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Empty Willing: Contemplative Being-In-The-World in St. John of the Cross and Dogen

Philip Novak

Department of Religion and Philosophy, Dominican University of California, philip.novak@dominican.edu

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EMPTY WILLING: CONTEMPLATIVE BEING-IN-THE-WORLD
IN ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS AND DŌGEN

by

PHILIP CHARLES NOVAK

B.A., University of Notre Dame 1972
M.A., Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York 1976

DISSERTATION

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PREFACE

The peace that descends with the completion of a difficult project brings with it a welling up of gratitude. It is, as the Buddha attests, a blissful mental condition, and one to which he often called his monks' attention: "Let us be grateful and bear in mind what has been done to us; let us not forget even a particle of what has been accomplished on our behalf" (Samyutta-nikaya, II, 272). The greater part of my own grateful remembering must, of course, remain a private matter, for the chain of grace is too long and many-linked to be acknowledged fully in writing. But in the spirit of the Buddha's reminder, I would like to express my thanks to the following persons for the roles they played in helping me to complete this leg of the journey.

First, to the faculty, graduate students and staff of the Syracuse religion department: deep friendships, collegiality and plain human kindness were always there to balance the rigors of intellectual training. To James Wiggins and Ronald Cavanagh: for their administrators' guidance and unflagging encouragement. To Richard Pilgrim: for his patient pedagogy in the matter and spirit of Zen and for timely suggestions during the writing of the dissertation. To David Miller: for teaching always with his whole soul and for teaching the logos of psyche with a contagious sense of its unfathomable depths. To Kendra

Smith: for a garland of kindnesses. To Bridgett: my wife, who married me in the middle of the dissertation and who, in addition to assisting mightily, has shown the most heroic forbearance. And last, and most, to Huston Smith: mentor, friend and thesis-advisor:

...the Sage
puts himself in the background
but is always to the fore
Remains outside but is always there...
Through his actionless activity all things are
duly regulated...
He is, indeed, a teacher.

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INTRODUCTION

Everything is both like everything else and different from it--like it in that the things being compared both exist; different or there would be no distinguishable things to compare. So, it might be asked of a dissertation that revolves around a comparison: what is its point? To what end is the comparison being made?

If persons on different sides of the globe were independently to discover that bodies fall at the rate of sixteen feet per second squared, this would be taken as evidence that they had learned something about nature--about the world and how it works. We see something like this at work in the sadhanas (spiritual paths) of St. John and Dōgen. Though the Christian saint and the Zen master are leaves on quite different trees, similarities between them, qua contemplatives, exist at a level profound enough to encourage the exploration of common ground. Ultimately this common ground invites us to go beyond San Juan and Dōgen to the contemplative gesture in its universal nature. In other words, though San Juan and Dōgen stand in the foreground of this thesis, they are, in the end, only doorways. We are seeking what their lives and teachings open onto: the essential elements of the human contemplative gesture and its psychotransformative power.

Our argument is a progressive one; it builds. The reader should take note of this. It does not reach its full

stature until Part Five and earlier circumscriptions will only be counterproductive. So that the reader is not in doubt concerning the full sweep of the argument, a concise account of it forms the last part of this introduction. And, so that the reader may not be in the dark regarding the nature of our thesis, we shall state it here: profound similarities in the praxes of John and Dōgen point to an underlying strategy of the human will, the elements of which suggest a transcultural understanding of the nature of contemplative being-in-the-world and its psychotransformative power.

A further introductory word must be said in connection with that cumbersome but indispensable phrase, "psychotransformative power". The abiding spirit of our researches and their present formulation has been the wish to understand the depth-aspect of psychological praxes that took shape long before Freud fashioned the conceptual tools that gave us official and 'unprecedented' access to a depth psychology. How was it possible, we asked ourselves, for premodern contemplatives to achieve psychological transformation and integration without theoretical access to "the unconscious"? In searching for an answer, we have been drawn to the conviction that man's contemplative response to reality contains something for which the interpretive categories of depth psychology are unfit, something which adds to that science's attempts to understand the nature of the psyche a unique and irreducible element.

Over twenty years ago in his overview of the four major theorists of depth psychology (Freud, Jung, Adler and Rank), Ira Progoff called for "a theory and practice that approaches the human personality with an awareness of its magnitude; and especially one that uses psychological concepts as instruments with which to develop man's spiritual and creative capacities" (1956:262-63). None of his subjects, his study concludes, answered that need. Even Jung, this Jungian admits, "could not hide from himself the fact that his earlier theories had built a psychological hedge around the realities of man's creative and spiritual experiences" (Ibid:10). It may seem presumptuous to claim a degree of success where the founding fathers of western psychology have failed, but the claim is finally not for ourselves but for the masters this thesis studies. Unencumbered by the epistemology and world view of contemporary social science and empowered by the powerful traditions in which they were securely rooted, they might well have had access to intents and strategies modern psychology lacks. By placing the contemplative sensibilities of John and Dōgen in conversation we have sought the beginnings of a transcultural answer to the kind of challenge Progoff has proposed.

Part One of the present study is a brief introduction to Juan and Dōgen within the contexts of their traditions.

Part Two is a prolegomenic discussion which draws John and Dōgen, as fellow contemplatives, within speaking distance of each other on issues that are often seen as dividing

Christians and Buddhists. The issues dealt with are (1) the relations between the individual and the absolute, (2) the question of grace or "cosmic complicity" in the contemplative endeavor, and (3) moral purification and asceticism as practical accompaniments of that endeavor. Our purpose in this part is to establish an atmosphere of similitude which invites the more detailed investigations that follow. The reader should note that the material covered here is ancillary to the main thesis.

Parts Three and Four are a presentation of textual evidence for and a discussion of the phenomena of attention and intention as they manifest themselves in John and Dōgen. "Attention" describes the practical core of the inner work; "intention", the general movement of the sensibilities in which that work proceeds. Attention and intention, as complementary movements of the will, are respectively the center and circumference of the contemplative gesture and the building blocks of the psychology of religious contemplation presented in Part Five. There, we bring together the contemplative paradigm of transformation with that of depth psychology and, from this confrontation, (1) draw out the psychotransformative strategy implicit in the gesture of attention and (2) probe, from a contemplative standpoint, the source and effectiveness of human willing.

The tongues of John and Dōgen speak different languages but, we shall argue, the language of their wills, is one. Their minds move in different universes of concept and image

but each, we shall see, puts the greatest stress upon a psychological praxis that is carefully indifferent to the concepts and imagery of the personal mind. And these two interrelated and complementary gestures--the all encompassing singlemindedness of the will and the specific practice of sustained, non-discursive attention--not only provide a way of understanding the generic structure of contemplative activity but suggest a paradigm of psychological transformation which completes psychological science because it asks man, as science cannot, to rely on something that transcends him and eludes him, to complete him.

EMPTY WILLING

Circumspect, like one who in winter
crosses a stream,
Watchful, as one who must meet danger
on every side,
Yet yielding, as ice when it begins
to melt...
Receptive as a hollow in the hills.

Tao Te Ching XV

I. The Lives of John of the Cross and Dōgen

The conditions of a solitary bird are five:
the first, that it flies to the highest point;
the second, that it does not suffer for company,
not even of its own kind;
the third, that it aims its beak to the skies;
the fourth, that it does not have a definite color;
the fifth, that it sings very softly.

John of the Cross

a. John of the Cross

He is a man heavenly and divine.... He is truly the father of my soul.... He is very advanced in the ways of the Spirit; to very great experience he adds profound learning (Benedictines of Stanbrook, 1922:179).

I have found no one like him in all Castille, nor is there anyone who inspires souls with such fervor on their road to heaven. You should all recognize that you possess a priceless treasure in that saint. Our Lord has given him a special grace for such guidance (Benedictines of Stanbrook:180).

He has our Lord's own spirit (Benedictines of Stanbrook:181).

This approbation of John of the Cross comes from the pen of his friend/1/ and contemporary Teresa of Avila who, together with him, abides at the highest echelon of the Catholic mystical tradition. Naturally indebted to their theological predecessors they were, however, the first in the Catholic tradition to give a systematic and psychologically practical account of the contemplative way. Though of the two Teresa was a better writer and more encompassing in her concerns, John's sheer contemplative depth and psychological acumen is still considered unparalleled.

John of the Cross was born in 1542 at Fontiveros, near Avila, in Spain. He never knew his father, a member of a well-to-do family who was unfortunately ostracized therefrom when, for love, he married a poor silk weaver named Catalina Alvarez. A few months after John's birth, he died, leaving

Catalina and her three sons in dire poverty.

Though one son died and another married, Catalina's poverty grew to the point where she could no longer care for John. She gave him to an orphanage which, in addition to providing necessities, gave John an education. As a youth, his first employment as a convent sacristan led to a second in a hospital for hopeless syphilis cases. There an administrator eventually noticed not only John's quiet dedication but his supple intellect as well. Through him John was enabled to attend the local collegio recently opened by the Jesuits. There he remained from his seventeenth to his twenty-first year studying the Latin classics and, no doubt, theology. John was poised for the career of a priest and had a hospital chaplaincy before him, but, apparently, his yearning for the contemplative life had already grown irresistible. Leaving the hospital late one night in order to avoid the administrator's protestations, John begged entrance into the Carmelite priory and soon thereafter took the habit.

Under the wing of the Carmelites, John's education continued. We know little about the specific courses he took in theology, but in the last analysis, it matters little. What John acquired was a traditional theological grid upon which his naturally speculative mind could place the revelations of his inner life.

Nevertheless, one can surmise the general theological debt he owes to Augustine, Aquinas and that seminal mystical

writer, Dionysus the Areopagite. He absorbed the writings of the latter and thereby found the via negativa which he himself would mark out with such subtlety and thoroughness. Filled with Augustine's passionate love for God, he was also infected by Augustine's rather severe body/spirit dualism (Mallory:112-142). John agreed absolutely with Thomas' Catholic doctrine on the finality of God for the human soul, but differed on matters of the latter's potential, holding out for the possibility for a more immediate contact between the soul and its Principle. Thomas did not believe in the abandonment of images or sensory phantasms in the relation of the soul to God (Copleston:47-48), whereas John, in his translation of apophatic theology into a practical method of consciousness transformation, did. And it was through this thoroughgoing via negativa in consciousness that John felt a more immediate knowledge of God was possible--that one could ultimately "know creatures through God" rather than only "know God through creatures" (F4,5)/2/. It is because of John's theological departures from Thomism and his emphasis on the practical that one may speak of more specific influences stemming from Bonaventura, from the Victorines (especially Richard) and from the Germano-Flemish school (especially Tauler) (Benedictine of Stanbrook: passim).

No account of influences, however, could diminish the originality that comes to light in John's stress on methodical prayer and his unprecedented psychological insight into the interior life. Up until John's time, as we have mentioned,

the science of the interior life had been imperfectly and unsystematically developed. Unlike Buddhism, where philosophical and cosmological speculation has always been paced by a science of the interior life, the elaboration of medieval theology was hardly matched by the science of prayer and contemplation. Schematizations of the latter tended to be superficial and arbitrary; definitions of meditation and contemplation were hazy and overlapping (Benedictine of Stanbrook:3-12). All this changed with the arrival of Teresa and John, and after their contributions, says Poulain in his classic summary of the Catholic spiritual tradition, virtually nothing of essential import has been added to the completeness of their understanding. Among great Catholic thinkers of the present day, J. Maritain is perhaps the most outspoken champion of John's greatness and normativeness, making clear why John is often called the Mystical Doctor:

The doctrine of St. John of the Cross is the pure Catholic doctrine of the mystical life (quoted in de Bruno:xxiii).

Why is it that one does not see that it is essentially the same doctrine...in the perspective of the practical science of the spiritual life, [that] was taught...by S. Thomas and S. Bonaventure in the perspective of theology?.... By what blindness does one fail to recognize the testimony given by saints and spiritual writers, all through the Christian centuries, to that very experience of the depths of God whose states and degrees S. Teresa and S. John of the Cross only succeeded in describing in a more analytical and more explicit manner? (Maritain, 1960:71).

The reason for Maritain's rhetorical questions is that even twenty years ago some of the odium attached to John's name had still not been disengaged. John's psychological stress on emptiness and nothingness (Sp. nada) had earned him the ridiculous title Doctor of Nada. In his own life-span, the depth of his interest in contemplation and the insistence with which he called for it, got him into trouble. With the intensification of the inquisition in Spain around 1586, suspicion was cast on "illuminist" books. Though John was clearly critical of "illuminations" and all other pseudo-mystical phenomena professed by the Illuminists of his day (Brenan:16-25), he nevertheless became suspect. For his part in Teresa's Carmelite reform movement, he tasted further persecution, including a horrible prison experience. Other political turmoil within the Carmelites, in addition to all of the above, placed him, by the time of his death in 1591, in disrepute. His works, in fact, were not published openly until 1618 after an investigation by the Holy See testified to his orthodoxy. Over the centuries, however, both his originality and his orthodoxy have stood the test of time and in 1926 Pope Pius XI proclaimed him Doctor of the Church Universal.

The first fruits of John's student pen were corrections of certain errors made in regard to contemplation. Throughout his life, his intellectual abilities remained under the aegis of religious praxis and "perhaps no one ever had a vocation which drew him so irresistibly" (Brenan:83).

