

Being Known: Evaluating D. T. Suzuki's Role as Zen Philosopher

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本稿では、第一に鈴木大拙の哲学が革新的なものであるかどうかを考察した上で、その哲学の枠組み及び概要の提示を試みる。第二に、その哲学と鈴木独自の日本文化論を比較検討することによって明らかになる矛盾を示唆する。

Introduction

D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) was famous in his time as an accomplished scholar, translator, exegete, apologist, and popularizer of Zen. However, his legacy as a philosopher has been not so clear. Some, such as Sakamoto have argued that Suzuki was “... in broader and indeed unique sense, a philosopher not only in the bent of his mind but also in the attitude of his lifelong scholarly activities” (1978: 33). There is the alternative view that his “affection for philosophy was that of ‘a would-be philosopher’” (Dumoulin 1992: 8) and that Suzuki lacked the rigor and consistency to be considered a proper philosopher. This paper aims to argue that Suzuki did establish a philosophically-consistent system of beliefs that was innovative. I will try to demonstrate this claim by suggesting, albeit in the most general way, what the contours of a Suzuki philosophical system can be said to look like. However, I will also make the argument that Suzuki's adoption of a particular interpretation of Japanese culture interfered with the coherence of his philosophy with the result that his conceptualization of Japanese religious culture creates a fundamental contradiction in his philosophy.

Suzuki outside philosophy

Suzuki was recognized in his time as a talented scholar, translator and proselytizer. However, his image as a philosopher suffered a number of drawbacks. First of all, there was a reluctance on his part to declare the Zen he was describing to be a philosophy. Consistent throughout his writings is an attitude that Zen can never be subsumed completely under the label of “philosophy”, that it is a way of being alive rather than a set of ideas. Zen is a set of experiences, a set of practices, and, indeed, a state of being. For instance, in an article entitled *Zen and Philosophy* he writes, “The conceptualization of Zen is inevitable: Zen must have its philosophy. The only caution is not to identify Zen with a system of philosophy, for Zen is infinitely more than that.” (1956: 260–261) This reluctance to give Zen a philosophy meant that Suzuki never had a motive for applying systematically a set of core concepts to Zen. Instead his writings on Zen often tend to be anecdotal, depending on incidents concerning the great Zen masters to illustrate a Zen *attitude* rather than a Zen philosophy. When he does apply concepts to Zen, he tends to promiscuously use vaguely defined terminology borrowed liberally from an array of religious and philosophical traditions. Whilst this can make for exciting and stimulating reading, it does suggest a mission to proselytize (*upaya*), to explain Zen in ‘local terms’, rather than a mission to systematize, to explain Zen in ‘universal terms’.

But more than his reluctance to set Zen in fixed conceptual terms, another impediment to seeing Suzuki as a philosopher has been his unrelenting anti-rational and anti-language attitude. In this format Suzuki’s writing defied what was seen as the conventions of proper philosophy in the mid-20th Century. Kasulis has summarized this situation as follows:

Suzuki ... was not a philosopher at all, at least in the sense of formal training. Although his impact on Western, especially American, culture has been extensive in the areas of poetry, aesthetics, and general spirituality, his influence on Western philosophy has been nil. In fact, in some ways, his writings permanently alienated a significant portion of

a whole generation of Western philosophers. Because of their exposure to Suzuki, for example, many professional Western philosophers will never read *any* works on Eastern thought, not as philosophical literature, anyway. This is understandable when we consider that Suzuki's greatest popularity in the United States was in the late 1950's and 1960's, about the same time that American philosophy had assumed a strong analytic orientation. To a philosopher attempting to make philosophical language ever more precise and philosophical statements verifiable by empirical data, Suzuki's approach must have seemed outrageous ... (1982: 131)

The "strong analytic orientation" of American philosophy was the Anglo-American tradition which placed formidable emphasis on the role of language in attaining ultimate truth statements. Suzuki, with his constant rejection of language as a reliable vehicle for attaining coherent truth, was innately anathema to this tradition. A typical example of Suzuki's attitude to any kind of analytical-oriented thinking is as follows: "We are generally attracted to analytical knowledge or discriminative understanding, and we divide reality into several pieces. We dissect it and by dissecting it we kill reality. When we have finished our analysis we have murdered reality, and this dead reality we think is our understanding of it." (1980: 21)

Suzuki the reluctant alternative philosopher

Despite Suzuki's reluctance to be described as such, and despite the reluctance of many in the philosophical profession to accept him as such, I will argue here that it is still possible to characterize Suzuki as a philosopher.

