Henry Barrows and included the subject of the emergence of religious pluralism. His speech was titled “The Law of Cause and Effect, as Taught by Buddha.”²¹ The parliament and Suzuki’s indirect participation via the text he had translated for Sōen introduced the world to a plethora of religious traditions. In the wake of the parliament of 1893, there emerged a multitude of religious experiences in place of the singularity of the Christian discourse, and the possibility of a plurality of religious experiences: “One could be saved or self-realized or grow in God consciousness or be self-emptied. And as America itself continued to pursue its messianic mission, it was a nation under a changed God. Krishna, Vishnu, the Buddha (technically a not-God), the Divine Mother, and other deities had been tucked up in the nation’s sacred canopy, where they joined the Christian Father and Son, Jehovah, Nature’s God, and Apollo and his Muses. America had gone into the Parliament claiming to be a cosmopolitan nation and had come out having to live up to the claim. There was no going back.”²² At the parliament, Sōen also met the “atheist who loved God,” Dr. Paul Carus, the publisher of the Open Court Publishing Company in La Salle, Illinois—a pioneer in the promotion of interfaith dialogue—and before Sōen returned to Japan, Carus asked him to send to the United States an English-speaker knowledgeable about Zen Buddhism. Upon returning to Japan, Sōen asked his apprentice and Tokyo University student D. T. Suzuki to go to the United States, where his work in the translation of Buddhist texts was sponsored by Paul Carus, and he started the

journey that would lead to him becoming the leading scholar on Zen Buddhism in the West.

Toward a New Wave of Laymen as Spokesmen for Buddhism

In a nutshell, Daisetsu sensei was a religiously free man.

D. T. Suzuki represented a new wave of spokesmen for Buddhism who were not only laymen but whose global spiritual activism and active engagement in translation activities promoted the global rise of cosmopolitan Zen Buddhism. This development triggered a renaissance that saw Buddhism transform from monastic to laicized practices. Sōen Shaku returned to the United States once again in 1905 as a guest of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Russell. He spent nine months at their house outside San Francisco, teaching the entire household Zen. Mrs. Russell was the first American to study koan. Shortly after arriving, Sōen was joined by his student Nyogen Senzaki. During this time, he also gave lectures around California, some to Japanese immigrants and some, translated by D. T. Suzuki, for English-speaking audiences. Following a March 1906 train trip across the United States, during which he gave talks on Mahayana translated by Suzuki, Sōen returned to Japan via Europe, India, and Ceylon.²³

Meanwhile, following the Japanese *kaikoku* or “opening of Japan” to the West and the rapidly modernizing Japanese worldview, Shintō had been adopted as a unifying agent throughout Japan.²⁴ Rival denominations such as Buddhist teachings were being stigmatized as socially disengaged, sectarian, and anti-Japanese, which made them contrary to the principles of the Meiji Restoration. Following the failure of the *sonnō jōi* (revere the emperor, expel the barbarians) dialectic, the Meiji tenet of *bunmei kaika* ushered in a new age that rejoiced in the freshly unified nation of Japan but also suggested the opening of the country to Western values. At least, for Japan’s intelligentsia and members of the government, the new slogan of *fukoku kyōhei* became the rallying call of the Meiji period. Just as social mores had to adapt to the outside world, so Buddhism had to open its doors. This was exemplified by the modernist criticism of religions in Japan by the avant-garde entrepreneur Fukuzawa Yukichi, who was also a lay Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist with close ties to the Unitarian and Anglican missionaries. Arguably, it was through the efforts of the Japanese laity such as Sōen, and later Suzuki, that Zen Buddhism was brought out of the dark ages. Unordained men and women actively began to encourage lay participation in Buddhist practice, and Sōen opened the newly constructed Zen hall at Engakuji to lay students wishing to practice Zen meditation.

Following Sōen's institutionalization of an open-door policy, Zen Buddhism moved from the exclusivity of the *shukke*, or the monastic practice of Buddhists who have renounced the worldly pursuits to devote themselves exclusively to spiritual work, to the *zaïke* or nonordained common lay devotee, a role that was available to everyone with less severe requirements for religious ritual and practices. This dichotomy of laity versus clergy is also evident in other religious traditions, such as Christianity, and marked the emergence of Japanese laicity at the turn of the century. The new rationalism and the successful encroachment of science on the fin de siècle way of life meant that religion was in competition with secularism on a global scale. The late nineteenth century epitomized the reconciliation of scientific and religious ideas, which led to the foundation of a rational New Buddhism (Shin Bukkyō) in tune with scientific discoveries. In 1905, while Suzuki was still in the United States, the French law on the separation of church and state was passed and institutionalized French *laïcité*, which also rose to prominence at the dawn of the twentieth century.

Yet much work was needed to make the scholarly academic Buddhist teachings often written in another language available to the general public. This is where D. T. Suzuki, as transcultural scholar, deployed his linguistic craftsmanship to bring Zen from the shibboletic usage of the religious clergy to the readily accessible level of the layperson. This move meant that religious practices and rituals were able to diffuse into the domain of a much larger group of ordinary citizens who were more capable of disseminating Buddhist thought.²⁵

Intercultural Agency: Transcending Binarity toward a Multivalent View of the World

Due to his steadily increasing popularity, Suzuki was able to translate and acculturate aspects of global culture through intertextual references in his work, but more directly he was also able to build cross-cultural networks via the foundation of several associations and their journals that actively encouraged global participation. A few examples shall suffice to illustrate the agency of Suzuki as one of the chief ambassadors of Zen philosophy to the English-speaking world. For instance, Suzuki accepted a position as professor of Buddhist philosophy at Ōtani University in 1919, and then in 1921 he and Beatrice founded the Tōhō Bukkyō Kyōkai (Eastern Buddhist Society), which served as the *raison d'être* for the publication of the *Eastern Buddhist*, the bimonthly English-language journal where Suzuki and others published articles on Buddhism.²⁶ Besides his frequent English publications, and following a particularly peripatetic period in 1956,²⁷ the Zen Studies Society was established by Cornelius Crane in order to assist

D. T. Suzuki in his effort to help promote Zen Buddhism in Western cultures.²⁸ Later, Suzuki informally founded the Cambridge Buddhist Association in 1957 when he moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he befriended John and Elsie Mitchell, two of the pioneers of American Buddhism, who owned a vast library of books on Buddhism and held regular zazen meditation sessions.²⁹

Technological advances at the dawn of the twentieth century invariably led to the topographical perception of a shrinking world. This meant at first that the proximity between people and their culture became narrower, and dialogue between cultures and empires easier to facilitate. We now know that this close proximity also came with an escalation in the competition for natural resources resulting in devastating conflicts. It was in this climate that the East-West paradigm was replaced by a multivalent and pluralistic worldview inspired by scientific discoveries, which also led to the transformation of religious philosophies.

Suzuki was a close friend of the philosopher Nishida Kitarō, and both of them struggled throughout their lives to combine the unique senses of Japanese and Western universality into a transcendental discourse of their own. Just as Nishida and his Kyoto school followers played a crucial role in Suzuki's formulation of contemporary Zen discourse, so Suzuki's introduction of Western philosophical sources, such as the American philosopher William James, influenced Nishida's discourse. Nishida drew on Suzuki for his understanding of *hannya* (prajna, wisdom), Zen, and Pure Land, while Suzuki relied on Nishida for his notions of pure experience and absolute nothingness.³⁰

In particular Nishida's notion of *basho* or "place" as a nondualistic entity that could be adopted to overcome the subject/object duality of Western discourse appealed to Suzuki. Nishida and Suzuki's interaction developed a discourse that espoused a nonbinary relation between God and man, which emphasized a new sense of subjectivity centered on the embodied self in the historical world.³¹ This innovative topology of place associated *basho* with a binding sense of belonging. As a result, the new multivalent sense of place and geography would link people and locations by establishing a sense of cultural identity. For instance, Shigaraki Takamaro—one of the most influential Jōdo Shinshū Buddhologists in the twentieth century—was able to view Amida Buddha and the Pure Land not merely as entity or place but as dynamic symbols or ideal spheres that serve as the motives for authentic religious life.³² This geography of the mind led Suzuki to nurture a strong interest in Pure Land Buddhism rendered in Japanese as *jōdo bukkō*, with the first character *jō* suggesting "purity" of *tsuchi*, a "land" or "place."³³ While in traditional Amidist belief, the "Pure Land" was perceived as a transcendental space that could be reached only after death, the reinvigorated term *jōdo* encompassed larger spatial and transhistorical dimensions, including the

concept of Pure Land on this earth.³⁴ Contemporary Pure Land traditions see the “land,” and its metonym Japan, as a region of purification, where all sentient beings inhabiting these lands can be led into the pure way, that is to say, the way to *nirvāṇa*, and the perfection of the way to Buddhahood in these lands.³⁵ Thus the hyperbole of the Land of the Rising Sun became an allegory for *shinkoku*, or “the divine country,” with Japan as “the land of the kami.”³⁶

Yet another way of examining this in-between, interstitial “place” of nothingness, as Nishida termed it, can be found in the dialectic inquiry into metaphysical contradictions and their solutions, especially in the thought of Kant and Hegel. For Nishida Kitarō, the concept of *basho* could transcend the contradictory association of binarity or the simplistic dualistic perception of the world that was also present in the structure of Buddhist orthodoxy and its laity. Eventually, the slippage of topophilia—as the placement of people in geopolitical circumstances—from the realm of religion into cultural uniqueness and aesthetic superiority was readily manipulated for a colonial agenda and also provided fertile ground for the emergence of nationalistic discourses. It is this sentiment that Suzuki seeks to dispel with the chrysanthemum metaphor in the opening citation, and such was the downside of a theory of “universality” adopted to promote particularity, which led Japan into the dark valley of the Asia-Pacific War.

Suzuki developed his own theory that sought to overcome mutually antagonistic aspects of the binary worldview termed *sokuhi no ronri* (literally “is and is not”) or the “logic of simultaneous identification and differentiation,” which he presented as characteristic of Japanese spirituality and as archetypal in both Zen enlightenment and Shin Buddhist faith.³⁷ Well after the second opening of Japan following the end of the occupation in 1955, Suzuki explicated this duality via the chicken-and-egg paradox in Western thought as an example of a rational binarism that could not be transcended via conventional thought processes. He stated, “We need a different methodology in thinking. This new methodology is the Oriental way of thinking,” in which both states exist at the same time.³⁸ However, it should be noted that by that time this sense of dualistic ambiguity was already well documented in the analects of science via the vivid examples of Schrödinger’s cat (1935) and Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle (1927) in our modern understanding of quantum physics. Much time had passed since the turn of the century, when science and secularism had brought the world closer together, but following two devastating world wars, science did not turn out to be the purported savior of humanity. Suzuki was disillusioned and wrote, “We all now know what has come out of Western sciences, dialectics, historical studies, and all kinds of intellectual analyses.”³⁹ Arising like a phoenix out of the ashes, a new Japanese spirituality was needed for a new age, and to Suzuki, who

transliterated the scientific rational into the realm of religious experiences, via his English translation of seminal Buddhist texts, this meant that “intellectualization leads us nowhere but to an endless maze of entangling thistles.”⁴⁰

Intertextuality and Literacy: Toward a Global Literacy of Aestheticism and Philosophy

This author does venture to say of enlightenment that it embraces an insight into the nature of self, and that it is an emancipation of the conscious from an illusionary conception of self.

Suzuki quite literally lived in the interstice between rigid national boundaries; he took up residence abroad before and after the war but returned to his motherland when it was in crisis. At a time when Japan and, by extension, Asia were seen in the West as racially and culturally inferior, Suzuki introduced key Asiatic cultural elements into Western discourse and built bridges that would transcend the destruction of the Asia-Pacific conflagration. Not only did his translations initiate the Western Zen textual tradition as a precursor of transnational literature but his engagement at the forefront of literary production acculturated the process and helped established new literary trends. This trend was a world literature beyond borders, described by Peter Hitchcock as the “long space,” with the operative word being a geopoetic type of literary “space” that was not just a thorn in the side but rather a permanent intellectual challenge to the hegemony of national literature and canonical texts.⁴¹

Suzuki was prolific, and far outweighing his religious activism was his contribution to the intellectual output in the realm of philosophy and cross-cultural literacy. Suzuki stands out conspicuously amid his contemporaries by combining orthodox spiritual discourse with Japanese literature or, more precisely, by grounding spirituality within literary manifestations of the Japanese language. Through his intertextual linkage of poems and verses to Western discourse, he not only teased out mutual cross-cultural variables but also conveyed Japanese spirituality via a new diction that spoke to native Japanese as well as international audiences. Through rendering the pronunciation of words into the different writing system of Japanese, Chinese, and Sanskrit texts, Suzuki reimaged Zen as emblematic of world culture. For instance, at the turn of the century, he translated several of the key Mahayana texts into English, such as *Aśvaghōṣa's Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* (*Daijō kishinron*), a discourse that both reflected the importance of the Chinese Zen tradition and also

required the invention of an entirely new branch of English vocabulary. An example from *Awakening of Faith* illustrates the establishment of Suzuki's imaginative philosophical diction: "Activity-consciousness *yeh shih, karmavijñāna?* the assertion of the 'Will to Live.'" ⁴²

In this way, as a polyglot and translator of literature, Suzuki coined many new terms in the English language that still reverberate across the globe today. Suzuki's significance lies in his introduction of key spiritual elements into the imperial discourse of Western culture that counterpoised the dominance of Western-centric discourse before and after the war. At the same time, Suzuki brought his understanding of Buddhism and the Japanese Zen tradition into dialogue with numerous currents of modern thought, including existentialism, nineteenth-century idealism, pragmatism, psychoanalysis, psychology, Theosophy, transcendentalism, and many others. ⁴³ Through the mystical experience of William James, incantations of Faust, and the philosophy of Swedenborg, Suzuki amalgamated literary traditions with philosophical discourse and gave Zen a unique place and powerful interpretation in global culture. For instance, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung wrote the foreword to Suzuki's *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1964), because just as Freud repeatedly likened the human mind to not only the topographies of various types of multistory dwellings but also the geology of ancient excavation sites, so Suzuki's translations combined spirituality and science to give rise to a literary topography of the mind.

However, Suzuki worked on both sides of the spurious and divisive East / West binary, and in addition to his English translations he also translated seminal texts from English into Japanese. By way of illustration, he translated Paul Carus' *The Gospel of Buddha* (*Budda no fukuin*, 1895) in order to introduce an interpretation of the Western philosophical tradition into Japan, but he also actively translated Sanskrit and Chinese texts into English. Yet, far beyond mere translation, what catches the reader's imagination is the interpretative quality of Suzuki's narratives and his frequent intertextual references to other cultural figures. Put simply, Suzuki mingled and intertwined philosophical literary traditions. An example is his casual acknowledgment of Confucius, "Is it not delightful to have a friend come from afar?" in his preface to the translation of *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, which figured prominently in the development of Chinese, Tibetan, and Japanese Buddhism, and is a vital sutra in Chan Buddhism and its Japanese version, Zen. ⁴⁴

One more example shall suffice to illustrate this highlight in Suzuki's literary discourse. For instance, in his introduction to the first series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927), he juxtaposes a plethora of Western literary and philosophical

giants with their Eastern counterparts. Suzuki quotes Confucius, “At fifteen my mind was directed to study, and at thirty I knew where to stand,”⁴⁵ and moves seamlessly to Buddha’s noble truth of “life is pain,”⁴⁶ in a preliminary acknowledgment of the Chinese textual tradition. Yet several pages later, he cites the Chinese philosopher Mencius vis-à-vis Oscar Wilde in their mutual cognizance of the notion of triumph arising from painful experiences.⁴⁷ This is followed by episodes of the mysterious spiritual awakening of Zen master Unmon (Yunmen Wenyan) juxtaposed with a quotation from Ruskin about the slow release of meaning in the authorship of texts.⁴⁸ Finally, Suzuki explains some of the methods used by the masters to open the spiritual eye of the disciple via a comparison of Chōkei Eryō (Ch. Changqing Huilen, 長慶慧稜) with Tennyson’s poetic notion of a “flower in a crannied wall,” which is used in a metaphorical sense of seeking holistic and grander principles from constituent parts and their connections.⁴⁹

Yet, Suzuki was not immune to the vagaries of modernity, and years later, in an English essay titled “The Morning Glory,” written after the disillusionment of the war in July 1950, he once again compares the poetry of Tennyson with that of Fukuda Chiyo’ni (Kaga no Chiyo; 1703–1775), a Japanese poet of the Edo period, widely regarded as one of the greatest female haiku poets in the tradition of Bashō.⁵⁰ The title of Suzuki’s essay stems from one of Fukuda’s most famous haiku, *Asa gao ya, tsurube torarete, morai mizu*, which Suzuki translates as “Oh, morning glory! The bucket taken captive, Water begged for.” Still, without Suzuki’s accompanying detailed explanation of the nuances of this poem, the uninitiated reader would miss much. Suzuki painstakingly explains that, taken aback by its beauty, the poet could not bring herself to disturb the flowering plant twined around the bucket used for fetching water, and so she went to a neighbor to get the water needed for her rustic work that morning. For Suzuki, the lack of explanation provided and the subtle spontaneity of the poem are part of its “celestial purity.” He continues to compare Fukuda’s poem with Tennyson’s “Flower in the Crannied Wall,” as an attempt at “murderous” intellectualizing of Western poetry against the philosophizing Eastern tradition in a subconscious expression of consternation following Japan’s collapse in the post-Asia-Pacific conflagration. Yet in the end, reason and logic prevail, and in an elegant homage Suzuki gives Keats the final word citing the famous lines:

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty,”—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.⁵¹

Notwithstanding his elegant translations, Suzuki’s lectures were famously obtuse, and very few of his listeners could comprehend his enthusiastic

chalkboard scribbling or his line of thought.⁵² But still, despite the fact that little meaning could be drawn from Suzuki's explication of terms such as "Zen" and "Satori" beyond their status as enigma and incomprehensible mysticism, the resulting synergy of combining the Eastern and Western textual traditions of hitherto supposedly disparate philosophical elements into a unified ecumenical literary discourse of theology is Suzuki's greatest contribution to the global dialectic of spirituality.⁵³

It was the alterity of *différance* and the intermediality of his texts—in terms of their aesthetics and the humanistic tradition existing between cultures—that determined how Suzuki was appraised in the West via books such as *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (3 vols., 1927–34), *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (1935), and *Studies in Zen* (1955), which introduced the basic principles of Zen Buddhism to a receptive Western audience. Yet, it was the nearly simultaneous publication in 1958 of a special Zen number of the *Chicago Review* and of Jack Kerouac's novel *The Dharma Bums* that first alerted the American public to the countercultural Beat Generation's interest in Asian thought.⁵⁴ In fact, in *The Dharma Bums* (1958), Suzuki quite literally receives an honorable mention in a description of the novel's main character, Japhy, who was a literary manifestation of countercultural icon and Beatnik poet Gary Snyder:

[He] lived in his own shack which was infinitely smaller than ours, about twelve by twelve, with nothing in it but typical Japhy appurtenances that showed his belief in the simple monastic life—no chairs at all, not even one sentimental rocking chair, but just straw mats. In the corner was his famous rucksack with cleaned-up pots and pans all fitting into one another in a compact unit and all tied and put away inside a knotted-up blue bandana. Then his Japanese wooden pata shoes, which he never used, and a pair of black inside-pata socks to pad around softly in over his pretty straw mats, just room for your four toes on one side and your big toe on the other. He had a slew of orange crates all filled with beautiful scholarly books, some of them in Oriental languages, all the great sutras, comments on sutras, the complete works of D. T. Suzuki and a fine quadruple-volume edition of Japanese haikus.⁵⁵

Even though Beat culture embraced very little of the Zen Buddhist philosophy promulgated by Suzuki, Kerouac's ultimate significance as a promoter of Buddhist thought lay not in the depth of his knowledge but, as with Suzuki himself, his influence in stimulating interest in Asian religion via his literary output. His books were remarkably popular, and he became a cult hero to many young people. It may

well be that the countercultural appeal of *The Dharma Bums* did more to spark American interest in postwar Zen Buddhism in the late 1950s than all the excellent Zen studies authored in the years before 1958 by Zen scholars such as Suzuki. Kerouac's meeting with Suzuki on October 15, 1958, in Manhattan is described by Ellis Amburn as the meeting of two cultural icons with worlds between them:

A small man, Suzuki lived in book-lined rooms with wood paneling on West Ninety-fourth Street. Having carefully arranged three chairs for Jack and his companions, Suzuki sat behind a table, quietly studying them. Jack noticed that Suzuki's eyelashes were very long, which somehow made him think about a saying about the Dharma—that it took root very gradually but could never be dislodged. Suzuki asked his guests to speak distinctly, explaining that he was partially deaf. Almost shouting, Jack asked Dr. Suzuki why Bodhidharma came from the west. Dr Suzuki at once realized that Kerouac's problem was alcohol, and told him to switch to green tea. Then he advised Jack and his friends to sit here quietly, Jack recalled . . . and in a few minutes . . . came back and served "thick and soupy" green tea in fragile, battered and chipped bowls. Shortly [after] Suzuki showed them to the door, admonishing Jack to stick to green tea. On the sidewalk, Jack looked back and saw Suzuki standing in the doorway. Speaking from his heart, Jack said he wanted to move in with (him) and spend the rest of his days with him. "Sometime", Suzuki said, raising a finger and giggling.⁵⁶

In reality Suzuki was critical of the Beat Generation, who claimed to be inspired by his writing on Zen philosophy. Freedom (or *jiyū*) to Suzuki was not merely a way of following one's desires impulsively or entertaining capricious whimsies; rather it meant being disciplined and exercising self-control. Ultimately it also demanded a degree of existential death of the ego as the internal source of bondage.⁵⁷ In this regard, Suzuki became a cultural icon whose very image of the wise old man represented the new relationship between the United States and Japan in the postwar period. His warm and friendly image graced the front cover of many popular American mainstream magazines, such as the *Saturday Review*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*.⁵⁸ In this way, Suzuki's image developed into an avatar for a type of Zen in the West that criticized the debauchery, hedonism, and decadence of traditional Western cultural aesthetics.

Suzuki's formative years in fin de siècle culture and societies exposed him to yet another binary paradox: the vitality of *joie de vivre* philosophical cosmopolitanism juxtaposed with an overriding sensation of *Weltschmerz*, which presaged

the devastation that was soon to envelope the world. Suzuki found himself right in the middle between an expansionist colonizing empire at home and the colonialist European notion of *lebensraum* that would eventually lead to the first of two devastating conflicts. Later, it was in 1944, at the apex of these global conflagrations, during Japan's existential crisis and when psychological trauma was most acute, that Suzuki attempted to define Japanese *reisei* while seeking refuge in an air-raid shelter during some of the heaviest bombardments of the war. With the world crumbling around him, Suzuki attempted to historically redefine terms such as *reisei* and *seishin*, *reisei* (靈性, spirituality) and *seishin* (精神, mind, soul, spirit) and so proffered an interpretation of the Japanese psyche at a particular traumatic place and time. The repercussions of his endeavors are still influential today.

As several commentators have claimed, the historicity of Suzuki does not lie in an interpretation of good versus evil, yet another binary simplification. Rather his literature potentiated the interface where Eastern philosophical currents met with Western discursive formations in a synergy that pioneered the formation of world literature. He became the avatar that moved geopoetic philosophical discourse into the domain of a topography of the mind. In the impending new century, he became one of the chief architects of people's mindsets and labored assiduously to accomplish the right blending of the world's hemispheres at their literary junctures, where ideology and discourses meet, clash, and combine in order to overcome their binary opposition and mutual exclusivity. In the above examination, I have juxtaposed the major themes running through Suzuki's discourse with the relevant historical trends in his lifetime. I have sought to highlight the fact that he always continued to "strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield," in accordance with the literary traditions he cherished. And this was despite the fact that his contribution was a product of forces that lay well beyond the power of individuals.

Yet, in his time Suzuki became a cosmopolitan ambassador fetishized by the global community as the living symbol for a transcendental spirituality that extends across all creeds of the world's religions. He embodied the rise of the common layperson above and beyond the national confines of orthodox religious doctrine toward an imagined idealized worldwide religious community. Though a world beyond ideological and cultural constraints has not eventuated as a result of his work, the ripples of his oeuvre continue to reverberate across the globe in a philosophical tide that combines many of the disparate and often antagonistic cultural elements via a "spirit" of universality. The establishment of a sense of interculturality of European, American, and Asian thought via literary translation is his greatest achievement.

Suzuki's literary work occurred during a paradigm shift in human consciousness, when local cultures and identities shifted and merged with global traditions and practices, giving birth to transnational and transcultural public imaginations that ushered in a new age, first of worldwide conflict, and later to embrace universality as a *modus operandi*. Today, some fifty years after his passing, the world is still enveloped in the same zeitgeist of globalization that he helped to usher in, but the context and trauma associated with our attempts to overcome our differences both spiritual and ideological have not changed significantly. With the war in Syria, the European refugee crisis, rising tensions in Asia, and the vestiges of the last World War still visible on the divided Korean peninsula, Suzuki's legacy of universality through spirituality still needs urgent attention.

Notes

Epigraphs. Hisamatsu, Yamaguchi, and Furuta, *Suzuki Daisetsu*, 61; Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 13.

1. Suzuki Daisetz, *Nihonteki reisei*, 1944, *SDZa* 8:60–61.
2. Jōdo Shinshū is also referred to commonly as Shin Buddhism or Shinshū, but more specifically refers to the Japanese reading for the Chinese characters rendered as *True Teaching of the Pure Land*. Somewhat confusingly it can also be referred to as Pure Land Buddhism (Jōdo bukkō) or Amidism in English. It is a major branch of Mahayana Buddhism and constitutes one of the most widely practiced traditions of Buddhism in East Asia. For details, see the explanation by Alfred Bloom in "Introduction to Jōdo Shinshū," *Pacific World* 5 (1989): 33.
3. Ishii Kiyozumi, "Eihei-ji de shugyō o nozonda Steve Job," *Chuō Kōron*, November 2015, 48–50.
4. Suzuki revised and added new material some twenty years after the original publication, and the book was republished by Pantheon Books in 1959 as *Zen and Japanese Culture*.
5. Mita Munesuke, *Social Psychology of Modern Japan*, trans. Stephen Suloway (London: Routledge, 1992), 152.
6. For a discussion on the neglected influence of Carus on Suzuki, see Robert H. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," *History of Religions* 33, no. 1 (1993): 13–16.
7. Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Three Boys on a Great Vehicle: 'Mahayana Buddhism' and a Trans-National Network," *Contemporary Buddhism* 14, no. 1 (2013): 53–60.
8. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, *Mahayana Buddhism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), xvii.
9. B. L. Suzuki, *Mahayana Buddhism*, xvii.
10. B. L. Suzuki, *Mahayana Buddhism*, 10.
11. Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 240–245.
12. C. Frederick Beiser, *Weltschmerz: Pessimism in German Philosophy, 1860–1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 6–7.
13. Richard M. Jaffe, ed. *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki: Zen* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 1:xlvi.

14. Helen Hardacre, "Creating State Shinto: The Great Promulgation Campaign and the New Religion," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 12, no. 1 (1986): 29.

15. B. L. Suzuki, *Mahayana Buddhism*, xxxvi.

16. Jung's foreword also goes a long way toward locating Zen in the Western textual tradition, and he provides several examples of literary satori experiences to foreground the coexistence of a sense of epiphany that make Zen a global phenomenon; Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), 9–29.

17. Carl Jung, "Psychological Types," in *Collected Works*, ed. Gerhard Adler and R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971), 6:709.

18. Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala Publications, 1992), 124–128.

19. Derek Michaud, "World Parliament of Religions (1893)," in *Boston Collaborative Encyclopedia of Western Theology*. <http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/worldparliamentofreligions1893.htm>.

20. Richard Hughes Seager, "The World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, Illinois, 1893: America's Religious Coming of Age" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1986), 189.

21. Seager, "World's Parliament of Religions," 406–409.

22. Seager, "World's Parliament of Religions," 271.

23. Fields, *How the Swans Came*, 168–174.

24. Several scholars of *kokugaku*, or "national learning," argued that this national Shinto could be the unifying agent of the country around the emperor while the process of modernization was undertaken with all possible speed. The psychological shock of the arrival of the Western "Black Ships" and the subsequent collapse of the shogunate convinced many that the nation needed to unify in order to resist being colonized by outside forces. See, for example, J. Roger Davies, *Japanese Culture: The Religious and Philosophical Foundations* (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle, 2016), 118.

25. Scholars such as Martin Verhoeven and Robert Sharf, as well as Japanese Zen monk G. Victor Sogen Hori, have argued that the pedigree of Japanese Zen that was propagated by New Buddhism ideologues, such as Imakita Kosen and Sōen Shaku, was not typical of Japanese Zen during their time, nor is it typical of Japanese Zen now. Quite on the contrary, the Zen popularized by Suzuki and others was unorthodox and still stands apart from the contemporary monastic Zen tradition. Martin Verhoeven, "Americanizing the Buddha," in *The Faces of Buddhism in America*, ed. Charles S. Prebish and Kenneth K. Tanaka (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Robert H. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," in *History of Religions* 33, no. 1 (1993): 1–43. John S. Harding, Victor Sōgen Hori, and Alexander Soucy, eds., *Buddhism in the Global Eye: Beyond East and West* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

26. Jaffe, *Selected Works*, 1:xxix.

27. For further details of his travels see Jaffe, *Selected Works*, 1:xxxv–xxxvi.

28. Eugene Taylor, *Shadow Culture: Psychology and Spirituality in America* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1999), 196–198.

29. Elsie Mitchell, "Elsie Mitchell, Cambridge Buddhist Trailblazer," Cuke.com, November 2002, <http://www.cuke.com/Cucumber%20Project/other/Elsie/em.html>.

30. Sharf, "Zen of Japanese Nationalism," 22–24.

31. W. M. John Krummel and Nagatomo Shigenori, *Place and Dialectic: Two Essays by Nishida Kitarō* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.

32. Shigaraki Takamaro, *Heart of the Shin Buddhist Path: A Life of Awakening* (Boston: Wisdom, 2013), 15.

33. See, for example, the concept of a “humanistic geography,” developed by Chinese American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, who elaborated the notion of topophilia, or literally “love of land,” to foreground the affective bond between a place and its people. Topophilia can be employed alongside Suzuki and Nishida to map religious territories in a more nuanced manner that reflects nations’ own understandings of their geography, and the symbolic meaning and significance of landscape. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 113.

34. Meri Arichi, “Sannō Miya Mandara: The Iconography of Pure Land on This Earth,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 33, no. 2 (2006): 324.

35. Fujita Kōtatsu and Rebecca Otow, “The Origin of the Pure Land,” *Eastern Buddhist* (New Series) 29, no. 1 (1996): 34.