Until the time of his death John remained a devoted practitioner of contemplative prayer and a tireless guide of souls, though his life was hardly one of uninterrupted quietude. Through his biographers (Brenan, 1973; Christani, 1962; Crisogono, 1958; Peers, 1954, 1964) we glimpse a man who was on occasion overly pious or unnecessarily severe, yet the prevailing impression is that of a deeply compassionate man, tender in his care for others and in his own heart full of mystical passion. Contemplative teacher and writer Rev. W. McNamara says that he "know(s) of no one who, following Christ, has paved and marked the Way into the center more effectively and surely than John of the Cross" (1975:410). In addition to all this he was, in literary scholar Brennan's opinion, one of the greatest lyric poets of his or any century (3).

To form a just appreciation of most historical figures it is necessary to see them against the background and within the context of the time in which they lived and which colored and determined them. There are, of course, exceptions to the rule and, says Bede Frost, none more striking than John of the Cross. Though living in one of the greatest centuries of the Christian era and in the very center of greatness, "he plays no part, humanly speaking, in that immense and stirring drama." John was rather, a pilgrim of eternity, a man drawn irresistibly inward in his search for the reality of the Deathless.

O my God when will it be?
The time when I can say for sure
At last I live: I die no more /3/.

b. Dōgen

More than any other religious figure in Japanese history...Dōgen has evoked attention and admiration in modern times.... All schools venerate him as a bodhisattva.... Philosophers derive inspiration from the "incomparable depth of his thinking"/4/...the embodiment of the best elements of the Japanese genius.... The crucial element [in his writings] is his religious intuition, deeply convincing in its authenticity.... He belongs to the great creative figures of mankind (Dumoulin:151).

Dōgen was born in the year 1200. We know little of his family background and our record of him begins in 1213, the year of his entrance into Buddhist monastic life on Mt. Hiei near Kyoto. Though Zen had reached the Japanese mainland some two to three hundred years before, it had not yet become a major movement (Earhart:66), and Dōgen's early training was Tendai, the dominant sect of those clustered on Mt. Hiei.

Spiritually restless and dissatisfied by what he perceived as lack of depth in the teachings, the youthful Dōgen left Hiei after a year and spent the next two or three years visiting Buddhist teachers in various parts of the country. Later in life he would speak of these times as a regrettable mismatch between his profound yearning for Buddhahood and the questionable authenticity of his Japanese teachers. His adult teaching mission was to be characterized by an uncompromising critique of contemporary Buddhist 'sects' in an effort to propagate in Japan a truly authentic Dharma Way,

firmly based in contemplative discipline.

The first truly important and influential figure in the development of Japanese Zen was Myōan Eisai. Born sixty years before Dōgen, Eisai, too, received his monastic initiation on Mt. Hiei but found contemporary forms of Buddhism lacking. His own quest for true Buddhism drew him toward India, though China marked the bounds of his westward progress. There he came under the influence of a Lin-chi (Rinzai) sect of Ch'an and received comprehensive training. His return to Japan, with the Ch'an Dharma lineage, marked the formal birth of Japanese Zen Buddhism.

Around the time of Eisai's death in 1215, Dōgen entered the Kyoto Zen temple of Kennin-ji, over which Eisai had been presiding. Dōgen's own writings never mention a personal meeting with Eisai even though Soto historians have often stated that Dōgen received personal instruction from him (Waddell, October 1977:105). In any case, it was at Kennin-ji where Dōgen's dissatisfaction with domestic Buddhism confronted the splendid example of Eisai's two trips to China (trips across the China Sea were rough and rare) and created in him the desire to seek true Buddhism in the land of the Ch'an Patriarchs.

Dōgen's fateful trip did not take place, however, until 1223. In the intervening years, he remained at Kennin-ji practicing the koan Zen of the Rinzai (Lin-chi) lineage under Eisai's successor, Butsujōbō Myōzen. Dōgen's first two years in China also were spent under the aegis of the

Lin-chi sect. But in 1225, Dōgen began his two year tenure under the Ts'ao-t'ung (Soto) Master Ju-ching, and it proved to be decisive. Early on, Dōgen came to an enlightenment experience. The rest of his life would be spent deepening his insight and sharing it with others.

Ju-ching was everything Dōgen could have wanted in a teacher. Traditionally, the Lin-chi lineage was critical of the Ts'ao-t'ung for its contemplative piety. When Dōgen arrived in China, however, his uncompromising religious nature was often shocked by the laxity in the Lin-chi monasteries; zazen practice was often quite casual (Waddell, October 1977:109). At the time Dōgen met him, Ju-ching was the leading representative of the Ts'ao-t'ung lineage in China, admired throughout the country for his deep devotion to Buddhism and the strict training he gave to those in his care. Because his own training had included instruction in the koan (Waddell, October 1977:112), it seems that his virulent criticism of the Lin-chi schools was not motivated by sectarian considerations. Rather, the only question for Ju-ching was the depth of commitment of religious practice, a quality he apparently felt contemporary Lin-chi lacked.

It is said that Ju-ching had a "veritable passion for zazen (Waddell, October 1977:112). "Though in his sixties he sat with his students every night until eleven o'clock and then awoke at two-thirty or three and sat again until morning" (Waddell, October 1977:113). The passion, it seems, was contagious. When Dōgen returned to Japan, the nucleus

of his Zen ministry became a tireless exhortation to zazen, most clearly evidenced in his Shōbōgenzō zuimonki (Masunaga, 1971). Laced between all of Dōgen's subtle turns of phrase and philosophic insight, are constant urgings to the quiet contemplation of shikantaza, the liberating core of Buddhist praxis, without which conceptual subtleties were but seeds sown on uncultivated ground. Like his master, Dōgen warns that one should not argue the superiority or inferiority of doctrine, for what truly matters is the depth and authenticity of practice (Dōgen's Bendōwa in Waddell and Abe, May 1971:140).

In 1227, in the season of the cherry blossoms, Dōgen returned to Japan with Ju-ching's Certification of Transmission. It verified that he was "fully conversant with the authentic realization of the buddhas and patriarchs," Ju-ching's Dharma heir and the 51st patriarch of the Ts'ao-t'ung line in direct descent from Sakyamuni Buddha. Neither Eisai nor his predecessors had been granted this accolade. Dōgen was the first Japanese monk of any line to be so honored (Waddell, October 1977:114-115).

"As soon as I arrived [back in Japan]," writes Dōgen, "I vowed to spread the Dharma for the salvation of all beings; it was like carrying a heavy burden on my shoulders" (Dōgen's Bendōwa in Waddell and Abe, May 1971:130-131). Given the state of Japanese Buddhism, Dōgen's profound experience built atop an already uncompromising nature, karmically cast him into the role of a reformer. This did

not sit well with those on the receiving end. Pressured by those in power to change his ways or soften his approach, Dōgen chose exile rather than capitulation (DeBary:359). By the time of Dōgen's death in 1253, the Soto 'sect'--Dōgen's teaching--had begun to flourish. However, it was not until a few generations later, with Keizan Zenji (b. 1267), that Dōgen's teaching began to be accepted throughout Japan.

In one of his sermons (Cyōji, Cook, 1978:196) Dōgen quotes Zen master Huai-jang with approval:

Though you may talk about the realm of great enlightenment, words cannot reveal reality, for language is just concepts. The realm of great enlightenment is real; it is experience. That realm was acquired for the first time [by Sakyamuni] after eight years of continuous practice.

"Continuous practice," Dōgen goes on to say, is what we all should aspire to. And if anything becomes clear in studying Dōgen, it is his own dedication to such continuous and all-inclusive practice. His conceptual upaya--striking, unique, catalytic--remains, by his own admission, secondary. Even his critique of existing forms of Japanese Buddhism cannot obscure his more fundamental traditionalism. His own self-image is plain: a link in the long chain of Truth-transmission that began with Sakyamuni and continued with the Chinese Patriarchs. Consequently, our primary involvement has not been with Dōgen the philosophical thinker but with Dōgen the religious doer. We seek his beauty, and

thereby Zen's, not primarily in his conceptualizations, but in the existential commitment of his whole bodymind to the heroic religious project: entering the realm of great enlightenment, "acquiring the essence" (Raihai Tokozui, Cook: 148), willing to cast off body and mind for the emancipation of all sentient beings.

II. The Context of Contemplative Practice

Fecisti nos ad te, et inquietem est cor nostrum,
donec requiescat in te. (For you have made us
for yourself, and our heart is anxious until it
finds rest in you.)

Augustine

In what concept are you abiding in the fullness
thereof, Sariputra?
In the fullness of Emptiness, Lord.

Majjhima-nikaya III, 294

1. ESSENCE AND REALIZATION IN JOHN AND DÖGEN

a. John of the Cross

"Union of the soul with God" is the theme of John's four major writings. He distinguishes two modes of this union, calling the first "substantial", "natural" or "essential" union, and the second "supernatural" union. The former is ontically given, the latter is acquired through psychological transformation. In John's words:

...In discussing union with God, we are not discussing the substantial union which is always existing, but the union and transformation of the soul in God. This union is not always existing, but we find it only where there is a likeness of love.... [It] exists when God's will and the soul's are in conformity.... When the soul rids itself of what is unconformed to the divine will, it rests transformed in God through love (A2,5,3).

Essential union, then, is the union all souls enjoy by the very fact that they are. God, qua Being, preserves his creatures in their being; all manifestation shares the life of its Principle and in this way is united to It:

...God sustains every soul and dwells in it substantially, even though it may be that of the greatest sinner in the world. This union between God and creatures always exists. By it He conserves their being so that if the union would end they would immediately be annihilated and cease to exist (A2,5,3).

...her [the soul's] life is radically and naturally centered in God, like that of all created things, centered in God, as St. Paul says: In Him we live and move and are. [Acts 17:28]. This was like saying: In God we have our life and our movement and our being. (C8,4; c.f. C38,8; F4,5,7).

By contrast, "supernatural union" is John's term for conscious realization of essential union. Supernatural union actualizes in conscious life what is naturally given in being. It adds nothing to essential union. The prefix "super" refers solely to John's belief in the presence of a Cosmic Complicity in the process of transformation. Supernatural union, then, is conscious realization of and lived participation in the union which, though eternally present, is ordinarily not conscious.

John never considers the possibility of losing the essential union; damnation is not a theme of his writings. As is common with contemplatives, his religious message partakes little of the rhetoric of salvation. He is more concerned with a fuller appreciation of God's dynamic presencing as Love. The primary concern of his contemplative way is to meet That Ontological Presencing with a consciousness sufficiently receptive to it: to meet God's Love with Love of God. For John, the evolution of "love" stands for a deep transformation of human intentionality which touches psychological structure at its root and turns it toward the Principle as the only adequate object of its energy.

b. Dōgen

In Dōgen, we readily find the same double relationship to the ontological Principle. Essential and supernatural unions with God are formally paralleled by unrealized and realized Buddha-nature. Dōgen puts the parallel into a pithy statement: "Although this Dharma/5/ is amply present in every person, unless one practices, it is not manifested; unless there is realization, it is not attained" (Dōgen's Bendōwa in Waddell and Abe, May 1971:129).

Buddha-nature is what all beings have--or are--by birthright; but to taste the fruit of this ontic inheritance, a certain realization must occur, a certain blindness be overcome:

The Way is basically perfect and all-pervading. How could it be contingent upon practice and realization?... And yet, if there is the slightest discrepancy, The Way is as distant as heaven from earth. If the least like or dislike arises, the Mind is lost in confusion.... You should therefore cease from practice based on intellectual understanding, pursuing words and following after speech, and learn the backward step that turns your light inward to illumine yourself (Dōgen's Fukanzazengi in Waddell and Abe, October 1973:121-122).

In Dōgen's view, entrance to the Dharma is sought for the benefit of all living beings. The practice of dropping off body and mind is a means for developing that quality of mind which fully and spontaneously intends such benefit. "Benefitting living beings," says Dōgen, "means causing

living beings to arouse the thought of emancipating all others even before he himself is emancipated. We cannot become Buddhas in any other way than through the power of causing this thought [intention] in others" (Dōgen's Hotsu bodai shin in Cook:43). Dōgen sees the evolution--indeed the universal circulation--of bodhisattvic compassion as the most encompassing horizon for the understanding and practice of the Buddha Way. Arousing and communicating the "thought of enlightenment", the "awakening of faith" and "dropping off mind and body" are some of the many ways Dōgen perceives and articulates the deep transformation of human intentionality, and with it the whole psychological structure, by which each living being, like a bright pearl, radiates its compassionate nature to others (Cook:35).

Though "God" and "Dharma" suggest quite different universes of discourse, we shall attempt only to focus our gaze on the similarity of response that these signifiers of an immanent-yet-unrealized Reality evoke in the contemplative aspirant. The important point about the foregoing is thus a structural one. To use the most general terms: Both John and Dōgen are interested in a discipline whereby what is potential in the human being becomes actual.

2. COSMIC COMPLICITY

In contexts where the value of yogic or contemplative effort is presupposed, the question of grace comes down to whether or not some aspect of the nature of things can be said to assist that effort. In Christianity's case the answer is obvious; the notion of grace is so ubiquitous that those who have sought to argue Christian mysticism's difference from or superiority to all others, have used it as their trump. By comparison, Zen's notion of grace is extremely subtle and at times all but invisible. Yet the difference between the Christian and Zen contemplatives on this matter is not absolute; it is relative, negotiable (H. Smith, October 1977:142). After a brief glance at John's sense of cosmic complicity in the contemplative effort our question for Dōgen and Zen will be: Does the Dharma assist the quest for Enlightenment?

a. John of the Cross

Pseudo-Dionysus, whose writings set the guidelines for a millenium of Christian mystical theology, writes in The Divine Names:

...we press upwards to those beams...wherefrom we gain the light which leads us.... Thus do we learn that It is the Cause and Origin and Being and Life of all creation...an upward Guidance to them that are being drawn unto It.... (Rolt:54-56).