First of all to the charge that Zen is not a philosophy, as Rosemont (1970) has pointed out, Zen as articulated by Suzuki, does make claims about reality and our understanding of it that can only be described as philosophical beliefs. To assert that Zen's claims are not philosophy but transcend philosophy, as Suzuki does, is to engage in misleading rhetoric and to illegitimately claim privileged knowledge. Rosemont counters the Zen is not a philosophy claims by Suzuki as follows:

In just the same way, even if it were true to say of the Zen masters (which it is not) that they do not hold philosophical beliefs or do not hold them philosophically, or even if it were true to say of Zen Buddhism in general (which again, it is not) that it is not a philosophy, it still would not be proper for the Zen commentators to emphasize this issue to the point of seriously misleading their readers. In their attempts to articulate the beliefs of the masters, to assert that those beliefs are true, and to defend them, the Zen commentators offer *prima facie* evidence that they themselves, at least, are holding those beliefs philosophically. And because the philosophical statements they make on the basis of those beliefs form the bulk of their writings, readers should be told at the outset that what they will be reading in those commentaries will be, in an important sense, the philosophy of Zen Buddhism. (1970: 71–72)

In other words, if you are stating your beliefs about reality and justifying those beliefs, then you are doing philosophy. To express it proverbially, if it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, then it is a duck—no matter how much it may quack on about how it transcends duckness.

Secondly, to the charge that Suzuki bombed as a philosopher in the Anglo-American tradition, it is important to remember that this tradition is one of a handful of alternatives. There is also in the West what is called the “Continental tradition” and within this tradition Suzuki’s reservation about the truth value of language, and many of his other ideas, would not seem so shocking. As Kasulis further remarks (*ibid.*) “... there were little pockets of philosophical interest (especially among those in the Continental tradition) that did not follow the pattern of the mainstream. Heidegger himself was impressed by Suzuki in their personal encounters.” Indeed, philosophy has always been a broad church accepting a variety of methods and approaches. To discount a set of expressed beliefs as being no philosophy because it fails to fulfill narrow expectations of formal logic and objective rationalism is myopic. As Kasulis remarks elsewhere (1978: 354):

When people exclude Zen Buddhist thought from the classification of

“philosophy,” they often use such a limited definition of “philosophy” that their own criteria would also exclude such classical philosophers as Socrates, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas as well as modern figures like Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and aspects of Heidegger and Wittgenstein. One may be justified in disliking these Western philosophers, but it is merely an act of a semantic sleight of hand to discount them as “unphilosophical.”

Faith philosopher

Whilst Suzuki was mostly an uncritical popularizer of Zen, this is of no major import if we properly categorize him as essentially what could be termed a “faith philosopher”. A faith philosopher can be described as one who sees philosophy not as a path to truth but as a tool for describing and delineating a path that has already been discovered through faith in one’s beliefs, particularly when those beliefs are derived from revelatory experience. This primacy of faith over philosophy as the instrument of truth has had a long pedigree in religious philosophizing and is best summarized by St. Anselm’s dictum *Credo ut intelligam*: “I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand” (Freemantle 1954: 88). Similarly, this reversal of the path connecting philosophy to faith can be found in Thomas Aquinas, among other religious philosophers, who believed that philosophy was incomplete without revelation. (Copleston 1955: 56–57). For Suzuki, revelation is the Zen experience and the awareness it brings; the beliefs about reality it gives him are the be all and end all of all religious enquiry. He describes the characteristic of this awareness or *satori* as follows, “... the knowledge realized by satori is final, [...] no amount of logical argument can refute it. Being direct and personal it is sufficient unto itself. All that logic can do here is to explain it, to interpret it in connection with other kinds of knowledge with which our minds are filled.” (1956: 04).

In essence, Suzuki’s role as philosopher was not to *prove* anything about Zen, nor to influence or inspire changes within Zen, but to bring the revealed truths of Zen to a new audience who sought to be spoken to in modern

philosophical language. A good summarizing statement of Suzuki's attitude towards the role of philosophy in Zen and his understanding of his own mission as a philosopher of Zen can be seen in the opening paragraphs to his commentaries on the *Record of Lin-chi* where he justifies his attempts to ascribe a philosophy to T'ang era Zen master Lin-chi (2000: 343–344). He states that within the institutional traditions of Zen, the *Record of Lin-chi* has been used and understood in a particular religious context and that he has no intention to add anything to this. However, he points out that modern audiences have developed a need and desire for philosophical explanations and that it is inevitable that from the many words of Rinzai a coherent 'thought' (*shiso*) will be discernible and transmissible to such modern audiences.