36. Arichi, “Sannō Miya Mandara,” 326.

37. James C. Dobbins, ed. Volume 2 of *Selected Works of D. T. Suzuki: Pure Land* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 2:115.

38. D. T. Suzuki, “The Oriental Way of Thinking,” *Japan Quarterly* 2 (1955): 51–52.

39. Dobbins, *Selected Works*, 2:58.

40. Dobbins, *Selected Works*, 2:58.

41. Peter Hitchcock, *The Long Space: Transnationalism and Postcolonial Form* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 6.

42. D. T. Suzuki, *Āśvaghōṣa’s Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* (Chicago: Open Court, 1900), 151.

43. Jaffe, *Selected Works*, 1:xii.

44. Suzuki Daisetsu Teitarō, *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (Boulder, CO: Prajña Press, 1978). First published by Routledge Kegan Paul in 1932.

45. D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism [with Chinese notes]*, 1st series (London: s.n., 1927), 2.

46. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, 3.

47. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, 4.

48. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen buddhism*, 15.

49. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen buddhism*, 20.

50. Jaffe, *Selected Works*, 1:105–112.

51. Jaffe, *Selected Works*, 1:112.

52. Jane Naomi Iwamura, “The Oriental Monk in American Popular Culture: Race, Religion, and Representation in the Age of Virtual Orientalism” (PhD diss., University of California, 2001), 16–17.

53. From the foreword to *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* by the eminent Carl Gustav Jung we can also glimpse a similar pattern of transcultural citations, where sometimes lengthy citations link complex philosophical concepts from the medieval German mystic and religious poet Angelus Silesius, who is contrasted with the implicit antiquity of Schopenhauer and the dramatic transformation process of Nietzsche’s Zarathustra; Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 18.

54. Carl Jackson, “The Counterculture Looks East: Beat Writers and Asian Religion,” *American Studies* 29, no. 1 (1988): 53.

55. Jack Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums* (New York: Viking Press, 1958), 11.

56. Ellis Amburn, *Subterranean Kerouac: The Hidden Life of Jack Kerouac* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 297.

57. W. Bret Davis, "Natural Freedom: Human/Nature Nondualism in Japanese Thought," in *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy*, ed. William Edelglass and Jay L. Garfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 336–337.

58. Iwamura, "Oriental Monk," 15–16.

How to Read D. T. Suzuki?

The Notion of “Person”

SUEKI FUMIHIKO

In this chapter, I explore the notion of “Person,” which Suzuki articulates as a central concept in two books that constitute the pinnacle, so to speak, of his intellectual development, *Nihonteki reisei* (1945) and *Rinzai no kihon shisō* (1949). “Person” is a key word that appears only at this juncture, which helps explain the tendency on the part of scholars to overlook it, and why till now it has never received the attention that it deserves. The notion of “Person” in Suzuki’s thought is, however, of extreme importance. “Person” for Suzuki expresses human subjectivity of a kind that is not to be dissolved into a transcendental existence beyond the individual; nor is it yet reducible to the simple individual. Rather, the “Person” for Suzuki is human subjectivity that merges both; it is the supraindividual individual. My argument here is that the notion of “Person” is a key to unlocking Suzuki’s thought.

The Notion of “Person” in *Nihonteki reisei*: Japanese-Language Writings and *Nihonteki reisei*

From around 1939, when Beatrice passed away, Suzuki started writing his major works in the Japanese language. This was no doubt because, with the war’s intensification, it was becoming increasingly difficult to reach a European and American audience. It is notable that these Japanese works include textual research and excavations of new materials; here we find Suzuki the academic researcher at his best.

These studies gradually grew in number starting in the 1930s. In 1932 Suzuki wrote his study of the *Lankavatara Sutra*—which became his doctoral dissertation—and in 1935 he published the “Rufajie pin” (Jp. Nyūhokkai bon; Entry into the Dharma Realm Chapter) of the *Huayan jing* (Jp. *Kegonkyō*; Flower Ornament Sutra) as the *Gandavyuha Sutra* in English. However, his publications of critical editions of Chan texts (including Dunhuang manuscripts) were the major accomplishments. These included *Rokuso dankyō* (Platform Sutra of the Fifth Patriarch; 1936), *Jinne goroku* (Shenhui Record; 1934), *Sōshitsu isshō* (Lost Works

of Bodhidharma; 1936), and *Bukka hekigan hakan gekisetsu* (Yuanwu's Keeping the Beat to Smash the Barriers at the Blue Cliff; 1942). His treatment of Dunhuang manuscripts led to a debate with Hu Shi. Importantly, it was around this time that he discovered Bankei, Suzuki Shōzan, and *myōkōnin*.

In this academic research Suzuki consistently adopted his religious experience perspective, which led from the idea of a "spiritual world" to "spirituality." Suzuki discovered and produced research on experience-oriented Buddhists who had been overlooked in previous academic studies. At the same time, while "Zen" was at the forefront in his English-language works, in his many Japanese-language critical textual studies related to its history, he often also paid attention to both Zen and Pure Land Buddhism. Redefining *sahā* and *Sukhāvatī* ("Sukhāvatī is the world of spirituality, and *sahā* is the world of sensation and the intellect"¹), he included spiritual experience within Pure Land thought. By doing so, he eliminated the idea of the "spiritual world" that had a Swedeborgian feel about it, and was able to discuss Chan/Zen and Pure Land Buddhism as issues belonging to the same sphere. Furthermore, while focusing on these two Buddhist schools, his discussions of spiritual issues transcended the framework of Buddhism, and extended to the structure of religion overall.

Nihonteki reisei stands at the apex of these Japanese-language works, synthesizing them together. However, Suzuki did not spend adequate time planning his monographs and polishing his writing, so sometimes their core arguments are unclear. There are more than a few cases in which it is hard to understand how one work relates to the others that preceded and followed it. For example, consider the term *reisei*, or "spirituality." It appeared suddenly in *Nihonteki reisei*, and again after World War II in his 1946 *Reiseiteki Nihon no kensetsu* (Constructing a spiritual Japan). In *Nihonteki reisei*, the idea was that "Japanese spirituality" had already been manifest in the past in Japan. In contrast, in his later work, Japan's "spiritualization" is presented as a task yet to be fulfilled. There is a slippage here. In other books, Suzuki did not attach any significance to *reisei*. Therefore, while it is less than certain whether we should place *Nihonteki reisei* at the center of his Japanese-language corpus, it is certain at the very least that it constitutes the culmination of the various intellectual elements he had developed in these writings.

Furthermore, Suzuki did not necessarily pay particular attention to a book's structure. For example, he later removed without explanation the fifth chapter of *Nihonteki reisei* titled "Kongōkyō no zen" (Diamond Sutra Chan/Zen). His complete works and Iwanami Bunko follow his lead in this regard.² We can speculate that he might have wanted to decrease its length. However, he might also have been concerned that the chapter on Chan thought was inappropriate for a book

about “Japanese” spirituality. Suzuki presents in this chapter the very important “logic of *sokuhi*” (*sokuhi no ronri*), sometimes translated into English as the “logic of contradictory self-identity” or “the logic of ‘is and is not.’” By excluding this discussion, *Nihonteki reisei* becomes a book only about Pure Land thought, not Zen; the logical aspect of “spirituality” is lost, as it is approached only from its emotional side. Depending on whether or not this fifth chapter is included, our understanding of Suzuki’s ideas on spirituality changes considerably.³ Believing that this chapter was indispensable, I included it in the 2010 complete version of this work that I compiled for Kadokawa Bunko. The analysis that follows draws on the Kadokawa edition of *Nihonteki reisei*.

“Person” in Chapter 2 of *Nihonteki reisei*

Ideas regarding “Person” serve as an important part of *Nihonteki reisei*. They are carried over into *Rinzai no kihon shisō*, but let us first examine them in the former work. Chapter 2 of *Nihonteki reisei*, which is about “spirituality,” discusses the issue of “the supra-individual ‘Person’” (*chōko no [nin]*) and the “one individual ‘Person’” (*hitori*). While Suzuki’s explanations are sometimes hard to understand, he uses the expression “the supra-individual ‘Person’ that lies at the basic ground of the individual self,” contrasting it with a self that does not “encounter spirituality itself.” He also states, “The supra-individual ‘Person’ is the genuine individual.”⁴ We could say that it is the individual that has awoken to the universality that is spirituality. “Spirituality” as religious experience can, in Buddhist terms, be described as acquiring the Dharma body. In the past, Suzuki had said that individual existences are absorbed into the singularity of the Dharma body; the individual dissolves. However, here spirituality is not a simple negation of the self; the subject again rises. The “supra-individual ‘Person’” is a subject that has, in this way, gotten back on its feet.

Here we should note that this “supra-individual ‘Person’” can be considered from both a Zen and a Pure Land perspective: “Different tendencies or directions in the movement of Japanese spirituality are noticeable between Shin (and the other Pure Land sects) and Zen. The former always sees the supra-individual ‘Person’ in the direction of the individual self, while the latter sees the individual self in the direction of the supra-individual ‘Person.’”⁵

While Suzuki does not provide a detailed explanation here, he points to the “one individual person, Shinran” (Jp. *Shinran hitori*) as an example of the Pure Land “Person,” and Linji’s “true person of no rank” (Ch. *yi wuwei zhenren* 一無位真人; Jp. *ichi mui shinnin*) as an example of the Zen ‘Person.’ We could say

that in the case of Shinran, the “supra-individual ‘Person’” is expressed in the context of the individual that is an ordinary being (*bonpu* in Japanese), and in the case of Linji that the “genuine individual” is expressed in living in the “supra-individual,” having gone beyond the self. The former is emotional, the latter intellectual.

Had Suzuki pursued to their conclusion these two directions, a truly interesting unfolding of thought would have been possible. However, insisting he had no wish to “be trapped between two different directions of thought,” he pursued this no further.⁶ He then turned the discussion to Japanese-ness, stating that the above realization “was experienced only by means of Japanese spirituality.”⁷ While his argument in this section contains many jumps and is hard to follow, he points out that “Japanese spirituality possesses something that works within the emotional nature of the individual self,” and he focuses on “this one individual person, Shinran” as a typical example.⁸

This phrase draws from Shinran’s statement in the *Tannishō* (Record in lament of divergences), to the effect that “when I reflect deeply on Amida’s Original Vow which issues from his meditation for five long kalpas, I realize that it was solely for the sake of this one individual person, Shinran.”⁹ It was typical of Suzuki to identify an outstanding religious state in this statement. However, the phrase “this individual person, Shinran” is premised upon a response to “Amida’s Original Vow which issues from his meditation for five long kalpas.” The Other (Amida Buddha) is required for it to be meaningful. Therefore, Suzuki’s argument linking it directly to the “supra-individual Person” is something of a shortcut.

The Notion of “Person” in Chapter 5 of *Nihonteki reisei*

Suzuki also discusses the notion of “Person” in chapter 5 of *Nihonteki reisei*. Here we find a more thorough explanation that fills in the gaps of chapter 2. To explain the *Diamond Sutra*’s “[you] should abide on nothing while giving rise to that mind” (Ch. *yingwu suozhu ersheng qiyi* 心無所住而生其意; Jp. *ōmushojū ni shō goi*), Suzuki quotes and discusses the meaning of “Person” in Panshan Baoji’s (Jp. Banzan Hōshaku) statement, “All buddhas are persons; there is no difference between buddhas and persons” (Ch. *quanfo jiren renfo wuyi* 全仏即人人仏無異; Jp. *zenbutsu sokunin ninbutsu mui*) from *Jingde chuandeng lu* (Jp. *Keitoku dentōroku*; Record of the Transmission of the Lamp Published in the Jingde Era; T51:253b).¹⁰ He states, “From the standpoint of religious or spiritual life, one must no matter what extinguish all such discriminations, and function in absolute nothingness, in other words, non-abiding.”¹¹ “Person” is the subject’s

functioning that comes into existence when the individual has entirely dissolved, after entrenchment as an individual is eliminated.

Suzuki then quotes the enlightenment song of the Zen master Shidō Munan—"While living, be a dead man, thoroughly dead; Whatever you do, then, as you will, is always good," which Nishida Kitarō also liked to quote—as well as Linji's "true person of no rank."¹² Here we can clearly see a connection to Suzuki's later *Rinzai no kihon shisō*. At the same time, he also presents the idea of *jinen hōni*, or "naturalness of the dharma," and Shinran's statement "no working is true working" (*mugi o gi to su* 無義を義とす), understanding "Person" as the "discrimination of non-discrimination" (*mufunbetsu no funbetsu*).¹³ More than a few aspects of this are difficult to accept as they are: for example, considerable use of original terms familiar to the Kyoto school of philosophy, such as the latter phrase and "absolute nothingness" (*zettai mu*). Here, anyway, I limit myself to making clear that "Person" refers to a subject that begins to function after the individual has been temporarily dissolved.

We should also note that following his discussion of "Person," Suzuki turns to the issue of "passivity" (*judōsei*). He begins doing so from the standpoint of Shinran's Other Power (*tariki*) of "no calculations [*hakarai*]." Suzuki states, "The final position of religion is the acquisition of passivity,"¹⁴ thereby turning to passivity as a fundamental problem of religion. He finds this passivity in Buddhist scriptures' metaphor of a mirror that reflects all phenomena and "likening the mind of religious belief to trees and rocks."¹⁵ This is, in other words, the idea of "while living, be a dead man." Thus, he finds, passivity is in both Zen and Pure Land teachings. His incorporation of this constitutive moment of passivity introduces the Otherness that was lacking in his aforementioned discussion of "one individual person, Shinran." "Person" comes into existence only after taking in an outside stimulus. While Suzuki had already examined passivity head-on in his 1930 *Eastern Buddhist* article "Passivity in the Buddhist Life," by making it an important constitutive moment for "Person" in *Nihonteki reisei*, his ideas regarding spirituality acquired the potential to develop considerably.

Suzuki points out that this passivity is not simply passivity, for "the active is within the passive";¹⁶ after one has thoroughly become a dead man while living, one acts as one wills. "Person" takes on contradictions (that is, the logic of *sokuhi*), such as "the discrimination of non-discrimination, the non-discrimination of discrimination" and "passive being active, active being passive."¹⁷ This, Suzuki says, is *jinen hōni*, or naturalness.

As we have seen, in *Nihonteki reisei*, the constitutive moment of passivity is very important for "Person." In his later *Rinzai no kihon shisō*, however, Suzuki

ignores this aspect again. In the end, the notion of passivity is not put to full use in his thought regarding the notion of “Person.”

The Notion of “Person” in *Rinzai no kihon shisō*: Thought, Hermeneutics, and Intellectual History

Rinzai no kihon shisō was Suzuki’s last full-fledged Japanese-language monograph. We could call it a tour de force but it is certainly not easy to understand. Ogawa Takashi states, “While taking this idea of “Person” as a self-evident premise, he just presents as examples Tang era Chan practitioners’ words and actions one after another.”¹⁸ Kinugawa Kenji remarks that “this is a work very hard to understand,” before examining each quotation from the *Linjilu* (Jp. *Rinzairoku*; Record of Linji), and pointing out errors in Suzuki’s interpretations.¹⁹

While it is difficult to read and problematic, it deserves attention because Suzuki applies to his *Linjilu* interpretations the notion of “Person” that he had nurtured since *Nihonteki reisei*, and he also attempts to construct Chan intellectual history as the process of the establishment of Linji’s notion of “Person.” In other words, using “Person” as a keyword, Suzuki aims for an integration of thought, hermeneutics, and intellectual history. This work is hard to read because Suzuki does not discuss these three elements individually; they are indistinct. Furthermore, he does not always cover them in a systematic fashion. Nonetheless, Suzuki’s interpretation of the *Linjilu* forms a core. He fleshes out his understanding of “Person” based on this interpretation, and, having done so, examines pre-Linji Chan thought.

We first note that at the beginning of chapter 1 of *Rinzai no kihon shisō*, Suzuki makes an important methodological statement regarding his interpretation of the *Linjilu*: “The task of today is pointing to the fact of religious experience. Today’s research approach is to look at the *Linjilu* overall, and trace the development of his [Linji’s] *thought*.”²⁰ Here Suzuki presents “the fact of religious experience” and “thought” (*shisō*) as two central concepts. As we have seen, the former is the core of Suzuki’s own thought. However, we must ask whether Chan/Zen can ever be seen as “thought.” Chan/Zen is thought’s rejection in that it does not accept teachings that are systematized thought. To say that Chan/Zen itself has thought is a contradiction. Despite this, Suzuki tries to read thought into it. This is the basis upon which modern scholarship on the topic comes into existence. Suzuki wants to extract Chan/Zen thought out of the tension that exists between the two elements of “experience” and “thought” that he has established.

In 1943, before the publication of *Nihonteki reisei*, Suzuki had already published two works on Chan/Zen “thought”: *Zen no shisō* (Chan/Zen Thought) and the first volume of *Zen shisōshi kenkyū*. We could say that *Rinzai no kihon shisō* considers Chan/Zen thought anew by discussing it as inherent within the *Linjilu*.

The Notion of “Person”

Suzuki identified “Person” as comprising the fundamental thought of the *Linjilu*. Previously in *Nihonteki reisei*, along with “this one individual person, Shinran,” Suzuki had pointed to Linji’s “true person of no rank” as an example of thought regarding “Person.” It appears that Suzuki forms his notion of “Person” out of a generalization of these two models. Suzuki tackled Linji’s thought head-on in *Rinzai no kihon shisō*.

It is certainly true that, as Ogawa Takashi states, Suzuki does not really explain the notion of “Person” itself. This is because he was taking as a premise his ample discussions of it in earlier works such as *Nihonteki reisei*. While he does not provide a detailed explanation, in places such as the following, he does present in a straightforward, formularized expression regarding “Person,” as well as his “Person”-based understanding of the *Linjilu*: “In Linji’s words, spirituality is the Person. . . . It is the ‘true person of no rank,’ the ‘person on the path that relies on nothing [*mue no dō* 〈*nin*〉 無依の道 〈人〉].’ The *Linjilu* is expounded based upon this Person, it is a record of the functioning of this Person. By understanding this ‘Person,’ one grasps that which runs throughout this text. . . . This Person is the supra-individual as well as a single individual. In other words, Linji is Linji as well as that which is not Linji. . . . ‘Person’ is one who lives the logic of *sokuhi*.”²¹

Suzuki’s basic definition of “Person” can be found in his statement “This ‘Person’ is the supra-individual as well as a single individual.” Suzuki wants to read the *Linjilu* as the spiritual functioning that is “Person.” He frequently states that “Person” finds the most direct expression in the *Linjilu*’s statements regarding the “true person of no rank” when he was in the Dharma Hall giving a sermon. Suzuki had already pointed this out in *Nihonteki reisei*, where he quoted as follows: “‘On your lump of red flesh is a true person without rank who is always going in and out of the face of every one of you. Those who have not yet confirmed this, look, look!’ Then a monk came forward and asked, ‘What about the true person of no rank?’ The master got down from his seat, seized the monk, and cried, ‘Speak, speak!’ The monk faltered. Shoving him away, the master said, ‘The true person of no rank—what kind of dried piece of shit is he!’ Then he returned to his quarters.”²²

Chan scholars in recent years do not see this passage as an expression of the fundamental thought of Linji. I will return to this point below, but here, let us examine how Suzuki understands “Person” here by going through its characteristics. Compared to *Nihonteki reisei*, *Rinzai no kihon shisō* explains “Person” making more use of specific texts. Suzuki’s explanation is therefore somewhat involved, but it is not indecipherable.

First, “Person” is not static but functions dynamically. As Suzuki states, in the *Linjilu* one finds “Person” in phrases like “the person of the way who depends upon nothing,”²³ and “you, the persons who are listening to my discourse right now before my very eyes” (Ch. *niji jin muqian tingfa deren* 你即目前聽法底人; Jp. *chisoku kon mokuzen tokuhō teijin*).²⁴ As he points out, “Linji frequently says *tingfa de* [those who are listening to my discourse].”²⁵ This refers to “you” (Ch. *ni*; Jp. *chi*), in other words, the monks in training listening to Linji’s Dharma talk. Suzuki sees this *tingfa de* as “the core of the notion of Person” because “with only *muqian xianjin* [now before my eyes], simply a philosophical or intellectual existence is conceived of, and there is no actual *functioning* that emerges from it. . . . We must recognize that its uniqueness lies in its expressing *functioning* [of ‘Person’; that is, “listening”].”²⁶

Second, Suzuki admonishes against a pantheistic interpretation, which would hold that during religious experience the individual is dissolved in a Dharma body-like totality. Putting aside the appropriateness of this definition, in *Nihonteki reisei* it at least seemed as if we would be able to understand spiritual experience in this way: the establishment of the subject after having dismantled the individual. However, when it comes to “Person” in Linji’s thought, the individual is not abandoned: “Linji’s ‘Person’ is not waiting behind the multitude of individuals [*kota*].” He explains, “The multitude of individuals are themselves ‘Persons.’”²⁷ An individual fully exists as an individual, and the three bodies of the Buddha (the Dharma, reward, and response bodies) are also “not outside of the mind” (Ch. *xinwai wufa*; Jp. *shinge muhō*).²⁸ They are realized in the functioning of the individual. In this way, Suzuki thoroughly eliminates that which transcends the individual. However, how can there then be a “supra-individual individual”?

Third, the issue arises of how this “supra-individual” comes into existence. In this regard, Suzuki speaks of intellectual discrimination and spiritual awakening, which he had covered before writing *Rinzai no kihon shisō*. He understands the supraindividual “Person” to be attained by spiritual experience: “When the intellect itself dies [Jp. *sōshin shitsumyō*; Ch. *sangshen shiming*], there is a spiritual awakening.”²⁹ The supraindividual “Person” comes into existence when the intellect’s dualism vanishes: “Between spiritual awakening and intellectual abstraction there is an insurmountable trench.”³⁰

However, does this not again lead to a dualism between intellectual discriminative thinking and spiritual awakening? According to Suzuki, this is not the case: “The experiential fact of intellectual discrimination penetrating its own non-discriminatory root—or its own root non-discrimination—is spiritual awakening.”³¹ Therein the “discrimination of non-discrimination comes into existence.” This is a very important point for understanding the spiritual “Person.” One must overcome a gap in going from the intellectual to the spiritual. Therefore, “when reaching that which is a spiritual awakening, one becomes ‘Person’ [(*nin*) *o taitoku suru*].”³² However, the individual that is discrimination does not disappear after this trench has been surmounted. The supra-individual that is nondiscrimination is not separate from the individual that is discrimination; they cannot be divided. The supra-individual cannot come into existence outside of the individual. “Person” that is the supra-individual individual is established where this contradiction exists *as is*.

The above can be illustrated as follows:

Intellectual discrimination \Rightarrow Spiritual awakening
 Individual \Rightarrow “Person” (= individual + supra-individual)

This is Zen enlightenment put in modern terms.

Fourth, “Person” is complete in itself, lacking nothing: “What is lacking?” (Ch. *qianshao shenme*; Jp. *kanshō jūmo*).³³ This is the state frequently described in the *Linjilu* as “doing nothing” (Ch. *wushi*; Jp. *buji*) or, in the words of Mazu (Jp. Baso), “the ordinary mind being the path” (Ch. *pinghcangxin shidao*; Jp. *byōjōshin kore dō*). Suzuki also uses the phrase *kannagara no michi*, or the “way of the gods.”³⁴ He explains this as follows: “One returning [*gensō ekō shite*] from [the state in which] ‘mountains are not mountains and water is not water’ again to [the state in which] ‘mountains become mountains and water becomes water’ is very different from in the first place ‘mountains being mountains and water being water.’ However, if we only look at what is apparent, in terms of that which makes the person of the path that relies on nothing be the person of the path that relies on nothing, there is neither gain nor loss whatsoever in the present, past, there, or here.”³⁵

This is also the example Suzuki gives when discussing the “logic of *sokuhi*” in the fifth chapter of *Nihonteki reisei*. Ogawa Takashi explains this in an easy-to-understand way as turning from 0 degrees to 180 degrees, and then to 360 degrees.³⁶ If one rotates 360 degrees, then one is back at 0 degrees. While it looks the same, it is “very different.” In appearance, the Person that is a “supra-individual individual” is no different than just an individual. Just by looking one cannot

differentiate between the state of “doing nothing” in which someone has not engaged in any religious training (0 degrees) and the state of “doing nothing” in which, after religious training, someone has become enlightened (360 degrees). However, here the problem of “do-nothing Zen”—which holds that it is fine not to engage in religious training or anything else—emerges.

Have those in front of Linji listening to his Dharma talk—to them he calls out, “You, the persons who are listening to my discourse right now before my very eyes!”—truly rotated 360 degrees and arrived at a spiritual awakening? Probably not. Since they tend to be satisfied in a 0-degree state, Linji exhausts his words in his preaching, encouraging them to awaken. Thus, insofar as “true people of no rank” and “you, who are persons listening to my discourse right now before my very eyes” have not done so, they are unable to function as “Person.”

Above we considered four characteristics of the notion of “Person” that Suzuki identified in *Linjilu*. While Suzuki discusses various other issues as well, his major points regarding the notion of “Person” can be found above. Now, let us slightly change our perspective and turn to a fifth point, namely, that Suzuki does not only focus on Linji’s notion of “Person,” he also goes back into Chan history to identify Linji’s position therein. Suzuki points out, using concrete examples, that here and there one finds that the notion of “Person” in Chan figures prior to Linji. Here I would like to point to the fact that Suzuki summarizes Chan intellectual history at the end of this work in the following way:

The “*mind of no-mind*” [Ch. *xin wuxin*; Jp. *shin mushin*] transmitted by Bodhidharma became “*seeing* [buddha] nature” [Ch. *jianxing*; Jp. *kenshō*] in Huineng [Jp. Enō]. This clearly marked a turning point in Chan/Zen intellectual history. Shenhui [Jp. Jinne], saying “the single character for *knowing* [Ch. *zhi*; Jp. *chi*] is the gate of myriad wonders,” changed Huineng’s “seeing” into “knowing,” losing the outstanding nature of this idea. Mazu then advanced “functioning” [Ch. *yong*; Jp. *yū*]. Mazu’s Chan/Zen was one of “great capacity and great functioning” [Ch. *daji dayong*; Jp. *daiki daiyū*]. Linji changed this again. He synthesized seeing, knowing, and functioning as “Person.” “Person” is a very instructive concept. While considerable developments in Chan/Zen thought can be expected from this [idea], in both China and Japan it was not carried on.³⁷

Here Suzuki presents the development from the “mind” to “seeing,” “knowing,” “functioning,” and, finally, “Person.” We should note that all terms preceding “Person” are terms used in Buddhist studies on doctrine. The first three had been used since the time of Indian Buddhism. In other words, “They were always

within the traditional vocabulary.”³⁸ We could perhaps see “functioning” as a term imbued with the characteristics of Chinese thought. It is also an abstract philosophical one. Suzuki holds that Linji brought together these terms, expressing them not with traditional philosophical terminology but with the nonphilosophical and concrete everyday term of “Person.” In order for Chan / Zen to exist as “thought,” it must be “thought” that lives with concrete reality as concrete reality, and not drawn back to abstract doctrinal studies. Such was one of the conclusions Suzuki reached after *Nihonteki reisei* when examining *Linjilu*’s notion of “Person” as a culmination to his Japanese language works.

A Critical Examination of the Notion of “Person”

As touched upon above, recent research on the *Linjilu* is skeptical of interpretations that emphasize the “true person of no rank,” as Suzuki did. According to Ogawa Takashi, who has offered a new view of Chan history, there were two major currents in Tang dynasty Chan:³⁹ Mazu Chan and Shitou (Jp. Sekitō) Chan. The former is characterized by ideas such as “this mind is Buddha” (Ch. *shixin shifo*; Jp. *zeshin zebutsu*), “functioning is [buddha] nature” (Ch. *zuoyong jixing*; Jp. *sayū sokushō*), and “ordinary doing nothing” (Ch. *pingchang wushi*; Jp. *byōjō buji*). In other words, it asserts that day-to-dayness is, as it is, the Buddha’s enlightenment. “Functioning is [buddha] nature” means that the functions of the senses and consciousness are, as they are, a manifestation of buddha nature. This exact four-character compound, however, was not used by Mazu himself. We can see it as a view that embraces one as one is. Linji and others express it as “doing nothing.” If understood in an extreme fashion, it can be taken to mean that since one is a buddha as one is in everyday life, there is no need to engage in religious training.

Shitou, on the other hand, criticized this Mazu Chan. He thought that everyday functioning is not the true self, and that, to use Ogawa’s phrasing, one must find in the depths of the “self of *energeia*” / “self of actuality” (*genjitsutai no jiko*) the “self of *Eigentlichkeit*” / “self of authenticity” (*honraisei no jiko*). Ogawa sees the characteristics of this Shitou Chan as best expressed in the phrase of his disciple Yueshan (Jp. Yakusan): “He is not similar to me, and I am not similar to him.”⁴⁰ Here, “he / him” is expressed by the third-person pronoun *qu* (Jp. *kare*). As Ogawa notes, it is “used to abstractly express the original person or master of the self, described here as the ‘self of authenticity.’”⁴¹ Therefore, Yueshan’s words mean that, not being satisfied with the self that appears in everyday life, one must arrive at the original self that lies in its depths. This directly confronted the issue of religious training that was lacking in Mazu Chan. However, a new

problem appeared: this can invite the misunderstanding that this *qu* is something that actually exists separately from “me.” In this way both Mazu and Shitou Chan had issues.

Similarly, Suzuki states, “It appears that a large proportion of those under Qingyuan like Shitou, Yueshan, Daowu, Yunyan, and Dongshan discussed things that would lead to the notion of ‘Person.’”⁴² In *Zen no shisō*, under the section “Person” (*hitori*) he covers a discussion between Yunyan and Daowu—both in the Shitou lineage—that shows this in an easy-to-understand fashion.⁴³ Yunyan was boiling tea, and his fellow monk Daowu came, and asked,

“Who are you boiling that for?”

Yunyan answered, “There is a person who said he wants it.”

“Shouldn’t you get him to do it himself?”

Yunyan answered, “Well, I am here and so . . .”

Here, it appears that there is “a person” separate from “I” (Yunyan). However, this would be strange. There is no possibility that a supraindividual person and an individual “I” would be different.