These words capture well the ontic current to which John of the Cross, the Aeropagite's spiritual descendant, testifies. The aspirant's transformation is possible only because there is a gravitational invitation from God to the soul written into the fabric and flow of reality. John teaches that,

It should be known that if a person is seeking God, his Beloved is seeking him much more....
(F3,28)

God, like the sun, stands above souls ready to communicate Himself....(F3,47)

...When the soul...attains to emptiness...it is impossible that God fail to do his part by communicating Himself to it....(F3,46)

John's stress on the attitude of nada or emptiness reminds us that that ontic invitation is most properly responded to not in a gesture of addition by the supplicating consciousness, but rather one of subtraction: an undoing of mental activity so that the Activity of the Principle may proceed unimpeded in the human psyche.

In this solitude, away from all things, the soul is alone with God and He guides, moves and raises her to divine things.... Once the soul disencumbers these faculties and empties them of everything inferior and of attachment to even superior things...God engages them in the invisible and the divine (C35,5; cf. F3,38,50-1,28,46-7, and A3,2,8).

Such utterances suggest that John's sense of grace was not that of a bauble intermittently dispensed by a fickle God, but that of a gift with which reality is permeated. The nature of things is graceful and we need but a certain awakening to be fully conscious of it. John, it seems would subscribe to Ramakrishna's famous formula, "The winds of grace are always blowing; it is for us to raise our sails." Do Dōgen and his tradition exhibit a similar attitude toward the Buddha Way?

b. Dōgen and Zen

There is a saying in Zen which runs, "Sitting, only sitting, and the grass grows green by itself." Though these words are especially applicable to Dōgen's shikantaza, let them take us back for a moment to the very birth of Chinese Buddhism, to the days of the ko-i /6/, when the first great translators of Sanskrit Mahayana discourses into Chinese unhesitatingly exchanged the words Dharma and Tao. If the grass grows green by itself, it is because the great, inscrutable Tao has deemed it so. It is because the grass' natural greening is one aspect of its irresistible Will. The Tao was always more to the ancient Chinese than merely a naturalistic principle of order and procession. It was a creative metaphysical Field, embracing each one of us, a Power with which one could align oneself. As Lao Tzu tells of it,

The Way is like an empty vessel
 That yet may be drawn from
 Without ever needing to be filled....
 It is like a deep pool that never dries.... (IV)
 A force that though rarified
 Is none the less efficacious
 It is there within us all the while;
 Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry. (VI)
 (Waley:146, 170, 149)

Some 600 years after Buddhism had first been planted in China's earth, perhaps 1500 years after Lao Tzu had spoken the words above, we hear Master Liang-chieh of Tung-shan, co-founder of the Ts'ao-t'ung sect of Ch'an Buddhism--progenitor of Soto Zen--speaking of the Buddhist Dharma in much the same manner:

Such is the Dharma
 Inherited from the Buddhas and Patriarchs
 Though its aim lies beyond (all) words
 It is responsive to inquiring seekers....
 Being a pattern for the living
 Its function saves them from miseries....
 (Luk:149)

In a text called Hokyōzammai, often recited in Soto temples, the same Liang-chieh reminds us that

Supreme Mind
 In words can never be expressed, and yet
 To all the trainees needs it does respond
 (Masunaga:190)

Even in Theravada meditative practice, the heart of Buddhist self-reliance, a teacher of ours has repeatedly

counseled: "Your job is to pay attention. Maintain choiceless evenness of the mind. Let the Dhamma do the rest!"

The concept of special grace dispensed by a Supreme Being, though present in popular Buddhism, is, of course, ignored by Zen and Theravada alike. But to conclude that a sense of cosmic complicity in the aspirant's quest for enlightenment is therefore absent is surely a misreading. If grace goes largely unproclaimed in Zen it is because the fish does not think to comment upon the ocean. Far closer to the truth than the notion that grace is absent, is that it is always and everywhere present. One of Zen's laments is that we remain blind to the graceful immanence of the Buddha-nature, failing to draw on its Power, failing to see reality as it is by refusing to work on our habitually inattentive mode of ordinary consciousness.

If we take seriously the Buddhist teaching, unanimous in all its fundamental forms, of the illusory character of the human claim to selfhood, we understand at once that the Buddhist's goal, whatever it may be called, cannot be a passive object awaiting our laying hold of it. Because Enlightenment is in the deepest sense who and what we are, it is the source of our aspiration toward it as well as our capacity for faith in it. It is the subject of our quest as well as its ostensible object. This paradox is but the non-dualistic way of expressing a common contemplative intuition. In John's unabashed dualistic language: "If you are seeking the Beloved, indeed He is seeking thee much more."

In Dōgen's own writings we find further confirmation of this point. Often he speaks as if the essence of Zen lay not at all in jiriki, "self-power", but in tariki, "other-power":

When you let go of your mind and body and forget them completely, when you throw yourself into Buddha's abode, when everything is done by the Buddha, when you follow the Buddha Mind without effort or anxiety--you break free from life's suffering and become the Buddha (Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō Shōji, Masunaga, 1958:99).

Dōgen scholar Francis Cook is unequivocal in his agreement. "In the final analysis," writes Cook, "this event (the thought of Enlightenment) is the determination of the Buddha to realize himself through us (35). Dōgen's Zen," he says, "is not really Buddhism of self power...it is the Buddhism of other power.... His life was spent teaching a Buddhism of faith in the power of the Other, who is the Buddha" (28, 30). Dōgen proclaims that "through their boundless love the Buddhas and Patriarchs have flung open the vast gate of compassion for all beings" (Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō Shushōgi, in Masunaga, 1958:173). In his Bendōwa, he speaks of the realm in which Enlightenment abides as a "realm free of human agency" (Waddell and Abe, May 1971:138, 144). In Shōbōgenzō Gyōji, Dōgen speaks of the "Enlightenment which embraces all sentient beings" (DeBary:678).

Though we are innately of the nature of Buddha we must, nevertheless, in Dōgen's view, strive to realize this fact in its fullness. Yet perhaps more emphatically than in any other Buddhist view, Dōgen's sense of practice may be likened to the reception of an omnipresent Gift, rather than the attainment of a distant goal. This is apparent in Dōgen's notion of the identity of practice and enlightenment, the basis of admonitions like the following:

"Just to pass the time in sitting straight, without any thought of acquisition, without any sense of achieving enlightenment--this is the way of the patriarchs.... Truly the merit lies in the sitting" (Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki, in DeBary:370).

"Attainment of the Way is...achieved through the body as well as the mind.... To do away with mental deliberation and cognition, and simply go on sitting, is the method by which the Way is made an intimate part of our lives...." (loc. cit.).

The practice of "simply go on sitting", Dōgen calls shikantaza. In his own day, Dōgen reacted against what he perceived to be Rinzai's preoccupation with the momentary experience of enlightenment. He criticized the koan method as being directed too much toward "obtaining one thing". These practices, he felt, put too great a stress on intellection and not enough on the psychological transformation of the whole man in all his faculties. For this reason, Dōgen tirelessly encouraged the practice of zazen or "just sitting" without any thought of acquisition or attainment.

Though the actual experience of kenshō or satori could only be "sudden", it was, by the same token, momentary. The transformation of being which made it possible to live as a bodhisattva in the operative order was gradual, the life-long maturation of the whole man.

Zazen is, of course, the chief means of this gradual transformation. Since it is a non-activity of mind, or a letting-go of ordinary activity, there would seem to be a 'force' within emptiness which produces psychic maturation, a voidness nevertheless fertile. Dōgen calls this fertile quality of reality, zenki, which is rendered by his translators as "total dynamic working" (Waddell and Abe, May 1972: 70-80). Though Waddell and Abe admit that the precise nuance of the Japanese is untranslatable, they break zenki down into its component characters: "Zen means complete, a totality encompassing the entire universe with nothing excluded, and ki covers such significances as motive power, spring trigger, mechanism, opportunity." Thus zenki would seem to refer to ultimate reality conceived under the aspect of dynamism, apparently akin to pratitya-samutpada.

If we allow ourselves to slip into dualistic language, we may think of zenki as that which orders and transforms all things in accordance with Dharmic Will. The aspirant's chief task is, by means of zazen, to merge with this activity of the Real in the same way that a trickle of water finds confluence with a larger river. "The man in zazen," says Dōgen,

conforms totally in himself to the genuine Buddha-Dharma, and assists universally in performing the work of the Buddhas...circulating the inexhaustible, unceasing, incomprehensible, and immeasurable Buddha-Dharma inside and outside throughout the universe.... (This unperceived mutual assistance occurs) in the stillness of samadhi beyond human artifice, and is in itself realization (Dōgen's Bendōwa, Waddell and Abe, May 1971:134-35. Brackets belong to the translator.)

And, says Dōgen in the same writing:

...the principle of realization...function(s) unceasingly. Because of this, when even just one person, at one time, sits in zazen, he is performing the eternal and ceaseless work of guiding beings to enlightenment (136-37).

It is because one participates in essential cosmic activity (e.g. Buddha-tathagathas transmitting wondrous Dharma) when doing zazen that Dōgen calls the latter jiujyu-samadhi or the "samadhi of self-fulfilling activity" (Kim:68). Such samadhi is the sine qua non of our whole transformation in Buddha-nature. Thus did Dōgen stress practice rather than doctrine as that most worthy of the aspirant's attention:

For a Buddhist it is not a matter of debating the superiority or inferiority of a teaching... or of choosing the depth or superficiality of a teaching that matters; all we have to know is whether the practice is authentic or not (Dōgen's Bendōwa in Waddell and Abe, May 1971: 140).

The eight centuries that have passed between Dōgen and the late contemporary roshi Shunryu Suzuki have left this aspect of the teaching remarkably intact. Stressing both the importance of practice and the receptivity which allows reality to meet us halfway in our effort, Suzuki Roshi teaches that,

When you sit with your whole body and mind, and with the oneness of your mind and body under the control of the universal mind, you can easily attain this kind of right understanding (58).

Do not think about anything. Just remain on your cushion without expecting anything. Thus eventually you will resume your own true nature. That is to say, your own true nature resumes itself (49).

...the purpose of studying Buddhism is to study ourselves and to forget ourselves. When we forget ourselves, we actually are the true activity of the big existence, or reality itself.... The purpose of our practice is to be aware of this fact (79).

If the passages examined in the foregoing pages are representative for Dōgen and Soto Zen, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the Zen mind in transformation possesses an underlying sense of a cosmic complicity in the effort of self-awakening. Such sensibility violates neither Zen's sense of the impersonal nature of that complicity, nor its fundamental non-dualism: For the self which awakens discovers in some unimaginably total way, that it never was and that only Thusness is.

3. MORAL PURITY AND ASCETICISM

Taming the mind is not a simple task. To do so the aspirant must gradually acquire a certain psychological resilience, a growing strength in concentrative ability and an increasing freedom from his/her innumerable, automatic habit-reflexes. Periods of intensive interior work are, of course, designed to bring about such changes. But the interior work itself, this "deep and delicate listening", can hardly be begun or cannot progress very far without support from a larger behavioral context. For this reason, contemplative traditions have univocally favored a life of moral purity, complemented by some degree of asceticism or denial of natural appetites.

It is not difficult to demonstrate the moral purificatory element in John's contemplative Christianity and Dōgen's Zen, and this we shall do in brief compass. Neither is it difficult to show the ascetical element in both John and Dōgen, yet in this case the differences are more than minor and we are forced to consider their import. For in Soto practice, asceticism is almost uniformly subtle while in John it seems to verge on the gross. Unmitigated, this tension might throw into question our postulate of fundamental similarity in contemplative style. The antagonistic body/spirit dualism which John's utterances often reveal seems to stand in sharp contrast to the non-dualistic climate of Zen praxis. Below we shall attempt to soften this

apparent opposition. Knowing full well that it cannot be completely dissipated, we may however be successful in suggesting that the difference is less stark than one might normally suppose in this, a matter which is, in any case, circumstantial.

a. Moral Purification in John and Dōgen

It has been asserted widely that in the realm of contemplative praxis, moral purification is the first and most indispensable step, as well as constant companion, on the journey which leads to an integrated and unfettered interior life. Certainly this is true of John of the Cross. Biblical law and the practice of simple virtue are the unchanging background of John's writings, so unchanging in fact, that they are taken for granted. So concerned is John with the technical contemplative problem of moving from imaged meditation to imageless contemplation and with a psychological treatment of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity in the context of the via negativa, that the issue of moral purification, though everywhere apparent, is never directly addressed. Suffice it to say that for John's contemplative way a basic effort of the will to abstain from things unlawful and the cultivation of virtue under the aspects of Biblical Law, are the prerequisites for all further progress.