Here we see that Suzuki is not interested in adding anything to Zen or to finding new ways of developing Zen. He perfectly accepts Zen in all its institutional and traditional forms and feels he has nothing to reveal to those who have already experienced Zen revelation. Instead his mission is to explain Zen to those outside the tradition, those who have not experienced its revelations, in a style and pattern of philosophical discourse they can understand and respect. Elsewhere in his writings, Suzuki makes the comment that (1974: 12) "the Western mind must help the East to construct a new system of thought based upon Zen experience." In other words, the East has much to offer the world in terms of philosophy and ideas about life but it needs to articulate this with the systematic rigor of Western philosophy.

Outlines of a system

Having made, then, the argument that Suzuki can be seen as a philosopher with a system of ideas, the next task is to present what this system of ideas looks like. With this challenge to hand, I attempt here to offer just a glimpse of how Suzuki's system could be held together. It is nothing further than an overview, a broad brushstroke that will exclude much and simplify greatly.

-The Zen perspective: the seeing Self in the world

The starting point for Suzuki's ontology is a phenomenological one. It is

the position of ones being itself looking out on the world. This initial seeing self is the foundation of our knowledge of the world. He writes, "... the seeing plays the most important role in Buddhist epistemology, for seeing is at the basis of knowing. Knowing is impossible without seeing; all knowledge has its origin in seeing. Knowing and seeing are thus found generally united in Buddha's teaching. Buddhist philosophy therefore ultimately points to seeing reality as it is. Seeing is experiencing enlightenment." (1957: 40)

In other words, ultimate knowledge does not depend on externally inputted religious revelation nor on empirical data to be decoded by a thinking brain. Instead ultimate knowledge is a primordial given, self-sufficient and not needing external verification. The idea of oneself existing is as a being-in-the-world.

-The view from somewhere

This assertion that our most basic knowledge of the world is a "subjective" *view from somewhere*, to borrow Thomas Nagel's (1986) eponymous phrase, establishes Suzuki's philosophy as something counter to the singularly "objective" naturalist philosophies of modern science which seek the view from nowhere. That is, Suzuki is opposing the naturalists' bracketing off of our subjective experience, our beingness in the world, and their opinion that the mystery of our being in this world, the mystery that we are in the world seeing it from one subjective point, is a creation and product of the world out there, and as such, not something worthy of serious consideration.

For instance, according to Suzuki:

"The intellect looks outwardly, takes an 'objective' view of things. It is unable to look inwardly so as to grasp the thing in its inwardlyness. It attempts to achieve a unitive view of the world by what is known as the objective method. This objective method may work well, but only when the inside view has first been taken hold of. For the unifying principle lies inside and not outside. It is not something we arrive at; it is where we start. It is not the outcome of postulation; it is what makes postulation possible." (2004: 86)

He made the same point at an Eric Fromm hosted conference on Zen and Psychoanalysis where he said:

The sciences are uniformly centrifugal, extroverted, and they look “objectively” toward the thing they pick up for study. The position they thus assume is to keep the thing away from them and never to strive to identify themselves with the object of their study. Even when they look within for self-inspection they are careful to project outwardly what is within, thus making themselves foreign to themselves as if what is within did not belong to them. They are utterly afraid of being “subjective”. But we must remember that as long as we stand outside we are outsiders, that for that very reason we can never know the thing itself, that all we can know is *about*-which means that we can never know what our real self is. Scientists, therefore, can never expect to reach the Self, however much they desire to. They can no doubt talk a great deal *about* it, and that is all they can do. Zen thus advises us to reverse the direction science is pursuing if we are really to get acquainted with the Self. (1960: 25)

For Suzuki then, the starting point for an understanding of ontology is not the world we see, or considerations of what made that world, but us, the beings in the world, as “Self” in the world. In this way, Suzuki is making central the very thing that is bracketed off by naturalist philosophies.