Linji belonged to Mazu’s lineage. In fact, Linji frequently spoke of “doing nothing” and “ordinariness.” For example, he said, “As to the Buddha-Dharma, no effort is necessary. You have only to be ordinary, with nothing to do—defecating, urinating, wearing clothes, eating food, and lying down when tired,” asserting that there is no Buddha dharma outside of everyday life.⁴⁴ However, if one focuses on the “true person of no rank,” then one might think that there is an original self like the one asserted in Shitou Chan. Therefore, Ogawa and Kinugawa are both critical of focusing on the “true person of no rank” phrase, and see the Dharma talk in which it appears as having been a failure based on the fact that Linji gives up and returns to his quarters (Ch. *fangzhang*; Jp. *hōjō*).⁴⁵

While I will not embark here on a discussion of the status of the phrase “true person of no rank,” there is room to consider whether Linji’s position in the *Linjilu* is really an exact replica of the Mazu Chan “functioning is buddha nature” doctrine. It is certainly true that Linji frequently quotes Mazu and attaches importance to this lineage. When read literally, the aforementioned phrase “you, who are the persons listening to my discourse before my very eyes right now” that Suzuki emphasizes does refer to the functioning of perception/consciousness (listening). Therefore, one can understand it as referring to the Mazu Chan “functioning as buddha nature” doctrine.

However, Linji is not advocating doing nothing. As Suzuki points out, Linji changes Mazu’s “functioning” into “Person” and draws considerable attention to

the active nature of “Person.” Linji states that “Person” who is “right now before my very eyes” engages in the activity of traversing “the ten directions” and “freely” being “himself in all three realms.” “Person” also has the ability to preach to the buddhas: “On meeting a buddha he teaches the buddha.”⁴⁶ Linji also expresses this functioning as “bright and vigorous” (Ch. *huobo bode*; Jp. *kappatsu pacchi*).⁴⁷ In other words, he is seeking not a 0 degree “doing nothing,” but a 360 degree “doing nothing,” which leads him to issue his famous harsh reprimand in the form of a shout (Ch. *he*; Jp. *katsu*). With Mazu Chan giving rise to a tendency for satisfaction with a 0 degree state, Linji wanted practitioners to arrive at the 360 degree state of “doing nothing” through intense religious training.

With the above in mind, it appears that Suzuki’s reading of the *Linjilu* that places at its core the notion of “Person” is not necessarily wrong. Chan, while trying to part ways with the study of doctrine, had only been able to articulate “thought” in doctrinal studies terms. Suzuki saw Linji, in contrast, as having established Chan thought in his idea of “Person” who is entirely enmeshed in the concrete. This understanding of Suzuki’s certainly merits our consideration.

We should also note that Suzuki, in investigating the relationship in Chan/Zen between the supraindividual and the individual, changed his view from writings such as *Nihonteki reisei*. In *Nihonteki reisei*, Suzuki considered the supraindividual as a Dharma body-like entity that dissolved the individual, and held that “Person” was established when the individual arose after this dissolution. However, in *Rinzai no kihon shisō*, he rejects the idea that the individual is dissolved by anything like a Dharma body. He holds that “Person” is established when the discrimination of the intellect changes to a spiritual realization, and that the supraindividual is the authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*) that makes “Person” be “Person.” “Person” comes into existence out of *sokuhi*-like contradictions: the “supra-individual individual” and the “discrimination of non-discrimination.” This is another one of Suzuki’s views worth considering.

However, as I mentioned when discussing *Nihonteki reisei*, in Suzuki’s understanding of “Person,” there is no constitutive moment of the Other. In *Nihonteki reisei*, Suzuki did not fully develop his ideas regarding examples of passivity; it disappears. In *Rinzai no kihon shisō*, while he covers the issue of “belief” as found in the *Linjilu*, he does so primarily as belief in oneself, and Suzuki does not discuss the Other. One could look for the constitutive moment of the Other in Chan/Zen by turning to the teacher-disciple relationship in the “mind-to-mind transmission” of the teachings (Ch. *yixin chuanxin*; Jp. *ishin denshin*). Only when a teacher and disciple come into contact with one another does “mind-to-mind transmission” arise. Otherwise, many Chan/Zen question-and-answer-format

exchanges also vividly show that Chan/Zen does not come into existence outside of coexistence with others, outside of communality. However, both Suzuki and other modern interpreters of Chan/Zen in general close the self off from the outside world by limiting it to the “investigation of the self” (Jp. *koji kyūmei*), thus losing sight of an important issue.

(Translated by Dylan Luers Toda)

Notes

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1. Suzuki Daisetsu, *Jōdokei shisōron* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016), 7.
2. “Kongōkyō no zen” is in *SDZa* 5, separate from *Nihonteki reisei*.
3. Note that the English translation of *Nihonteki reisei* does not include the crucial fifth chapter.
4. Suzuki Daisetz, *Japanese spirituality*, trans. Norman Waddell (Tokyo: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 1972), 76–77; Suzuki Daisetz, *Nihonteki reisei: Kanzenban* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan 2010), 109.
5. Suzuki, *Japanese spirituality*, 76–77; Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 109.
6. Suzuki, *Japanese spirituality*, 78; Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 109.
7. Suzuki, *Japanese spirituality*, 78 (modified); Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 110.
8. Suzuki, *Japanese spirituality*, 78; Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 111.
9. Suzuki, *Japanese spirituality*, 77 (modified).
10. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 355.
11. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 356.
12. Translation from Suzuki, *Japanese spirituality*, 124.
13. Translation from Dennis Hirota, Inagaki Hisao, Tokunaga Michio, and Uryuzu Ryushin, trans., *The Collected Works of Shinran*, vol. 1, *The Writings* (Kyoto: Jōdo Shinshū Honganji-ha, 1997), 666.
14. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 360.
15. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 361.
16. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 361.
17. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 362.
18. Ogawa Takashi, *Goroku no shisōshi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011), 428.
19. Kinugawa Kenji, “Zengaku satsuki,” *Hanazono daigaku bungakubu kenkyū kiyō* 48 (2016): 93.
20. *SDZa* 3:343; Suzuki Daisetsu, *Suzuki Daisetsu senshū* 鈴木大拙選集, 26 vols. (13 + 8 [zoku] + 5 [tsuikan]) (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1952–1958), 15:3 (hereafter *SDS*).
21. *SDZa* 3:350; *SDS*: 15:12–13.
22. Quoted in *SDZa* 3:352; *SDS*: 15:15. Translation (modified) from Sasaki 2008, 4–5. Japanese: Iriya Yoshitaka, trans. *Rinzairoku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 20.
23. Translation from Sasaki 2009, 197. Japanese: Iriya, *Rinzairoku*, 59.
24. Translation (modified) from Sasaki 2009, 160. Japanese: trans., *Rinzairoku*, 36.

25. *SDZa* 3:386; *SDS*:15:58.
26. *SDZa* 3:386; *SDS*:15:58.
27. *SDZa* 3:385; *SDS*:15:57.
28. *SDZa* 3:367; *SDS*:15:33.
29. *SDZa* 3:507; *SDS*:15:205.
30. *SDZa* 3:490; *SDS*:15:184.
31. *SDZa* 3:507; *SDS*:15:205.
32. *SDZa* 3:487; *SDS*:15:180.
33. Quoted in *SDZa* 3:379; *SDS*:15:49. Translation from Sasaki 2009, 208. Japanese: Iriya, *Rinzairoku*, 34.
34. *SDZa* 3:380; *SDS*:15:50.
35. *SDZa* 3:380; *SDS*:15:50.
36. Ogawa, *Goroku no shisōshi*, 260.
37. *SDZa* 3:521; *SDS*:15:224.
38. *SDZa* 3:441; *SDS*:15:124.
39. Ogawa, *Goroku no shisōshi*, 41–147.
40. Ogawa, *Goroku no shisōshi*, 112. Sun Changwu, Kinugawa Kenji, and Nishiguchi Yoshio, eds., *Zutangji* (Shanghai: Zhonghua Book Company, 2007), 224.
41. Ogawa, *Goroku no shisōshi*, 113.
42. *SDZa* 3:459; *SDS*:15:145.
43. *SDZa* 13:160; *SDS*: 2:193. *Jingde Zhuandelu* (Jp. *Keitoku dentōroku*) 14, T51: 315a.
44. Translation (modified) from Sasaki 2009, 185. Japanese: Iriya, *Rinzairoku*, 50.
45. Ogawa Takashi, *Rinzai roku: Zen no goroku no kotoba to shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008), 181; Kinugawa, “Zengaku sakki,” 447.
46. Translation from Sasaki 2008, 192. Japanese: Iriya, *Rinzairoku*, 54.
47. Translation from Sasaki 2008, 198. Japanese: Iriya, *Rinzairoku*, 61.

Suzuki Daisetsu, Spirituality, and the Problem of Shinto

JOHN BREEN

A striking feature of Suzuki Daisetsu's postwar writings is his merciless critique of Shinto. Shinto, for Suzuki, is a dangerous ideology steeped in politics; it is bereft of "spirituality," and it led Japan to war. This, in a nutshell, is his argument. Here I trace the origins of Suzuki's Shinto critique back to the Meiji period (1868–1912), and pursue its evolution through Taisho and early Showa (1912–1926 and 1926–1946, respectively), in order to expose its underlying structure. It might be claimed that Suzuki's Shinto critique does no more than echo the anti-Shinto propaganda of Japan's American occupiers. Certainly, the linkage between Suzuki Daisetsu, General Headquarters, and General Headquarters' Shinto policy merits close scrutiny, but this I must leave for another occasion.

In 1897, the twenty-seven-year-old Suzuki Daisetsu left Japan and headed for America. The following year he published an essay called "Tabi no tsurezure" (Travel tales) in the journal *Rikugō zasshi*.¹ There he wrote of the "hypocrisy" of Japan's political leaders who take advantage of the "frailty" of Japanese people to impart "a religious significance" to the monarch and his commands. "Abandon the thought," he told his readers, "that the Japanese are a great people simply because they have a 2,500-year history, and a monarch whose dynasty has endured throughout the ages." "What is there to be proud of?" Suzuki, it may be noted, understood "Shinto" to mean little more than the monarchy and its myths. The essay "Tabi no tsurezure" was Suzuki's first Shinto foray. It was to be more than twenty years before he broached the matter again.

In 1921, Suzuki was appointed professor at Otani University in Kyoto, and shortly thereafter he penned an essay in English styled, "A Contemporary Buddhist View of Shinto." Interestingly, he published no corresponding Japanese version for domestic consumption. "What the government wants," he lamented, "is that all Japanese subjects worship the emperor and the ancestral spirits solely from the principles of loyalty and patriotism and reverence. . . . Their official declaration is that Shinto is not a religion, and yet all they are doing for it, that is,

encouraging worship at the shrines and apotheosis of the imperial spirits, is no less than the creation of a new state religion.” Moreover, he reflected, “Shinto and militarism are good friends, the success of the one [has] magnified immeasurably the importance of the other.” He concluded with a protest: Buddhism and Christianity “object to having Shinto forced upon them—Shinto founded upon mythology, poor in content, made a tool of political theory, supported by pedantry, and devoid of inner life.”²

Suzuki appears to have written nothing on Shinto during the 1930s, state Shinto’s “fascist phase” (as defined by historian Shimazono Susumu). It was only in the 1940s, after the war had turned decisively against Japan, that Suzuki returned with due caution to the subject. Suzuki penned a short piece called “Shisō no tabide” (Intellectual departures) in the journal *Shindō*.³ There he took up the Shinto thought of the Edo period nativist Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843). Suzuki lamented Hirata’s “lack of intellectual breadth,” and warned that many of the “reactionary, conservative, and vainglorious thinkers” of the 1940s, who had “sprung up like bamboo shoots after a shower,” had a “psychological disposition” by no means dissimilar to that of Hirata. If the entire Japanese nation were to become Hirata-like, he ventured, then Japan was “doomed to destruction.” This was the first time in forty-five years that Suzuki had written in Japanese on Shinto.

Suzuki returned to the Shinto theme with a new urgency the very next year in his *Nihonteki reisei* (1944; published in English as *Japanese Spirituality*). The “spirituality” of the title meant “religiosity,” “religious awareness,” or “religious impulse.” Spirituality in these senses furnished Suzuki with his critical perspective. “What we know as shrine Shinto or ancient Shinto is a consolidation of the primitive customs of the Japanese race. It has nothing to do with ‘spirituality,’” he wrote. In Suzuki’s understanding, Shinto in the 1940s was quite simply “a political ideology, unconcerned with religious belief.” But Shinto was not always thus. The Ise Shinto that flourished in the Kamakura period (1185–1333) was altogether different, Suzuki opined without further embellishment. This was none other than “Shinto’s awakening.” And yet, Shinto was fated to depend for support on Buddhism or Confucianism or some other thought system. In the end, its efforts to establish a unique (religious) identity were doomed. Suzuki concluded with a warning: modern shrine Shinto “fails to distinguish between the worlds of emotion and of spirituality,” and as a consequence, “it poses a considerable danger to society in terms of daily living and acting.”⁴

In *Nihonteki reisei*, Suzuki’s first purpose was to explore the spiritual possibilities of the True Pure Land and Zen schools of Buddhism. Shinto was a secondary concern. But in a series of lectures he gave at Otani University in June 1945, Shinto loomed large. The lectures were published after the war in 1946 as *Nihon no*

reiseika (The spiritualization of Japan). Suzuki proposed in his preface that Japan's spiritualization could never be realized without first "disposing of Shinto" (Shintō *no shimatsu*). Shinto was "inextricably linked with *kokutai* ideology, reverence for the emperor, extreme nationalism, and propaganda about imperial virtue." "Shinto would be fine if it were possessed of spirituality," but it was not. Its substance was always to be found in "whatever [system of thought] it had locked on to."⁵

In 1945, Suzuki also published *Reiseiteki Nihon no kensetsu* (Constructing a spiritual Japan). Here, again, his preface makes clear that Shinto was now central to his concerns. "Shinto attached itself to government. Borrowing political power, [Shinto] imparted a new energy to it, added compulsion, and religiously oppressed people at home. This goes without saying, but it also [oppressed] the peoples of Korea, Manchuria and other countries besides." His verdict on Shinto's legacy was damning: "It was Shinto that destroyed the polity, reduced the Japanese people to misery, and brought about the ruin of Japan."⁶ Suzuki's most thoroughgoing Shinto critique is to be found in these two books, but given the considerable overlap between them in content, I confine my cursory comments here to the more concise *Reiseiteki Nihon no kensetsu*.

Suzuki writes of shrine Shinto, sect Shinto, ideological Shinto, ethical Shinto, and ancient Shinto, but is less than rigorous in discriminating between them. The angle of his attack, however, is always "spirituality." Unlike the "Japanese spirit" (*Nihon seishin*), with its connotations of political particularism, "Japanese spirituality," he insists, "is thoroughly compassionate and merciful. It is an earnest wish, a boundless, super-human vow." For Suzuki, these values had been integral to True Pure Land Buddhism from the medieval period, but not to Shinto. Shinto has "purging," and it has "purification"; it has "piety and awe," but there is no "absolute love," and no "great compassion." Shinto "has no tears"; Shinto kami, Suzuki lamented, do not "break down and cry." Shinto rather is "a religion of power," which embraces "an infantile nationalism, steeped in politics and rigid with exclusivism." As a result, it is bereft of "deep religiosity." The power that Shinto exudes could only ever lead to "exclusivist self-regard" and, beyond that, "to imperialism, expansionism and appropriation."⁷

For Suzuki, it was Hirata Atsutane and his followers who were responsible for unleashing Shinto on the international stage. The Japanese military—the most conspicuous of Hirata devotees—added to the Shinto mix "a Prussian-style imperialism," and then "stirred up the clouds of war in one corner of Manchuria, only to dispatch them throughout the continent. In the name of the Great East Asian War, they took on the world."⁸ It seems strange that Suzuki should single out Hirata Atsutane, a nativist thinker active in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when condemning Shinto for its involvement in mid-twentieth-century

warfare. But for Suzuki, it was Hirata who bequeathed to the world the “most perilous” ideology of Japan as father of all nations, of the emperor as master of all nations, and of Shinto as the way of all nations. Hirata Atsutane was the “instigator” (*genkyō*).

Suzuki did not shirk from discussing Shinto’s influence on the emperor. Shinto “attached itself to the monarchy and transformed the emperor into a god,” he protested, echoing his arguments of twenty years earlier. The ideology of the emperor as a living god and of the imperial dynasty as unbroken for all time may have been legitimated by the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* myth-histories, but there was nothing “either mystical or sacred about it.” “Nor is it any cause for pride.” What benefit, Suzuki asks, does an unbroken line of emperors bring to the construction of Japanese spirituality? “It is simply good for nothing,” he insists. So, what to do with the emperor? The emperor has “a spiritual mission,” but to fulfil it he must “abandon pretensions of being a living-god above the clouds.” He must descend to earth, and become “just one person among a million others like us ‘his subjects.’” If the emperor “returns to humanity,” then he may serve society as a “sacred mirror [*yata no kagami*] that reflects back on the people their ideals.” The prewar ideology of “one emperor one nation” [*ikkun banmin*] was an articulation of political power, and it destroyed the people’s subjectivity. What the Japanese people needed now was a new polity, “one erected of necessity upon foundations of spiritual awareness.”⁹

Such in brief are the conspicuous features of Suzuki Daisetsu’s Shinto critique, but much remains frustratingly obscure. What, for example, became of the anger that animated Suzuki in 1923 to write his English essay on Shinto? What are we to make of the two decades of silence that ensued? Again, the focus of Suzuki’s Shinto critique is distinctive in that it falls on Shinto thought, especially—and intriguingly—that of early modern nativists such as Hirata Atsutane. But what of the institutions that sustained state Shinto, such as the Jinjakyoku (Shrine Bureau) and the later Jingiin (Shinto Office)? What, too, of shrines themselves, like the great shrines in Ise, where the Sun Goddess is worshipped, the Yasukuni Shrine dedicated to the war dead, and the many other state-funded shrines? What of shrine rites, and the imperial myths that gave them meaning? It seems that Suzuki had next to nothing to say, critical or otherwise, on these matters. What are we to make of this? For all its limitations, Suzuki’s Shinto critique was nonetheless unforgiving: it was Shinto that bore responsibility for the disastrous war. But where does the accusation leave the war responsibility of Buddhism, especially that of Zen Buddhism? And what of Suzuki’s reflections on his own wartime role? What, finally, are the interconnections, if any, between Suzuki’s trenchant Shinto critique as Japan faced defeat, Buddhist fortunes under the American occupation, and the so-called Shinto Directive issued by GHQ in 1945? These are just some of the questions demanding critical attention.

Notes

1. Suzuki Teitarō Daisetsu, “Tabi no tsurezure,” *Rikugō zasshi* 210 (1898): 68–73.
2. Suzuki Daisetsu quoted in D. C. Holtom, ed., *The Christian Movement in Japan, Korea and Formosa* (s.l.: Federation of Christian Missions, 1923).
3. Suzuki Daisetsu, “Shisō no tabide,” *Shindō* 18, no. 5 (1943): n.p.
4. *SDZb* 8:11–222.
5. *SDZb* 8:231–420.
6. *SDZb* 9: 101–104.
7. *SDZb* 9: 104–107.
8. *SDZb* 9: 101.
9. *SDZb* 9: 146–148.

PART IV

Postwar D. T. Suzuki (c. 1946–c. 2000)

Suzuki Daisetz' "Spiritual Japan" and Buddhist War Responsibility

An Alternative History of the Allied Occupation
of Japan, 1945–1952

ALICE FREEMAN

Japan's defeat and surrender in the late summer of 1945 was one of the greatest—and most traumatic—turning points in Japan's history. The blazing sunset of imperial Japan and its accompanying atomic fallout brought death and extreme suffering to the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and scorched the hopes of many who had sought meaning in the aspirations of the war and the merciless sacrifices that it had entailed. Those who had directed the war sweltered under the glare as Allied scrutiny came to bear. Yet the evening calm brought relief from the intense heat of battle and its uncompromising demands on national life, and the charred ruins of flattened cities offered fertile ground for new visions for the future of Japan that began to sprout like shoots of bamboo in the cooling rain. As the initial pit of despair caved in to a morass of hedonism, and liberal and Marxist thought currents bubbled to the surface of the muddied political arena, various new religious movements rose up to offer spiritual manifestos for the future of Japan.¹ Some of these religions would achieve domestic and international renown over the ensuing decades.² However, as will be argued below, the Japanese spirituality that would have the greatest impact on Europe and America during the 1950s and 1960s came from elsewhere.

Amid the tumult of 1945, the Zen scholar and proselytizer Suzuki Daisetz (1870–1966) continued his wartime existence of writing, receiving visitors, and tending the parched vegetable patch at his home in Kamakura.³ Already in his mid-70s, Suzuki had a distinguished career behind him, spanning three continents. Beginning with his residence in La Salle with the Theosophist Paul Carus from 1897 to 1908, Suzuki had endeavored to promote the appreciation of Japanese Buddhism in the Western world through a marathon of publishing and public speaking.⁴ His invitation to the World Congress of Faiths in 1936 and an accompanying tour of Britain, the United States, and Germany signified his increasing success and recognition by high society internationally.⁵ However, the

death of his American wife, Beatrice, in 1939 and the encroaching war had forced Suzuki to devote more of his attention to a Japanese readership.⁶ This was not difficult, for Suzuki was equally well networked in political and intellectual circles in his home country. The philosopher Nishida Kitarō was a childhood friend, and Suzuki's teaching posts at Gakushūin (1909–1921) and Ōtani University (1921–1940) saw him interacting regularly with such luminaries as Count Makino Nobuaki and the Konoe family.⁷ These connections continued throughout the war, during which Suzuki continued writing prolifically. During the 1940s the content of those writings and Suzuki's American connections piqued the suspicion of the Japanese thought police, who watched him warily.⁸ In the 1990s his Anglophone critics would conversely decry his apparent complicity with the geopolitical turmoil that obstructed his overseas proselytization mission for almost a decade.

In late 1945, Suzuki's fortune was beginning to rise like an evening star in the imperial twilight. Although few perceived it at first, from the hub in Kamakura surrounding Suzuki's magnetic personality there began to radiate a new current in Japanese, American, and global history that, although unable to overturn political developments, ran counter to the dominant narratives of postwar world history even as it intertwined closely with it. Within a decade, the Japanese Buddhism that Suzuki had been promoting overseas for half a century would finally achieve a popular following in the West, especially in the United States, Japan's vanquisher in 1945.⁹ This chapter will examine the beginnings of this process at the heart of the Allied Occupation of Japan. By examining Suzuki's role amid the official developments of the occupation in the transmission of Japanese Buddhism to the West and the concealment of Buddhist war responsibility, this chapter will offer an alternative history of the Allied Occupation of Japan. This alternative history subverts conventional narratives of Americanization, and sheds some light upon the origins of one of the most controversial topics in Japan's postwar cultural relations with the West.

The Allied Occupation has frequently been presented as a rupture in Japanese history at which, under the leadership of the United States, Japan reentered the political and cultural sphere of the democratic West.¹⁰ Moreover, it has often been pointed out that occupation reforms, particularly land reform, were devastating to institutional Buddhism.¹¹ Both of these theses are true. However, in what follows I will demonstrate how, through his engagement with a number of key occupation personnel, Suzuki took advantage of this critical juncture in Japan's relations with the outside world to accelerate the dissemination of Japanese culture and Buddhism in the West. Suzuki's vision for a "spiritual Japan," which he had been formulating already during the war years, would seek

to temper the potential excesses of Americanization, democratization, and mechanization of occupied Japan with a spirituality that was simultaneously Japanese and global, and yet avoided the pitfalls of the recently discredited Shinto ultranationalism.¹² Although this vision did not materialize in Japan, it did resonate with the outlook of a number of key occupation personnel who would subsequently help Suzuki to convey it to America and Europe, where in the mid-1950s a “Zen boom” would begin to resound.

The transmission of Zen to the West that was precipitated during these years was contingent upon another development in occupied Japan: the concealment of Japanese Buddhist war responsibility. A half century after Suzuki began his postwar Buddhist mission in the United States, a generation of “Zen boomers” would be devastated by the publication of Brian Victoria’s *Zen at War* (1997) and *Zen War Stories* (2003), which uncovered uncomfortable truths concerning the cooperation and complicity of the Japanese Buddhist establishment with state-led militarism from the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894 up until the eventual collapse of the Japanese empire in 1945. Victoria’s writings, which caused “shock waves” in the English-speaking world, revealed how almost without exception Japan’s Buddhist leaders had exhorted soldiers and civilians to give their all to the war effort in a spirit of Zen selflessness. Japanese Buddhists had argued that the development of Zen in Japan was testimony to Japanese supremacy, and glorified Japan’s war in Asia as an act of Buddhist compassion that would bring peace and civilization to Asia. Some priests even accompanied troops to the battlefields in pursuit of this mission. Victoria shows how while Japanese Buddhist institutions’ collaboration with the war effort was a necessary means of survival in the wartime environment, many institutions and individuals went above and beyond state demands in advocating militarism and expansionism. There is almost no record of Buddhist resistance to the war, and the fate of those who resisted demonstrates why.¹³ Numerous studies have subsequently been produced concerning the connections between Japanese Buddhism and imperialism.¹⁴ However, the mystery remains as to why such a potentially sensitive topic should have apparently gone unnoticed in the West until the 1990s.

This chapter will argue that the occupation was not only a key moment for the transmission of Zen to the West but was moreover the point at which the recent militarist past of Japanese Buddhism was concomitantly hidden from the Western gaze. I will show how this process was not only encouraged by Suzuki and other Buddhists but was in fact assisted inadvertently by occupation religious policies. Officially, these policies sought to sever the relationship between Japanese religions and the state so as to prevent the recurrence of ultranationalism. Unofficially, American occupiers sought to conceal the problem of Christian

war guilt in order to advance the standing of Christianity in Japan. Ultimately, as I shall argue below, while failing to Christianize Japan, these policies deflected domestic and international attention from Japanese Buddhism's recent ultranationalist past, thereby unintentionally assisting the development of a cultural phenomenon that ran counter to their own aims. The occupation thus served as a pivot for Zen between the militarism of Japanese Buddhism during World War II and the anarchist ideology that would subsequently characterize the counter-cultural extremes of the postwar "Zen boom" in the West.

Democratization, Demilitarization, Americanization, and Christianization

The political and cultural significance of the occupation is usually interpreted in terms of its initial stated objectives of demilitarization and democratization and subsequent response to the exigencies of the Cold War.¹⁵ These processes involved the dissolution of Japan's empire and army, the purge of leaders and trial of war criminals, the reintroduction of democracy through the drafting of a new constitution with an emphasis on individual human rights, the amendment of the role of the emperor from that of a divine sovereign to a constitutional "cultural symbol," the separation of religion and state, the prohibition of ultranationalist discourse, the redistribution of land, and the promotion of American values and culture. As the Soviet threat intensified in 1948, US policy shifted from demilitarization to the reconstruction of Japan as a Cold War ally in the emergent bipolar world order. During this "reverse course," pragmatism overtook idealism as the purge of ultranationalist leaders was superseded by the purge of communists, and economic growth became a priority for creating a stable, anticommunist Japan. Eventually Japan's place in the Cold War world order was cemented in the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty, from which the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the People's Republic of China were excluded, and the Mutual Security Treaty with the United States of the same year, in which the United States was granted the right to operate military bases in Japan. Such policies, as the subject of the political and diplomatic history of occupied and postoccupation Japan, constitute the basis of a standard overarching narrative of the occupation as the beginning of Japan's postwar alignment with the US-dominated liberal Western Bloc.¹⁶ While the magnitude of American political influence over Japan during the occupation and beyond is irrefutable, this does not equate to a negation of Japanese subjectivity. Many studies have recognized the continuities between pre- and postdefeat Japan, especially the resilience of conservatism and nationalism, while others have highlighted the dynamism of grassroots

left-wing movements.¹⁷ However, it is only in the field of economic history that the occupation has been understood as the beginning of Japanese influence on the outside world—and even this owed much to American policy.¹⁸

Several surveys of religion under the occupation have examined the impact of the occupation on Japanese religions, and the response of Japan's religions to these changes, which sought to separate religion from the state and eliminate Shinto ultranationalism.¹⁹ Religious reforms were conducted in the name of the Western, liberal values of religious freedom that were initially proclaimed in the Removal of Restrictions on Political, Civil, and Religious Liberties (Civil Liberties Directive) of October 1945.²⁰ However, these intentions were often interwoven with the personal aspiration of General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme commander of the Allied Powers in charge of the occupation, and others in his team to Christianize Japan. Ray Moore claims that MacArthur's mission was part of "an established American policy of imperialism" by "imposing its religions on other peoples."²¹ Okazaki Masafumi observes that MacArthur's religious quest failed entirely, precisely because it could not be implemented in the context of religious freedom.²²

The failure of the Christianization of Japan demonstrates that American religious influence over postwar Japan, unlike broader cultural and political influences, had severe limitations. Rather, occupation reforms, notably the Religious Corporations Ordinance of December 1945, which enabled any religious group to secede from its headquarters and establish itself as a legally recognized religion, inadvertently aided the cataclysmic rise of the Shinto- and Buddhist-inspired new religious movements that would dominate the postwar Japanese religious scene.²³ Institutional Buddhism, by contrast, declined in postwar Japan, partly as a consequence of land reform legislation, which deprived many temples of their main source of income, and also as a result of the secessions that ensued following the promulgation of the Religious Corporations Ordinance.²⁴

Suzuki's "Spiritual Japan"

It is against this apparently hostile background for Japanese Buddhism that Suzuki's thought and action during the occupation period must be considered. The first clue to Suzuki's thinking and motivations lies in the publications that he produced at this time. Suzuki expressed his worldview most comprehensively in *Nihon no reiseika* (The spiritualization of Japan, 1947).²⁵ Suzuki had initially outlined his ideal of *Nihonteki reisei* (Japanese spirituality, 1944) during the war.²⁶ Since all of these books would have been subject to censorship, by the Japanese state during the war and subsequently by the occupation

authorities, it is by reading them together that Suzuki's intended meaning can be brought to light. These texts have been analyzed previously by other authors, whose interpretations of Suzuki are somewhat polarized between those who regard him as having endorsed Japanese militarism and those who contend that he sought to resist it.²⁷ What I would like to argue here is that in these texts Suzuki was subtly critical of both Japanese totalitarianism and excessive American liberalism, and sought to moderate both through Buddhism as a spiritual basis for world order. Suzuki's ideal of "Japanese spirituality" thus occupies a middle ground between the authoritarianism of the Japanese empire and the anarchism of the Zen counterculture that would become the heartland of Zen in America from the late 1950s.