Our appreciation of Dōgen's attitude toward moral purification is heightened by an initial glance at the beginnings

of the Buddhist tradition. There, moral purity is spoken of not only as a good in itself but an essential aspect of the Eightfold Path and the indispensable basis for progress in mental culture. Without it, the deepening of dhyana and the awakening of prajna are deemed impossible. The late Theravadin meditation master, Mahasi Sayadaw, affirms that "the purification of conduct [is] the essential preliminary step towards the proper development of concentration" (1). A contemporary Mahayana monk and scholar is of the same opinion: "Attempting the practice of meditation without first having purified one's morality is like seizing the oars of a boat and trying to row before one has unhooked the hawser" (Sangharakshita:145).

Is the same stress on sila found within the Soto school of Zen? It could hardly be otherwise (Gomez, 1973; Brear, 1974). Zen is a flower of the Mahayana, a tradition whose ideal is the bodhisattva. Six perfections are traditionally ascribed to the bodhisattva, the second of which is morality/7/. Dōgen, himself, was a rather strict traditional disciplinarian. Where admonitions to simple virtue often are lost sight of in the light of the exquisite paradoxes of Mahayana wisdom, Dōgen, by contrast, considered them to be part of wisdom's core. The following admonition is taken from his Shōbōgenzō Taitaikoho (Rules for Junior Priests). It follows an enumeration of sixty-two rules of conduct for the meditation hall:

The foregoing code of behavior represents the True Body and Mind of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs. If you do not realize this to the full, the Pure Law will disappear.... Only those who have done good works in former existences will be able to comprehend the value of this behavioral code; it is the very perfection of the Mahayana (Kennet:76).

Jiyu Kennet, a contemporary Soto Roshi, underscores the words of her great predecessor and, in so doing, affirms that willed morality and spontaneous ethics are, respectively the seed and flower of the Buddhist way:

...the sixth stage of [Zen] study [is] the study of the Precepts...the other five stages being used to bring the trainee to a fit stage of mind for studying them.... When a trainee first comes to the temple, he knows the Ten Precepts...only in his brain and not deeply in his blood and bones.... By the time the trainee has undergone the strict moral training of the temple for several years, his character is beyond reproach...and he keeps the Precepts because it is his nature to do so.... When the teacher sees that the pupil has made the Buddhist moral code his natural way of life, he knows that the latter has finally taken the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for refuge in the true meaning of the words.... One has to live Buddhism to be Buddhist and to do this the Precepts must flow through one's veins as the very life-blood (Kennet:52-53).

b. Dōgen and Buddhist Asceticism

One of the reasons the Buddha's Middle Path is so named is its opposition to both the brutalization of the senses and their indulgence. In traditions that spawn some sort of

asceticism, brutalization seems to occur whenever that ascetical means is, to one degree or another, treated as an end. The occasion for this error is usually the presupposition that mind and body are substantially distinct and that for one to be victorious the other must be ravaged. The Buddhist tradition tells us that at one point just previous to his Enlightenment, Gautama was so weak from the practice of physical austerities as to be close to death. A bowl of fresh milk offered to him by a passerby gave him the strength necessary to resume his efforts and reach Nirvana. The story teaches the coinherence of mind and body, that they are interdependent aspects of a single process. The psychological wisdom behind the Buddha's middle way in regard to asceticism is obvious: the appetites should be subdued, the sense door guarded (Majjhima-nikaya, 38), only to the extent that their restraint can contribute to the ultimate psychosomatic art of contemplation. Negative preoccupation with the body is the usurpation of the end by the means. From a psychological viewpoint it is counterproductive.

As balanced as the Buddha's teaching was in this respect, early Buddhist praxis when placed side by side with Zen still seems quite anti-sensual (Conze, 1956:78-106). Depending on one's perspective, Zen either lacks or has outgrown the anti-sensual tone of many spiritualities. It never invites misinterpretation as world- or sense-negating. Yet it would be a mistake to think that Zen or any discipline concerned with the profound restructuring of

consciousness could dispense with some form of asceticism. On the contrary, Zen prescribes, albeit more subtly than Christianity, an emptying of the usual diet of the senses, fully aware of the role such emptying plays in the overall clarification of Mind.

Thus when Dōgen is speaking and writing mainly as Zen master and not as Zen philosopher, as for example in the Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki (Masunaga, 1971), we encounter various exhortations to Zen style ascesis. Dōgen encourages his monks to abide by the "eating regulations" (6), to endure a "tattered robe" and savorless food (17), and to bear up under general physical hardship, cold and hunger and mental agony (65). He inveighs against indecent and idle talk and in fact against all forms of dissipation that deflect one from singlemindedness on the Way (20-21, 34).

All of these practices, though important, merely sweep the path in anticipation of zazen, Dōgen's sine qua non of the Buddhist Way. We shall take a closer look at the psychological aspect of zazen in the latter part of this thesis, but let us now look briefly at its physical and ascetical aspects.

In the Fukanzazengi, Dōgen provides a set of instructions for the practice of zazen:

A quiet room is suitable. Eat and drink moderately. Cast aside all involvements and cease all affairs.... Cease all movements of the conscious mind.... Sit in the full or half-lotus position...in correct

bodily posture, neither inclining to the left or to the right, neither leaning forward nor backward. Be sure your ears are on a plane with your shoulders and your nose is in line with your navel. Place your tongue against the front roof of your mouth, with teeth and lips both shut. Your eyes should always remain open, and you should breathe gently through your nose (Waddell and Abe, October 1973:122-23).

When Dōgen asks his students to cast aside all involvements and cease all affairs he is referring to the general influx of the phenomenal world through our sense doors. To "bring to rest the ten thousand things" is to make a concerted effort to diminish the bombardment of the sense doors by environmental stimuli. Silence, then, is the first and most important aspect of the sensory emptying necessary for zazen.

Food and drink are taken in moderation so that the digestive processes steal neither attention nor energy from the contemplative work itself. Though most Zen teachers prescribe zazen with eyes open or half-open, those eyes are usually placed before a blank wall, or at the very least, a dimly lit room with a minimum of clutter. To face a room of objects or a pleasant outdoor scene would be to deliver the senses into the captivity of those objects.

Finally, the Zen practitioner is urged to sit abso-
lutely still, thus diminishing the onslaught of stimuli brought to the organism through movement. The tripod-based full lotus is acclaimed as the simplest and most relaxed

way to maintain a motionless yet attentive state. Physical stillness is the precondition for the "dropping off of body and mind," Dōgen's favorite description of artful zazen.

Though zazen is profoundly different from a hairshirt asceticism which involves the cultivation of pain, pain nevertheless enters in. As J. van de Wetering's Japanese master told him, "that pain is for ever...but it will bother you less as concentration improves" (150). Kapleau provides the ascetic rationale for such discomfort when he says that "zazen makes plain...that pain, when courageously accepted is a means to liberation in that it frees our natural sympathies and compassion even as it enables us to experience pleasure and joy in new depth and purity" (1965:160; cf. Suzuki, 1974:94).

The most pervasive form of Zen asceticism is the mindfulness one is asked to bring to even the most trivial daily activities. Anyone who has ever attempted to keep his/her mind focused on what is being done and only what is being done knows the immense, counter-habitual effort this requires. Though the following words were written but a handful of years ago, there is no reason to doubt that Zen practice in Dōgen's day encouraged the same singleminded attention to the various acts and routines of ordinary life. This is how Zennists "pray without ceasing":

But all meditation is not just sitting. If one places one's slippers correctly--and this is the first thing to be taught a new-comer to a temple--it becomes a form of meditation. The small ceremony performed by oneself prior to bathing has the same purpose.... All washing must be done...in a special position.... All bathing, like everything else, is done in silence.... [Regarding] the use of the lavatory...a special position of the body must be used, not the conventional one, so as to remind one that all habits of mind and body must be changed completely if one is to understand the truth of Zen. One must make no noise in walking, and stand and sit in attitudes that are neither arrogant nor disrespectful to others. One must sleep on one's right side, with one's head on a meditation cushion.... When eating is over--and it must be done in silence--...the bowls are polished clean.... The housework must be done in the same spirit.... The garden is cleaned and tended in the same way.... Thus every aspect of life is made into a meditation on how to think of others and purify oneself (Kennet:32-34).

C. John and Christian Asceticism

"The spirituality of the prophets from Amos and Hosea to Jesus Christ," writes Matthew Fox,

was a sensual spirituality. None called for a 'mortification of the senses' but for a sharing of the Creator's gifts. The prophets needed the sensual both for their own enrichment and, as a taste of the visions they entertained for the people of God (1976:6)

Fox's words, of course, are written in reaction to the fact that the sensual has long since disappeared from Christian spirituality. The fault is not that of Jesus who

balanced his negative pronouncements on the body with a Semitic earthiness in both speech and act. Part of the blame lies, perhaps, with Paul and certainly much more can be laid on the Zeitgeist of the second and third centuries of the Roman Empire, a time when Christianity was still forging its own identity within pagan culture and amid gnostic, Manichean and neoplatonic influences. E.R. Dodds has written that "contempt for the human condition and hatred of the body was a disease endemic in the entire culture of the period" (35). When a single scapegoat is sought, the onus usually falls upon Augustine. The fourth century saint combined a religious genius of the first order with what is to the modern mind an embarrassingly backward attitude toward the body. An ineradicable tension between body and spirit was thus stamped on Christian praxis and led, at its worst, to the pathological abuses of the desert and the abbey.

John of the Cross was enmeshed in the Augustinian ascetical tradition. A consideration of his own ascetical teaching must, however, be a balancing act. Mild pronouncements stand side by side with the unbalanced and the questionable. We shall look at this phenomenon presently, but an initial summary statement may correctly guide our approach: Though irredeemably dualistic in utterance, John of the Cross is rarely in danger of confusing "means" with "end" on the subject of asceticism. Ascetical practices are always an adjunct, an accompaniment. This fact alone separates him

from the more unfortunate cases of Christian asceticism.

Let us begin with the worst. In the Ascent we came upon the following passage, the tone of which is not infrequent in John's writings:

Inordinate appetites for the things of the world...damage...the beauty of the soul.... If we try to express how ugly and dirty is the imprint that the appetites leave in the soul we find nothing comparable to it--neither a place full of cobwebs and lizards... nor the filthiest thing imaginable in this life.... In an inordinate soul there is a deposit of as miserable a variety of filth and degradation as the variety of its appetites for creatures (Al,3,4).

If these words told the entire story they would indeed present a rather bleak image of John's spirituality. But much else in his writings suggests that such passages are moments of fire and brimstone. In fact, we begin to suspect that such enthusiastic pronouncements are for the benefit of novices who need to be shocked into doing what is good for them--a questionable technique, perhaps, but understandable.

Other attempts to balance some of John's more gruesome pronouncements have been made by European sanjuanist scholars E. Oroczo (1959) and G. Morel (1960). The latter insists that John's bark is worse than his bite, his abstract theory far more negative in tone than his actual praxis. Mallory (1977) counters this by citing stories from John's life. We learn that, as a student, John slept on boards using a log for a pillow, wore hairshirts and was once discovered to

have been wearing a chain around his waist, links embedded in his flesh, which when disengaged caused profuse bleeding (9).

G. Brennan (1973), however, invites us to place such incidents in perspective, perhaps as indicative of a youthful heroic enthusiasm. For Brennan informs us that some of John's most profound writing poured out not at a time when he was undergoing severe austerities but when he lived in relative ease and comfort, "one of the happiest period of his life" (42). His pastoral style, too, is telling. He often took monks in his charge out of the abbey into the open fields and sun-drenched hills, there to sit or lie in the grass to contemplate God and the beauties of creation. His living quarters at this time were a small, sparsely furnished room which nevertheless had one outstanding feature: an open view to magnificent Spanish countryside. In fact, John seemed to show a predilection for rooms with a wide view as this was not the only time he found one (Brennan:48).

It would seem, then, that all judgment on John relative to the issue of asceticism finally rests upon how one wishes to see him and how boldly one attempts to separate what is essential in John's contemplative praxis from what is less so. Mallory's (1977) recent empirical study of John of the Cross' teachings with fifty-four contemplative nuns of John's Discalced Carmelite Order is perhaps the vanguard of such attempts. Mallory's data suggest that dualistic body versus spirit ascesis is irrelevant to contemplative development (69). The living core and effective power of

John's teachings, she argues, resides in its via negativa contemplation and the practice of the theological virtues (69)--precisely those aspects we shall examine in part three of the present thesis.

Given these preparatory remarks, let us now offer our own view of John's ascetical teaching.

John expresses the foundational importance he attributes to some kind of asceticism with an agricultural analogy:

As the tilling of the soil is necessary for its fruitfulness...mortification...is a requisite for man's spiritual fruitfulness.... Without [it] all that a man does for the sake of...knowledge of God and himself is no more profitable than a seed sown on uncultivated ground (A1,8,4).

Later in the Ascent, John teaches that, "by guarding the senses, the gates of the soul, one decidedly safeguards and brings increase to one's peace and purity of soul" (A3,23,3). Though John's writings contain sterner exhortations, this gentle prescription is finally a truer characterization of his attitude toward the body. John does declare war on the body's tendencies: on the curiosity of the senses as soon as it threatens to dissolve the single-mindedness of contemplative life; on over-keen passions which distract the soul from its effort toward God; on enjoyment and comfort and all that tends to lull the soul to sleep; on all, in a word, that may loosen from below the integral connections of the interior life. But though he

is thorough and firm, John avoids fanaticism. He prescribes a "guarding of the senses," not their brutalization in harsh ascetic practice. Rarely does he seem to be in danger of considering ascetic practice to be an end in itself, of stressing penance to the detriment of love, or of oppressing nature without fortifying the spirit.