-Pure experience as pure absorption

This seeing self that is the starting point of Suzuki’s philosophy is not a consciously thinking self. As a self that is just there in the world, it is undifferentiated from that world, existing in a state of, what the Heddegerian Hubert Dreyfus might term, “absorbed coping” (1991: 70). Suzuki describes this primordial state as “pure experience” and links it to the concept of *sonomama* (which I translate here as “as it is-ness”). He states (1957: 60) “Buddhist philosophy, therefore, is the philosophy of Suchness, or philosophy of Emptiness, or philosophy of Self-identity. It starts from the absolute present which is pure experience, an experience in which there is

yet no differentiation of subject and object, and yet which is not a state of sheer nothingness. The experience is variously designated: in Japanese it is *sonomama...*” This as it is-ness is the radical message of a philosophy that implies a primordial being-ness, an absorbed non-judgemental self in the world in a state of pure experience. In this way, Suzuki reverses the Cartesian prioritization of the mental cognitive self over the ontological self. He evokes Buddha’s first words “天上天下唯我独尊 (In heaven and earth, I alone am the honored one)” in contradistinction to Descartes famous dictum *cogito ergo sum*: “The French philosopher Descartes has the famous “Cogito ergo sum” which is defined as ‘I think therefore I am’ but from Shakamuni Buddha’s perspective, in other words for Zen, first is ‘I am’ and after comes ‘I think’. This is in fact absolute affirmation, identification with absolute contradiction, non-dilemmatic or rather non-differentiated differentiation.” (2001b: 149)¹

For Suzuki this non-dualist absorption, the self in the world, is the norm, the condition of our existence, and mental cognitivism, the thinking mind is a special case, a distortion and derivation. For instance, Suzuki in many places speaks approvingly of states of mind where the world is undifferentiated, such as in the mind of an infant. (2001b: 35) And suggests that this is the state of being we should seek—not the knowing, judging mind but the seeing, acceptant mind.

Suzuki then (in keeping with Buddhist tradition), rejects any Cartesian or Christian-style assertions of an inner essential self, soul, or mind, where such an assertion creates a division with one’s corporeal, physical self. Instead Suzuki employs Rinzai’s concept of “person” to create a conceptualization of the human as a being *in* the world, meshed with the world (1973a: 93). Suzuki wants to emphasize that we are not souls placed in this world to await a distant salvation but that the here and now of our existence is our reality from which notions of eschatological transcendence are of no relevancy and are something we are falsely desiring. For Suzuki, notions of a world beyond are a pointless negation of the value of the world we are in now. Suzuki rejects any idea of the sacred and the profane, God and Man, the heavenly and the Earthly, as being distinct realms, distinct realities. The fact that we see such distinctions, the fact that such distinctions make sense for us is a

product of a false viewing of reality generated by our drive towards dualistic mindfulness.

-Capping concepts of non-duality:

However, to purport this lack of division is not to assert that all is one or that nothing moves and changes through time in our reality. We are still separate and distinct though unified. Any totalizing monism is rejected by Suzuki along with any divisive dualism. He is constantly at pains to assert that Zen, although dismissive of all dualistic distinctions, is not pantheist. For Suzuki reality moves in a dialect transcendent of monoism and dualism. This may be hard to countenance, but to the “awakened” mind of Zen such notions make complete sense. However, for Suzuki the philosopher, asserting that all will make sense once one is enlightened is not enough and in his works there is a constant drive to describe fully the paradox of distinctions still existent in oneness, a radical non-dualism that is not pantheist either. We find that when Suzuki reaches this ultimate dilemma of conceptualizing Zen ontology, he employs what I term ‘capping concepts,’ such as the notion of *sunyata*, *prajna* (e.g. 1956: 286), or 靈性的直覚 -*spiritual direct awakening* (2001b: 92), which are designed to encapsulate this apparent paradox of non-monist non-duality in a transcendent category of ontology. In using these concepts at the apogee of his philosophical speculation, Suzuki is pushing language and logical conceptualization to describe a reality where divisions are meaningless, false illusions, but where an absence of those divisions would be equally un-real and illusionary.

And so Suzuki describes a conceptual format whereby division and non-division are combined in a higher spiritual dimension. However, this “higher” spiritual dimension cannot be seen as separate from “lower” spiritual dimensions, since this would create a further “division” between non-division and division with the need for a further potentially divisive non-dividing dimension, all resulting in an infinite regress.

Instead Suzuki tends to describe his capping concepts as existing in what can only be apophatically described as “nothingness” and existing at a point of time termed the “eternal now”. In other words, for there to be

an ontological reality of division and non-division existing simultaneously, a reality of change but permanent, constant ‘is-ness’, there can be no distinguishing categories nor can there be any sense of moving time. All divisions must be happening now and all divisions must be creating nothing else other than their own division-ness. In essence, the capping concepts of Suzuki’s philosophy are designed to describe an ontology and concurrent epistemology where the aware mind sees the ultimate (spatial) asyety and (temporal) eternalism of reality.