Nihonteki reisei is in certain respects a nationalist text. In an era in which the Japanese empire is expanding across Asia while claiming that Oriental culture has been sublimated into Japan's divine national polity, Suzuki asserts that Pure Land and Zen Buddhism are the "cream" of Asian Buddhism and the purest forms of Japanese spirituality.²⁸ However, it is not an *ultranationalist* text. Suzuki acknowledges that Japan is not unique in possessing spirituality and that not all Japanese people are spiritual, and is boldly critical of Shinto, Japan's own system of deities, as lacking in spirituality.²⁹ *Nihonteki reisei* stands out moreover among other contemporary works in its absence of ultranationalist terminology such as "the national polity" (*kokutai*), "all eight corners of the world under one roof" (*hakkō ichiu*) and "imperial nation" (*kōkoku*), and of the Mahāyāna dialectical discourse of "discrimination" (*shabetsu*) over "equality" (*byōdō*) used by right-wing "imperial way" (*kōdō*) Buddhists in support of social hierarchy.³⁰

Suzuki expresses the experience of an individual's attainment of true spirituality in terms of Shinran's "transcendent self" (*chōko no nin*) and Rinzai's "true person without rank" (*mui no shinnin*). He contrasts these Japanese Buddhist forms of free and yet disciplined subjectivity with both unenlightened selfishness (*koki*) and totalitarianism (*zentaishugi*).³¹ Contemporary state-sponsored texts such as *Kokutai no hongi* (The cardinal principles of our national polity, 1937) and *Shinmin no michi* (The way of the subject, 1941) regarded individualism as a Western trait and attributed all the flaws of Western civilization to individualism.³² Suzuki's spiritual selfhood in *Nihonteki reisei*, by contrast, is not a critique of Western civilization, which is scarcely mentioned in this text, so much as an implicit rejection of the Japanese totalitarian regime of the 1930s and 1940s. Suzuki rejects the prevalent ultranationalist notion of the Japanese nation as a family writ large in a hierarchical parent-child model. He states explicitly that a nation should not be compared to a family, and even hints that for a child to rebel against a parent may not necessarily be a bad thing.³³ Suzuki also subtly

critiques Japanese militarism by suggesting that the promotion of spirituality is ultimately more enduring than military struggle, and attempts to redefine the foundations of the Japanese empire by arguing for the global promulgation of Buddhism as “the manifestation of the realization of Japanese spirituality.”³⁴ Suzuki’s successful promotion of Zen in the West following the defeat of imperial Japan would demonstrate that these were not empty words.

Japanese Buddhists have often been accused of a sudden turn to America under the occupation.³⁵ The pages of *Nihon no reiseika*, which are full of praise for America, and denigrating of Japan, give such an impression. In the wake of defeat and apparently ashamed of Japan’s wartime conduct, Suzuki refrains from extolling the virtues of Japanese culture. Suzuki praises Japan’s new constitution, MacArthur’s Christianity, and the Christian, pacifist, liberal values of the United States.³⁶ Moreover, Suzuki is staunchly anticommunist, and condemns the totalitarian nature of the Soviet regime as resembling fascism, Nazism, and indeed the Japanese emperor system.³⁷ Similarly, Suzuki condemns the rash of labor strikes in occupied Japan, which were eventually banned in May 1947, as an abuse of the liberal concept of freedom by the workers.³⁸

These pro-American sentiments cannot be interpreted completely at face value, and would have been in part a response to the censorship that Suzuki complained of in his diary.³⁹ Moreover, Suzuki’s praise for America is not unqualified, and he cautions against worshipping American technical prowess and material wealth as potentially obstructing the spiritualization of Japan.⁴⁰ In fact, as Suzuki himself points out, criticism of American materialism and science had been a feature of Japanese wartime ideology.⁴¹ Suzuki raises these concerns only after the end of the war, now that Japan is genuinely occupied by Western civilization.

While Japanese ultranationalists had condemned all Western forms of government as individualist, for Suzuki, who resented the authoritarianism of the Japanese regime, the occupation may have been an opportunity to redress the balance. Whereas *Nihonteki reisei* had emphasized personal awakening, now that the occupation was tipping the scale too far toward individualism, Suzuki sought to temper this excessive freedom through Japanese spirituality. Suzuki reinterprets the current slogans of “freedom” and “equality” in a Buddhist sense in order to construct a middle way between authoritarianism and hedonism. For Suzuki, true freedom is, in the Rinzai sense, “to become master of oneself.” On the one hand, freedom is to be regulated by responsibility and duty. On the other hand, Suzuki cautions against the blind obedience to superiors that characterized the emperor system, and insists upon the importance of autonomous thinking.⁴² Likewise for equality, Suzuki emphasizes, in accordance with the Buddhist

logic of the “mutual interpenetration of all things” (*jijimuge*), that absolute equality is impossible since individuals are inherently diverse.⁴³ In other words, Suzuki seeks to swing the political pendulum away from excessive equality back toward the center but without reverting to the oppressive wartime hierarchy of “discrimination.”

By Buddhicizing democracy, Suzuki does not resist the importation of Western ideas but pursues a spiritual basis to the American political world order. Suzuki accepts America’s leading role in global politics.⁴⁴ However, he seeks to temper the American maxim that “all men are created equal” under God with Buddhist nuances of equality, difference, and freedom as spiritual principles for global political leadership.⁴⁵ Suzuki does not argue directly for the export of Japanese Buddhism to the West in *Nihon no reiseika*. His focus during these years is on Japan, and he apparently does not yet have the confidence to advocate the export of Japanese culture as he had prior to the war. Furthermore, with a domestic readership in mind, both *Nihonteki reisei* and *Nihon no reiseika* contain more references overall to Shin Buddhism than to Zen. Suzuki had stated previously that Zen was the most appropriate form of Buddhism through which to engage with the West.⁴⁶ He would adopt this practice again during the occupation. However, first it was necessary to purify Japanese spirituality itself. For Suzuki, this meant above all the elimination of Shinto ultranationalism, which he blames for the state-centrism of the preceding regime, and devotes two entire chapters to critiquing.⁴⁷

Allied Religious Reforms and Zen: The “Shinto Directive,” the “Purge,” and the Separation of Religion and State

Shinto was also the primary target of Allied General Headquarters (GHQ)’s religious reform policy. The Abolition of Governmental Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control, and Dissemination of State Shinto (Shinto Directive) of December 15, 1945, sought to prevent any future possibility of Shinto being used to incite militarism and ultranationalism, by separating Shinto from the state. The directive banned state sponsorship of Shinto, including financial support of shrines, participation in shrine rituals by government employees in an official capacity, and the dissemination of Shinto doctrine by public educational institutions.⁴⁸ The title of the Shinto Directive and consistent, specific references to Shinto throughout the text constitute a public iteration of GHQ’s position that it was Shinto, and not any other religion, that had been the religion of militarism and ultranationalism.

A second policy that shielded Buddhist war responsibility from the American gaze was the Removal and Exclusion of Undesirable Personnel from Public Office, popularly known as the “Purge,” of January 1946. This legislation purported to eliminate the influence of ultranationalist and militarist leaders, and to enable democratic forces to arise in their place.⁴⁹ Anyone who had held an important post in wartime ultranationalist organizations was barred from government and the higher echelons of the civil service.⁵⁰ Throughout 1946, purges were conducted against former military and naval officers and political leaders. In January 1947, the criteria were extended to local government. Finally, in late 1947, the purge was expanded to industry, and, on a lesser scale, to media and publishing. By May 1948, when the Japanese government announced the end of the purge, two hundred thousand people had been dismissed from office.⁵¹

Evidence suggests that the official separation of religion and state was the key rationale behind the absence of a religious purge. It was common knowledge at GHQ’s Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) that many political purgees who had not been clerics before 1945 took advantage of the absence of a religious purge by retreating to the religious world. Nonetheless, GHQ maintained that the separation of religion and state prohibited their intervention.⁵² The majority of lawyers investigating the matter on behalf of the Japanese government took a similar stance.⁵³

GHQ had another reason for protecting religion. According to William Woodard, the eventual abandonment of the idea of a religious purge was the decision of Kenneth Bunce, head of the CIE, who “recognized that American public opinion might support a purge in Shinto but he was not so sure what would happen if this were extended to other faiths.”⁵⁴ Evidence demonstrates that Bunce’s primary concern was Christianity, and not Buddhism.

In principle, US officials regarded Christianity as a victim, and not a perpetrator, of military aggression. However, a significant problem emerged regarding the wartime stance of the Christian social activist Kagawa Toyohiko. MacArthur hoped that Kagawa would lead the Christianization of Japan, and serve as an international icon for Japanese Christianity. This plan was devastated when, on December 20, 1945, an article appeared in the Japan edition of the American military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* accusing Kagawa of active complicity in Japan’s war effort, and of remaining an ultranationalist after 1945. Its author, Barnard Rubin, moreover accused the Counter Intelligences Corps and Federal Communications Commission of attempting to conceal this fact. The article caused great controversy in the American media, and temporarily tarnished Kagawa’s pacifist and pro-American reputation. Rubin was dismissed from his post.⁵⁵ Such extensive efforts to conceal Kagawa’s alleged war guilt demonstrate

GHQ's determination to protect Christianity. Bunce may have been motivated likewise in his unwillingness to purge Japanese religion, even though official rhetoric concerned the separation of religion and state.

The separation of religion and state in the 1947 Constitution is misleading in that it was not always implemented in practice. The ongoing connection between government and religious figures was exemplified by the All Japan Religionists' Peace Conference (Zen Nippon Shūkyō Heiwa Kaigi), which was held in Tokyo from May 5 to May 8, 1947, to celebrate the new constitution. The conference was organized by several Japanese religious federations, but both GHQ and Japanese Diet members were heavily involved in the project from the start. Speeches emphasizing the importance of religion in constructing a democratic and peaceful Japan were made by prime minister Yoshida Shigeru, minister of education Takahashi Seiichirō, and Bunce. The conference in Tokyo was followed by further regional conferences throughout Japan, the last of which was the Kyoto conference from November 3 to November 4.⁵⁶ The conference provided a platform for Japanese religious figures to assert publicly that they had been pacifists at heart all along. The conference organizers sought to make known internationally Japan's pacifist religious aspirations by sending a message to the United Nations Organization, the Vatican, and other religious organizations abroad.⁵⁷

Suzuki, who was present at both Tokyo and Kyoto conferences, sought conversely to use these assemblies to call to account the Shinto ultranationalism that he had condemned so fiercely. This was, for Suzuki, a necessary step in the spiritualization of Japan. Suzuki attempted to put the question of the war responsibility of religionists themselves, including Buddhists, squarely onto the agenda of the conferences, but the organizers apparently refused.⁵⁸ Suzuki caused further controversy at the Kyoto conference with his accusation that "Shrine Shintoism has martial gods but no god of love, no god of mercy. It is therefore still underdeveloped as religion."⁵⁹ When addressing a Western readership, however, Suzuki adopted a very different stance. Less than a week after the Kyoto conference, Suzuki published an essay titled "Christianity and Buddhism" in *Stars and Stripes*. In this article, he characterized Christianity as a religion of "fighting . . . sadism [and] bloodiness," whereas Buddhism was "peace-loving."⁶⁰ It may be deduced that Suzuki was keen to promote a peace-loving Buddhism to non-Japanese who had come to Japan in connection with the occupation. The hushed atmosphere in which religious war guilt was played down by both GHQ and Japanese religious leaders made it easy for Suzuki to put forward this peaceful image of Buddhism. Ironically, Suzuki's primary audience were non-Japanese men who were in Japan for the purpose of trying war guilt.

The Tokyo Trials and Zen: Suzuki's Informal Encounters with Occupation Personnel

Suzuki was quick to make contact with Westerners under the occupation. Owing to his renown in the West and elite connections in Japan, a number of Westerners who were in Japan in connection with the occupation sought out his company in their spare time.

Most of Suzuki's Western associates were introduced to Zen as a direct result of their connections with the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), commonly known as the "Tokyo Trials" or "Tokyo Tribunal." Christmas Humphreys QC, who was also the head of the Buddhist Society of London, and Jack Brinkley, who was the son of the military advisor to the Japanese government, author and journalist captain Francis Brinkley, had been acquainted with Suzuki before the war. Humphreys was a junior prosecutor in the trial, and Brinkley was the chief translator for the prosecution.⁶¹ Richard DeMartino, a lawyer working for the defense at the trial, had also encountered Suzuki's writings through his studies in Oriental philosophy at the University of Hawai'i under professor Charles Moore, an acquaintance of Suzuki, during the war.⁶² The acquaintance of the other members of the group with Suzuki was initiated as the result of conversations on Zen Buddhism between war crimes suspects in Sugamo Prison and Albert Stunkard, a medical officer in the US Army.⁶³ Of this group, Philip Kapleau, a court reporter at the tribunal, would become one of the most influential Western popularizers of Zen in the postwar era. Kapleau's meeting with Suzuki was his first encounter with Zen.⁶⁴

The IMTFE began on May 3, 1946, and ended on November 4, 1948. The tribunal sought to deliver "stern justice" to "war criminals" in accordance with the Potsdam Declaration. As at the Nuremberg Trials, those accused of personal responsibility for state acts of aggressive war were tried for war crimes, crimes against peace, and crimes against humanity. The twenty-eight defendants included the leading prime ministers, war ministers, army ministers, and military commanders of the period 1928 to 1945, and also the ultranationalist philosopher and activist Ōkawa Shūmei. Whereas war crimes were determined on the basis of the Hague and Geneva Conventions in international law, the issue of crimes against peace and humanity was controversial, since there existed no law prohibiting these "crimes" at the time they were committed. Such objections were raised by the defendants, and also in the dissenting opinions of judges Justice Pal from India and Justice Röling from the Netherlands. Despite the lack of unanimity among the judges, the majority judgment, approved by Douglas MacArthur, condemned seven men to hanging, sixteen to

life imprisonment, one to twenty years' imprisonment, and one to seven years' imprisonment. Two men died before the trial was over, and Ōkawa was declared mentally unfit for trial.⁶⁵

The IMTFE is conventionally studied in terms of its implications for international law.⁶⁶ However, an examination of the behind-the-scenes informal associations between Suzuki and the non-Japanese tribunal staff suggests that the tribunal was also highly significant as a pivotal event in the transmission of Zen from Japan to the West through informal channels, from a private religious practice of the Japanese elite to the Zen boom in the United States.

The role of religion in the IMTFE has never been studied. Indeed, an examination of the proceedings reveals that religion was rarely debated at the IMTFE. Some reference was made to attempts to impose Shinto on other Asian countries, and to violations of religious freedom in these countries.⁶⁷ However, this was not considered a major issue. Buddhism received only incidental reference, such as General Araki Sadao's engineering of an attack on Japanese Nichiren priests as a *casus belli* to incite the Shanghai incident in 1932.⁶⁸ Overall, the ideological basis of Japan's war was accorded minimal attention, the only exception being the scapegoating of Ōkawa Shūmei as the ideological perpetrator of the early stages of the alleged military conspiracy. Ōkawa was a highly religious figure, whose influences included Islam and Christianity and other minor cults as well as emperor-centered Shinto and Buddhism.⁶⁹ However, the majority judgment overlooked this dimension of Ōkawa entirely, and focused instead on his promotion of the ultranationalist "imperial way" and *hakkō ichiu*, which they regarded as "*kokutai* ideology," and not Shinto.⁷⁰

As Brian Victoria has observed, several of the convicts were Buddhists. Generals Tōjō Hideki, Matsui Iwane, and Doihara Kenji were Pure Land believers.⁷¹ Doihara was also a Zen practitioner. Generals Hirota Kōki and Hiranuma Kiichirō practiced Zen.⁷² Itagaki Seishirō was originally a Zen Buddhist but later converted to Nichirenism.⁷³ Facing death, many of the convicted sought solace in Buddhism. Buddhist chaplains were provided at Sugamo, alongside Christian chaplains.⁷⁴ Buddhism was a personal matter, and played no part in the tribunal, which claimed to adhere to the secular principles of international law. It was only MacArthur who, in his Review of Judgments, characteristically challenged this secularity by urging Japanese of all faiths to pray for world peace.⁷⁵

An examination of Suzuki's relationship with many of the tribunal participants reveals that the situation was different behind the scenes. Significantly, Stunkard was introduced to Zen through conversations with Hiranuma. While working at Sugamo, Stunkard engaged in deep and extensive consultations with Japan's wartime leaders, with the hope of gaining an understanding into the

psychological factors that had led to war.⁷⁶ Stunkard's initial interest in Zen Buddhism was thus centered upon the question of how the personal self-cultivation of elites influenced their public actions and policies. He thereby honed in upon lay Zen, which the CIE had to a great extent overlooked. Stunkard's investigation was unsuccessful. However, it did lead to the pivotal meeting between Stunkard and many of his colleagues with Suzuki. Count Karlfried Graf von Dürckheim, another Sugamo prisoner, provided Stunkard with a letter of introduction to Suzuki.⁷⁷ Stunkard began to visit Suzuki regularly on Sundays, gradually introducing more colleagues—DeMartino, Kapleau, and others. This network expanded through what Kapleau described as an "awesome Tribunal grapevine." The tendrils of this vine extended to the Indian and Dutch tribunal judges, Pal and Röling, who requested a private meeting with Suzuki. In the event, however, "some twenty-five to thirty persons" attended. Although conducted in an informal capacity, for the judges, these "private" meetings were evidently closely related to their work. At the meeting, Pal questioned Suzuki regarding his relationship with Tōjō:

After a long awkward silence the judge spoke:

"Dr. Suzuki, I understand that General Tōjō had been a student of yours at the University? Is that true?"

"Yes."

"What did you think of him as a student?"

The rapt audience edged forward expectantly. Pause—a long pause.

Then:

"Not much."⁷⁸

Judging from Kapleau's account, the meeting was awkward. Suzuki did not prove to be a willing informant, and the judges abandoned their attempts to acquire further information. The interest of Pal and Röling in Zen is highly significant. Of all the tribunal judges, these two were the most sympathetic toward wartime Japan. Pal was the only judge to repudiate the entire judicial process as illegal.⁷⁹ This was connected to his overall rejection of Western imperialism, and made him a hero among Japanese ultranationalists.⁸⁰ Röling also submitted an independent report, in which he likewise condemned the tribunal for failing to meet international standards of justice.⁸¹ A core feature of Pal's defense of Japan's war was the denial that there had been any Japanese military conspiracy to start a war.⁸² This suggests that Pal came to consult Suzuki in search of evidence in favor of Tōjō's moral character, evidence that, if Stunkard's account is correct, Suzuki would not provide.

Eventually, therefore, Buddhism failed to serve as a defense in the IMTFE, and neither, conversely, was the issue of Buddhist war responsibility raised. The connection between the tribunal and Zen was rather the informal association that arose between Suzuki and those non-Japanese at the trial who were the most sympathetic toward Japan. DeMartino was working for the Japanese defense side, albeit in an objective legal capacity, and Stunkard's account suggests that he interacted amicably with these men in a genuine attempt to understand them. These facts suggest that Suzuki's Japanophile Western friends harbored none of the animosity that had characterized wartime trans-Pacific relations.

Suzuki's Western Followers' Perceptions of Zen War Responsibility and Visions of a Zen World Order

The drastic downplaying of the issue of religious war responsibility at the official level created an atmosphere in which Buddhist war guilt was rarely discussed. The conversation between Pal and Suzuki moreover suggests that, despite his active condemnation of Buddhist war responsibility within Japanese circles, Suzuki refrained from discussing the matter with his non-Japanese followers, presumably in order to protect the international reputation of his religion. If the attitude of GHQ was mostly one of benign neglect, how did those Westerners who engaged in Zen during the occupation, and subsequently assisted in its promotion in the West, approach the question of Zen and war?

Of all Suzuki's followers, Kapleau was apparently the most oblivious to Zen ultranationalism. Kapleau's view of occupied Japan was partly colored by his recent post at Nuremburg, where he had been especially disturbed by the failure of European religion and culture to prevent the atrocities of Nazism and fascism in Germany and Italy.⁸³ However, Kapleau did not ask the same questions of Zen. On the contrary, he recalled sensing a contrast of attitude between what he perceived as the "absence of contrition," the "self-pitying despair," and the "self-justifications" of the Germans and the "remarkable self-restraint and composure" of the Japanese. Kapleau states that his Japanese acquaintances explained to him that "the traditional acceptance of adversity" was "grounded in . . . 'The law of karmic retribution.'" These explanations aroused Kapleau's curiosity regarding the nature of karma, and his friends thereupon directed him toward Suzuki as an English-speaking teacher who could explain Buddhism.⁸⁴

Why was Kapleau so ignorant of the reality of wartime Zen? Kapleau's low proficiency in Japanese may have prevented him from discovering information that was not relayed to him in English. A deeper reason for overlooking the question of Zen and war may lie in Kapleau's rejection of Christianity since

childhood, and his restless and disconsolate mood in the late 1940s and 1950s, which he reported in reaction to the horrors of the war.⁸⁵

Christmas Humphreys, by contrast, was not entirely unaware of ultranationalist “imperial way” Buddhism. He acknowledged in his autobiographical account of his visit to Japan that “each Buddhist as well as Shinto priest was steeped in the same dye [of ultranationalism], and were all alike half willing to be driven in time of war . . . into the ranks of the army.” However, Humphreys maintained his belief that “Buddhism is the religion, above all others, of peace.” Apparently ignorant of the active use of Buddhist doctrine in Japanese ultranationalism during the Pacific War, Humphreys states that “no priest was allowed to speak to the men about Buddhism . . . their only function was to bury the dead.”⁸⁶ Despite his association with, and involvement in, the IMTFE, Humphreys was apparently unaware of the link between the Japanese military leadership and Zen, for he adhered to the official Occupation and Tribunal stance that the war had been caused by a militant minority leadership, and maintained that Buddhism had the power to overcome this in the future: “Politicians, themselves the tools of vicious cliques, have driven the individual Buddhist into the field of war, yet Buddhism in the end will break those governments, for, as is written in that classic of China, the Tao Te Ching, ‘The soft and weak overcome the hard and strong.’”⁸⁷

Like Kapleau, Humphreys had minimal Japanese linguistic ability. While in Japan, he engaged with several leading Japanese Buddhists.⁸⁸ It may be surmised that these Buddhists, like Suzuki, were unwilling to divulge the wartime history of their creed. Moreover, Humphreys himself was a long-standing Buddhist who had established the London Buddhist Lodge in 1924. In 1936, he had met with Suzuki at the World Congress of Faiths in London, where Suzuki had made a speech condemning the rising tide of militarism.⁸⁹ It may have been partly Suzuki’s influence, perceptible also in Humphreys’ Taoist interpretations of Buddhism above, that instilled in Humphreys’ mind the notion that Buddhism was inherently pacifist. However, during the war in London Humphreys himself had produced his own brand of Buddhist militarism in his journal *Buddhism in England*: “The mind of the pilot who drops his bombs on London and of him who drops them on Berlin is equally part of the Essence of Pure Mind, the Wisdom Heart that is Enlightenment, and each is performing his dharma as he sees it and within the framework of his karma of lives gone by.”⁹⁰

Just like the American Christians within GHQ, Humphreys thus had his own personal reasons for playing down religious war guilt. A combination of ignorance, idealism, and denial led Suzuki’s followers to overlook Zen’s recent past. In their enthusiasm for Zen, Suzuki’s Western followers also shared many

of Suzuki's political and cultural views. In some instances, it is evident that they were directly influenced by Suzuki in this regard. Ironically, in certain instances, Suzuki's Western followers' views come closer to Zen ultranationalism than does Suzuki himself. For example, Humphreys' rejection of the influence of Western materialism in early postwar Japan is reminiscent of wartime ultranationalist rhetoric: "It is my hope that the Japanese people will in an organized manner guard against the bad influences which are received from the West. . . . Japanese youths regard things Japanese as musty and outmoded, without giving any reason for this, and rush towards all that is new, without even knowing the direction. Will they not come eventually to blindly worship the god of money, without even being aware of it?"⁹¹

Beyond mere rejection of the ills of Western civilization, Humphreys' views also have Japanese cultural nationalist overtones: "I believe that Japanese arts, especially the Zen arts, are extremely superior, and are unrivalled throughout the world, with the sole exception of the arts of Ancient Greece."⁹² This ideal reveals a strong influence from Suzuki's *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, which had been published in English in 1938.⁹³ In this respect, Humphreys is even bolder in his praise for Japanese culture than Suzuki, who is more reticent in his writing during this period regarding the virtues of Japanese culture. That Humphreys remained inspired by this book, published in 1938, throughout the war years is testimony to the appeal of Zen that transcended the hostilities of the war.

The same may be argued for Brinkley, who also maintains that Buddhism lies at the base of Japanese thought and culture, and is the ideal cultural medium for Japan's transnational interactions.⁹⁴ Humphreys and Brinkley perceive astutely the opportunity provided by the occupation for Japan's reengagement with the postwar world through the means of Buddhism. Humphreys proposes that instead of war or economic expansion, Japan "play a leading role, not just in East Asia but throughout the whole world," by promoting "Japanese religion, culture and art." He argues that Japanese temple priests should take advantage of the occupation by learning English and promoting Buddhism to Occupation personnel.⁹⁵ Brinkley argues that, because Japan still possesses high-caliber arts such as the tea ceremony and kendo, "in this respect [Japan] has not lost the war, but has, I think, won a great victory."⁹⁶

Humphreys, Blyth, and Brinkley's Buddhist sociopolitical ideal also follows Suzuki's "middle way" conservatism. In a 1950 article Brinkley writes, "Democracy is not mere individual selfishness, neither is it to extinguish the individual within the whole. The individual permeates the whole, and the whole permeates the individual."⁹⁷ Brinkley hereby rejects authoritarianism, but

without endorsing individualism. Blyth does not negate the hierarchical relationship between the parent and the child but seeks to balance it. He argues, “it is not that children must respect their parents. [Rather,] children must respect the respectable qualities of their parents. If a child wrongs his parent he should apologize. If a parent wrongs his child he should apologize.”⁹⁸ These words resonate strongly with Suzuki’s rejection of the parent-child ideal for Japanese society that he had expressed during the war.

Suzuki and his Western acquaintances during the occupation thus shared a liberal conservatism that respected a limited social hierarchy but not authoritarianism, and endorsed freedom so long as it did not descend into selfishness and the neglect of duty. This formed part of a vision for a peaceful, cultural, Buddhist postwar Japan that would not absorb the shallow materialism of Western civilization but would be reconstructed through the power of Buddhism. Humphreys and Brinkley argue furthermore that Buddhism would also be the basis of Japan’s contribution to global society.⁹⁹ Although these high ideals were not realized in postwar Japan, Japanese Buddhism would achieve some unexpected success overseas. The circulation of Suzuki’s books played an important role in this process.

Suzuki’s Publishing Activities and Travels Abroad: From Japanese Elites to the Western Public

Suzuki relied mainly on publishing and lecturing to promote his vision. This enabled him to reach a wide readership and audience, both in Japan and in the English-speaking world. However, many of his activities were funded in Japan by a circle of political and financial elites, in other words through an elite lay Zen network, within which politics and culture were occasionally intertwined. Of all Suzuki’s Western associates, it was Blyth who played the most active political role in the occupation. Through Suzuki and Blyth, state and nonstate roles and institutions overlapped in the transmission of Zen to the West. One outcome of this relationship was that prime minister Yoshida Shigeru, the conservative architect of postwar Japan, sought to make use of Blyth and Suzuki’s Zen writings as an informal means of reviving the cultural reach of the Japanese nation in the wake of the defeat.

At the end of the war Blyth, a haiku enthusiast and English teacher in Kanazawa who had been interned during the war, took up a post at Gakushūin through Suzuki’s recommendation. This post led to Blyth’s appointment as personal tutor to the crown prince. Blyth also served as a liaison between the imperial household and the CIE.¹⁰⁰ Blyth’s most important contribution in this

intermediary capacity was in the drafting of the Imperial Rescript on the Construction of a New Japan (Shin Nippon Kensetsu ni Kansuru Shōsho) (Human Declaration), although Blyth's precise role in this is disputed.¹⁰¹ In gratitude to Blyth, Yoshida allegedly arranged a grant of three hundred thousand yen through the Foreign Ministry toward the production of the *Cultural East*, an English-language journal edited and produced by Suzuki and Blyth that purported to introduce Japanese culture to occupation personnel.¹⁰²

Yoshida and Suzuki were old acquaintances. Prior to the war the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai (Society for the Promotion of International Cultural Relations), of which Yoshida was a director, had sponsored Suzuki's second visit to the United States as part of their "soft power" initiative in the West in the wake of the Manchurian Incident.¹⁰³ It is therefore possible that, given its target readership of occupation personnel, sponsorship of the *Cultural East* was not just a thank you gift but was also intended as a form of soft power for restoring the image of Japan in the eyes of the West. In the early years of the occupation, the Japanese government lacked the means, autonomy, and credibility to do this, and the informal use of Suzuki, Blyth, and Zen may have been an attractive alternative option. Moreover, Suzuki's elite connections within Japan went higher than Yoshida. In 1946, Suzuki lectured to the emperor on the meaning of Buddhism.¹⁰⁴ Whatever the impact of this homily on the emperor, its contents were translated by Humphreys and published in England.¹⁰⁵ Suzuki's ideas thereby traveled from the center of imperial culture through nondiplomatic channels to what would become a wide following in the West. Additionally, Humphreys and Suzuki agreed to the subsequent publication of Suzuki's complete works in English.¹⁰⁶ Yoshida's envisaged cultural diplomatic mission was thus continued through a private Western initiative, and Suzuki's books were made available to a generation of Western "Zen boomers" during the subsequent two decades.

Zen cannot be transmitted by books alone. One final outcome of the occupation for Suzuki was that his Western friends followed him to the United States, where Suzuki took up a series of posts at American universities between 1949 and 1956. In 1949 Suzuki spoke at the East-West Philosopher's Conference at the University of Hawai'i—a symbolic nexus between Eastern and Western thought—with the assistance of Richard DeMartino. DeMartino then accompanied Suzuki to California, where he held a post at Claremont Graduate College from February until June 1950, followed by a tour of several other universities.¹⁰⁷ In 1951 Suzuki began a five-year lectureship at Columbia University, where he would once again find DeMartino, Kapleau, and Stunkard in the audience, in addition to several psychologists, artists, philosophers, and

journalists who would help to incorporate Suzuki and his Zen into American culture.¹⁰⁸ Just as the San Francisco Peace Treaty of September 1951 established Japan's position in the emergent Cold War world order under the guiding hand of the United States, the crimson fingers of the Zen dawn were rising in the West.

The endeavors of Suzuki and his Western followers brought a new cultural significance to the occupation as a crucial juncture in the transmission of Zen to the West. In other words, Suzuki and his followers initiated their own "reverse course" that turned the Americanization and Christianization of Japan on its head by exporting Zen and Japanese culture to America and Europe. This occurred despite the decline in institutional Buddhism in Japan resulting from occupation reforms. Suzuki's name rarely features in studies of the occupation. Yet he was often close to the center of events. Moreover, several official occupation policies had important implications for the spread of Zen to the West. It is thus in the intertwining of the mainstream political history of the occupation with a transnational religious history "from below" that the politico-cultural significance of Suzuki's work comes to light.