If physical austerity cannot touch the root of the problem, neither can artificial disconnection from the world:

We are not discussing the mere lack of things; this lack will not divest the soul if it [still] craves for these objects. We are dealing with the denudation of the soul's appetites and gratifications....
(Al,3,4,)

And it is not appetites as such that John attacks. Rather, he is concerned with their potential for breeding attachment and psychological bondage. Mortification "is what leaves them [the appetites] free and empty of all things even though it [the soul] possesses them" (Al,3,4). Scattered acts of different desires are not a serious obstacle; it is only the habitual appetites that must be transformed (Al,11,3). The problem thus lies in automatism, in the habit-patterns of the mind. John knows that simple starvation of these tendencies or, what is worse, a frenzied punishment inflicted upon sin's nearest occasion, the body, will do little to educate the senses, to restructure the

lines deeply etched in the body-mind. Neither sensation nor physicality are sin. Real sin stems from the uneducated will, easily deflected and dispersed by the community of cravings that vie for its attention:

Since the things of the world cannot enter the soul, they are not in themselves an encumbrance to or harm to it; rather, it is the will and appetite dwelling within them that causes the damage (A1,3,4).

The real theme of mortification, then, is non-attachment wherein consciousness is left, in John's own words, "free and empty...even though it possesses." This typifies John's awareness that all mortification of the flesh can at best be a gross analogue to the subtle "mortification" taking place in the psychic field. Seclusion and physical deprivation are merely gross--though in some measure indispensable--accompaniments to the work which must be carried out in the soul.

John's Christian asceticism, we would like to believe, is no more morbid nor final than that portrayed in Zen's second oxherding picture which is accompanied by the verse:

I am in possession of a straw rope, and
I pass it through his nose
For once he makes a frantic attempt to run away,
but he is severely whipped and whipped;
The beast resists the training with all
the power there is in nature wild and ungoverned
But the rustic oxherd never relaxes
his pulling tether and ever-ready whip
(Suzuki, 1960:136).

When training begins to bear fruit, the whip is discarded or at least laid aside. Ascesis is not forgotten but it ceases to be a dominant mode of action. The training which for John necessitates a guarding of the senses and a shunning of the world leads ultimately to a joyous return to creation as divine manifestation. The inordinate soul is not the soul which has appetites, but the soul whose appetites prevent it from seeing that the final referent of those appetites is God.

John is not interested in obliterating desire but in tuning it finely. The practice of non-attachment in the "sensory part of the soul" is the necessary prelude to the ultimate work of contemplative emptying in the "spiritual part of the soul". Both forms of apophysis work in unison until the soul is directed toward God alone. As progress is made, the root intentionality of the soul, like the bow of a ship, pulls the dynamic network of its faculties in unison toward this supreme object of desire. By remembering the principal Energy which enables all things to be and by directing his desire toward it, the contemplative begins to take spontaneous pleasure in its manifestations:

He obtains more joy and recreation in creatures through the dispossession of them. He cannot rejoice in them if he beholds them with possessiveness for this is a care which like a bond fastens the spirit to the earth and does not allow it freedom of heart (A3,20,4).

For John, love of God and love of Nature, love of the Principle and delight in its manifestation are not mutually exclusive. In fact, it is John's view that only a deep love of God, extending from the heart to the head and throughout the viscera, can free one for true delight in creation. When we read that "God so weans and recollects the appetites that they cannot find satisfaction in any other objects" (F3,22), we must remember that such statements are characteristic only of the preparatory ascetical 'stage'. We are correct in completing this sentence with the words, "but when love is grounded in God, the appetites find satisfaction, without attachment, in all their objects."

Without the total perspective gained through a study of John's entire corpus, his often morbid pronouncements on creatureliness in Dark Night of the Soul are prey to misunderstanding. In context, we may take them as representative of the first rough miles of the journey toward an increasingly vital celebration of creation and creatures:

Purged of imperfections and...clouds in the senses and spirit, she [the soul] feels a new spring, in spiritual freedom, breadth and gladness.... Such is the song of the soul in transformation that is hers in this life, the delight of which is beyond all exaggeration (C39,8,10).

Even though this happy night darkens the spirit...it does so only that he may reach out divinely to the enjoyment of all earthly and heavenly things with a general freedom of spirit in them all... (N2,9,1).

The Father did not merely beautify creatures partially, but...clothed them wholly in beauty and dignity (C5,4).

And here lies the remarkable delight of this awakening: the soul knows creatures through God and not God through creatures. In this movement it is the soul that is moved and awakened from the sleep of natural vision.... Hence it very adequately uses the term "awakening" (F4,5,6).

In these passages John's acceptance and joyous affirmation of creatureliness is unmistakable. They conclude our attempt to place the gloomy and matter-negating aspects of John's utterances in a larger frame, one that suggests those aspects to be of accidental rather than essential import. By the same token we hope we have mitigated, to some extent, the tension between the earthy spirituality of Dōgen and Zen and the Christian mysticism of St. John--at least to the extent that we can acknowledge their temperamental and cultural differences on this matter without letting it obfuscate or distract us from the central argument to follow.

III. Contemplation and Emptiness:
The Role of Attention

A warrior must be...impeccable and thoroughly empty before he could even conceive of witnessing the naqual....
To change our idea of the world is the crux of sorcery...and stopping the internal dialogue is the only way to accomplish it....
The rest of the activities are only props.

Castaneda's don Juan

Having examined some of its more important contextual aspects, we now propose to investigate the heart of the contemplative gesture. Let us first say a few words about that obvious metaphor.

When the heart ceases to function, the body dies. It is the sine qua non of the life process. The latter, of course, depends for its fullness upon numerous other functions of the organismic system. Thus the fullness of the Zen contemplative gesture, for example, includes the lotus posture and the intimate sanzen relationship with the master. If one assumes the lotus posture, however, without attending to the mental work, the life of the contemplative gesture will cease. Similarly, a person not engaged in zazen may visit a master for sanzen twice a day but it is doubtful that these meetings will bear much fruit. The master's role in sanzen, it seems, is comparable to that of any coach. He guides the effort and tries to derive the most from it. But the effort itself is the crucial thing and it is a solitary matter.

The heart of the contemplative gesture is something other than bodily posture, something other than the delicate relationship between aspirant and master. It is also something other than the mystical experience in which the gesture may result. All of these enfold the contemplative gesture, give it its particular identity and underscore its most unique or extraordinary aspects. But the psychological heart of the contemplative gesture has no culture, no

particular allegiance, just as the physical hearts of John and Dōgen and all men are virtually identical. In what follows, we shall argue that beneath the similes of purification and the metaphor of "emptying", beneath the practice of Christian contemplation and that of zazen, there lies, in John and Dōgen, a single strategy of the will. And the most important aspect of this strategy is the regular and methodical practice of non-discursive attention--the universal heart of the contemplative gesture.

It is important to remember that the practice of non-discursive attention is not some psychological common denominator that can be ripped from its particular religious contexts and still be practiced fruitfully. Practiced in such isolation it may indeed lead to some extraordinary mental experiences, even powers, that other aspects of contemplative discipline, practice in isolation, cannot produce. But mankind's contemplative gestures have evolved within religious frameworks that have deemed such powers and experiences beside the point. No, by focusing on this all important psychological gesture we do not mean to lose sight of the encompassing religio-ethical and symbolic context in which alone it can properly and fully function. If we take John and Dōgen as our prototypes we may say that the full fruition of the contemplative gesture demands a horizon of "love for all God's creatures" or "compassion for all sentient beings". Outside this profound ethical context the practice of non-discursive attention retains its status as

a powerful psychological tool, but becomes religiously insignificant. This fact should be remembered in all that follows.

Our investigation of the centrality of non-discursive attention will be divided into three parts: 1) The Contemplative Aspirant as a Consciousness-of-Objects; 2) The Metaphor of "Purification" and 3) Non-discursive Attention as Emptying.

1. THE CONTEMPLATIVE ASPIRANT AS A CONSCIOUSNESS-OF-OBJECTS

a. John of the Cross

In John's writings, "soul" is a general term for the psychological subject. The soul is both receptacle and agent in relation to the outer world of phenomena and the inner realm of the Holy Spirit. It is the pivot point of interaction with the world and with the ontological energy he calls God.

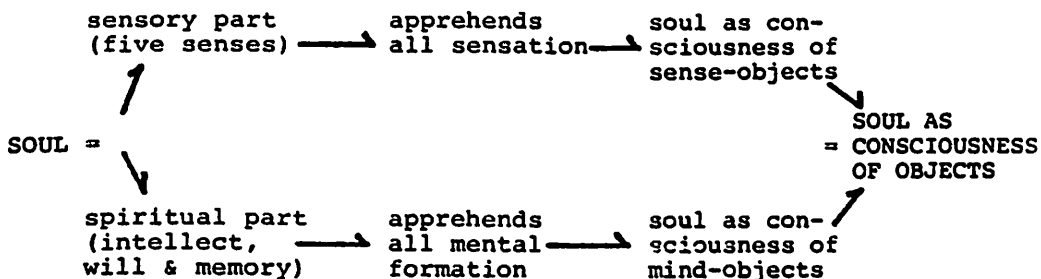
Following traditional Augustinian terminology, John divides the soul into two parts: the sensory part of the soul is the basis of the five senses, while the spiritual part of the soul is the seat of the three intellectual functions, intellection, will and memory /8/.

The soul, then, is the basis or medium of all apprehension, both exterior and interior. The exterior world comes to us through the senses and the data of the senses is consciously apprehended by the sensory part of the soul. When the evidence of the senses is chewed over by the intellect, summoned up by the memory or acted upon by the will, the objects of these intellectual functions are consciously apprehended by the spiritual part of the soul.

John recognizes that certain mentations arise spontaneously in consciousness. He says that our cognizance of the autonomy of such impressions can effect in us a greater degree of self-knowledge. But John does not have a theory of unconscious mentation nor does his method of self-discovery

suggest any systematic attempt to know the unconscious springs of thought and action. The cause of intramental phenomena such as visions or hallucinations John attributes to God or Devil. But even in such cases it is the conscious soul that sees the visions or undergoes hallucinations. Psychic phenomena join sense perceptions and thoughts as simply another class of data, more kinds of objects, consciously apprehended by the soul.

John's soul may thus be functionally described in terms of consciousness: soul is the consciousness of objects, both sensory and mental. This description remains the same regardless of the source of objects (exterior world or interior world of fantasy and conceptualization) and regardless of the objects' relative grossness or subtlety. The following diagram will help to clarify the point:



b. Dōgen and Zen

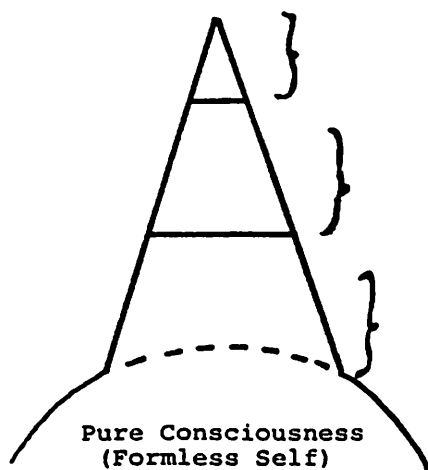
Traditional Buddhist psychology analyzes the individual into an ever-changing constellation of five aggregates or skandhas: form, feeling, perception, impulse and consciousness. Consciousness is thought of as the most important skandha, the one on which the others depend (Conze, 1962:108).

Consciousness is itself divided according to the sense organs of a human being. The Buddhists are unique in that in addition to the usual five sense organs, they posit a sixth sense organ, the mind. Thus, Buddhism speaks of empirical self-consciousness as a combination of five sense-consciousnesses and a mind-consciousness which apprehends sense objects and thought objects respectively.

The contemplative aspirant in Buddhism, therefore, may be functionally described as a consciousness of objects.

Such conceptual analysis, elementary as it may be, is rarely found in the writings of the Zen masters /9/ and, as far as we know, does not occur in the writings of Dōgen. When such an analysis is made in the name of Zen (Suzuki, 1968:169-200; Izutsu:73-74; Kapleau, 1965:327-28), its source and sanction is the Lankavatara Sutra and the Mind-only philosophy of the Yogacara School of Buddhism (Chang, 1971:182-184). The following diagram, stemming from the latter, is as close as one can come to a standard Zen analysis of consciousness. We notice that in addition to the six consciousnesses of the empirical subject, Yogacara, and with it Zen, adds two others, revealing their basic

intuition of the unconscious functioning of the mind. The positing of Pure Consciousness takes us beyond the empirical subject, from psychology to ontology, and indicates the general Mahayana tendency to ontologize consciousness (Kapleau, 1965:327).



Classes of Consciousness

1-6. Sight, sound, smell
taste, touch, intellect.

7. Manas (source of
persistent I-awareness;
functions as conveyor).

8. Alaya-vijnana
("seed" repository).

Since in actual Zen practice the subject is asked to attend only to that which is within the field of empirical consciousness, we are concerned only with that empirical, phenomenal consciousness. The contemplative aspirant in Zen may, therefore, be understood as a composite of six consciousnesses, reducible to the general formula "consciousness of objects."