Eventually attempts to explain this vision of reality—seeing movement in time whilst rejecting notions of dualistic/dialectic changes in time, seeing divisions in space while rejecting the idea of a world of divisions—collapses into illogical violations of the law of identity as division and non-division is divided but not divided, the world moves but is frozen in an eternal now, the mind is in the world but is looking at the world. Eventually Suzuki can do no more than evoke the logic of the Diamond Sutra with the syllogism “A is A, therefore A is not A”, a logic he dubbed *sokuhi*. He states (2001: 86) “This *sokuhi* logic has undoubtedly been the most important thing throughout the history of Zen thought. Zen is in fact the translation of this behaviorally.”² This declaration of non-contradiction in contradiction helps Suzuki to unify his capping concepts and present a coherent philosophy.

The logic of *sokuhi*, then, is a rational attempt to explain in philosophical language an awareness of reality that can only defy rationality in its attempts to avoid all division but, at the same time, evade a static, pantheist reductionism.

Universal ontologies and patriotism

As well as producing copious works of intellectual speculation on Zen that, as I have tried to argue here, form an innovative new system of philosophy, Suzuki also labored as a cultural interpreter of Japan. He produced many works and articles describing what he saw as the unique features of Japanese culture and its artistic practices and artifacts. For Suzuki, the existence of the Zen religion in Japan gave the country a unique cultural form and artistic

sensibility, which he was proud to declare to the World.

There has been controversy over how far his sense of national uniqueness went. Victoria (1997, 2003) has in the past accused him of aggressive nationalist tendencies. However, this has been strongly (and convincingly) rebutted by Sato (2008) who demonstrates extensively that Suzuki (unusually for his time and place) was no ultra-nationalist. However, Sato does concede that “Suzuki was not without patriotic sentiment” (2008: 77). This is a fair assessment. There is no doubt Suzuki cherished his country and, as a man of his time, found no shame in professing this. But Suzuki was no warmonger, imperialist, or fascist. Nowhere, even in his most patriotic writings (i.e. *Nihontekireisei* (1944/1972)), does he promote Japanese military invasions of other countries or direct Japanese hegemony over other nations. His patriotism was of the inter-cultural type, suited to the discourse of international intellectuals, cultural exchanges, and diplomatic pleasantries. It was a patriotism that sought to differentiate Japan culturally and promote Japan’s image in the world to itself and to the rest of the world. It may have been often overstated and overplayed, sometimes naive and twee, at times woefully inaccurate and anachronistic; and (like every other nation’s patriotism) may come across these days as quite irritating and cringe-worthy for modern readers of a post-nationalist persuasion. But it was by no means aggressive, xenophobic, or sinister. On the contrary, it was a patriotism that was very much enjoyed in its time by many non-Japanese, as the popular reception of *Zen Buddhism and its Influence on Japanese Culture* in the 1930s would attest.

However, whilst Suzuki’s patriotism was harmless politically, it does present a serious drawback to his philosophical system. This is because Suzuki often tended to conflate with his ontology, a certain supposed Zen-influenced worldview Japanese people had, that is, a Japanese specific-epistemology, a Japanese way of knowing and seeing reality. In other words, in sections of his writing, it seems that Suzuki is arguing that for the Japanese the world *is* non-dualistic and for Westerners it *is* dualistic. Importantly, this is not the same as saying that the world is *seen* as non-dualistic by Japanese and is *seen* as dualistic by Westerners. For in establishing an ontological