This interaction was most dynamic in the concealment of the problem of religious war responsibility. The problem of Buddhist war guilt, which would later return to haunt Suzuki's reputation in the 1990s, had to be concealed in the aftermath of the war in order for Buddhism to be accepted so soon in the West. It was mostly official occupation policies that hid the problem of Buddhist militarism from the international gaze. The focus on Shinto as the source of Japanese ultranationalism in the "Shinto Directive," the annulment of religious war responsibility through the separation of religion and state, the concern of MacArthur and other Christian occupation personnel regarding Japanese Christian war responsibility, the resulting decision not to purge religionists from public office, and the downplaying of the role of religion at the IMTFE were all policies that sought to Westernize, modernize, and, for some, Christianize postwar Japan. All but the latter largely succeeded. However, these policies were also pivotal in the covering up of Buddhist war responsibility. Ironically, it was the IMTFE that brought Kapleau, Humphreys, and DeMartino to Japan in 1946 and into contact with Suzuki, whom they subsequently assisted in his Zen proselytization mission in Europe and America. Yet owing to the silence surrounding non-Shinto religions and war, these followers of Suzuki were able to maintain a blind spot with regard to Japanese Buddhism's recent history, even as they participated directly in the official processes of reckoning in occupied Japan. Kapleau and Humphreys' own

weariness of war, disillusionment with Christianity, and even, for Humphreys, culpability concerning his own wartime background further encouraged these men to overlook Zen's recent ultranationalism. This process was cemented by Suzuki's actions. Contrary to his critical stance among his fellow Japanese, Suzuki steadfastly refused to discuss Zen war responsibility among his non-Japanese acquaintances. Instead, he presented Buddhism as a peaceful religion.

Suzuki's concealment of Zen war responsibility from non-Japanese during the occupation may eventually have served to exacerbate criticisms against him from the 1990s onward. Evaluations of Suzuki's political standpoint have heretofore been somewhat polarized and controversial. By analyzing his transwar writings on "Japanese spirituality," I have suggested that throughout the 1940s Suzuki upheld a liberal conservatism that sought a middle way between authoritarianism and individualism. During the occupation, he hoped to construct a Buddhist subjectivity that would form a Japanese spiritual basis to the democratizing occupation reforms. While Suzuki failed to transform postwar Japan, the Westerners whom he encountered in this context shared his political ideals and his aspirations for Buddhism and Japanese culture. These men would help him to transmit Buddhism overseas through publishing and travel from the late 1940s.

Significantly, the middle way shared by these men during the occupation formed a bridge between the authoritarian militarism of wartime Japanese Buddhism and the hedonist, drop-out "beat" Zen that ensued in America from the mid-1950s. The "beat" Zen of the 1950s was the apparent political antithesis of "imperial way" Zen. A generation of American drop-out "dharma bums" enjoyed a Bohemian lifestyle of parties, alcohol, and free love, all justified by a "Zen" rationale of breaking free from ordinary consciousness and convention.¹⁰⁹ Their "hippie" successors in the 1960s would pursue this consciousness through recreational drug use while opposing the war in Vietnam, bringing the American Zen counterculture into direct conflict with the US state.¹¹⁰ Zen hedonism dismayed Suzuki, just as he had despaired at the authoritarianism of imperial Japan.¹¹¹ Suzuki had not intended this radical turn any more than the transmission of Zen to the West had been a goal of the occupation. Nonetheless the "Zen boom" and its subsequent countercultural associations posed a cultural challenge to the American world order. Its vision lives on today amid the more aesthetic and materialist ideals of Zen cool and apolitical practices of Zen mindfulness that continue to be popular in the West. Yet the controversy of Zen war responsibility, so carefully concealed during the occupation, continues to cast an awkward shadow.

Notes

1. The classic account of this poignant moment in Japanese history is John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Aftermath of World War Two* (London: Allen Lane, 1999).
2. David Machacek and Bryan Wilson, eds., *Global Citizens: The Soka Gakkai Buddhist Movement in the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Shimazono Susumu, *From Spirituality to Salvation: Popular Religious Movements in Modern Japan* (Melbourne: Trans Pacific, 2004).
3. D. T. Suzuki, "D. T. Suzuki's English Diaries V, 1943 to 1945," ed. Kiritā Kiyohide, *MBKN* 23 (2009): 101–113.
4. The main biographical accounts of Suzuki's life prior to World War II are Suzuki Daisetz, *Jijoden* (1968), *SDZa* 30:567–622; Nishitani Keiji, ed., *Kaisō Suzuki Daisetsu* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1975); A. Irwin Switzer, *D. T. Suzuki: A Biography* (London: Buddhist Society, 1985); Iwakura Masaji, *Shinjin Suzuki Daisetsu* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1986); Shugetsu Ryūmin, *Sekai no zenja: Suzuki Daisetsu no shōgai* (Tokyo: Dōjida Library, 1992); Okamura Mihoko and Shizuteru Ueda, *Daisetsu no fūkei: Suzuki Daisetsu to wa dare ka* (Tokyo: Tōkeisha, 1999); Stefan Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū: Gendai 'Nihon' bukkyō no jiko ninshiki to sono 'sei'yō' ni taisuru hyōgen" (PhD diss., Komazawa University, 2014), 14–145. I will mostly follow Grace below.
5. Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū," 113–119.
6. Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū," 125–128.
7. Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū," 36, 144.
8. Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū," 130–133.
9. Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala Publications, 1992), 195–272; Richard Hughes Seager, *Buddhism in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 90–101.
10. See especially Robert E. Ward and Yoshikazu Sakamoto, *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), ix, 248; Theodore Cohen, *Remaking Japan: The American Occupation as New Deal*, ed. Herbert Passin (New York: Free Press, 1987), 1–2. For a more detailed historiography of the occupation, see Howard B. Schonberger, *Aftermath of War: Americans and the Remaking of Japan, 1945–1952* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1989), 1–5.
11. Shin Nippon Shūkyō Kyōdan Rengōkai, ed., *Sengo shūkyō kaisōroku* (Tokyo: Shin Nippon Shūkyō Kyōdan Rengōkai Chōsashitsu, 1963), 155; William Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952, and Japanese Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 201.
12. This chapter uses the term "ultranationalism" to refer to the "Imperial Way" (*Kōdō*) ideology of Japanese racial and cultural superiority, which was used to justify a hierarchical, authoritarian social order and a militarist and expansionist war in East Asia and the Pacific from 1931 to 1945. For an in-depth discussion of the meaning of "ultranationalism" in the Japanese context, see Katayama Morihide, *Kindai Nihon no uyoku shisō* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2007), 18–26.
13. Brian Victoria, *Zen at War* (New York: Weatherhill, 1997); Brian Victoria, *Zen War Stories* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).
14. E.g., Ishii Kōsei, "Daitōa kyōeiken no gōrika to kegon tetsugaku (1): Kihira Tadayoshi o chūshin to shite," *Bukkyōgaku* 42 (2000): 1–28; Eizawa Kōji, *Kindai Nihon no bukkyōka to*

sensō: Kyōsei no rinri to no mujun (Tokyo: Senshū Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 2002); Ōtani Eiichi, *Kindai Nihon no Nichirenshugi undō* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2001); Sueki Fumihiko, *Kindai Nihon to bukkō* (Tokyo: Transview, 2004); Christopher Ives, *Imperial-Way Zen: Ichikawa Hakugen's Critique and Lingering Questions for Buddhist Ethics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009); Ōtani Eiichi, *Kindai bukkō to iu shiza: Sensō, Ajia, shakaishugi* (Tokyo: Perikan, 2012); Kondō Shuntarō, Nawa Tatsunori, and Ishii Kōsei, eds., *Kindai no bukkō shisō to Nihon shugi* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2020); Hwansoo Ilmee Kim, *Empire of the Dharma: Korean and Japanese Buddhism, 1877–1912* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012). See also the special edition by Richard M. Jaffe on religion and the Japanese empire of the *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010).

15. Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (Government Section), *Political Reorientation of Japan: September 1945 to September 1948* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949), 2:423, appendix A:11.

16. Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); John Welfield, *An Empire in Eclipse: Japan in the Postwar American Alliance System: A Study in the Interaction of Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy* (London: Athlone Press, 1988); Roger Buckley, *US-Japan Alliance Diplomacy, 1945–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

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20. Woodard, *Allied Occupation of Japan*, 49–51.

21. Ray A. Moore, *Soldier of God: MacArthur's Attempt to Christianize Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 183.

22. Okazaki Masafumi, "Chrysanthemum and Christianity: Religion and Education in Occupied Japan, 1945–1952," *Pacific Historical Review* 79, no. 3 (2010): 393–417.

23. Benjamin Dorman, *Celebrity Gods: New Religions, Media, and Authority in Occupied Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 1–2.

24. Shin Nippon Shūkyō Kyōdan Rengōkai, *Sengo shūkyō kaisōroku*, 109–110; Woodard, *Allied Occupation of Japan*, 61.

25. Suzuki Daisetz, *Nihon no reiseika* (1947), SDZa 8:325–420.

26. Suzuki Daisetz, *Nihonteki reisei* (1944), SDZa 8:1–224.

27. For example, Bernard Faure (*Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993], 66), Robert H. Sharf ("The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," *History of Religions* 33, no.1 [1993]: 25–28), and Victoria (*Zen at War*, 150) argue that Suzuki's "Japanese spirituality" supported

ultranationalist discourse, whereas Kirita Kiyohide (“D. T. Suzuki on Society and the State,” in *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*, ed. James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo [Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1995], 59–64) and John Maraldo (“Questioning Nationalism Now and Then: A Critical Approach to Zen and the Kyoto School,” in *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*, ed. James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo [Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1995], 340) contend that “Japanese spirituality” was intended as a form of resistance against state rhetoric. For a fuller discussion of this debate, see Sueki, “Daisetsu hihan saikō,” *MBKN* 24 (2010): 19–36; Grace, “Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū,” 136–138; and Stefan Grace, “Suzuki Daisetsu ‘Nihonteki reisei’ saikō: Bukkyō o koeru shin ‘Nihon shūkyō’” in Kondō et al., *Kindai no bukyō shisō*, 283–314.

28. Robert King Hall, ed., and John Owen Gauntlett, trans., *Kokutai no Hongi: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1949), 51; Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 25, 73.

29. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 23, 25, 53, 111, 116–119.

30. For a discussion of *shabetsu* and *byōdō*, see Victoria, *Zen War Stories*, 41–42; Ives, *Imperial-Way Zen*, 83–100.

31. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 80–81. See Sueki Fumihiko’s chapter in this volume for a more profound discussion of selfhood in *Nihonteki reisei*.

32. Hall, *Kokutai no Hongi*, 53–54, 82, 87, 93, 133, 180, 182. Japan Ministry of Education, *Shinmin no michi* (Tokyo: Monbushō Kyōgakkoku, 1941), 1–3, 7, 56, 85.

33. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 64–65, cf. Japan Ministry of Education, *Shinmin no michi*, 47–48, 63, 72, 75–76; Hall, *Kokutai no Hongi*, 81, 87–89, 141.

34. Suzuki, *Nihonteki reisei*, 59, 61.

35. Ives, *Imperial-way Zen*, 134.

36. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 390–393.

37. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 407, 417.

38. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 398.

39. Suzuki, “D. T. Suzuki’s English Diaries V,” 167.

40. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 228, 402–413.

41. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 391.

42. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 395–396.

43. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 321, 327–328, 332.

44. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 321, 323.

45. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 328–337.

46. Suzuki Daisetz, *Tōyōteki ichi* (1942), *SDZa* 7:323.

47. Suzuki, *Nihon no reiseika*, 227, 288–310, 338–361.

48. “The Shinto Directive,” *Contemporary Religions in Japan* 1, no. 2 (1960): 85–89. For more detailed studies of the directive, see, for example, Ōhara Yasuo, *Shintō shirei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kōgakkan Bunko, 1993); Jinja shinpōsha, ed., *Shintō shirei to sengo no Shintō* (Tokyo: Jinja Shinpōsha, 1975); and Tamaru Noriyoshi, ed., *Gendai tennō to shintō: Shinpojiamu* (Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten, 1990).

49. Supreme Commander, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 1:4799–4823.

50. Supreme Commander, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 2:482.

51. Hans Baerwald, *The Purge of Japanese Leaders under the Occupation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 74.

52. "Career Commissioned Personnel in Shinto Associations," CIE to GS, September 27, 1947, in Prange Collection, GHQ/SCAP Records (RG 331, National Archives and Records Service), Box No. 5790/18, Folder Title: General—"Policy, Purge Problems."

53. Shibukawa Ken'ichi, "Senryō seisaku to shintōkai no taiō," in Ikado, *Senryō to Nihon shūkyō*, 497–520.

54. Woodard, *Allied Occupation of Japan*, 186.

55. Barnard Rubin, "No Halo for Kagawa (Taken from December–January issue of: 'THE PROTESTANT')," 1–23, in GHQ/SCAP Records, Box No. 5837, Folder Title: "Kagawa Toyohiko."

56. "CI+E Bulletin, No. 13 APO 500," December 22, 1947, vol.1, *Peace through Religions*, "Conferences Sponsored by Japan Religious League Indicate Leaders Aware of Responsibility in Shaping New Japan," in GHQ/SCAP Records, Box No. 5792, Folder Title: "Peace Organizations."

57. "Social Series: 1530 Item 2 Religious Peace Conference Pens Message to Uno—Tokyo Tomin Shimbun—8 May 47. Translator: Y Sato," in GHQ/SCAP Records, Box No. 5792, Folder Title: "Peace—Through Religion Conference, May 1947."

58. Abe Masao, "Shūkyō heiwa kaigi no hanshō," *Chūgai nippō*, November 27, 1947, 1.

59. Abe, "Shūkyō heiwa kaigi no hanshō," 1; "Tendencies: General, Peace through Religions Conference" in GHQ/SCAP Records, Box No. 5792, Folder Title: "Peace—Through Religion Conference, May 1947."

60. Suzuki Daisetz, "Christianity and Buddhism," *Far Eastern Stars and Stripes Weekly Review* 9 (1947): 2.

61. Christmas Humphreys, *Via Tokyo* (London: Hutchinson, 1948), 9; Nagamori Kiyoshi, "A Footprint of Jack Ronald Brinkley and the Influence of Francis Brinkley, His Father," *Ibunka Kenkyū* 3, no. 10 (2006): 135.

62. Abe Masao and Francis Haar, eds., *A Zen Life: DT Suzuki Remembered* (New York: Weatherhill, 1986), 193.

63. Victoria, *Zen War Stories*, 2.

64. Albert Stunkard, "Philip Kapleau's First Encounter with Zen," in *Zen Teaching, Zen Practice: Philip Kapleau and the Three Pillars of Zen*, ed. Kenneth Kraft (New York: Weatherhill, 2000), 21.

65. Timothy P. Maga, *Judgment at Tokyo: The Japanese War Crimes Trials* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 1–68.

66. E.g., Neil Boister and Robert Cryer, *The Tokyo International Military Tribunal: A Reappraisal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Futamura Madoka, *War Crimes Tribunals and Transitional Justice: The Tokyo Trial and the Nuremberg Legacy* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2008).

67. Tōjō Hideki et al., *Record of Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East... Tokyo, Japan: The United States of America and Others against Araki, Sadao, Tojo, Hideki, and Others Accused* (Tokyo: International Military Tribunal in the Far East, 1946–1948), 80:39163.

68. Tōjō et al., *Record of Proceedings* 70:28135, 28333–28338, 28341–28342. The incident led to a brief war between Japanese and Chinese troops.

69. The most comprehensive analysis of Ōkawa's religious vision is Usuki Akira, *Ōkawa Shūmei: Isurāmu to tennō no hazama de* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2010).

70. Tōjō et al., *Record of Proceedings* 122:48516.

71. General Tōjō was prime minister and army minister in 1941–1944; General Matsui was commander-in-chief of the Japanese Forces in Central China in 1937–1938; General Doihara was commander of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria in 1938–1940. He subsequently served on the Supreme War Council in 1940–1943, and then as an army commander in Singapore in 1944–1945.

72. General Hirota was foreign minister in 1933–1936, and prime minister in 1936–1937; General Hiranuma was president of the privy council in 1936–1939, and prime minister in 1939. Although convicted as a class A war criminal, Hiranuma was given only a life sentence and was paroled shortly before his death in 1952.

73. General Itagaki served as chief of staff in the Kwantung Army in 1936–1937, army minister in 1938–1939, chief of the army general staff in 1939, commander in Korea in 1941, member of the Supreme War Council in 1943, and commander in Singapore in 1945.

74. Victoria, *Zen War Stories*, 177–194.

75. Boister and Cryer, *Tokyo International Military Tribunal*, 70.

76. Albert Stunkard, *After the War: An American in the Ruins of Japan*, unpublished manuscript, n.d., 2, <http://www.cuke.com>.

77. Stunkard, *After the War*, 2. Dürckheim's connections to Suzuki and Zen are discussed further in Brian Victoria, "D. T. Suzuki, Zen and the Nazis / Suzuki Daisetsu Zen Nachisu (Ue)," *Asia-Pacific Journal/Japan Focus* 11, issue 43, no. 4 (2013): 2, 14–15; Brian Victoria, "A Zen Nazi in Wartime Japan: Count Dürckheim, and His Sources—D. T. Suzuki, Yasutani Haku'un and Eugen Herrigel," *Asia-Pacific Journal/Japan Focus* 12, issue 3, no. 2 (2014): 1–51; Karl Baier, "The Formation and Principles of Count Dürckheim's Nazi Worldview and His Interpretation of Japanese Spirit and Zen / Deyurukuhaimu Hakushaku no Nachisuteki Sekaikan oyobi Nihonteki Seishin to Zen no Kaishaku: Sono Keisei to Rinen," *Asia-Pacific Journal/Japan Focus* 11, issue 48, no. 3 (2013): 1–33.

78. Abe and Haar, *A Zen Life*, 205.

79. Boister and Cryer, *Tokyo International Military Tribunal*, 1139–1143.

80. Nakazato Nariaki, *Neonationalist Mythology in Postwar Japan: Pal's Dissenting Judgment at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 141–216.

81. Boister and Cryer, *Tokyo International Military Tribunal*, 1156–1171.

82. Boister and Cryer, *Tokyo International Military Tribunal*, 1139–1143.

83. Philip Kapleau, *Zen: Dawn in the West* (London: Rider, 1980), 257.

84. Kapleau, *Zen*, 258.

85. Kapleau, *Zen*, 259–265.

86. Humphreys, *Via Tokyo*, 71.

87. Humphreys, *Via Tokyo*, 201–202.

88. Humphreys, *Via Tokyo*, 53–56, 59–67.

89. Marcus Braybrooke, *A Wider Vision: A History of the World Congress of Faiths, 1936–1996* (Oxford: One World, 1996), 39–40.

90. Christmas Humphreys, "Buddhism at War: A Report of the Presidential Speech at the Birthday Meeting of the Lodge," *Buddhism in England* (January–February 1941): 108–109.

91. Christmas Humphreys, *Shin Nippon to bukk'yō*, trans. Ogata Sōhaku (Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan, 1948), 4–5.

92. Humphreys, *Shin Nippon to bukk'yō*, 3.

93. Suzuki Daisetz, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1938), 13–33.

94. Jack Brinkley, "Watashi to Nippon bukk'yō IV," *Daihōrin* 18, no. 1 (1951): 86–94.
95. Humphreys, *Shin Nippon to bukk'yō*, 3, 8.
96. Brinkley, "Watashi to Nippon bukk'yō IV," 93.
97. Jack Brinkley, "Dōgen ni yosete," *Dōgen* 12, no. 5 (1950): 9.
98. R. H. Blyth, "Nippon bukk'yōto ni nozomu," *Sekai bukk'yō* 1, no. 4 (1946): 15.
99. Humphreys, *Shin Nippon to Bukkyō*, 4; Brinkley, "Watashi to Nippon bukk'yō IV," 93.
100. Yoshimura Ikuyo, R. H. *Buraitsu no shōgai: Zen to haiku wo ai shite / The Life of R. H. Blyth* (Tokyo: Dōhōsha, 1996), 111–118.
101. Woodard, *Allied Occupation of Japan*, 259–268; Ueda Kuniyoshi, *Buraizu sensei, arigatō / Thank You, Professor Blyth* (Tokyo: Sangokan, 2010), 23–35.
102. Yoshimura, R. H. *Buraitsu no shōgai*, 117, 134. The given figures sound implausibly high, but it may be understood that the grant was a generous one. The published correspondences of Suzuki do not mention the source of funding for the journal; Suzuki Daisetz, *Suzuki Daisetsu shokan II, 1940–53*, ed. Ōzuka Shin'ichi, *SDZb* 37:144, 157, 161, 166, 172.
103. Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū," 118.
104. Suzuki, *Bukkyō no taii* (1947), *SDZa* 7:3.
105. Suzuki Daisetz, *The Essence of Buddhism* (London: Buddhist Society, 1946).
106. Grace, "Suzuki Daisetsu no kenkyū," 115.
107. Abe and Haar, *Zen Life*, 232–233.
108. Stunkard, "Philip Kapleau's First Encounter," 25; Seager, *Buddhism in America*, 46.
109. As portrayed in Jack Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums* (New York: Viking Press, 1958).
110. As exemplified by Timothy Leary, "The Buddha as Drop-Out," in *Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out* (Berkeley, CA: Ronin, 1999), 84–89.
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D. T. Suzuki's Theory of Inspiration and the Challenges of Cross-Cultural Transmission

ROY STARRS

One of the most noteworthy facts about D. T. Suzuki is the remarkable success of his writings in English. As has often been pointed out, these varied and numerous works were almost single-handedly responsible for the rise of an interest in Zen among leading Western philosophers and psychologists of the prewar period, as well as for the much more widespread “Zen boom” among artists, writers, and eventually the public at large from the 1950s onward. The major contemporary American poet Gary Snyder has described Suzuki as the “most cosmopolitan Japanese thinker of the 20th century” and asked, “Can you think of any Japanese person who has done as much as he has to affect the rest of the world?”¹

How can we account for this remarkable success? It seems to me that Suzuki was ideally suited to be a *cultural* translator—that is, a translator not just in the narrow linguistic sense, of particular texts, but, in a much wider sense, a translator/interpreter/transmitter of ideas, of cultural values, of spiritual and aesthetic sensibilities, and of the many other immaterial elements that constitute a complex and ancient cultural tradition. More than any other scholar and writer of the age, he was able to bridge the wide cultural gap that existed between Japan and the West in the early twentieth century. It was an achievement that required a rare combination of talents, abilities, and even life experiences: not only a profound practical and scholarly knowledge of Zen Buddhism and its vast cultural-historical context, an equally wide and deep knowledge of Western culture, and a consummate mastery of English prose style, but also a prolonged period of residence in a Western country, prolonged enough to give Suzuki an intimate feel for the way Westerners think and express themselves. All these factors came together to enable him to create works in English that had enormous appeal to Western readers.

Another relevant factor no doubt was the cultural milieu of the early twentieth century, especially what has been called the “inward turn” of Western culture, as manifest in the rise of the psychological novel, symbolist poetry, the

psychology of the unconscious, the modernist stream-of-consciousness novel, surrealism, and so on. The moment was obviously right for an interest in Zen as another, and indeed very direct and methodical, form of “inward turning.”

But it might also be said that Suzuki’s “mode of translation” or “interpretive methodology” belongs to some extent to the cultural context of the early twentieth century. It was a context in which translators or interpreters of East Asian culture could not assume much familiarity with their subject among even educated Western readers. Thus, understandably, they would often resort to providing Western parallels or equivalents to help their audience understand better the unfamiliar cultural phenomenon. Inevitably, this raises the question for us today of whether this communicative strategy led to serious distortions or misrepresentations—for instance, in Suzuki’s case, when he explains Zen in terms borrowed from American transcendentalism, from Christian mysticism, from the religious psychology of William James, or from Freud or Jung. No doubt his use in this way of terms and ideas familiar to Western readers made Zen seem less “alien” to them and enabled them to feel that they “understood” it far more readily than would otherwise have been the case. But how much was “lost in translation?” Was his readers’ “understanding” based on a false sense of familiarity? In other words, does the sophisticated knowledge of Western culture Suzuki brings to bear on his interpretation of Zen cloud or distort its “original nature” or, on the contrary, does it help clarify it—even for a Japanese audience? Should his “free translation” of Zen into Western cultural terms be regarded as a “historical relic” or as a still-seminal influence for the future, which will continue to advance the international understanding of Zen in the global age of the twenty-first century? The question is further complicated, of course, by the fact that anyone’s answer will depend on their understanding both of Zen and of the Western religious, philosophical, and psychological terms Suzuki uses to describe it. And, of course, one could also argue, from a more purely pragmatic point of view, that even if Suzuki’s works caused some misunderstandings of Zen in the West, these were “creative misunderstandings” that helped inspire some interesting new directions in postwar Western culture—the music of John Cage, the poetry of the “Beat Generation,” the painting of the abstract expressionists, all supposedly characterized by “Zen spontaneity”—and that also led many to study Zen further and even ultimately to practice it.

Suzuki’s Cross-Cultural Transmission of Haiku

Since my own academic background is more in literary than in religious studies, I would like to explore these issues in more depth by focusing here on the

intellectually ambitious and lengthy essay (about fifty pages in the 1970 Princeton edition) Suzuki wrote on "Zen and Haiku" as part of his general study *Zen and Japanese Culture*. The first question one might ask is: why would a scholar of religion devote such intensive study to such a narrowly literary topic as haiku? The answer, of course, is found in the essay itself. One thing it shows is the influence of Suzuki's literary friend, R. H. Blyth, the pioneer English scholar of haiku who wrote numerous lengthy volumes on the subject. Suzuki praises Blyth's work highly, apparently regarding him as the only foreigner who ever really understood haiku. But the essay also shows Suzuki's own strong literary bent, his literary talents and tastes, his considerable abilities as a literary critic, and especially of course his love for haiku. Even more importantly, it also illustrates his view that the ultimate truth of Zen, being logically incomprehensible and inexpressible, is best expressed through the more indirect and intuitive means of poetry and art than through direct, logically constrained philosophic or religious discourse. Indeed, this is one of Suzuki's most attractive features for Western readers, and helped greatly to popularize his work, especially among writers and artists. In this sense, he is no ordinary scholar of religion. More specifically for our purposes here, in this essay too Suzuki has some interesting things to say on the issue of cross-cultural translation and transmission, not only explicitly but implicitly: he demonstrates his own methodology in action.

It must be admitted, however, that, despite these many virtues, the essay also is not without its "vices." There are passages that, for the contemporary reader at least, smack of an offensively chauvinistic form of *nihonjinron*—statements such as "It takes a Japanese mind to appreciate fully the value of a *haiku*,"² or "To understand the spirit of Zen along with *haiku*, a thorough acquaintance with Japanese psychology and surroundings is essential"—as if Zen were of purely Japanese origin!³ But then, as already mentioned, in the same essay he quotes at length from R. H. Blyth, praising his analysis as "really illuminating, showing how much of the haiku spirit the commentator has imbibed."⁴ As is by now widely recognized, these kinds of "contradictions," if such they be, are fairly common in Suzuki's work, in his presentation of Zen and Buddhism in general as well as in his writings on Japanese culture. Generally, he seems to be guided by two opposing impulses: one toward Japanese or Asian cultural exceptionalism and the other toward a remarkably open-minded universalism.

Another writer might try to "finesse" these contradictions by pointing to the element of truth in both of the opposing propositions—before tidying up with an appropriate Hegelian synthesis. Suzuki does not seem to bother with such academic niceties. He simply states the two apparently contradictory positions in

absolute terms, as if no qualifications were necessary. One might perhaps regard this as a mental habit acquired from his long years of training in Rinzai Zen, which, to say the least, does not shy away from logical contradiction, and may even be said to thrive on it, as manifested most famously in many of its *kōan*. As Suzuki himself says in his haiku essay, “The experience of reality itself . . . refuses to be so sharply defined that ‘yes’ can never be ‘no’ and ‘no’ ‘yes.’ Nowadays, I am told, the physicists are trying to use the concept of complementarity, seeing that one theory in exclusion of an antagonistic one does not explain everything. Life goes on whether or not we logically comprehend and mechanically control it.”⁵ In other words, Life or Reality itself is contradictory, or at least seems so from the perspective of our limited intellects; thus, if we wish to grasp life as it is, we must be willing to live with contradictions.

What this suggests to me is that Suzuki purposely leaves his “contradictions” unresolved, thus inviting his reader to resolve them or to “fill in the blanks.” One could compare this with the kinetic caesura in haiku itself: it is a way of activating the reader’s dormant mind. Presumably, the reader’s mind will flit between the two poles of the “contradiction,” struggling somehow to reconcile them—a state of creative mental tension. Of course, this is a dangerous technique, not recommended for novice writers. In this respect, Suzuki’s method of communication is less that of a conventional academic than of a poet such as Walt Whitman, who wrote, “Do I contradict myself? / Very well, then I contradict myself, / (I am large, I contain multitudes).”⁶

At any rate, whereas today’s reader, confronted by the occasional exceptionalist or chauvinist passage, is likely to wince and move on, readers a century or so ago would have been much more sympathetic to such sentiments, since the general consensus of the time was that a wide and perhaps unbridgeable cultural chasm separated Asia from the West—and the point would be reinforced with the inevitable quote from Kipling. However, Christian readers of the time might well have resisted any comparison of their religion with the “heathen” creed of Buddhism. Today, of course, we “global citizens” are naturally drawn toward the opposite, universalist end of the pole—perhaps also because very few of us today are “exclusivist” Christians in the Victorian sense, and we find nothing objectionable in Suzuki’s free use of Christian ideas and symbols. In fact, we are more likely to see them as evidence of an admirably open mind. Also, we are heirs of the now long-popular idea of “mysticism” as a universal “perennial philosophy” or religion—thanks to William James, Aldous Huxley and, of course, Suzuki himself, among others. Thus, few of us today are likely to find his wide-ranging cross-cultural comparisons objectionable, although we may still find ourselves startled at times by their unexpected nature.