2. THE METAPHOR OF PURIFICATION

a. John of the Cross

"Everything is received according to the mode of the receiver." John of the Cross quotes this Thomistic standard three times in his writings (N1,4,2; N2,16,4; F3,34) and leaves no doubt that the "mode of the receiver" is highly malleable. "The spiritual part of the soul," he writes, "receives God's spirit...receives everything, according to [its] mode" (N1,4,2). He hints at the transformability of psychological structure when he says that the "breadth and capacity" of the Word is highly refined, subtle and delicate and that such a content demands a vessel of co-equal subtlety and delicacy. "The soul," he says, "is the vessel having [such] breadth and capacity because of its remarkable refinement in this state" (F2,19).

The mode of the soul, in other words, must be transformed in order for it to become conscious of its essential union with God. According to John, the obstacle to conscious realization of that union is the soul's confrontation within itself of "all that is not God." John is fond of this phrase and uses it no less than four times in his writings (A3,16,2; A2,6,2; A2,6,6; N2,21,11). And what is it that is not God? Quite simply, it seems to be the objects of personal consciousness. John repeatedly states that the soul must empty itself of all forms, images, thoughts and visions, "since God is unimaginable." His

formula for psychological transformation leading to union is thus deceptively simple: To know union with God the soul must empty itself of all that is not God, that is, of the mental contents that obscure the radiance of his essential Presencing. John writes that, "the illumination will not be perfect until the entire soul is entirely cleansed, clear and perfect" (A2,5,8). He extends this assertion by offering two similes, likening consciousness-in-transformation first to the removal of veils and then to air cleansed of vapors:

That which I understand as to how God affects this awakening and view of the soul (which is in Him substantially as in every creature) is that he removes some of the many veils and curtains hanging in front of it so that it might see him as He is... (F4,7).

The more the air is cleansed of vapors and the quieter and more simple it is, the more the sun illumines and warms it. A person should not bear attachment to anything, neither to the practices of meditation, not to the savor...nor any other apprehensions. He should be very free and annihilated with regard to all things...for the sake of this deep and delicate listening (F3,34).

In these similes John draws our attention to the distinction between consciousness and its contents. It is at the forefront of another of John's most telling similes, one in which he connects the subtilization of the object-field of consciousness to the awakening of latent powers in consciousness:

In observing a ray of sunlight stream through the window, we notice that the more it is pervaded with particles of dust, the clearer and more palpable it appears to the senses; yet obviously the sun ray in itself is less pure, clear, simple...[when] it is full of so many specks of dust. We also notice that when it is more purified of these specks... it seems more obscure...to the material eye.... If the ray...should be entirely cleansed... of all dust particles...it should appear totally obscure and incomprehensible to the eye.... The spiritual light has a similar relationship to the intellect, the eye of the soul. This...light shines so purely and simply in the intellect and is so divested and freed of all intelligible forms (the objects of the intellect) that it is imperceptible to the soul [i.e., object-consciousness] (A2,14,9-10).

For John, then, consciousness must be transformed-- purified--until the subtlety of its receptivity matches the subtlety of God's Presencing. The subtilization of the object-field of consciousness is described through the metaphor of purification. John's doctrine of essential union affirms that though God dwells eternally and immovably in the soul, His radiance is obscured by the consciousness of objects. To "empty", "purify" or "denude" the soul of its objects is to turn its attention from those objects to the ontological energy which causes both them and their perceiver to be. It is to discover something of God at the ground and root of consciousness.

b. Dōgen and Zen

The consciousness of the Zen aspirant, too, is understood to be highly malleable. Between the existential traits of "unenlightened" and "enlightened," between "beginner's mind" and "expert's mind," there is a spectrum of possibility. Even after the satori-awakening experience, one's consciousness or state of being is capable of further maturity. This fact, often missing in Zen literature, is worth stressing. Garma Chang tells us that,

Zen only begins at the moment one first attains satori.... After one has attained satori, he should cultivate it until it reaches full maturity, until it has gained great power and flexibility. This after-satori cultivation, together with the before-satori searching and striving is what Zen Buddhists call hsing, "the practice" or "the work" (1959:51-52)/11/.

Dōgen, who tells us that his teacher's foremost characteristics were a "veritable passion for zazen" and "depth of commitment to religious practice," also says that after his enlightenment he spent the "next twenty years deepening his understanding in practice" (Dōgen's Hokyo-ki in Waddell, October 1977:112). Dōgen, urging his listeners to the same kind of continued vigilance, says that "the dusty world and [the Buddha Way] beyond it assume many aspects but we can see and understand them only to the extent our eye is cultivated through practice" (Dōgen's Genjōkoan in Waddell and Abe, October 1972:137).

With the phrases "Buddha-nature," "Original Mind," "Mind-Essence," and so forth, Zen points its aspirants to the 'Object' of Awakening. Every possible attempt is made to undercut the dualism that this mental set, "training toward X" invites, yet training is defended as indispensable. Zen abounds with stories in which meditation is derided as a futile attempt to achieve enlightenment and in which we are reminded that "Original Mind" is none other than ordinary everyday mind. Dōgen, himself, tells his listeners to "understand that when you train within the delusive world, full enlightenment is already there" (Dōgen's Gakudōyōjinshu in Masunaga, 1964:61). But non-dualistic jolts are administered, and this is true at least for Dōgen and his tradition, only within a context fully permeated by the mental set of "training toward enlightenment." As Dōgen says in the same work:

I have never heard of anyone who came upon riches without study or who gained enlightenment without training.... One gains enlightenment by training.... If enlightenment can be gained without training, how can we perfect the teaching of the Buddha who knows delusion and enlightenment?

Ordinary mind may indeed be non-different from Original Mind but this truth in its fullness is something ordinary mind does not know and cannot realize simply through assent or intellectual reflection:

In practicing Zen meditation and studying the Way remember that Buddhism is beyond presumption, discriminative reasoning, divination, imagination, intellectual knowledge or ordinary understanding. If it were something attained through such things, it would have constantly been with you from birth, yet why is it you haven't yet awakened to Buddhism? (Dōgen's Gakudōyōjinshu in Kadowaki, 1977:113).

The training of which Dōgen speaks is the training of the mind-body, the transforming of consciousness. The most salient characteristic of the consciousness-to-be-transformed is that it is a consciousness bound up with objects. To the enlightened mind, of course, objects of consciousness are "no hindrance," the trackless flight of birds across the empty sky. But to phenomenal consciousness, to the mind in training, these objects can very well be a hindrance. They ceaselessly elicit the mind's "stick-to-object" tendency, as one Zen master has put it. Objects of consciousness ceaselessly constellate a subject, and if this continuous process is never de-railed, the practitioner is deprived of his chance to realize the relative non-existence of his ego-self. The Zen mind-in-training moves from I see THAT, to I SEE, and ultimately to SEE, as Izutsu (1977:18-62) formulates it. Thus, from the standpoint of the phenomenal, necessarily dualistic, consciousness of the aspirant, the central task of training is to empty consciousness of its objects in order to ripen it for the self-revealing Presence of Suchness-as-It-Is. Dōgen speaks of

"cutting off the function of consciousness" (Masunaga, 1964:71) but perhaps the most direct statement of the process is made by Soto Roshi Philip Kapleau:

The uniqueness of zazen lies in this:
That the mind is freed from bondage to all
thought forms, visions, objects and imag-
inings, however sacred or elevating, and
brought to a state of absolute emptiness,
from which it alone may one day perceive
its own true nature (1965:13).

We recognize in Kapleau's words the fundamental con-
templative distinction between "pure" consciousness and
consciousness of objects. Consequently, we find that the
same sort of similes of purification that occur in John of
the Cross occur in Dōgen's Soto tradition. The late Soto
master, Yasutani, speaks typically in this regard:

...We can say that the mind of a Buddha is
like water that is calm, deep and crystal
clear, and upon which the "moon of truth"
reflects fully and perfectly. The mind of
ordinary man...is like murky water...no
longer able to reflect the moon of truth....
How can we bring the moon of truth to
illumine fully our life and personality?
We need first to purify this water, to
calm the surging waves by halting the
winds of discursive thought (Kapleau,
1965:29).

The formula for realization is again deceptively
simple: personal consciousness must empty itself of all
conceptualizing and imaginative activity which tends to

obscure the non-dualistic oneness of ego and world.

Yasutani even defines zazen as a process of purification:

Your mind can be compared to a mirror which reflects everything that appears before it. From the time you begin to think, feel and exert your will, shadows are cast upon the mind which distort its reflections. This condition we call delusion, which is the fundamental sickness of human beings.... The purpose of zazen is to wipe away from the mind these...defilements so that we can intimately experience our solidarity with all of life. Love and compassion then naturally and spontaneously flow forth (Kapleau, 1965:96).

Let us summarize what we have proposed in this section. The contemplative aspirant, functionally understood as a consciousness of objects, is asked within his/her religious symbol system to discipline his/her mind. This discipline involves a purification of object-consciousness and this purification (or emptying) is, in turn, understood to promote the realization of the aspirant's deepest nature.

We must now look still closer at the metaphor of "emptying" and the mental disposition with which it is intimately associated, namely, non-discursive attention.

3. NON-DISCURSIVE ATTENTION AS EMPTYING

a. John of the Cross

In the works of St. John of the Cross there are repeated references to a contemplative discipline which involves the practice of emptiness with regard to the mind's ceaseless confrontation with thought-objects. In a typical passage we read:

...when a person has finished purifying himself and voiding himself of all forms and apprehensible images, he will abide in this pure and simple light and be perfectly transformed into it. The light is never lacking to the soul, but because of creature forms and veils weighing upon and covering it, the light is never infused. If a person will eliminate these impediments...and live in pure nakedness and poverty of spirit...his soul...will then be immediately transformed into simple and pure Wisdom, the Son of God (A2,15,4).

In line with his opinion that John of the Cross represents the normative contemplative teaching of the Catholic tradition, Maritain describes the primary mark of this tradition as the cultivation of imageless contemplation. As Maritain, himself, puts it:

Prayer demands that she [the soul] should leave the region of sensory images for the sphere of the Pure Intelligible and what lies beyond, while the operation of the intelligence grows more perfect in proportion to its emancipation from sensory images (1943:5).

Such apophatic prayer is the practical adjunct to traditional apophatic theology. Following the lead of the Areopagite, the most seminal source for medieval mystical theologians, Thomas Aquinas encapsulated the method of apophatic theology in these words: "We must proceed by way of remotion, since God in his immensity exceeds every conception which our mind can form" (Clark:139). Meister Eckhart was still more emphatic, adding an experimental accent to his theological utterance: "You must get into the ...core of the Soul so that God's undifferentiated essence may reach you there without the interposition of any idea" (Blakney:98). Of those who have tried to reflect the apophatic method of theology in the mirror of their own consciousness, there is none in the history of Christianity more thorough, nor perhaps more adept, than St. John of the Cross.

In his 1937 treatise on John, Bede Frost wrote that the "...way of Unknowing...in coming to the knowledge of God is...necessary to the understanding of St. John and [it] has been...misrepresented and caricatured where not altogether ignored by modern writers unfamiliar with the primary postulates of Catholic theology" (Frost, 1937:76). Indeed, John has been called the Doctor of Nada, a caricature that stems perhaps from John's remarkable drawing of the Ascent of Mount Carmel (infra) that is, the path of the contemplative soul. If forty years ago John was shunned or misunderstood because of his radically apophatic praxis, times have

changed. John of the Cross and the Cloud of Unknowing have become the primary texts for the current renaissance of the Catholic contemplative tradition--a renaissance fueled by a reaction to the appeal that Asian psychotransformative strategies have had in the West as well as by the exposure of a number of Catholic thinkers and contemplatives to Zen and other Asian disciplines.

The tone of John's teaching is found in one of Augustine's thoughts in the Confessions. In Book VII he reflects on the reality of created things, including his own selfhood, in relation to the God Who Is:

And I viewed all the other things that are beneath thee and I realized that they are neither wholly real nor wholly unreal. They are real insofar as they come from thee; but they are unreal insofar as they are not what thou art (Pine-Coffin:147).

In these words Augustine expresses the universal religious intuition that selfhood is somehow less a reality than its Principle and that the true appreciation of Reality lies in seeing through the relative reality of the self. This theme is central to John's writings. The foremost goal of "union with God" is linked with the "annihilation" of the notion of a self-subsistent self and its self-centered will:

The religious must practice the following instructions if he wishes to attain to holy recollection and spiritual silence... liberated from one's own self (Precautions, Kavanagh and Rodriguez:656).

The secrecy of this ascent is evident since ordinarily the losing and annihilation of self, which brings most profit to a man, will be considered worst for him (N2,18,4).

Since the task of becoming empty can only seem to the natural man to be an effort against life,

...we flee from what most suits us. We embrace what fills our eyes with the most light and satisfaction and run after what is the very worst thing for us.... (N2,16,12).

We attribute substantial reality to that which is, at best, derivative. John's remedy for this blindness is the cultivation of an awareness of the reality that underlies all the particular objects of his consciousness, including his sense of self. To see God he must first see through the seeming reality of his self; he must break the natural identification and attachment to his own subjectivity. Since some form of subjectivity is ceaselessly constellated by the objects of consciousness, John prescribes the cultivation of consciousness without an object:

The discreet reader must always keep in mind my intention and goal in this book; to guide the soul in purity of faith through all its natural and supernatural apprehension, in freedom from every obstacle, to the divine union with God (A2,28,1).