category of non-differentiated differentiation, as he does with his ‘capping concepts’, Suzuki seems to have made a flawed move by applying this all-embracing ontology to the culture-specific spiritual experiences of the Japanese people. For instance, in his book *Nihontekireisei*, (written with impeccable bad-timing in the early 1940s), he purports the idea that the Japanese have a special type of spirituality, that Japanese people exist in non-differentiated differentiation. He writes, “The individual person each exist by themselves but they are supra-individuals just as they are. This spiritual direct awakening first appeared with the Japanese so it can be called ‘Japanese spirituality’”. (2000: 118)³. Further on he writes, “A person is a supra-individual person and forms the center of an infinite circle with no center. Spiritual direct awakening is established when this center-less center is recognized. When that happens one becomes the person of ‘In heaven and earth, I alone am the honored one’. This is the true individual—the self-limits of the supra-individual. The contradiction of the non-individual individual is recognized as the most concrete truth and its existence obtains ultimateness.” (2000: 136)⁴. Reading these words, one cannot avoid the suspicion that Suzuki has misunderstood his own ontology, or has unwittingly distorted it to suit parochial concerns. For it seems that Suzuki is confusing what a person is with what a person sees. If we understand “spiritual direct awakening”, a favorite capping concepts of his, to mean the ontology of non-differentiated differentiation, then it is hard to reconcile it with the way he has employed it here to describe mere culturally determined “awareness” of this supposed non-differentiated differentiation. He has confused his own descriptions of how we are, what we are, what are being-ness is, with descriptions of what certain among us can see and are aware of. He has gone from describing the realm of “no-mind” to describing the specific “mind of the Japanese”. It seems he is muddled in a confusion between ways of seeing and what it is that is seen, between the epistemological and the ontological. It is a confusion well summarized by Peter Medawar’s notorious comment quoted in *When* (2004: 87):

“I am reminded of an air-raid warden in wartime Oxford who, when

bright moonlight seemed to be defeating the spirit of the blackout, exhorted us to wear dark glasses. He, however, was being funny on purpose.”

The criticism being that there should be a clear distinction made in any coherent philosophy between how we look at reality and the nature of that reality we look upon. Of course, a Suzuki philosophy may counter that the seer and the seen are one, and that the ontological and epistemological are false distinctions. Yet, in saying that we are effectively making the assumption that how we look at reality can change that reality, that wearing dark-glasses makes the moonshine disappear from the sky for all. This is obviously untenable. However, a Suzuki philosophy may further counter that it is not a case of the way we see reality determining that reality but that reality determining the way we see it. But if this is the case, why then has this reality selected that it be seen correctly exclusively by the Japanese. Suggesting that the seer and the seen are one for the Japanese puts one on the slippery-slope to a *divine chosen race* style of conclusion, something I am confident Suzuki never meant.

Unfortunately it seems that Suzuki, in overstating the special mode of being of the Japanese, with their special spiritual fusion with the world (a fusion so strong that, as Suzuki suggests elsewhere in *Nihontekireisei*, Amida Butsu chants her divine name through Japanese lips in a fusion of *tariki* and *jiriki*) he is giving his metaphysics a cultural location and, in his enthusiasm to promote the uniqueness of Japanese philosophy, is misunderstanding his own capping concepts and assuming that because Japanese philosophy had a particular place in history, the philosophy itself can only have a particular and partial application to reality.

Conclusion

I have attempted to argue here that D.T. Suzuki should be recognized as a philosopher of some creativity and originality who described the insights

of Zen with a system of concepts that were radically innovative and which provided a new set of concepts for the West to articulate some of the major belief systems of East Asia. However, concurrent with this is that fact that Suzuki was very much embedded in an historically-specific ideology which saw vast differences between the Orient and the Occident and which saw national cultures as monolithic determiners of every aspect of the human mind, including, confusingly, that minds integration with its own primordial state of no-mindedness. The task when studying Suzuki is to appreciate his unique innovations in terms of their philosophical expression whilst separating him from certain ideas of his that now seem dated, parochial, and which, most importantly, contradict and cheapen his formidable stature as a philosopher and original thinker.

Notes

1 Original text:

フランスの哲学者のデカルトに有名なCogito ergo sumというのがある、「われ思う、ゆえに、われあり」との義であるが、お釈迦さんの立場——すなわち禅では初めから「我有焉」である、「我思う」は後からついて来る。これが実に絶対肯定であり、絶対矛盾の同一性である、不揀択すなわち無分別の分別である。

2 Original text:

この即非論理は禅思想史を通じてもっとも重要なものであることは疑いない。禅は実にこれを行為的に翻訳したものである。

3 Original text:

個己の一人は一人一人で、しかもそれがそのままに超個己の一人であるのである。この靈性的直覚は日本人の上に初めてでたので、これを日本的靈性といわなければならぬのである。

4 Original text:

一人は超個己の一人で、中心のない無限大円環の中心を形成するところのものである。靈性的自覚は、この中心のない中心を認得するとき成立する。そのとき「天上天下唯我独尊」の一人者になるのである。それが真実の個己—超個己の自己限定である。個己でない個己という矛盾が即ち最も具体的事実として認得せられ、この存在が究意性をもってくるのである。

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