In his haiku essay, for instance, just as in many of his other writings, Suzuki makes frequent use of Christian terms and references. He uses the word "divine" quite often, as when he writes that "*satori* is to be an act of divine grace, as Christians would declare," or even, in writing of "the spiritual relationship between Zen and the Japanese conception of art," he maintains that, when art "moves us to the depths of our being," it "becomes a divine work . . . something approaching the work of God."⁷ Perhaps his most startling and ingenious use of a Judeo-Christian analogy is in his powerful defense of the value of haiku, despite its brevity, when he writes that "we must remember that 'God' simply uttered, 'Let there be light,' and when the work was finished, he again simply remarked that the light was 'good.' And this was the way, we are told, that the world started, this world in which all kinds of dramatic events have been going on ever since it made its debut in such a simple style. 'God' did not use even as many syllables as ten and his work was successfully carried out."⁸

This witty and highly original analogy (who else could have thought of it?) might well have had some pedagogical utility in helping Western readers better understand the value of haiku; but in my view, it is far more than that: a brilliant insight in its own right that can be appreciated as such by anyone, including Suzuki's fellow Japanese. Indeed, what is often most remarkable and original in Suzuki's work, it seems to me, is precisely these unexpected but enlightening cross-cultural associations and comparisons, which achieve a kind of mutual illumination of cultures. And this is something even more relevant and valuable today than it was a century ago.

Suzuki's Theory of Inspiration

But here, as already mentioned, I would like to focus more on a literary than a religious aspect of Suzuki's efforts at cross-cultural translation and transmission, looking from a comparative-literary perspective at the aesthetic philosophy he presents in his haiku essay and, more particularly, at his "theory of inspiration." This is a branch of aesthetic theory that attempts to describe the psychological process of creative writing or other forms of artistic creativity, especially as it involves the relationship between self, mind, and literary or artistic work. I should add that, although my main focus here is literary and aesthetic, it seems to me that Suzuki's "theory of inspiration" is not, as might first be thought, of only secondary or peripheral significance in his understanding and presentation of Zen. Actually, I would argue, it is of central import, primarily because of his view of the truth or reality of Zen as graspable only by intuition or feeling and not by logic or intellect. Art therefore becomes the most suitable medium for the

expression of Zen—or, one might say, the best way to “express the inexpressible,” the “Dao that cannot be spoken” but only hinted at, as in the Buddha’s own “flower sermon,” supposedly the first historical example of a Zen-style “transmission of mind to mind.” Furthermore, in perhaps the most controversial part of his argument, as we shall see, Suzuki ultimately even seems to conflate artistic with spiritual attainment: he applies the word “satori” both to the ultimate insight of the Zen practitioner and to the ultimate inspiration of the artist.

From time immemorial, of course, poets and other artists have been possessed by a strong sense that the “inspiration” for their work comes from somewhere beyond, below or above their everyday conscious selves—whether from a goddess Muse or from a “deeper” unconscious level of their own minds. In this respect, this fundamental artistic experience is similar to the fundamental Zen or mystical experience—and, in both cases, much aesthetic or psychological theory and religious belief has been founded upon this very basic but “inexpressible” insight or experience. “Where does a poem come from?” is a question comparable in this respect to “Where does a mystical experience such as satori come from?” In a word, the answer Suzuki provides to both questions in his haiku essay is “the Unconscious.” Furthermore, he argues that, to access the unconscious, the poet or Zen practitioner must enter a receptive psychological state, which he characterizes with words such as *mushin*, *munen*, *muga*, and *samādhi*. Thus, Suzuki’s central concern with the psychology of Zen experience is paralleled here by a concern with the psychology of poetic creativity. One might say that he is able to apply his Zen understanding of the mind to an in-depth analysis of the process of poetic creation and of the relation therein between self, mind, and poem.

The question arises then: how does the aesthetic philosophy Suzuki presents here fit within a larger context of East/West cultural tradition? And to what extent does he succeed in “translating” or “transmitting” it from the Japanese and Asian to the English-speaking world? More specifically, is Suzuki’s theory of inspiration authentically “Japanese”—that is, does it accurately represent Zen tradition on the one hand and the literary tradition of *waka*, *renga*, and *haiku* on the other? Or does it distort or misrepresent those two traditions? And, if it is “authentically Japanese,” is it understandable or “transmittable” to a Western audience or, on the contrary, is it so alien to the “Western mind” that misunderstandings and misrepresentations are bound to arise?

To give some more concrete examples of what I mean: does Suzuki’s use of the term “the unconscious,” then so au courant in Western psychological and artistic circles, misrepresent Buddhist psychology, especially in the context of Japanese poetic theory? Or, by contrast, does his use of such Zen concepts as

"no-mind" and "no-self" make his theory of inspiration incomprehensible to an audience familiar only with the Western poetic tradition?

Although a surprising number of statements predicated on a theory of inspiration are scattered throughout Suzuki's haiku essay, these tend to be made "in passing" rather than set out as a sustained, logically progressive theoretical argument. With this in mind, I take the liberty here of summarizing these various statements as a series of five propositions or claims that, it seems to me, represent the central argument of his theory and also its major psychological, philosophical, and aesthetic implications.

Suzuki's first claim, in his own words, is that the "human mind can be considered to be made up, as it were, of several layers of consciousness, from a dualistically constructed consciousness down to the Unconscious."⁹

Secondly, what Suzuki ultimately means by "the Unconscious" is not the personal Freudian unconscious or even the Jungian "collective unconscious" (which is still a purely human phenomenon) but rather what he calls the "Cosmic Unconscious," the indivisible, nondualistic mind-ground of all creation: "Psychologically speaking, this *ālayavijñāna* or 'collective unconscious' may be regarded as the basis of our mental life; but when we wish to open up the secrets of the artistic or religious life, we must have what may be designated 'Cosmic Unconscious.' The Cosmic Unconscious is the principle of creativity, God's workshop where is deposited the moving force of the universe. All creative works of art, the lives and aspirations of religious people, the spirit of inquiry moving the philosophers—all these come from the fountainhead of the Cosmic Unconscious, which is really the store-house (*ālaya*) of possibilities."¹⁰

Thirdly then, haiku poets, like all artists, must gain access to and derive inspiration from this very deepest level of the mind if they are to produce work of the highest aesthetic order, "works vibrating with 'spiritual (or divine) rhythm' (*ki-in*), exhibiting *myō* (or the mysterious), or giving a glimpse into the Unfathomable, which is *yūgen*."¹¹

Fourthly, to open themselves to this deepest level of inspiration, poets or artists must enter a passive but profound meditative state in which they are so intensely focused on the task at hand that they completely forget themselves and transcend their everyday "superficial" minds. Only this level of "selflessness" enables the poet or artist to "broaden himself out to embrace the whole universe in his arms."¹² For, Suzuki asks, "Is life really so connected with the analysis which occupies our superficial consciousness? Is there not in every one of us a life very much deeper and larger than our intellectual deliberation and discrimination—the life of the Unconscious itself, of what I call the 'Cosmic Unconscious?'"¹³

Fifthly and, as I have said, perhaps most controversially, Suzuki seems to unconditionally equate this aesthetic trajectory of the poet or artist with the spiritual trajectory of the Buddhist monk: both achieve “enlightenment” (*satori*)—that is, in his terms, union with the Cosmic Unconscious—by intense concentration (*samādhi* or *ekāgratā*) while in a state of no-self (*muga*) or no-mind (*mushin*).

The following are a few examples of Suzuki’s actual deployment of this theory in his haiku essay:

The artist, at the moment when his creativeness is at its height, is transformed into an agent of the creator. This supreme moment in the life of an artist, when expressed in Zen terms, is the experience of *satori*. To experience *satori* is to become conscious of the Unconscious (*mushin*, no-mind), psychologically speaking. Art has always something of the Unconscious about it.¹⁴

Haiku, like Zen, abhors egoism in any form of assertion. The product of art must be entirely devoid of artifice or ulterior motive of any kind. There ought not to be any presence of a mediatory agent between the artistic inspiration and the mind into which it has come. The author is to be an altogether passive instrument for giving an expression to the inspiration.¹⁵

Whatever aspects of the Unconscious there may be, they can never be tapped unless one experiences *samādhi* or *sammai*, which is the state of one-pointedness (*ekāgratā*), that is, of concentration. And this state is realized only when the artist, with his knowledge of all the technicality, is still sincerely and loyally looking for a complete mastery of the art.¹⁶

To reach the bedrock of one’s being means to have one’s Unconscious entirely cleansed of egoism, for the ego penetrates even the Unconscious so called. Not the “Collective Unconscious” but the “Cosmic Unconscious” must be made to reveal itself unreservedly. This is why Zen so emphasizes the significance of “no-mind” (*mushin*) or “no-thought” (*munen*), where we find infinite treasures well preserved.¹⁷

A somewhat subtler use of the theory occurs in Suzuki’s explication of haiku master Bashō’s most famous work: “An old pond / a frog jumps in: / the sound of water (*Furu ike ya kawazu tobikomu mizu no oto*). Suzuki’s Rinzai Zen training reveals itself in his rejection of any suggestion of quietism and his interpretation of the haiku’s *satori* insight as a dynamic intuition of the unity of form and emptiness, the natural world and the Cosmic Unconscious. It is not the serene placidity of the old pond that precipitates the poet’s moment of awakening to a deeper

reality but rather the plop made by the frog as it leaps into the water. This reminds us of the Zen “enlightenment stories” narrated by Suzuki himself in which a monk’s satori is said to have been triggered by a sudden sound—for instance, of a stone striking bamboo. In this respect, such everyday sounds often play a key role in the world of Zen:

It is by intuition alone that this timelessness of the Unconscious is truly taken hold of. And this intuitive grasp of Reality never takes place when a world of Emptiness is assumed outside our everyday world of the senses; for these two worlds, sensual and supersensual, are not separate but one. Therefore, the poet sees into his Unconscious not through the stillness of the old pond but through the sound stirred up by the jumping frog. Without the sound there is no seeing on the part of Bashō into the Unconscious, in which lies the source of creative activities and upon which all true artists draw for their inspiration. It is difficult to describe this moment of consciousness where polarization ceases or rather starts, for these contradictory terms are applicable there without causing logical inconvenience. It is the poet or the religious genius who actually has this kind of experience. And, according to the way this experience is handled; it becomes in one case Bashō’s haiku and in the other a Zen utterance.¹⁸

Furthermore:

Bashō came across this Unconscious, and his experience was given an expressive utterance in his haiku. The haiku is not just singing of a tranquility imagined to be underneath the superficial tumult of the worldly life. His utterance points to something further below, which is at the same time something we encounter in this world of pluralities, and it is on account of this something that our world gains its value and meaning. Without reckoning on the Cosmic Unconscious, our life, lived in the realm of relativities, loses its moorings altogether.¹⁹

As may be seen, Suzuki freely mixes traditional Buddhist terms—*samādhi*, *ekāgratā*, *mushin*, and so on—with terms drawn from modern psychology describing the unconscious, always a central concern of his thought. But, among his Japanese contemporaries, he was certainly not alone in adopting this “culturally hybrid” mode of thought. Most conspicuously, his close friend, the major Kyoto School philosopher Nishida Kitarō, took much the same approach. For instance, Nishida’s early aesthetic philosophy, as Steve Odin has pointed out, “reformulates the Kantian sense of beauty as a disinterested pleasure, or an

artistic detachment from egoistic desires, in terms of a key philosophical notion of Zen Buddhism in Japan: namely, *muga* (Sanskrit: *anātman*).²⁰ Indeed, Odin also notes that “Nishida’s early notion of beauty as *muga* designating no-self or ecstasy itself corresponds to his associate Daisetz T. Suzuki’s position expressed in *Zen and Japanese Culture*, whereby the traditional Japanese arts of ink wash painting, calligraphy, flower arrangement, haiku poetry, the tea ceremony, and samurai martial arts are all alike based on the realization of Zen satori or sudden enlightenment rooted in *mushin* or ‘no-mind.’”²¹

As already noted, this invites two questions: firstly, by adopting such apparently contemporary and “Western” terms as Freud’s “the unconscious,” Jung’s “the collective unconscious,” or a term reminiscent of Richard Bucke’s “cosmic consciousness,” and, by using these terms to argue that the haiku poet’s insight is somehow equivalent to a Zen *satori*, does Suzuki misrepresent the cultural tradition to which both haiku and Zen belong? For instance, are ideas such as *muga* and *mushin* incompatible with a Western psychology of the unconscious? Secondly, if this is a “misrepresentation,” does it give Western readers merely the illusion that they have been afforded an in-depth understanding of Zen and haiku and of the relation between them?

Early in the essay Suzuki offers a rather conventional definition of satori as “seeing directly into the mystery of our own being, which, according to Zen, is Reality itself.”²² He also points out that, from an epistemological point of view, satori is “an intuitive mode of understanding” as opposed to a mere “conceptual knowledge” that is “superficial” because it is not a direct personal apprehension of the “living truth.”²³ But he then goes on to claim that this direct intuitive experience of reality is obtainable as much through artistic as through Zen practice and, indeed, that the greatest art is always an expression of this ultimate experience: “This supreme moment in the life of an artist, when expressed in Zen terms, is the experience of *satori*. To experience satori is to become conscious of the Unconscious (*mushin*, no-mind), psychologically speaking.”²⁴ In other words, the artist’s intuition of reality deserves to be called satori because it too is an experience of the “Unconscious.”

On the face of it, this is an extraordinary claim from a Zen or even from a more generally Buddhist point of view. In religious terms, it could even be considered heretical. Artistic practice, after all, was never part of Shakyamuni’s “noble eightfold path” to liberation and enlightenment. Orthodox Buddhists, in fact, have often regarded artistic pursuits as dangerous distractions from the correct path. Although, of course, there is a long and rich tradition of Buddhist art throughout Asia, artistic practice was usually regarded as secondary to more purely spiritual practices such as meditation—a finger pointing at the moon,

perhaps, but not the moon of enlightenment itself. Even Buddhist artists themselves have often felt a certain ambivalence about the spiritual value or otherwise of their art. The great haiku poet Bashō, for instance, whose Zen insight is so highly praised by Suzuki in this essay, may well have suffered from this ambivalence. According to one of his leading contemporary interpreters, Ueda Makoto, in Bashō's rather melancholy death poem that begins "*Tabi ni yande*" (Falling ill on a journey)—so different to the usual triumphant tone Zen masters adopt in their death poems—the image of the withered moor "seems to suggest Bashō's ultimate failure to enter a realm of religious enlightenment" and thus represents his disillusion with poetry as a "way" to liberation.²⁵

So how is it that Suzuki can make such a bold and apparently radical claim? In providing an answer to this question, his haiku essay also sheds light on his general view of what is really important or essential to Zen practice. In short, he is able to make this claim because of his conception of what he calls the "Zen method," that is, "a method of its own to realize *satori*, to bring it within the reach of every ordinary mind," a method, he claims, by which "Zen is distinguished from other schools of Buddhism."²⁶ By "Zen method" one might naturally assume that Suzuki is referring to *zazen* (seated meditation), which, as the Buddhist sect's name indicates, is commonly regarded as its central practice. But seated meditation is a practice common to all forms of Buddhism and, besides, Suzuki's attitude toward *zazen* was famously ambivalent. Indeed, at times in his writings he seems to disparage the practice on the grounds that it is not a natural activity of the mind but rather yet another artificial encumbrance. In his *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, for instance, he writes, "If there is anything Zen strongly emphasizes it is the attainment of freedom; that is, freedom from all unnatural encumbrances. Meditation is something artificially put on; it does not belong to the native activity of the mind."²⁷ And, in the same work again, "Zen perceives and feels, and does not abstract and meditate. Zen penetrates and is finally lost in the immersion. Meditation, on the other hand, is outspokenly dualistic and consequently inevitably superficial."²⁸ As might be expected, Suzuki has often been criticized for his attitude by more "orthodox" Zen practitioners. The popular American Zen teacher Philip Kapleau, for instance, complained that Suzuki's almost complete failure to mention *zazen* in his writings was proof of his overly "philosophical, theoretical approach to Zen."²⁹ In my view, however, this is not quite accurate. What Suzuki's "neglect" of *zazen* really signifies is that he preferred, at least in his writings, to emphasize another, albeit closely related, aspect of the practice of the Rinzai school of Zen, in which he himself was trained. I refer to the *kōan* (meditation problem) system—which, as he makes clear, is designed, just as much as is *zazen*, to take the student beyond

what he called “conceptual knowledge,” that is, theory and philosophy. This is what Suzuki refers to in his haiku essay as the “Zen method,” and it is his emphasis on this particular aspect of Zen training that enables him, in this essay, to draw such close parallels between the painful struggles toward “enlightenment” of both Zen students and artists, as for instance in the following passage:

Generally speaking, *satori* breaks out when a man is at the end of his resources. He feels within himself that something remains to complete his mastership of the art, whatever it may be. He has nothing to learn as far as the techniques are concerned, but if he is really dedicated to his chosen field of work and sincere to himself, he is sure to have a feeling of uneasiness owing to something in his Unconscious, which is now disquietingly trying to move out into the open area of consciousness. In the case of Zen study as it is carried on nowadays, there are the master and the *kōan* confronting the student. In the case of artistic disciplines, individual experiences may vary, though there are a certain number of fixed patterns.³⁰

We begin to see the full implications of this argument when Suzuki next applies it to the particular case of haiku. He illustrates his point by recounting an episode in the life of the well-known “haiku poetess,” Chiyo (1703–1775). When Chiyo studied with a certain haiku master, he asked her to write about a cuckoo. She struggled mightily day and night to write a good haiku on this topic, just as Zen students struggle relentlessly to answer their *kōan*, but the haiku master, just like a Zen master, rejected one attempt after another. Then, at last, came her breakthrough moment—or, as Suzuki would have it, her *satori*. She was so intent on composing her haiku that she lost all sense of self-consciousness and the poem naturally formed in her mind. Whereupon, as Suzuki writes,

When this was shown to the master, he at once accepted it as one of the finest haiku ever composed on the cuckoo. The reason was that the haiku truly communicated the author’s genuine inner feeling about the *hototogisu* and that there was no artificial or intellectually calculated scheme for any kind of effect; that is to say, there was no “ego” on the part of the author aiming at its own glorification. Haiku, like Zen, abhors egoism in any form of assertion. The product of art must be entirely devoid of artifice or ulterior motive of any kind. There ought not to be any presence of a mediatory agent between the artistic inspiration and the mind into which it has come. The author is to be an altogether passive instrument for giving an expression to the inspiration.³¹

In other words, Chiyo's intense mental struggle and ultimate self-surrender, just as in the case of a Zen student tackling a baffling *kōan*, finally gave her access to the unconscious, the "intuitive prehension" of which, according to Suzuki's theory of inspiration, is "the foundation not only of philosophy but of all other cultural activities."³²

But, before we can attempt to address the two questions posed above regarding Suzuki's central argument in his haiku essay, we must next look, however briefly, at some well-known examples of the theory of inspiration in the Japanese and Western poetic traditions, and try to determine how Suzuki's theory fits within that much larger context.

Shinkei's *Sasamegoto*

Suzuki's use of the term "the unconscious," what exactly he means by it, and how this relates to Buddhist and modern psychology, and to Zen practice, are all of course complex issues that could be debated at great length. Trying to define "the unconscious" is rather like trying to define "nothingness"—there's nothing to hold on to! Both nothingness and the unconscious, Suzuki would say, can only be intuited or "felt" rather than logically defined: "It is by intuition alone that this timelessness of the Unconscious is truly taken hold of."³³ But one thing he makes clear in this essay is that the unconscious he refers to is not a Freudian, personal unconscious or even a Jungian collective unconscious. It is what he calls a "cosmic unconscious," something no doubt like the "Buddha mind," an impersonal mind that pervades the whole of reality. And certainly it is also true, as Suzuki himself points out, that Buddhism has possessed some idea of an unconscious dimension of the human mind at least as far back as the Yogacāra school of fourth-century India, with its idea of *ālayavijñāna*, or "storehouse consciousness." But here I am interested in the issue mainly from a literary point of view, and the fact is that Japanese writers on poetry have also long applied this aspect of Buddhist psychology to a theory of inspiration. An eloquent example may be found in the fifteenth-century aesthetic treatise *Sasamegoto* (*Murmured Conversations*, 1463–1464), by Shinkei, a *renga* master who was also a Tendai Buddhist monk. Shinkei's work is a thoroughgoing exposition of the relation between Buddhism and poetry. In a way typical of the aesthetic theorists of the Muromachi period, Shinkei wanted nothing less than to turn his art form—in this case, poetry—into a meditative discipline that would lead its practitioners to spiritual liberation and enlightenment. In this respect he was every bit as spiritually ambitious for poetry as was Suzuki. Shinkei's aim, in writing his treatise/handbook, was to revive what he saw as the "golden age" tradition of major

earlier poets such as the courtier Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241) and the Buddhist monk-poet Saigyō (1118–1190), whose poetry, whether the short, thirty-one-syllable *waka* or the lengthy *renga* (commonly one hundred verses), was deeply imbued with Buddhist meditative practice, philosophy, and aesthetics. Such poets had a high ambition for poetry. Not only would it somehow “express the inexpressible”—the profound insights into reality gained by Buddhist meditation—but the practice of poetry in itself would become a *michi*, a Way to enlightenment more or less equivalent to the practice of meditation. Poets of this golden age, wrote Shinkei, “held that it is the Style of Meditation [*ushintei*] that is the most noble and consummate. It is poetry in which the mind has dissolved and is profoundly at one with the numinosity [*aware*] of things; poetry that issues from the very depths of the poet’s being and may truly be said to be his own *waka*, his own authentic *renga*.”³⁴ As Shinkei’s English-language translator, Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen, writes, “The focus in *ushintei* is the non-egoistic mind, one that has ‘dissolved’ its own narrow concerns and relates to things in the profound spirit of *aware*, which here refers to a recognition of the numinosity of phenomena, the utter uniqueness of each and every thing in its very temporality and ontological dependency, a self-overcoming nondualism of ‘subject’ and ‘object’ that paradoxically enough gives rise to the poet’s ‘own *waka*, his own authentic *renga*’ (*waga uta waga renga*). From this point of view, ‘the ultimate’ refers to the attainment of the illumined mind in meditation and is in this sense synonymous with *ushintei*.”³⁵

The term used by Shinkei that seems closest to Suzuki’s “unconscious” is “mind-ground” (*shinji*), and, as with Suzuki’s unconscious, he regards this as the ultimate source of poetic inspiration. As with Suzuki’s theory of inspiration, too, the poet must enter a meditative, egoless state of mind in order to access this deepest level of the “mind-ground.” Because mind is regarded as the absolute, all-pervasive ground of reality, an experience of Mind at the deepest level is not, strictly speaking, seen as a personal or subjective experience. In fact, one cannot enjoy this (often ecstatic, unitary) experience of Mind unless one surrenders one’s sense of personal, subjective self standing in opposition to an “objective” world. At any rate, it is fairly obvious from all this that Suzuki’s theory of inspiration is perfectly in accord with Shinkei’s.

Of course, it is also true that not all Japanese poets have had such a highly ambitious vision of poetry’s spiritual mission; but, certainly, one can trace a tradition of major poets of this Buddhist type over the centuries from Saigyō through Shinkei and Sōgi up to Bashō and on even to the important modern Zen poet Takahashi Shinkichi. All would have been fundamentally in agreement with Suzuki’s Zen theory of inspiration. Suzuki has sometimes been accused of

exaggerating the influence of Zen on Japanese culture. Whatever the truth of that generally, it is undeniable that Zen had a profound influence on a number of major Japanese poets, from Saigyō to Bashō. But it also depends what is meant by "Zen." When Saigyō says that "the Way of Poetry is wholly the practice of Zen meditation" (*kadō wa hitoe ni zenjō shugyō no michi*), and Shinkei quotes this approvingly, what they are both referring to is probably not the Zen sect (neither of them were Zen monks) but Zen in the generic sense of "meditation" or *dhyāna*.³⁶ Meditation has had a great appeal for Japanese poets, probably for the same reason it has appealed to Western poets such as Gary Snyder, Leonard Cohen, and many other contemporary writers and artists: it promises a way of access to the deep-mind source of creative inspiration. Indeed, generations of English-language poets no doubt have been inspired to practice Zen meditation by Suzuki's theory of inspiration, as elaborated in this particular haiku essay. One can also see the influence of this theory, either directly or indirectly, in the many popular how-to books on "Zen and the art of writing," such as Natalie Goldberg's best seller, *Writing Down the Bones*.

In his commemorative essay on Suzuki, Gary Snyder speaks eloquently of the great influence Suzuki's work had on him and his generation of "Beat" poets: "We stood for original human nature and the spontaneous creative spirit. Dr. Suzuki's Zen presentation of the 'original life force,' the 'life-impulse,' 'the enlivening spirit of the Buddha'—the emphasis on personal direct experience, seemed to lead in the same direction."³⁷ Furthermore, "I also came to see that Dr. Suzuki's presentation of Zen is in many ways a creative leap out of the medieval mentality that brought Zen to that point, a personal way of pointing Zen in a fresh, liberating direction, without even saying so. D. T. Suzuki gave me the push of my life and I can never be too grateful. Now, living again in America, I see evidence of his strong, subtle effect in many arts and fields, as well as in the communities of Americans now practicing Zen."³⁸

A similar claim could be made about Suzuki's impact on postwar American visual artists, especially such "abstract expressionists" as Franz Kline, Jackson Pollock, and Robert Motherwell. In his study of Motherwell, Robert Hobbs writes, "So important were Zen Buddhist ideas to Americans during the initial post-World War II decade that this time period should be regarded as the Zen moment in American culture."³⁹ And he acknowledges that the "primary sources for learning about Zen were the publications of Suzuki," who "in his many writings was able to couch Zen in universal terms, often using Western philosophic concepts and making comparisons with Christianity, so that Zen, which at the time had few serious followers in post-war Japan, was able to achieve wide acceptance in the U.S."⁴⁰

This popularity, the “Zen boom” among writers and artists, also already seems to provide an answer to my second question: does Suzuki’s use of such Zen concepts as “no-mind” and “no-self” make his theory of inspiration incomprehensible to an audience familiar only with the Western poetic tradition? But does this also suggest that these ideas are not really as “alien” to an educated Western readership as might first be suspected?

In the concluding part of his essay, in which he proposes to “take up some of the haiku in their relation to the Japanese character” (a rather dubious project in itself), Suzuki, rather ironically, seems to argue for an essential difference between Japanese and Western poetic practice. He sets up a *nihonjinron*-style dichotomy between Japanese and Western poetry on the basis of a supposed greater “personalism” or self-consciousness or perhaps even egotism on the part of Western poets. The “haiku masters,” he claims, “are not at all ego-centered,” because “if they were they could not be poets. For the poet first of all must be selfless so that he can broaden himself out to embrace the whole universe in his arms.”⁴¹ In short, “the haiku poet, if he at all aspires to be one, cannot have his self assertive in any circumstance.”⁴² However, comparing a “flower poem” by Bashō with one by Tennyson, which he finds overly analytical and self-centered, Suzuki says that “Bashō knew better than Tennyson. He was no scientist bent on analysis and experiment, nor was he a philosopher. When he saw the white-flowered *nazuna*, so humbly, so innocently, and yet with all its individuality, growing among other vegetation, he at once realized that the herb was no other than himself.”⁴³ In other words, Suzuki here seems to claim that the haiku poet, because of his humility or egolessness, has a unique ability to overcome subject-object dualities and become one with the object of his rapt attention. If this were actually true, it would mean, indeed, that haiku poets are the world’s only genuine poets, since, as Suzuki himself points out, this capacity for an ego-transcending relationship with the world is a necessary condition for all great poetry: “For the poet first of all must be selfless so that he can broaden himself out to embrace the whole universe in his arms.”⁴⁴ On this latter point, in fact, many Western theorists of poetic inspiration would completely agree with him. But Suzuki’s legendary cross-cultural understanding seems to desert him here, since he seems unaware of the rich tradition of something very similar to the idea of *muga/mushin* in the Western theory of poetic inspiration. On the contrary, he argues that “what we can say generally about Western poetry on nature is that it is dualistic and personal, inquisitive and analytical.”⁴⁵ In contrast, “Bashō has no need for dualism and personalism.”⁴⁶ As an example of the “dualism and personalism” of Western nature poetry, Suzuki refers to Wordsworth’s lines about “a violet by a mossy stone half hidden from the eye” and claims that, unlike a Japanese poet,

"his interest is not in the violet as such. It comes to his notice only when he thinks of the fate of a country maid who lives and dies unknown and unpraised. The violet may bloom unknown and unpraised, it may wither unknown and unpraised. The poet would pay no attention to it. It is only when he thinks of the maid he loves. His romantic contemplation of it comes only in connection with a human interest."⁴⁷ But surely, one might object, in many classical Japanese poems, too, the poet is reminded of his love by a flower or some other beautiful object in nature? In fact, it would be harder to find a more universal trope in all of world poetry than this, and thus to try to characterize it as somehow uniquely "Western" and symptomatic of the inability of Western poets to overcome subject/object dualism is obviously absurd.

Suzuki's exaggerated and stereotypical presentation here of an East/West cultural divide in the world of poetry may perhaps be explained if not excused by the literary-historical context in which he was writing, and by the consequent polemical tone he adopts in some parts of the essay. Writing in English and addressing himself to an English-speaking audience of the mid-twentieth century, he intended his essay, on one level at least, as a "defense of haiku." But why did he feel that such a defense was necessary? No doubt he was aware of the possible influence on his readers of the deprecatory comments about haiku made by the earlier, Victorian generation of Western Japanologists—in particular W. G. Aston, pioneer author of the first book-length history of Japanese literature in English, who dismissed haiku rather summarily with the claim that "nothing which deserves the name of poetry can well be contained in the narrow compass of a verse of seventeen syllables."⁴⁸

To this sort of patronizing view Suzuki retorts, "I am afraid that the uninitiated may not be able to recognize anything poetically enlivening in those seventeen syllables so loosely strung. And yet what a deep truth of intuition is herein given utterance—a truth which cannot be expressed so inspiringly even with a formidable array of ideas!"⁴⁹ Furthermore, "As far as original inspiration is concerned, Bashō is just as great a poet as any of the West. The number of syllables has nothing to do with the true quality of the poet."⁵⁰ It may well be that he had Aston in mind when he wrote the rather chauvinistic statement already quoted, and what follows it: "It takes a Japanese mind to appreciate fully the value of a haiku; foreign critics, whose way of feeling is not in accord with the Japanese way because they were not born in this climate and brought up with its cultural tradition, may fail to enter into the spirit of a haiku."⁵¹ And, of course, the high claims that Suzuki makes for the spiritual value of the best haiku, for their *satori*-like intuitions of the unconscious, may be regarded as his most powerful defense of that miniature art form, and his most convincing demonstration of the kind of

background cultural knowledge, particularly in Zen, lacked by the “uninitiated” Western critics.