...this union is effected by disuniting oneself from everything imaginative (A3,12,3).

...we will present...a method of emptying and purifying the faculties of all that is not God (A2,6,6).

.... The one road belongs to discursive meditation and the other is beyond the range of the imagination and discursive reflection (N1,10,2).

His goal transcends all of this, even the loftiest object that can be known or experienced. Consequently, he must pass beyond everything, to unknowing (A2,4,4).

The illumination will not be clear until the soul is entirely cleansed, clear and perfect (A2,5,8).

.... In the measure that he embarks through his own efforts upon this negation and emptiness of forms, he will receive from God the possession of union (A3,2,13).

God is incomprehensible and transcendent... that is why our journey to God must proceed through the negation of all (A2,24,9).

John's drawing of the Ascent of Mount Carmel, which contains in nuce, his entire doctrine, thus has as its axis:

The Path of Mount Carmel, the perfect spirit
nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing,
nothing.

And within this radical apophasis, John is aware that the aspirant must not cling even to his own desire for union, nor to God, nor to the things of God:

and even on the Mount...nothing.

To charges of quietism or the misunderstanding of his teachings as nihilistic, John responds forcefully:

Do not say, therefore: "Oh, the soul does not advance because it is not doing anything." For if it is true that it is not doing anything, I shall prove to you that it is accomplishing a great deal by doing nothing. If the intellect empties itself...it advances, and the freer it becomes of particular knowledge and acts of understanding, the further it advances in its journey toward the supreme supernatural Good (F3,47).

...If...scruples about...inactivity arise, he should remember that the pacification of the soul (making it calm, peaceful, inactive and desireless) is no small accomplishment. This, indeed, is what our Lord asks through David: Vacate et videte quoniam ego sum Deus [Ps. 45:11]. This would be like saying: Learn to be empty of all things--interiorly and exteriorly--and you will behold that I am God (A2,15,2).

In the Ascent, John spends three chapters discussing the dangers and delusions attendant to "supernatural apprehensions," that is, non-ordinary intrapsychic phenomena. They can be frightening or dazzling (A3,10,2), but John always returns to the stance of "emptiness" with regard to them (A2,12,2-3; A2,16,11). Summing up his attitude toward them, be they terrifying visions or glimpses of the numinous, he says, "I only repeat that my main teaching is to pay no heed to them" (A2,30,7). This, of course, is precisely the directive given to the student of Zen. H. M. Enomiya-La-Salle, one of the few Catholic scholars to enter deeply and sensitively into the comparative study of contemplation

in Christianity and Zen, notes this similarity (108-109).

John's counsels regarding the attitude one is to assume when confronting the spontaneous stream of object-consciousness are extremely important. They provide a way for us to understand the actual mental posture that lies behind John's vigorous exhortations to emptiness. Taken at face value, the latter would seem to indicate that John taught that a person could empty the mind by sheer exertion of mental muscle. This would lead to the mistaken conclusion that John's emptying of the mind was of the form of Herakles' cleaning of the Aegean stables--that one could, by sheer effort, push all the contents of consciousness out of consciousness as if they were garbage.

We are convinced, however, that this is neither John's teaching nor his practice. His directive for 'effortless effort' (N1,10,4) indicates that he was aware of what is now a commonplace in the psychology of meditation: forceful efforts to suppress the contents of consciousness result only in more of the same. John asks the aspirant to "be content with a loving and peaceful attentiveness to God and live without the concern, without the effort and without the desire to taste or feel Him. All these desires disquiet the soul and distract it..." (N1,10,4).

In his own way, John, like Dōgen, objects to contemplative clinging, the strenuous posture of "attaining one thing." He seems to prefer a Christian counterpart to "quiet sitting." Part of the phenomenon of quiet

contemplation is that images, forms and other objects of consciousness arise autonomously. Rather than strain to suppress them or to forcefully empty them out, John indicates a mental posture of peaceful, attentive non-reflection: Neither grasping nor running from what appears before the mind, neither following it nor reflecting upon it. Meanwhile, the underlying intentionality of that attention is directed fully toward the present moment and toward the imagelessness by which John feels he will approach the Divine Presence.

We are led to conclude that in John's tireless instruction to "empty the mind," the real activity of emptying is not an attempt at a forceful, direct emptying of the objects of consciousness, but primarily an emptying of reaction to them. John's war is not with objects of consciousness as such, but with the reactive, associative mind. This is crucial. Such an emptying-of-reaction, a posture of disidentification with the objects of consciousness, may indeed, especially if accompanied by a physical quietude, lead to the state that Kapleau has called "absolute emptiness." And within a religious context, that state of absolute emptiness may elicit extraordinary mental experience. But this state cannot be forced. It must be invited, cultivated. And the sine qua non gesture of consciousness-in-contemplation is non-discursive attention.

In John's contemplation, attention is focused on an 'objectless object'--in this case, God--while objects

spontaneously arising in consciousness are met by a choiceless, non-reactive evenness or "peace." Again we say that this indeed may eventually lead to a mental state that is virtually empty, but the primary meaning of the metaphor "emptying" is this attitude of non-discursive attention: attention without reflection, without interpretation, without reaction or identification. What is being emptied, first and foremost, is the mind's natural tendency to 'stick' to objects, to react, identify, associate, wander, discourse. This would explain the animus behind John's insistence that the Christian contemplative be allowed to glimpse possibilities that lie beyond imaginative/discursive meditation:

The first point to consider concerns the interior corporeal sense (the imaginative power and fantasy). We must...empty this sense of every imaginative form and apprehension...and demonstrate the impossibility of union with God before the activity relating to these apprehensions ceases. Such apprehensions are incapable of being the proper and proximate means of this union.... Meditation is the work of these two faculties [imagination and fantasy] since it is a discursive act built upon forms, figures and images, imagined and fashioned by these senses. For example: the imagining of Christ crucified...or the imagining and considering of glory as a beautiful light...or the picturing of any other human or divine object imaginable....

The soul will have to empty itself of these images and leave this sense in darkness if it is to reach divine union. For these images, just like the corporeal objects of the exterior senses, cannot be an adequate proximate means to God... (A2,12,2-3; cf. A2,16,11).

It is important to understand that under our present interpretation one may have one's eyes wide open and have an image reflected upon one's retina and still be fully involved in the gesture of "imagelessness" and "emptiness." For the crucial thing is not that there exists an image on the retina or an object in consciousness, but that there be no identification, elaboration, or association with that image. All the while, the intentionality of consciousness is fixed on "God" who, for consciousness-in-transformation stands for That which is unimaginable and unthinkable.

For John, God is "hidden within the soul" (C1,6), that is, within the fact of consciousness. Yet his Presence is obscured because consciousness is unconcerned with its ground, center and source (C21,1; C27,1; F1,12; A2,16,11) and the flotsam carried along in its current. The cultivation of non-discursive contemplation is an actively attentive passivity, an objectless desire, which waits in naked openness for the self-revealing Presence of God. God, in turn, is never absent, only hidden by the clouds of mentation:

God, like the sun, stands above souls
ready to communicate Himself (F3,47).

Like the sun, he 'beams' constantly in the sheer ontic fact of awareness. Yet contact with the purity of his radiation requires the disassembling of all filters and reflectors:

It [the soul] thereby empties itself of everything comprehensible to it, because none of that is God; as we have said, God does not fit in an occupied heart (F3,48).

Purify the soul, however, and the sun hidden behind its clouds can do nothing else but illumine and transform:

Wipe away, O spiritual soul, the dust, the hairs, and the stains, and cleanse your eyes, and the bright sun will illumine you, and you will see clearly (F3,38; cf. supra pp. 47-48).

And this clarity of vision is not meant to refer to a momentary state of consciousness but to new, clarified activity in the operative order. For clarity of vision comes about as a result of a "substantial transformation in all [the soul's] faculties" (F3,28).

The blessings of this silent communication and contemplation impressed on the soul... are...inestimable. For they are the most hidden unctions of the Holy Spirit and hence most delicate, and they secretly fill the soul with spiritual riches, gifts and graces... (F3,40).

If this language of the Holy Spirit infusing riches into the soul sounds antiquated, we beg the reader's leave to quote a rather lengthy passage from a contemporary Benedictine monk. Henri Le Seaux (Abhishiktananda) is a Catholic priest whose years in India have influenced his

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understanding of the psychotransformative possibilities of prayer. His words amplify those of John's quoted above and, in addition, relate them to the great Yogic tradition of Asia:

As traditionally understood...the aim of yoga is to quiet the mind, to free it from its innate tendency to dispersion.... Christian spiritual discipline has this at least to learn from yoga--to strive by any effective and acceptable means for quiet and silence in the mind. Such quiet and silence alone make it possible for the Holy Spirit to work freely in the soul.... The highest gift of the spirit is the gift of wisdom, through which the Spirit works in the most intimate places of the soul...where the soul is a pure awareness of itself...beyond all mental activities and perception.... That experience is the natural substratum of any authentic mystical experience. At other levels of the psychological life the mystery of God is apprehended only through concepts and images...essentially incomplete and for ever incapable of leading man to the final goal which is written in his nature. Only at the center of his being can man have a real glimpse of the central mystery of God.... The aim of all yoga is to attain this point.... The God who is experienced in one's coincidence with oneself beyond all vritti (movements) of the mind is...really the experience of the silence of the Father, of the unmanifested mystery of the Godhead, before (as it were) the Father calls the Son, and all of us in the Son, by that "Thou" which fills time and eternity (Abhishiktananda, 1976:29,42,40,41,75).

John struggles nobly to retain the dualistic tension between the innermost core of his soul and the reality of God but cannot help but display a tendency toward outright identification:

Love produces such likeness in this transformation of lovers that one can say each is the other and both are one...thus each one lives in the other and is the other and both are one in the transformation of love (C12,7; cf. C26,4; C22,3; and, N2,20,5).

No matter how John struggles with doctrine and utterance, however, the adamant core of his practical method remains non-discursive, non-imaginative attention to God:

He will approach God the more closely he withdraws from all imaginative forms, images and figures (A3,3,1; cf. A2,17,5; F3,52).

b. Dōgen

The late Soto Roshi, Daiun Harada, has made the following pertinent remarks in regard to Zen practice:

Now though we usually say simply Zen, there are many kinds of Zen: ordinary man's Zen, Hinayana Zen, Zen of other religions beside Buddhism.... Even though there are so many kinds of Zen, quiet meditative Zen is really the root of all Zen. Quiet meditative Zen is to become still and quiet. It is to unify one's spirit and mind, to enter the state of no-self and to achieve complete stillness and peace through and through.... Quiet meditative Zen is the root and basis of all Zen. It is the elemental Zen that must be practiced in order to enter the Zen of Buddhism.... In quiet meditative Zen, the waves of delusive consciousness and feelings are stilled. Therefore, the main point in Zen is just to get rid of these delusive consciousnesses, that is, to become completely naked, to become completely one, to experience the "great death" (Maezumi and Glassman, 1978a:14,17,19,20).

Harada's description of the nature of "quiet, meditative Zen" is obviously reminiscent of John's quiet contemplation, and our elaboration of this similarity will continue through this section. Of more immediate importance, however, is the distinction Harada makes between "elemental Zen" and the "Zen of Buddhism."

The subject of this section and, indeed, a major focus of this thesis is "elemental Zen." Though not definitive of Zen practice, it is the "root and basis of all Zen" and "must be practiced in order to enter the Zen of Buddhism." We are not, in other words, dealing with something unimportant or derivative. Moreover, "elemental Zen" is the posture in which the aspirant is engaged during the great majority of training and after-satori cultivation. Though nothing can take the place of the intuitive flashes of satori or kensho through which one enters the Zen of Buddhism, "quiet, meditative Zen" presides over the domain of "graduality"--the slow psychological transformation in which, seed by seed, petal by petal, the aspirant's 'beginner's mind' is ripened and readied for fruition.

From the standpoint of the "Zen of Buddhism"--a reality as resistant to conceptualization as fresh air is to containment--comparisons to other states of mind or contemplative methods are beside the point. Defending its own absolute uniqueness, Zen traditionally distinguishes five kinds of Zen (Kapleau, 1965:43), the second of which is gedo Zen, literally, "an outside way." Into this category

the Zennist would place all Zen-like practices that fall outside the boundaries of the Mahayana, for example, Hindu raj yoga and Christian contemplation. (Parenthetically, a Christian contemplative would surely consider Zen praxis gedo contemplation --an outside way, genuine but inchoate.) We are content to honor the final uniqueness of the enlightened Zen man and the Christian and Hindu saints. Each may justifiably look upon his brother contemplative as following a worthy and profound, yet "outside" way. What is fascinating to us, however, is that along the road to the final uniqueness, each contemplative seems to spend a good deal of time in a similar mental posture. We admit that our investigation of the latter does not exhaust either Christian contemplation or shikantaza in their final and complete natures, but if it is a raft upon which the two groups share space for a time, if it is the root and basis of the ultimate stages, it seems worthy of attention. We turn therefore to an exposition of Dōgen's and Soto's zazen/shikantaza--not, to repeat, in its ultimate aspect but in its "elemental Zen" aspect--to highlight the commonality between it and the contemplative mode of John of the Cross.