Here too his theory of inspiration is deployed to bolster his claims for the potential greatness of haiku as a direct, spontaneous expression of the unconscious: “We now can understand why it is not necessary for the Japanese haiku to be long and elaborate and intellectual. It avoids an ideational or conceptual construction. When it appeals to ideas, its direct pointing to the unconscious is warped, marred, interrupted, its refreshing vitality forever gone. Therefore, the haiku attempts to offer the most appropriate images in order to make us recall the original intuition as vividly as possible.”⁵²

Thus Suzuki obviously hoped to prove to his Western readers that what prevented Victorian interpreters from fully appreciating the value of haiku was precisely the kind of in-depth understanding of its grounding in Zen that he was providing in the present essay. And, indeed, one might reasonably claim that his eloquent advocacy of haiku had something to do with its present worldwide acceptance as a major poetic genre, one that has even been adopted into many foreign literatures.

However, the rather deprecatory comments he directs at Western poetry, like the doubts he expresses about Westerners’ ability to really understand haiku, may be taken as a kind of “payback” for the similarly patronizing evaluations of haiku by earlier Western commentators. But then this begs another question: how valid are Suzuki’s judgments regarding the characteristically ego-centered and dualistic nature of Western poetry?

Self and No-Self in Western Poetry

When the major twentieth-century Mexican poet Octavio Paz wrote that “poetry does not save the ‘I’ of the poet, it dissolves it in the vaster and more powerful reality of speech,” and that the “practice of poetry requires abandonment, renunciation of the ‘I,’” he was not merely revealing a Japanese influence (though he did write haiku and *renga*), he was also reiterating a theory of the poetic self that may be traced back at least as far as John Keats and his influential idea of “negative capability.”⁵³ In a letter of October 27, 1818, Keats used words that are as startlingly “Zen-like” as any that might have been written by a Japanese *renga* master. Of the “poetical character,” for instance, he asserts that “it is not itself—it has no self—it is everything and nothing—It has no character.”⁵⁴

In fact, since Keats many poets have testified to the creative necessity of this passive state of receptivity or “non-ego.” One might recall Rimbaud’s succinct formulation: “Je est un autre.”⁵⁵ Baudelaire expressed the same insight with a

striking metaphor: "An artist is a kaleidoscope endowed with consciousness . . . an ego athirst for the non-ego, and reflecting it at every moment in energies more vivid than life itself, always inconstant and fleeting."⁵⁶ Along similar lines, Stéphane Mallarmé wrote, "The work of pure poetry implies the elocutionary disappearance of the poet, who yields the initiative to words."⁵⁷ Another famous expression of this "impersonality" principle is by T. S. Eliot. In "Tradition and the Individual Talent," Eliot wrote that "the progress of the artist is a continual self sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality,"⁵⁸ and that "poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality."⁵⁹

In his seminal work *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, the French cultural philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882–1973) made a connection that is also highly relevant to Zen aesthetics when he pointed out that poetry's "I" belongs to a far deeper level of the mind than the everyday ego; it is "the creative Self, a subject as act, marked with the diaphaneity and expansiveness proper to the operations of the spirit," and it "resembles in this respect the 'I' of the saint".⁶⁰

Thus, by necessity of nature, poetic activity is, of itself[,] disinterested. It engages the human Self in its deepest recesses, but in no way for the sake of the ego. The very engagement of the artist's Self in poetic activity, and the very revelation of the artist's Self in his work, together with the revelation of some particular meaning he has obscurely grasped in things, are for the sake of the work. The creative Self is both revealing itself and sacrificing itself, because it is given; it is drawn out of itself in that sort of ecstasy which is creation. It dies to itself in order to live in the work.⁶¹

Although he is writing here from his customary Catholic, Thomistic worldview, the all-important distinction Maritain makes between the everyday self-centered ego and the deeper creative Self is also completely in accord with Suzuki's aesthetic philosophy and psychology. In order to achieve unity with God—or, in the case of Zen Buddhists, with the ground-mind, Buddha-Mind or what Suzuki calls the "Cosmic Unconscious"—the mystic undergoes a *via negativa* of self-abnegation, because only an "empty vessel" can be filled with the infinite. The mystic, like the poet, must assume that state of passive receptivity that Keats called negative capability—or which one anonymous medieval English mystic more graphically described as a "cloud of unknowing."⁶² Needless to say, Japanese poets have also long been fully aware of the creative necessity of this negative poetic self, especially Zen-influenced poets. All of which suggests that we should be careful not to exaggerate East/West cultural differences. In fact, the principle

of *muga*, or “no-self,” is globally present in theories of poetic practice, composition, or inspiration. In poetry, and in Zen too, much that is fundamental is also universal, and cross-cultural comparisons such as Suzuki’s perform a valuable service when they remind us of this fact. In an increasingly fractious world, after all, where populist demagogues seem on the rise again, it is good to be reminded of our common humanity.

My conclusion, I am afraid, is a rather banal one: that Suzuki’s theory of inspiration neither misrepresents his own tradition nor presents any insuperable problems in translation or transmission for a Western readership, since—apparently unbeknownst to him—comparable ideas have long existed among Western poets and theorists of poetic inspiration. The essence of what he says seems to fit comfortably, *mutatis mutandis*, within both literary traditions. Nonetheless, I think the banality of this conclusion today does tell us something about our present global age. A century or so ago, when Suzuki first started publishing in English, it would not have seemed so banal. I suspect in fact that it would have seemed quite startling, challenging to conventional wisdom, even revolutionary. The fact that it no longer seems so is one index of the great changes that have occurred in global culture, both East and West, over the past century—changes for which Suzuki’s work is in no small measure responsible.

Notes

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4. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, 237.
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8. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, 227.
9. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, 242.
10. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, 242–243.
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master Bashō's ideal of "impersonality" also seems to refer to a comparable state of creative receptivity. Keats explained his idea in a letter to his brothers George and Tom written on December 22, 1817; John Keats, "Letter to George and Tom Keats," December 22, 1817, University of Adelaide Library, <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/k/keats/john/letters/letter24.html>.

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D. T. Suzuki's Literary Influence

Utopian Narrative in American and European Memoirs of Zen Life

BEN VAN OVERMEIRE

David Chadwick's *Thank You and OK!* (1994), a memoir of his life in a Japanese Zen temple, ends on a somber note. His master and friend, Dainin Katagiri (1928–1990), has passed away, leading him to reflect on Katagiri's legacy and his own:

Transmission is mysterious. I felt that at [Katagiri's] ashes ceremony. Maybe his true Dharma heir is the whole sangha, everyone he got to—not like the traditional stories with one or more of us realizing the true light, attaining a perfect understanding, and the rest just plodding along. I think we're all just plodding along—and that is the true light. So did Katagiri fail, and am I a failure because I can't remember what Buddhism is—and are the rest of us failures, as it seems, when contrasted against our early pure and simple expectations and the clear-cut enlightenment of the story books?¹

After considering the possibility that he and Katagiri “failed” at Zen, Chadwick rejects it: “Anyway, it seems to me that all our endless failures are adding up to a magnificent success. It's just not what we had in mind. It's real.”² Coming at the end of his book, this statement aptly summarizes how Chadwick views the “story books” and “traditional stories” that portray enlightenment as the measure of one's success as a Zen Buddhist: these stories are in no way good representations of the complicated and messy reality of living a Zen life.

Yet among those writing about Zen, Chadwick is an exception. Most other authors, as I will show, attach high value to idealistic depictions of Zen. During the last century, the most prominent author of such idealistic representations of Zen was Daisetz Suzuki. To identify him as such is not to insult his legacy but to render clearer the causes and consequences of his remarkable career. As someone experiencing a monumental shift in the social, economic, and political foundations of his country, Suzuki yearned for a premodern moment when everything was pure and transparent. He expressed this longing in Zen texts that need to be

read not as accurate descriptions of the religion but as utopian narratives of a desire to transcend what has been called “modernity.” With these utopian Zen narratives, he decisively influenced not just the way Zen has been perceived outside of Asia but also how Zen has been represented literarily. He thus provides a fascinating case study of how the influence of major thinkers extends beyond philosophical thought to literary style.

I demonstrate this by first reading Suzuki’s depiction of life in a Japanese Zen temple within the context of literary scholarship on utopia. Then, I move to consider two influential authors who wrote about Zen life: Philip Kapleau and Janwillem van de Wetering. I argue that Suzuki’s work defines the parameters of their memoirs of Zen monastic life. Foremost among these parameters is an assessment of awakening or satori as the summum bonum of Zen practice and the idea that “encounter dialogues” are representative of Zen practice. I end by reconsidering Chadwick’s memoir as an example that shows that it is possible to write a modern memoir about Zen without the utopian narrative framework Suzuki established.

Utopia

To examine Suzuki’s work and his influence, I draw on literary theories of utopian narrative. Although recent work in this field has mainly focused on science fiction, I will show that it can fruitfully be applied to other types of texts as well. One of the groundbreaking studies in this field is that of Darko Suvin. In an early essay, Suvin defined utopian texts as follows: “The verbal construction of a particular quasi-human community where sociopolitical institutions, norms, and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle than in the author’s community, this construction being based on estrangement arising out of an alternative historical hypothesis.”³ The phrase “alternative historical hypothesis” suggests the critical dimensions of utopia, which have more recently been explored by Fredric Jameson. In *Archaeologies of the Future*, Jameson argues that because utopian narrative produces a “cognitive dissonance” (Suvin’s term), it allows us to imagine a world beyond capitalism. This is the revolutionary potential of such narratives: “Utopia as a form is not the representation of radical alternatives; it is rather simply the imperative to imagine them.”⁴ For Jameson then, the merits and demerits of the social models proposed in utopian narratives are less important than the desire that sustains them: a desire for a world not dominated by capitalism. Utopia thus constitutes a resistance against hegemonic ideology.

While acknowledging the subversive potential of utopian narratives, Chris Ferns reminds us of the ambiguity that is encapsulated within the term itself,

which famously refers to both a *eu-topia* (good place) and an *ou-topia* (no place). As “good places,” utopian narratives can be read as advocating for social and political change. But as “no-places,” such texts also question the possibility of such change. Moreover, in their resistance to dominant ideologies, utopian texts tend to become rigidly ideological themselves: “Utopian fiction is often characterized by a certain prescriptive quality, suggesting, not simply that things might be otherwise, but that they ought to conform to a specific vision. While utopian fiction may have the potential to open up wider horizons, to suggest the sheer extent of the possible, its effect is often impoverishing rather than enriching: instead of opening up space for the imagination, the utopian vision merely fills it with a construct, to use Ernst Bloch’s phrase, ‘made banal by the fulfillment.’”⁵ This “prescriptive quality” affects three dominant characteristics of the utopian narrative. First, such narratives are often travel narratives: a person visits and experiences the ideal world, and then reports back to us what he has seen (the narrator is almost always masculine). This, Ferns tells us, functions to close off the ideal world as perfect and unchanging: it has been seen and recorded, and no longer evolves.⁶ Time (in the sense of evolution) does not exist in these worlds. Instead, the progress of utopian narrative is spatial, consisting of a tour of the utopian place.⁷ Second, though such narratives are often cast in the dialogue form, they are not truly dialogical: “Functioning primarily as a rhetorical device, [dialogue] serves rather to reinforce the authority of a single viewpoint than to reflect a genuine process of debate.”⁸ Finally, as with any ideological narrative, the most important questions are never asked: How was utopia achieved (again, this points to the absence of time in such narratives)? And who are those denied entry to the perfect world?

Suzuki and Utopia

The two aspects of utopian narratives described by the scholarship above can be summarized as a resistance to capitalism and an ideological rigidity. These aspects also appear in the historical treatment of Zen Buddhism by Japanese intellectuals in the first half of the twentieth century. For these thinkers, Zen provided a bulwark against the social changes they saw their country undergo as a result of its rapid economic transformation. Rejecting class struggle, modern city life, modern art, and consumerism, they sought to “overcome” capitalist modernity and return to the cultural roots of their nation.⁹ Such an overcoming implies not the rejection of the capitalist economic system but rather an elimination of the social and cultural dimensions of capitalism. To achieve this, these intellectuals resorted to cultural traditions, which they understood as an eternal expression of the essence of Japan.

Suzuki was one of the intellectuals who considered Zen as a means of overcoming modernity. He achieved this effect by portraying Japanese Zen temples as utopian spaces, bastions against the encroachment of capitalism and the loss of mystical experience. Although Suzuki's intention may have been to portray an ideal Zen temple and not a real one, the memoirs of Philip Kapleau and Janwillem van de Wetering show that he influenced how both these authors approached their stay in Japan and wrote about it. Before I discuss that influence, I will first analyze a representative chapter from one of Suzuki's most popular books, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1934). From this case study, the basic outlines of Suzuki's manner of imagining Zen become clear.

In an essay titled "The Meditation Hall and the Monk's Life," in *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, Suzuki proposes to describe this "unique institution" that we can find in "most of the main monasteries in Japan of the Zen sect."¹⁰ His discussion contrasts the Zen monastery with capitalism: the monastery is a "solitary island of Zen" that must be protected against "the merciless tide of modern commercialism and mechanization [that] is rolling all over the East."¹¹ Despite the threat to this institution in our age, "[Zen's] guiding principles, such as the simplification of life, restraint of desires, not wasting a moment idly [sic], self-independence, and what they call 'secret virtue' are sound for all lands and in all ages."¹² Indeed, Suzuki suggests that the Zen temple is a more rational way to organize the whole of society, asking:

Cannot society be reorganized upon an entirely different basis from what we have been used to see from the beginning of history? Cannot we ever hope to stop the massing of wealth and the accumulation of power merely from the desire for individual or national aggrandizement? Despairing of the utter irrationality of human affairs, Buddhist monks have gone to the other extreme and cut themselves off even from reasonably and perfectly innocent enjoyments of life. However, the Zen ideal of putting a monk's belongings into a tiny box is his mute protest, though so far ineffective, against the present order of society.¹³

That Suzuki's portrayal of the Zen temple is utopian should be obvious immediately. Like Thomas More's imagined country, his Zen temple is a "solitary island" protected from the "irrationality" of the surrounding world. In Suvin's words, "sociopolitical institutions, norms, and individual relationships are organized according to a more perfect principle."¹⁴

But what about the "alternative historical hypothesis," which Suvin argues is the foundation of utopian narrative? In Suzuki's essay, that hypothesis is the

following: in a changing world, Japanese Zen temples represent an ageless and unchangeable tradition, founded on monastic rules attributed to Hyakujō Ekai (Baizhang Huaihai, 720–814), a Chinese Zen master who supposedly wrote the *Zenmon kishiki* (*Chanmen guishi*).¹⁵ In this work, Hyakujō prescribes a highly idealized Zen monasticism: in his imagined monastery, monks do not worship Buddha statues, study scripture, or engage in ritual practices. Instead, everyone leads a simple lifestyle combining meditation and manual labor. But as Griffith Foulk has shown, Hyakujō's rules were rarely practiced, and need to be understood within the polemic position the Zen school had assumed at least since the Tang dynasty, namely that it constituted a “special transmission outside of the scriptures, not relying upon words and letters” (*kyōge betsuden furyū monji*), and could trace its lineage all the way to Śākyamuni Buddha himself.¹⁶ Zen thus presented itself as a unique and pure teaching distinct from all other Buddhist practices.

In his portrayal of monastic life, Suzuki follows Zen's alternative historical hypothesis, supporting it with hagiographical narratives, particularly “encounter dialogues.” Better known under their shortened form as *kōan*, encounter dialogues describe the interactions of famous lineage masters such as Rinzai Gigen (Linji Yixuan d. 866) and Baso Dōitsu (Mazu Daoyi, 709–788) with each other and their students. A famous example of the genre is the following, used by Suzuki:

When Tanka (Tan-hsia) of the T'ang dynasty stopped at Yerinji in the Capital, it was severely cold; so taking down one of the Buddha images enshrined there, he made a fire of it and warmed himself. The keeper of the shrine, seeing this, was greatly incensed, and exclaimed:

“How dare you burn my wooden image of the Buddha?”

Tanka began to search through the ashes as if he were looking for something, and said:

“I am gathering the holy *sariras* [relics] from the burnt ashes.”

“How,” said the keeper, “can you get *sariras* from a wooden Buddha?”

Tanka retorted, “If there are no *sariras* to be found in it, may I have the remaining two Buddhas for my fire?”¹⁷

Here, we see the literary translation of Zen's alternative historical hypothesis: Tanka Tennen (Danxia Tianran, 739–824) is a practical man, focused on getting warm when it is cold, and devoid of the supernatural beliefs that burning a Buddha will get you to bad places. He is not a developed character but a type, a marker for Zen's story of its own uniqueness as an iconoclastic school that does not worship Buddha images (as the school's masters are considered living

Buddhas) and dispenses with ritual, focusing instead on meditation and the achievement of enlightenment.

Encounter dialogues, like Tanka's story of burning Buddha statues, are connected to historical reality only in a very loose manner. Their purpose, after all, was not historiography, just as medieval saint's lives are not accurate biographies.¹⁸ Yet Suzuki cites encounter dialogues as if they represent the reality of life in a contemporary Zen temple. For example, when discussing the private interview with the master (*sanzen*), Suzuki quotes an encounter dialogue featuring the Japanese master Hakuin Ekaku (1686–1768).¹⁹ On another occasion, when talking about a Zen master's "long maturing of the sacred womb," the broadening of understanding after *satori*, Suzuki quotes several encounter dialogues describing the withdrawal of a master into the wilderness. His samples include the Sixth Patriarch Enō (Huineng), Isan Reiyū (Guishan Lingyou, 771–853), and Hakuin again.²⁰ Suzuki thus uses these largely mythical stories to describe what Zen masters are like.

If Suzuki's portrayal of the masters is idealized, his portrayal of Zen monks is hardly different. Of the monks, we read that "poverty and simplicity is their rule" and "to work [hard] is their religion."²¹ Their Zen education does not come from books but from practice.²² Like a commune, they are a "self-governing body" whose senior members have a character that "has been tested through many years of discipline."²³ Suzuki concludes, "The spirit of Hyakujo is ever manifest here."²⁴

Suzuki's insistence that Zen monks and masters behave according to fictional and idealized models makes one suspect that his real aim is not so much to portray what life in a Zen temple is really like but more to sketch an ideal but nonexistent space that is shaped by an idea of what Zen ought to be. As we have seen, Ferns has argued that utopian narratives possess "a certain prescriptive quality, suggesting, not simply that things might be otherwise, but that they ought to conform to a specific vision."²⁵ As is well documented, for Suzuki this prescriptive vision is *satori*, which he sees as a universally available experience.²⁶ The extent to which he conceives of the Zen temple as a means to attain this experience becomes clear in the conclusion of "The Meditation Hall and the Monk's Life": "Taking it all in all, Zen is emphatically a matter of personal experience; if anything can be called radically empirical, it is Zen. No amount of reading, no amount of teaching, no amount of contemplation will ever make one a Zen master. Life itself must be grasped in the midst of its flow; to stop it for examination and analysis is to kill it, leaving a cold corpse to be embraced. Therefore, everything in the Meditation Hall and every detail of its disciplinary curriculum is so arranged as to bring this idea into the most efficient prominence."²⁷ For Suzuki,

the “personal experience” of “grasping life in the midst of its flow” (satori) is of primary importance, and the “meditation hall” exists only as a tool in service to it. We will see this mechanism, where Zen spaces and practices are seen as valuable only to the extent that they contribute to enlightenment, figure heavily in Philip Kapleau’s description of life in a Zen temple, to which I now turn.

Utopia Regained: The Enlightenment of Philip Kapleau

For Suzuki, the distinction between what he wrote and how Zen is actually practiced in Japanese temples may have been obvious, but to at least some members of his audience, who traveled to Japan to practice the Zen they had read about, it was not. When Philip Kapleau, who would become a very influential voice in American Zen, went to Japan to study Zen, he saw the temple he would stay in as serving only the purpose of enlightenment. Moreover, the structure of Kapleau’s narrative, which is interspersed with encounter dialogues, betrays the influence of Suzuki as well.

Kapleau first meets Suzuki as a correspondent for the Tokyo war trials. His later description of this meeting is revelatory for the manner in which Suzuki, as the main spokesman for Zen Buddhism in the West, was seen from very early on. Expecting to encounter a wild, long-bearded and white-haired sage, Kapleau instead finds a “short, clean-shaven, almost bald Japanese who looked for all the world like an editor.”²⁸ Kapleau then goes on to describe how he never understood Suzuki’s lectures but visited him nonetheless “to experience the deep serenity that seemed to radiate from the giant cryptomaria [*sic*] trees, the temple buildings, the faces of the monks and laymen, from the very earth itself.”²⁹ Later on, he attends Suzuki’s famous Columbia University lectures, but his attitude toward Suzuki remains ambiguous: he thinks Suzuki is much too academic—not a Zen master at all—but nevertheless lauds him for initiating the “first, intellectual phase” of bringing Zen to America.³⁰ This leads him to the decision to travel to Japan to experience Zen for himself.

Kapleau’s recollections of his time in Japan makes clear how, despite his ambivalent attitude toward the Japanese scholar, his expectations have been conditioned by Suzuki’s utopian depiction of the Zen temple. Kapleau’s earliest account is contained in his best-selling *Three Pillars of Zen* (1967), an introduction of sorts to all different aspects of Zen life, containing long translated discussions of *kōan* and *kōan* practice by one of Kapleau’s masters, Yasutani Hakuun (1885–1973). An important part of the book is titled “Eight Contemporary Enlightenment Experiences of Japanese and Westerners,” the second entry of

which is titled “Mr. P. K., An American Ex-Businessman.” As the “editor’s introduction” to this part of the book indicates, this person is Kapleau himself.

The narrative arc of Kapleau’s account, organized as a diary with separate entries for each day, moves from despair to joyous awakening. The first entry complains about health problems and suicidal tendencies: “Belly aching all week. Doc says ulcers are getting worse . . . allergies kicking up too. . . . Can’t sleep without drugs. . . . So miserable wish I had the guts to end it all.”³¹ From this world of suffering, Kapleau finds no release by attending Suzuki’s lectures: “Why do I go on with [attending] these lectures? Can I ever get satori listening to philosophic explanations of *prajna* and *karuna* [wisdom and compassion] and why A isn’t A and all the rest of that? What the hell is satori anyway?”³²

Despite Kapleau’s annoyance with Suzuki’s lectures, his focus on awakening or satori nevertheless replicates Suzuki’s type of Zen, where satori is the summum bonum and Zen a means of overcoming the problems of the modern world. For Kapleau, attaining satori will directly solve his ailing health and existential depression, a depression associated, through the “ex-businessman” title of the account, with capitalism. He asks an unnamed Japanese expert on Buddhism: “If I go to Japan to train in Zen, can you assure me I’ll be able to find some meaning in life? Will I absolutely get rid of my ulcers and allergies and sleeplessness?”³³ Finding courage in the answers of his interlocutors, Kapleau departs for Japan, despite warnings from Suzuki and others that “Zen monasteries are too traditional and authoritarian for modern intellectually minded people.”³⁴

Initially, Kapleau is inclined to agree with Suzuki’s assessment of contemporary Japanese Zen temples. Taking particular exception to ritual practice in the temple, he comments, “What a weird scene of refined sorcery and idolatry: shaven-headed black-robed monks sitting motionlessly chanting mystic gibberish to the accompaniment of a huge wooden tom-tom emitting otherworldly sounds, while the roshi, like some elegantly gowned witch doctor, is making magic passes and prostrating himself again and again before an alter bristling with idols and images. . . . Is this the Zen of Tanka, who tossed a Buddha statue into the fire? Is this the Zen of Rinzai, who shouted, you must kill the Buddha? The Kyoto teachers and S_____ [Suzuki] were right after all.”³⁵ Here, Suzuki’s ideal temple is contrasted with the temple Kapleau actually finds himself in. Life in such a place revolves around ritual practice, and not around a series of weird encounters with brilliant and iconoclastic mystics (note the reference to the Tanka encounter dialogue we saw Suzuki discuss earlier). No wonder Suzuki disapproved of real Japanese Zen temples: the practice does not match the utopian ideal portrayed in his books. This comes up again later, once more in the context of a ritual performance, where Kapleau unfavorably compares this ritual to the Daoist ideal of nonaction, *wu wei*.³⁶

Zen meditation disappoints Kapleau as well. Unaccustomed to the traditional postures, he continually complains how painful the practice is.³⁷ But, longing for satori, he refuses to quit.³⁸ Like a hunter or a hard-boiled detective, he chases satori through the halls of the temple: "December 5, 1953. . . . Am still aglow. . . . Satori will hit me any moment now, I know it, I feel it in my marrow. . . . Won't my Zen friends in the United States be envious when I write I have satori!"³⁹ To Kapleau, getting satori is equivalent to a race: "Roshi says this last day is crucial and not to weaken. . . . But my do-or-die spirit's gone, the race is over and I'm just an also-ran . . . / / Watched, chagrined and envious, as the three 'winners' [those who gained satori] marched around the zendo, bowed down before Harada-roshi, the assistant roshi, and the head monks to show their reverence and gratitude. . . . One of the fortunate had sat next to me. He'd been struck repeatedly and had blubbered all of yesterday and today. . . . Evidently he'd been crying from sheer joy when all along I imagined he was in pain."⁴⁰ Both these quotations illustrate that Kapleau continually measures himself in relation to the goal, which is satori. Failure and success are essential in this measurement.

Later on, Kapleau begins to succeed. He does so by adopting Suzuki's utopian perspective to make sense of his life in the temple. Remember that for Suzuki, everything in a Zen space is arranged for the purpose of attaining enlightenment. Thus, Kapleau begins to interpret the daily rituals as expressions of the enlightenment he so desperately wants: "These ceremonies glow with the living Truth which these monks have obviously all experienced in some measure. . . . Yes, through these rituals they are reaffirming their link with their great Buddhist tradition, enriching it and allowing it to enrich them so they may extend its chain into the future."⁴¹ Similarly, the connection between enlightenment and meditation becomes clear: "Though painful [zazen] practice is rejuvenating. . . . My mind's a swamp of stagnant opinions, theories, impressions, images. I've read and thought too much, experienced without feeling. I need to recover the freshness of my jaded sensibilities, to face myself honestly, nakedly. And this I can best do through zazen in the monastery."⁴² Here, Kapleau comes to see the monastic environment as Suzuki does, namely as a means to an end, an expression of a lofty ideal, shaped and expressed by it. Ritual and zazen become valuable when they are considered to be at the service of satori.

With this new perspective on monastic life comes a new perspective on meditation. Jumping ahead a year and a half, Kapleau reports immense progress. Not only has he had great insights, but "every one of my allergies has disappeared, my stomach pains me only occasionally, I sleep well. . . . The dark fears which formerly haunted me, my cherished dreams and hopes, all these have withered

away, leaving me lighter and with a clearer sense of the real."⁴³ In short, his health has become better, and meditation has become a nourishing experience. Here, we find that Suzuki's assertion of Zen practice as a resistance to the diseases brought on by capitalism is literalized: Kapleau's body, damaged by his work as a businessman, is healed by his stay in Japan.

After adopting Suzuki's perspective that everything in the Zen space stands in the service of enlightenment, and that Zen practice is a remedy for the diseases of modern life, Kapleau's narrative speeds toward his experience of satori. To finally realize this ultimate goal, Kapleau finds a new master, Yasutani, whose Sanbōkyōdan school, as Robert Sharf has shown, represents an eccentric form of Zen that, like Suzuki, reduces the whole tradition to the pursuit of satori only. It does not represent mainstream practice.⁴⁴ Yet that is exactly what attracts Kapleau to it: "What a huge relief not to be driven by a savage kyosaku [a stick used to slap drowsy meditators to attention] or verbally belted by the roshi at dokusan [the private interview with the master]."⁴⁵ Under the guidance of Yasutani, Kapleau quickly attains satori. The diary ends: "Feel free as a fish swimming in an ocean of cool, clear water after being stuck in a tank of glue . . . and so grateful. Grateful for everything that has happened to me, grateful to everyone who has encouraged and sustained me in spite of my immature personality and stubborn nature. But mostly I am grateful for my human body, for the privilege as a human being to know this Joy, like no other."⁴⁶

However, it is very much the question whether Kapleau's experience was really as overwhelming as his narrative implies. In the afterword to *Zen: Dawn in the West* (1979), which was published over ten years later, Kapleau writes about his satori experience with remarkable restraint. In contrast to the verbal overflow of *Pillars*, in *Dawn* we only find a single sentence to describe the event: "My Mind's eye was opened to some extent."⁴⁷ This description makes it doubtful whether Kapleau's report of satori in the earlier work was an accurate representation. It makes it plausible that *Pillars* was engineered with the purpose of stressing satori as the end-all of Zen experience, conforming to Suzuki's vision of the Zen tradition and thus attesting to the influence of that vision.⁴⁸

Whatever the reality of the experience Kapleau underwent may be, the difference between *Dawn* and *Pillars* once more underscores Suzuki's influence on Kapleau's approach to and description of his life in Japan. Suzuki's utopian narrative not only conditions his expectations but also conditions the manner in which Kapleau describes his experiences. He focuses on satori, believes everything in a Zen space serves the goal of enlightenment, and refers to encounter dialogues as the model of how Zen ought to be.

The Reality Check of Janwillem Van de Wetering

The influence of Suzuki's work is not only apparent in Zen success stories. Even in a memoir of Zen failure, his presence is undeniable. I will show this through an analysis of Janwillem van de Wetering's "Zen trilogy," three books that describe his lifelong engagement with Zen Buddhism. In this trilogy, Suzuki's influence shows in a stress on satori and in the usage of encounter dialogues as representative of ideal Zen life.⁴⁹

In 1958, van de Wetering arrived in Kyoto to study Zen. Having studied philosophy in England, he had come upon Suzuki's work, which he had continued to read on the long boat journey to Japan.⁵⁰ At the beginning of *The Empty Mirror* (1973), the memoir he would write about his experiences in Japan, van de Wetering is standing in front of Daitokuji, the famous Zen temple. Clueless as he is about any aspect of temple custom except what he has read in Suzuki, he takes the temple bell for a doorbell and loudly clangs it to announce his arrival to the monks. Unaware of his impropriety—the bell, as it is made clear to him afterward, is to be used only for special religious occasions—van de Wetering is ushered in to meet the abbot of the temple, Oda Sessō (1901–1966).

To van de Wetering, the most remarkable aspect of his encounter with this abbot is its ordinariness. Thinking about encounter dialogues he has read in Suzuki, van de Wetering expects the abbot of Daitokuji to shout loudly, lunge at him, or speak nonsensical phrases. None of this happens. In response to van de Wetering's statement that he wants to study Buddhism to figure out the meaning of life, the master does not maintain "a noble silence" like the Buddha but gives a straightforward answer. When van de Wetering then asks to become his disciple, "the teacher nodded. His consent surprised me. Obviously the books I had read about Zen were faulty, written by inexperienced writers. Zen masters, I had been assured, do not readily accept disciples."⁵¹ Very early in *The Empty Mirror*, van de Wetering thus establishes a contrast between the books he has read about Zen and his own experiences in Japan.

This initial encounter with the abbot establishes the paradigm for the rest of *The Empty Mirror*. Despite van de Wetering's expectations, Daitokuji turns out not to be a utopian place filled with anarchist masters shouting each other into satori. Instead, the temple provides the full range of human experience, good and bad. Early in the book, the narrator already observes, "The newness of the exotic, mystical Far East had gone. Perhaps the people here looked different and sometimes wore outlandish clothes. . . . Even so, I couldn't rid myself of the clear and painful feeling that nothing had changed."⁵² This comment follows a slightly traumatic experience. Van de Wetering finds a kitten in the garden and feeds it,

only to see it bitten to death by the temple dog. He then finds out that people living near the temple put unwanted young kittens in the garden to be killed by the dog. This is the neighbors' solution to a moral quandary: as lay Buddhists, they are unable to kill the kittens themselves, yet they have no qualms about letting the dog take care of the problem. But van de Wetering considers their behavior hypocritical, and not in line with the ideals of the Zen Buddhism he has read about. Again, a utopian vision of Zen that he has derived from Suzuki clashes with his own experiences.

If, in van de Wetering's view, the neighbors act like hypocrites, so do his fellow monks, who do not remotely resemble Suzuki's characterization of them as hard-working, simple, and dedicated folk. Whenever they like, monks simply prop a ladder against the wall, put on civilian clothes, and rush off to the movies, a bar (a more challenging destination, since they might smell of liquor during the early morning interview with the master), or a prostitute.⁵³ Most of them are in the temple only for the job perspectives it offers: after three years of being there, they can get work in a temple. "The organization is similar to that of the Catholic Church," van de Wetering notes.⁵⁴ Later on, he will also compare it to the "Free Dutch Reformed Church in Rotterdam," a comparison he makes when he sees the whole neighborhood enter the Kyōto temple "neatly dressed" on a Sunday. At such an occasion, they enjoy percussion music, choir singing, a lecture on the life of a Buddhist saint, and a meal.⁵⁵ Gradually, Daitokuji loses its mystique, and becomes even more unlike the utopian space van de Wetering imagines it should be.

Even the enlightenment the temple is supposed to provide remains out of reach. For most of the book, meditation is described as torture. Moreover, van de Wetering cannot figure out the *kōan* he is supposed to solve to gain insight. His quest ends in disappointment. After roughly one year, he leaves Japan. On the ship back home, the first thing he does is order "a cold beer."⁵⁶

For some, this might have been the end. But some years after the publication of *The Empty Mirror*, van de Wetering gave monastic life another try. *A Glimpse of Emptiness* (1975) sees him going to Surry, Maine, where Walter Nowick, an American acquaintance from his time at Daitokuji, has started his own monastery. Studying with this acquaintance, whom he calls "Peter," van de Wetering very rapidly cracks his *kōan*. The remainder of the book, however, which describes an intensive ten-day retreat known in Japanese as *rohatsu*, obsessively returns to the question of what this experience actually meant. Although "according to the Zen books I had read and the stories I had heard solving a koan is accompanied by *satori*, enlightenment," for van de Wetering solving the *kōan* has minimal results: "I had to admit that nothing had changed very much. Perhaps I might now have a more intense realization of relativity, a better idea

of the non-importance of what concerned me. But that was nothing new. Detachment is caused by a slow process, and the results of this process, if any, are gradual. It was quite possible that I was merely imagining my improved sense of detachment."⁵⁷ Although on the face of it, van de Wetering seems to have gotten closer to satori in *A Glimpse of Nothingness* than he did in *The Empty Mirror*, his "accomplishment" seems nothing like that described by Suzuki and Kapleau. Again, Suzuki's utopian narrative of Zen contrasts with van de Wetering's description of his experience with Zen practice.

About twenty-five years later, the failure of the Zen space to match its utopian representations leads van de Wetering to sharply attack religious authority in general and Zen masters in particular. The first chapter of *Afterzen* (1999) opens with the phrase "Koans are vastly overrated," and then goes on to describe van de Wetering's encounter with a guru he calls "Baba, an Indian (from India)."⁵⁸ Although Baba never thought of pursuing a spiritual vocation in his native country, when he arrives in the United States and lives in abject poverty, he quickly discovers that Americans hungry for spiritual instruction will follow anyone with the appropriate oriental trappings. Having acquired a white robe, toe sandals, and a beard, Baba quickly moves out of poverty, acquiring a Jaguar and several sexual partners in the process. Van de Wetering, who clearly relishes Baba's story, comments, "There was some slyness about him that I, coming from a trading background in the Holland city of Rotterdam, thought I recognized."⁵⁹ As in *The Empty Mirror*, where the Sunday gathering in the temple called to mind a Rotterdam Church, the exotic becomes recognizable through a comparison with van de Wetering's roots. But where in that earlier book the Buddhist ceremonies on Sunday at least were associated with religious services in Holland, Baba's personality bears greater similarity to the trading instinct of a businessman than the qualities of the clergy.

Afterzen extends the complicity of spirituality and capitalism that Baba exemplifies to Zen as well. Instead of holding on to a vision of Zen as a bastion against capitalism and a cure for the illnesses caused by modernity, as we found in Suzuki and Kapleau, Zen here is inextricably connected with doing business and with self-enrichment. A good example of this is someone van de Wetering calls "Master Dipshit."⁶⁰ This master's signature practice is the "Silent Treatment": speaking is forbidden in his temple. Yet the temple is also a bustling marketplace, selling not only the master's personal calligraphy but also "Made in Indonesia" statues of Zen monks. Looking at a statue demon trampling a baby, van de Wetering is first told that the scene signifies the destruction of the ego, and then encouraged to deposit money in the demon's mouth. One of master Dipshit's former students reveals where the money gained from donations and sales goes:

Dipshit uses it for luxury cars, return trips to Paris with his female students, and golden Buddha statues.⁶¹

Master Dipshit is just one example of the many Zen masters van de Wetering examines in *Afterzen*. None of these Zen masters matches the profile of wise, detached men of the encounter dialogues. The brunt of van de Wetering's attack, though, is aimed at Nowick, who in this book is called "Sensei" and in whom van de Wetering is now gravely disappointed. Although *Afterzen* is dedicated to Nowick, the book can be read as one long attack against Sensei's practice in the Maine monastery. Sensei's most disturbing features are his routine abuses of power, his addiction to alcohol, and his sexual frustration. In the Dutch version of *Afterzen*, which is much more pointed than the English one, van de Wetering quotes a colleague, "Ben," who calls Sensei a "perverted powerhungry fraud."⁶² Sensei, however, is not seen as an exception but rather the rule; *Afterzen* lists many more Buddhist masters who are to varying degrees permutations of Nowick: substance abusers, sex addicts, and criminals.

Despite this grim appraisal, *Afterzen* essentially maintains the dual vision that *The Empty Mirror* was structured on. "There must have been a time when Zen study was fun," van de Wetering speculates after elaborating on the problems of Sensei's Maine Center.⁶³ He then delves into Zen mythology: "Antique Zen masters and their disciples were always hiking along nature paths, exchanging spiritual in-talk and laughing while they slapped each other's cheeks to illustrate a subtle point," before asking, "Whatever happened to these amusing fellows?"⁶⁴ Thus, although *Afterzen* lacks the naiveté of the younger van de Wetering in *The Empty Mirror*, there is still a certain longing for the Zen utopia he has read about in Suzuki. As with *The Empty Mirror*, encounter dialogues here contrast with the experiences of the protagonist. This is what makes the tone of the later book so dark at times. The descriptions of alcoholism, sexual power games, and violence are shocking exactly because in the background there is still the belief that Zen really is not supposed to be this way, that it is all about happy, kind people inhabiting a better society. *Afterzen* is an eloquent testimony, then, to the necessity of Zen narratives that describe Zen without projecting utopian ideals onto it.

"This Bumbling Unseen Path of Me as I am and Us as We Are": David Chadwick

If disappointment is characteristic of van de Wetering's "Zen trilogy," such disappointment is hard to find in David Chadwick's recollection of his time in Japan. In Chadwick's book, failure is celebrated and becomes the central theme

of the book, as already indicated by its subtitle, *An American Zen Failure in Japan*. Unlike Kapleau and van de Wetering, Chadwick leaves for Japan without any utopian notions of what Zen is supposed to be like. By that time, the San Francisco Zen Center, where Chadwick practiced for a long time, had been ravaged by the 1983 discovery of the sexual relations its Zen master, Richard Baker, maintained with many of its students.⁶⁵ Though Chadwick does not mention this event, his book does make clear that, early in his career as a Zen Buddhist, he discovered that satori is not quite what some people make it out to be. Describing his first encounter with Dainin Katagiri, Chadwick confesses that that he thought that Katagiri would be a kind of superman, an expert at everything.⁶⁶ However, he quickly discovered that this enlightened superman cannot even perform properly a task Chadwick sees as simple, namely sawing wood. Thus, by the time he arrives in Japan, Chadwick does not suffer from any utopian ideas about the actual behavior of Zen masters or life in Zen temples.⁶⁷

Unlike Kapleau and van de Wetering, who take Zen ideals seriously, Chadwick does not take anything seriously, least of all himself. Trying to convince a foreign Zen priest, whose Japanese is better than his, to help him at the embassy, he gets the following response:

"You're a priest too, ne?" he said. "Help yourself, ne."

"No I'm not. I failed."

"No more than I have—and don't give me that reverse arrogance trip. It's too easy an out."⁶⁸

Despite this warning, Chadwick continues to ride this "reverse arrogance trip" the whole memoir long. Contrasting Chadwick with the woman whom he will marry, Katagiri calls him "the enemy of Zen," and later Chadwick quotes Dōgen to characterize his own meditative practice as "the zazen of demons."⁶⁹

It is no wonder that this "enemy of Zen" does not attain a great deal using his "zazen of demons." Continuing the previous quotation, he writes, "Maybe I sat therapeutic zazen or not-zazen or just failed zazen. But I didn't sit there going 'darn it, darn it, not enlightened yet' or anything like that. I worked that out of my system a while ago. . . . But one thing I have picked up from my teachers and fellow students is the joy of continuing this bumbling unseen path of me as I am and us as we are."⁷⁰ The result of this attitude is a very different narrative about Zen. Unlike van de Wetering and Kapleau, Chadwick is not obsessed with the quest for enlightenment. He does not expect Zen masters to behave like supermen. And he joyfully participates in temple rituals. Indeed, the book's title is inspired by a slogan on a Japanese matchbox used to light incense offerings to Buddha statues.

Emblematic of Chadwick's attitude toward satori is the following passage, where Chadwick ironically describes his encounter with Japanese bureaucracy in terms borrowed from the Zen tradition. When attempting to validate his American driver's license to be able to drive in Japan, a clerk asks him countless minutely detailed questions, finally inquiring how much power the car had that Chadwick used to take his US driver's license test.

Him: "How many cc's was the engine of the car?"

Me: I spoke back from timelessness and without thought. I had come to Japan to study the teaching beyond words and letters, and here I had surely found it. "How many cc's does a big car have?" I heard emanating from my throat.

Him: "2000 cc's"

Me: "2000 cc's"⁷¹

Here, "the teaching beyond words and letters" that is so central to Zen ideology is found in making whatever reply the office clerk wants to hear. This dialogue ironically references encounter dialogues, except that here, there is no ordained master present, and the context is outside the temple grounds.

Inside the temple, however, satori matters even less, as seniority determines hierarchy.⁷² Similar to van de Wetering, Chadwick observes that monks in many temples lead leisurely lifestyles and are motivated by the job prospects of being a Buddhist priest, but unlike van de Wetering he is not shocked by this. Rather than comparing Zen life in Japan with ideal portrayals, Chadwick approaches Zen as just another aspect of human experience.

In Chadwick's Japan, temple life and daily life are therefore on the same continuum, barely separable. Outside and inside, people behave alike. Some people like chain-smoking, even in the Buddha-hall. Some are kind and interested in foreigners. Some are racists, discriminating against Korean monks living in the temple. Monks burn plastic in the temple garden. Others have a bad temper. Particularly notable are the instances where Chadwick comments on the monks "power trips," and their use of violence against each other.⁷³ This violence can be psychological, where monks "mind-torque" others to destroy their individuality and make them part of the group.⁷⁴ But it can also be physical, as in the instance of a monk called Dokuji, who "roughed up one too many freshmen and got canned, though it was apparently handled so as to seem to be a promotion. He had a temple to go to and so he's there now with his wife and kids. Hope they can handle him."⁷⁵

In Chadwick's book, Suzuki's utopian space thus dissolves, as there is no separation between Zen life and ordinary life. Similarly, he also deconstructs the

orientalist separation between “East” and “West” Suzuki relies on in much of his work.⁷⁶ When Chadwick has dinner with a party of Japanese businessmen, he finds that they flatly deny the possibility he could ever understand Zen. Just like a Japanese person cannot understand Christianity, they argue, Chadwick can never understand Japanese Zen.⁷⁷ This orientalism also appears in Suzuki's account of the utopian Zen temple, which is emphatically located in the “East,” far away from the intellectualizing that so characterizes Suzuki's view of western culture. Yet the Japan that Chadwick encounters makes such a distinction practically useless: Japan is different than the United States, but it is not more mystical and definitely not more “Zen.”

Chadwick, then, is impressed not by how close contemporary Zen Buddhists mimic the behavior of ancient Zen masters but by how plainly human some of his teachers are. The most touching scene in the book describes Katagiri breaking down when his sick master, Shunryu Suzuki, announces he will die soon: “At one point Suzuki turned to Katagiri and thanked him for all he had done through the years. Katagiri burst into tears and with mournful voice he beseeched Suzuki, ‘Don’t die.’ He started to make his way across the tatami floor on his knees, treading awkwardly on his brown *kesa* [ordination robe], and repeating, ‘Don’t die, don’t die.’ Throwing his arms around fragile Suzuki, he sobbed, expressing unreservedly the grief and love that the rest of us were trying so hard, like good little Zen soldiers, to keep inside.”⁷⁸ Despite the fact that Kapleau's account ended with tears as well, the differences between Chadwick's account and that of Kapleau and van de Wetering are vast. Perhaps the most instructive of these differences is how Chadwick deals with the “Mu” *kōan*, a *kōan* that van de Wetering and Kapleau both undertook to solve, Kapleau successfully, van de Wetering unsuccessfully. At a certain point, Chadwick's Japanese master tells him to simply stop doing the *kōan*: “He said I didn’t need to do it anymore. What? I was so into it I didn’t know how to respond. I didn’t think of it as something I’d graduate from—it was a practice. I hadn’t had any breakthrough experience.”⁷⁹ Then an explanation follows that Chadwick can’t understand. The next day, he asks his master to repeat his explanation in the presence of Jessica, who is fluent in Japanese. His master replies he has no idea what he said the day before. Then Chadwick asks, “Well, what do you think my practice should be? . . . If I don’t do mu, what should I do?” He looked at me fiercely. ‘Open your ears!’ he yelled. ‘I already told you!’”⁸⁰

With Chadwick's book, we get an entirely different narrative of life in a Zen Buddhist temple. Unlike van de Wetering and Kapleau, Chadwick's memoir does not focus on how Japanese Zen temples compare to Suzuki's utopian Zen spaces.

Although Suzuki might not have intended his description of Zen life to be taken as a lived reality, Kapleau and van de Wetering's memoirs demonstrate that he was certainly interpreted in this manner. A comparison of their work with Chadwick's demonstrates both that Suzuki's utopian description of temple life has been highly influential and also that more recent Zen memoir writing has moved away from this model. Although this conclusion is not the place to elaborate on this shift, the number of recent Zen memoirs that have emphasized failure instead of success, lived complexity instead of utopian ease, seem to suggest such a new paradigm.⁸¹ Historically, we might explain this change by pointing to the—still ongoing—discovery that a significant number of Zen masters engaged in sexual relationships with their students. This discovery likely made apparent to this new wave of authors that Zen cannot be separated out from the world that surrounds it, and that Suzuki's utopian island was in fact always a result of the modernity it purportedly rejected. The more recent Zen memoirs then further support Ann Gleig's proposal that convert Buddhism in America has moved into a postmodern phase, dissociating itself from dominant metanarratives of the religion, of which Suzuki's has certainly been one of the most influential examples.⁸²

Notes

1. David Chadwick, *Thank You and OK! An American Zen Failure in Japan* (Boston: Shambhala, 1994), 434.
2. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 434.
3. Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 49.
4. Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (New York: Verso, 2005), 416.
5. C. S. Ferns, *Narrating Utopia: Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Literature* (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 4.
6. Ferns, *Narrating Utopia*, 20.
7. Ferns, *Narrating Utopia*, 21.
8. Ferns, *Narrating Utopia*, 23.
9. Harry D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Alan Tansman, *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Alan Tansman, ed., *The Culture of Japanese Fascism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009); Ben Van Overmeire, "Inventing the Zen Buddhist Samurai: Yoshikawa Eiji's Musashi and Japanese Modernity," *Journal of Popular Culture* 49, no. 5 (2016): 1125–1145.
10. Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 88.
11. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 94.
12. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 100–101.

13. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 90.
14. Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*, 49.
15. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 88, 93.
16. T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 156–157.
17. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 94–95.
18. John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.); Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); John R. McRae, *Seeing through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
19. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 97–99.
20. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 99–100.
21. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 91, 93.
22. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 93.
23. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 93.
24. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 93.
25. Ferns, *Narrating Utopia*, 5.
26. Robert H. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," *History of Religions* 33, no.1 (1993): 1–43; Robert H. Sharf, "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience," *Numen* 42, no. 3 (1995): 228–283.
27. Suzuki, *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 102.
28. Philip Kapleau, *Zen: Dawn in the West* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1979), 263.
29. Kapleau, *Zen: Dawn in the West*, 264.
30. Kapleau, *Zen: Dawn in the West*, 265.
31. Philip Kapleau, *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 219.
32. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 219.
33. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 219.
34. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 221.
35. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 222.
36. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 226.
37. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 222.
38. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 227–228.
39. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 230.
40. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 233.
41. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 233.
42. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 234.
43. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 234–235.
44. Robert H. Sharf, "Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22, no. 3–4 (1995): 417–485.
45. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 235.
46. Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*, 239–240.
47. Kapleau, *Zen: Dawn in the West*, 267. *Dawn* can be read as a counterpoint to *Pillars*: unlike the earlier book, which kept the spotlight on Yasutani's teachings, *Dawn* is a testament

of Kapleau's own mastery: all commentary on practice and understanding now comes from Kapleau himself. This thematic break reflects a personal one: according to Kapleau, Yasutani formally cut ties with him because of his Americanization of Zen in the Center he founded in Rochester, New York (Kapleau, *Zen: Dawn in the West*, 269–270). The single-sentence enlightenment description of *Dawn* can thus also be read as a reflection of this cooling relationship with his former master.

48. It is important to note here that Yasutani, as Sharf has shown, had a strong influence on Kapleau's view of the Zen tradition as well, and that the former may have strengthened the stress on *satori* Kapleau would have been familiar with from Suzuki (Sharf, "Sanbōkyōdan"),

49. From a different angle and with different evidence, I have made a similar argument about Suzuki's influence on the style and contents of van de Wetering's *The Empty Mirror* in a previous publication, to which the reader can turn for a deeper investigation of this book. Ben Van Overmeire, "Portraying Zen Buddhism in the Twentieth Century: Encounter Dialogues as Frame-Stories in Daisetz Suzuki's Introduction to Zen Buddhism and Janwillem Van de Wetering's 'The Empty Mirror,'" *Japan Studies Review* 21 (2017): 3–24.

50. Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Afterzen: Experiences of a Zen Student Out on His Ear* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 65.

51. Janwillem Van de Wetering, *The Empty Mirror: Experiences in a Japanese Zen Monastery*, 1st American ed. (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 8.

52. Van de Wetering, *Empty Mirror*, 35.

53. Van de Wetering, *Empty Mirror*, 89–90.

54. Van de Wetering, *Empty Mirror*, 39.

55. Van de Wetering, *Empty Mirror*, 54–55.

56. Van de Wetering, *Empty Mirror*, 145.

57. Janwillem Van de Wetering, *A Glimpse of Nothingness: Experiences in an American Zen Community* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1975), 55.

58. Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 1.

59. Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 7.

60. Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 173–179; Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Zuivere leegte: Ervaringen van een respectloze zenleerling* (Rotterdam: Asoka, 2007), 203–212.

61. Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 176.

62. Van de Wetering, *Zuivere leegte*, 22.

63. Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 58.

64. Van de Wetering, *Afterzen*, 58.

65. Michael Downing, *Shoes Outside the Door: Desire, Devotion, and Excess at San Francisco Zen Center* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2001).

66. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 322.

67. Incidentally, Katagiri himself would be compromised after his death over sexual relationships with his students. See Natalie Goldberg, *The Great Failure: My Unexpected Path to Truth* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004).

68. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 176.

69. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 179, 364.

70. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 364.

71. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 290.

72. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 184.

73. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 374.

74. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 164.
75. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 436.
76. Robert H. Sharf, "Whose Zen? Zen Nationalism Revisited," in *Rude Awakenings: Zen the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism*, ed. James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995), 47–48.
77. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 231.
78. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 435.
79. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 447.
80. Chadwick, *Thank You and OK!*, 447.
81. Examples include Goldberg, *The Great Failure: My Unexpected Path to Truth*; Shozan Jack Haubner, *Single White Monk: Tales of Death, Failure, and Bad Sex (Although Not Necessarily in That Order)* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 2017); Gesshin Claire Greenwood and Brad Warner, *Bow First, Ask Questions Later: Ordination, Love, and Monastic Zen in Japan* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2018).
82. Ann Gleig, "From Buddhist Hippies to Buddhist Geeks: The Emergence of Buddhist Postmodernism?" *Contemporary Buddhism* 15 (2015): 15–33.

D. T. Suzuki and American Popular Culture

YAMADA SHŌJI

It is said that the early adopters of new culture are, in many cases, young women. Zen culture in the United States is no exception. *Vogue*, the famous fashion and lifestyle magazine for women, was the first American mass-circulation magazine to refer to D. T. Suzuki's enigmatic lecture at Columbia University. In its January 15, 1957, issue, it had this to say: "People Are Talking About . . . the great Zen Buddhist teacher, Dr. Daisetz Suzuki, who sits in the centre of a mound of books, waving his spectacles with ceremonial elegance while mingling the philosophical abstract with the familiar concrete: "To discover one is a great achievement, to discover zero, a great leap."¹

It goes without saying that *Vogue* was already famous as a fashion journal. Even though the article cited above was short, Suzuki was clearly already of sufficient stature to attract the attention of the editor. Two weeks later, an article on Zen appeared in the February 4 issue of the weekly magazine *Time*: "A Buddhist boomlet is under way in the United States. Increasing numbers of intellectuals—both faddists and serious students—are becoming interested in a form of Japanese Buddhism called Zen. . . . And the current issue of *Vogue* tips off its [People Are Talking About] readers [that] . . . Columbia's 87-year-old Dr. Suzuki, whose weekly lectures attract a well-packed but mixed bag of serious students and cult shoppers, is one of the most respected religious leaders in America."² One can easily see how the report had sprung from the earlier article in *Vogue*. *Time* was enormously influential, and prompted by the *Time* article, all sorts of inquiries came DTS's way. In a letter dated March 18, Suzuki wrote to one of his disciples, Furuta Shōkin (1911–2001), about the article in *Time* and a forthcoming piece in "a New York magazine." Furuta was taking care of Suzuki's empty house in the Engakuji temple in Kamakura City. Suzuki concluded, "Zen looks set to become fashionable."³

The "New York magazine" he referred to was in fact the *New Yorker*. A fifteen-page article titled "Profile" appeared on August 13, 1957, introducing Suzuki in great detail, accompanied by a portrait of him with his bristling eyebrows. It was written by Winthrop Sargeant (1903–1986), a music critic and violinist: "On Friday afternoon, in a lecture room in the northwest corner of Philosophy Hall,

at Columbia University, a small, wiry, and very aged Japanese named Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki regularly unwraps a shawlful of books in various ancient Oriental languages and, as he lovingly fingers and rubs them, delivers a lecture in an all but inaudible voice to a rapt and rather unusual-looking group of graduate students. . . . 'At this point, zero equals infinity and infinity equals zero. The result is emptiness.'"⁴ According to Sargeant, Zen had been quietly spreading through the United States and Europe in recent years, and was drawing the particular attention of artists, philosophers, and psychologists to the point where it had taken on the flavor of an intellectual fashion. The author went on to state that the teacher at the First Zen Institute of America in New York had died several years earlier, and that the institute, which no longer had a teacher, had eschewed verbal communication, even going so far as to ban the reading of Suzuki's books.

Sargeant went on to write about koan. His verdict on Suzuki is somewhat harsh. He asserted that while the teachings of Zen transcended logic, Suzuki had strayed from the right path, given his interest in explaining Zen logically: "The fact that he has written a large number of books on the subject is enough to disqualify him as a strict Zen practitioner, since the written word is regarded by the orthodox as more or less taboo. Dr. Suzuki's approach to Zen is, in fact, more like that of a Western philosopher than like that of a true Zen disciple. . . . Dr. Suzuki often depreciates his own elaborate ventures into philosophical speculation, describing his works as 'my sins.'"⁵ Sargeant wrote of Suzuki's activities in New York, discussed the history of Zen and its teachings, and explained how Zen had affected the lives and the art of the Chinese and the Japanese; he also summarized Suzuki's life history. He went on to say, "As a personality, he radiates not only the general glamour that attaches to aging Oriental men of wisdom but a special serenity that makes him a magnificent living example of the doctrine he preaches."⁶

It appears that Suzuki was pleased with the *New Yorker* article. On September 6, instead of reporting on recent events, DTS sent Furuta a copy of the magazine with an accompanying letter: "Here in America, Zen has become a sort of fashion. Real Zen will come later, I guess. In any case, this is a bit of publicity. I'm sending you a copy of a weekly magazine called *The New Yorker* that has a 'Profile' of me. I believe this will show you what my situation is."⁷ Sargeant appears to have started gathering information on Suzuki after reading *Vogue* and *Time*. Indeed, it is clear that Suzuki received a visit on March 12, 1957, from a reporter from the *New Yorker* after *Vogue* and *Time*.⁸ They are all connected by the thread that started from *Vogue* and "People Are Talking About."

Around this time, another popular fashion magazine for women, *Mademoiselle*, published a lengthy special feature in its January 1958 issue called "What Is Zen?" *Mademoiselle* was the second women's magazine after *Vogue* to publish on Zen,

but *Mademoiselle's* article was lengthier and more substantial than the piece in *Vogue*. It began, "A young New Yorker telling a friend about a cocktail party she had attended described the conversation as uncommonly stimulating, even 'fascinating.' Everyone present, she said, had been 'talking about Zen.'"⁹ The article was written by the novelist and critic Nancy Wilson Ross (1901–1986). Ross had long been interested in Zen Buddhism, and was known for having edited the anthology *The World of Zen* in 1960.¹⁰ Ross dealt with such subjects as Zen's influence on the Beat Generation, the relationship between Zen and the "white writing" painting style of Mark Tobey (1890–1976), koan and satori, and the history of Zen. Ross had lived in Seattle in the 1930s, and had lectured on Zen and painting, so it is possible that she had some interaction with Tobey, who was resident in Seattle at the same time. Her article prominently featured a photograph of the "Seated in Half-cross-legged Posture Bosatsu" housed at Chūgūji temple in Nara Prefecture, and explained that this photograph was on the wall of Suzuki's room in New York.

Among Ross' posthumous papers, there is a memo of the editorial department at *Mademoiselle* that discusses plans to mount a special feature on Zen.¹¹ The memo says, "Now that 'Zen', as it's cozily called, has become one of the most popular cocktail party conversation topics . . ."¹² From this, one can see that Ross borrowed the text of the memo to launch her article. The Ross papers also contain a letter from an editor advising Ross to start the article with an episode from a cocktail party.¹³ This memo backs up the fact that the radar of women's magazine editors had locked onto Zen.

At the same time, perhaps Ross had sold the idea to *Mademoiselle*? The Ross papers invalidate such a hypothesis. After all, there is among the letters that Ross sent to the editors of *Mademoiselle* one inquiring about the author of the planning memo, and asking for clarification of some of the points in it.¹⁴ If Ross herself had been pushing the plan, she would not have asked about the author of the memo or its contents.

The Ross papers do not reveal details of how Ross was chosen to write the article. In 1953, however, Ross had contributed an article to *Mademoiselle* on Eastern religions, and it appears that the editor had faith in Ross' writing abilities in that area.¹⁵ In addition, Ross had been in contact with Suzuki up until 1952.¹⁶ In response to a request from Suzuki, Ross had made a copy of the article nine months after its publication and sent it to him.¹⁷ Along with the *New Yorker*, perhaps Suzuki liked this article as well.

As described in this column, Suzuki's Zen was disseminated in and by American popular culture, which includes mass magazines and also the Beat Generation. If this perspective is overlooked, one cannot grasp the whole picture of Zen in the United States. Moreover, Zen scholars should surely pay more attention to Nancy Wilson Ross, and her contribution to the popularization of Zen in the West.

Notes

1. "People Are Talking About," *Vogue*, January 15, 1957.
2. "Religion: Zen," *Time*, February 4, 1957, 65–66.
3. SDZb 38:491.
4. Winthrop Sargeant, "Profiles: Great Simplicity," *New Yorker*, August 31, 1957, 34.
5. Sargeant, "Profiles," 36.
6. Sargeant, "Profiles," 53.
7. SDZb 38:572.
8. Kiritā Kiyohide, ed., *Suzuki Daisetsu kenkyū kiso shiryō* (Kamakura, Japan: Matsugaoka Bunko, 2005), 206.
9. Nancy Wilson Ross, "What Is Zen?," *Mademoiselle*, January 1958, 64.
10. Nancy Wilson Ross, *The World of Zen: An East-West Anthology* (New York: Random House, 1960).
11. Ross' lecture notes are archived in the Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986 held by the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin.
12. "Street & Smith Publications Inter Office Memorandum; From MW to CA; Subject: Article on Zen Buddhism," dated June 19, 1957, Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986.
13. Cyrilly Abels' letter to Nancy Wilson Ross, dated October 4, 1957, Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986.
14. Nancy Wilson Ross' letter to Cyrilly Abels, dated July 17, 1957, Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986.
15. Blythe Morley's letter to the editors, *Mademoiselle*, dated December 17, 1953, Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986.
16. Mrs. Stanley Young [Nancy Wilson Ross]'s letter to Dr. Suzuki, dated December 20, 1952, Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986.
17. Mrs. Stanley Young [Nancy Wilson Ross]'s letter to Dr. Daisetz Suzuki, dated October 16, 1958, Nancy Wilson Ross Papers 1913–1986.

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