The Lankavatara Sutra is one of the most important scriptures of the Mahayana, and along with the Avatamsaka, Diamond and Heart Sutras, forms the scriptural basis of Zen. Suzuki has singled it out for special treatment in his Zen studies because its prevailing psychological viewpoint and experiential emphasis are more appropriate to Zen than the

speculative, philosophical climates of the other Mahayana scriptures (Thomas:230ff; Suzuki, 1971:171). In it we find the following exhortation:

...When the existence and non-existence of the external world are understood to be due to the seeing of the Mind itself...[the Bodhisattva] can enter upon the state of imagelessness where Mind-only is, and see into the Solitude which underlies the discrimination of all things as being and non-being and the deep-seated attachments resulting therefrom (Suzuki, 1960:64).

Here, in a Mahayana scripture, we find reaffirmed the practical essence of Zen: the cultivation of an imageless consciousness as an essential step in actualizing bodhi in one's being. We must however be as cautious of the word "imageless" in Zen practice as we were with John. For here too, though quiet sitting may eventuate in a state of consciousness that is actually or virtually empty or imageless (Hirai, 1960:144), "imagelessness" refers not only to such a state but to an attitude that consciousness holds while objects and images naturally arise and pass within it. That attitude of "imagelessness" is properly described as non-discursive attention. Images occur on the retina, thoughts arise in consciousness, but the practitioner neither reacts to nor identifies with them. Thus, though consciousness may contain objects, it is coursing in objectlessness through an attitude of non-attaching, non-discursing attention.

It is often said that Soto practice differs from that of Rinzai in that shikantaza, unlike koan-concentration, has no particular object. But it would be wrong to conclude that shikantaza therefore is a mere daydreaming or letting the mind wander where it will. It is, on the contrary, a state of active vigilant attention. Sense and mental data impinge, but active attention watches such data arise and pass away, thereby preventing its own dispersal and distraction. Though shikantaza has no 'object', it is nonetheless, like koan Zen, single-minded: a one-pointed attention, an emptying of the discursive tendency of the mind. In this intention the two distinct methods merge.

In actual fact, koan Zen and shikantaza are complementary. Either can support the other. It is said that Dōgen's Chinese master Ju-Ching attained enlightenment under a Soto master while working on a koan (Waddell, October 1977:112). Yasutani provides contemporary testimony for the complementarity:

If we were to distinguish the various kinds of Zen now practiced in Japan we would find two major types: koan Zen and shikantaza. The Rinzai and Obaku schools emphasize koan study; the Soto school emphasizes shikantaza. But even when koan study is stressed, shikantaza is not abandoned. The great masters of the three schools always emphasized the importance of shikantaza. Conversely, the finest masters always used koans freely (Yasutani in Maezumi and Glassman, 1977:67).

Whatever subtly different strategies koan Zen and shikantaza may pursue in quest of the ultimate Zen of Buddhism, they seem to converge in the single-minded attention of "elemental Zen." Dōgen certainly favored the practice of repeated quiet sitting. Reminders and exhortations to sit in zazen and to keep on sitting pervade his writings. Dōgen thus praises samadhi as one of the eight awarenesses of the bodhisattva:

Dwelling in the Dharma undisturbed is what is called "samadhi."
The Buddha says: "When you monks unify your minds, the mind is in samadhi.... [It] is not scattered, just as those who protect themselves from floods guard the levy. This is also true for practice. For the sake of the "water of wisdom," then, cultivate samadhi well, and do not let it leak out (Dōgen's Hachidainigaku in Maezumi and Glassman, 1978:69).

Keizan Zenji, the second great patriarch of the Soto school who is sometimes called its "mother," says that,

...one is muddled by the senses and their objects and cannot understand the real self.... 'Neither thinking nor sense': This is your Real Lord. The Lord has neither face nor aspects... (Keizan's Mishaka Sonja in Kennet, 1972:186-7).

To commune with the "Lord," to allow the "Lord" to transform one's consciousness, one must stop thinking. The great 18th century Rinzai Zen Master, Hakuin, states the

case most bluntly in his commentary on the Heart Sutra:

Grasping, walking, man needs no help
He accumulates sin only by thinking
(Swearer:194).

In the 13th century, Dōgen stresses the already centuries old Zen theme of non-thinking in his description of the art of zazen:

Once you have adjusted your posture, take a deep breath, inhale and exhale...and settle into a steady, immobile sitting position. Think of not-thinking. How do you think of not-thinking? Non-thinking. This in itself is the essential art of zazen (Dōgen's Fukanzazengi in Waddell and Abe, 1973:123).

In his commentary on Dōgen's Fukanzazengi, Taizan Maezumi Roshi expands Dōgen's instructions:

...in sitting it is very important not to have your own ideas or thinking. That unconditioned, very plain state of mind, that's the state of non-thinking. And with that state of mind, sit. Eliminate all kinds of mental activities, don't even think of becoming Buddha. That's what he [Dōgen] meant.... By sitting concentrating in zazen we empty ourselves and at the same time we are able to empty the object. So the subject object relationship is eliminated altogether.... That's the kind of zazen he talks about. That's shikan-taza (Maezumi and Glassman, 1977:39).

One begins the practice of non-thinking by disidentifying with the stream of object consciousness. Included in this stream, of course, are the images and impressions that may arise, without objective referent, from the unconscious psyche. Yasutani describes such makyo:

...in our subconscious are to be found all the residual impressions of our life experience, including those of previous existences.... When zazen penetrates so deeply that the surface and intermediate levels of consciousness are stilled, elements of this residuum bubble up to the conscious mind. These we call makyo (Kapleau, 1965:101).

Makyo can be frightful or pleasant, create fear or induce well-being, but because they are not the Ultimate, they are, as Kapleau says, devoid of religious significance. Just as John of the Cross dismisses all that is not God--thoughts, dreams, visions, imaginings--the Zen counsel is:

Never be tempted into thinking that these phenomena...have any meaning.... This is to squander your energies on the foolish pursuit of the inconsequential.... Whenever makyo appear, simply ignore them and continue sitting (Kapleau, 1965:40; cf. W. Johnston, 1970:9; H. M. Enomiya-LaSalle: 39).

We are not sure that John "sat" in contemplation. We assume he often knelt; we know he sometimes laid down (Brenan, 1978:43). Because western science had made us

aware of the important physiological roles yogic sitting postures play in the cultivation of concentration (Timmons and Kamiya, 1970, 1973), we may wonder whether John or his Christian counterparts ever attain the depth of contemplation known for centuries to Buddhists.

In any case, we hope we have shown that John's wish to experience the immanence of the God of apophatic theology led him to a psychotransformative strategy similar to that of Dōgen's shikantaza and of Zen in general. The emptying of spiritual and sensory parts of the soul may perhaps be looked upon as John's peculiarly Christian version of Dōgen's "dropping off body and mind." Echoes abound, we think, between John's utterances on the contemplative gesture of nada, those of Dōgen on non-thinking and those, for instance, of fourteenth century Rinzai master, Bassui, and the twentieth century Soto teacher Yasutani:

Cut down whatever appears in the mind....
In short destroy all ideas.... When you
have eradicated every conception until
only emptiness remains, and then you cut
through even the emptiness, your mind will
burst open and [the Real] will manifest
itself (Bassui in Kapleau, 1965:182;
cf. Ibid:168,181).

You will realize your True-nature only
after your mind has become as empty of
thoughts as a sheet of pure white paper is
free of blemishes. It is simply a matter
of engrossing yourself in Mu so totally
that there is no room for thoughts of any
kind, including Mu itself (Yasutani in
Kapleau, 1965:108; cf. Ibid:29,70,117,128).

IV. Contemplative Intention:
John, Dōgen and the Actualization of Will

A warrior learns to tune his will....
It is...the road to the naqual.

Castaneda's don Juan

The words "attention" and "intention" both stem from the Latin tendere meaning "to stretch." Given the foregoing discussion we might say that non-discursive attention is a stretching of the human will toward the Absolute within the intramental confines of personal consciousness. Yet though a stretching, it is not a straining. In John and Dōgen we come to understand that the effort involved in keeping the attention focused and consciousness clear is paradoxically balanced by a rest, a peace, a letting go, a letting be, a surrender. Within one and the same will-as-attention there thus seems to be a dialectical complementarity between the effortful and effortless will, between the will-to-attain and the will-to-receive, between the will as struggle and the will as submission.

This same dialectical balance is found when we move from the circumscribed realm of attention to the more generalized realm of intention. Here the stretching of the human will toward its source is seen in a larger frame. We see that the contemplative gesture of non-discursive attention is embedded in an intentionality of the heart which spreads itself over the cognitive, conative and emotive network. And yet, characteristic of contemplative intentionality, there is along with the yearning for the ought, a deep affirmation of the is, along with activity, a corresponding receptivity.

1. JOHN: THE WILL AS FAITH, HOPE AND CARITAS

John's journey proceeds as an "emptying of the soul of all that is not God." The soul, as we have seen, is composed of "spiritual" and "sensory" parts. The emptying of the latter is the work of traditional asceticism; the emptying of the former is the work of non-discursive contemplation.

John amplifies his explanation of the emptying of the "spiritual part of the soul" by further dividing it into its three constitutive functions, intellect, memory and will. For the transformative work to proceed, each of these functions must be emptied. In their phenomenal state, intelligizing, remembering and willing are "beclouded" and "impure;" they lack the ability to relate themselves to their unitive, divine ground. Their objects are multiple, ego-borne, self-referential, idolatrous. Intellect, memory and will lack a unifying intentionality toward God. Through the non-discursive attention of contemplation, an attitude of dis-identification with the soul's objects, John wishes to empty or purify the soul's three functions of their vagaries. Thus, he directly equates the emptying of the intellect, memory and will with growth in the theological virtues, faith, hope and caritas. In the Ascent, he writes:

As we outlined for the sensory night a method of emptying the sense faculties of desire for their objects...so for this spiritual night we will present a method of emptying and purifying the spiritual

faculties of all that is not God. By this method these faculties [intellect, memory and will] can abide in the darkness of these three virtues [faith, hope and caritas] which are the means and preparation for the soul's union with God (A2,6,6,).

Sometimes, John speaks of the virtues not as a result of the apophatic process but as its cause:

Faith darkens and empties the intellect of all its natural understanding.... Hope empties and withdraws the memory from all creature possessions.... Charity also empties...the will of whatever is not God and centers them on Him alone.... Because these virtues have the function of withdrawing the soul from all that is less than God, they consequently have the mission of joining it with God (N2,21,11; cf. A2,6,2).

John's equation--emptying of the (self-aggrandizing) intellectual functions = growth in the (self-transcending) theological virtues--is didactically effective. Through it John is able to place his systematic emphasis on contemplative emptying (quite new to the Catholic theological tradition) within a traditional theological/psychological context. Yet we should not let the facility of this device and its oversimple faculty-psychology blind us to the subtlety of John's psychological understanding. For the field described by

phenomenal intellect	——>	intellect imbued with faith
phenomenal memory	——>	memory permeated by hope
phenomenal will	——>	will become <u>caritas</u>

is indeed the entire field of human consciousness. This diagram does not describe a simple switch from "off" to "on" but the boundaries of a vast transformative project. John means to tell us that as the psychotransformative work proceeds, all the interdependent powers of the soul are re-vitalized and newly constellated. The structure of consciousness, its general "trait" or "mode" is open to a virtually infinite spectrum of transformation. John's only tool for expressing the spectrum is the rather cumbersome distinction between ordinary, misdirected intellectual functions and the theological virtues. "Faith," "hope" and "caritas" refer to the powers of intellect, memory and will as the latter's egocentric and centrifugal valences are gradually transformed into theocentric and centripetal ones.

Faith, hope and caritas are not three praxes, but three descriptive nuances for consciousness undergoing transformation under a single praxis: contemplation. When John is asked how one practices faith, hope and charity in their purity he does not have three answers. He has one: non-discursive contemplation:

If the spiritual person directs his intellect in faith according to the doctrine given him [i.e. imageless, non-discursive contemplation] it is impossible for him not to instruct his other two faculties simultaneously in the other two virtues. For these faculties depend on one another in their operations (A3,1,1).

...And the conduct required of the memory and the intellect...is also necessary for the will. Since the intellect and other faculties cannot admit or deny anything without the intervention of the will, the same doctrine that serves for the one faculty will evidently apply to the others also (A3,34,1).

Though faith, hope and caritas may, at the beginning, have distinct objects, they begin to melt into a single intention as the objectless, apophatic work proceeds. Contemplation renders each more subtle, less prone to attach themselves to phenomenal supports. At the outset, faith, we may surmise, is mere belief in propositions; hope is a form of spiritual materialism, a clinging to some future destiny; and, charity, perhaps, is an act of the ego to "do good" under pressure from the superego. But as the journey proceeds this changes. The cataphatically-toned and utilitarian functions of faith in something, hope for something and care for beings and things are transformed into apophatically-toned, ontological virtues of pure faith, pure hope and pure charity. In their purity, their objectlessness, "faith," "hope" and "caritas" become a single attitude of spiritual nakedness and radical openness toward the activity of God.

The transformative process here being described may be simplified in the terminology of "will"--even though the latter involves a paradox. Kant came to teach Western man as no man before him may be viewed as having taught that

ordinary consciousness is willful, interpretive and manipulative. We see the world through colored lenses. Freud and the science he spawned seem to have added a psychological dimension by describing that willfulness as fundamentally egocentric and narcissistic. Translating into religious terms, one might say that phenomenal consciousness is naturally idolatrous. The entirety of the contemplative gesture in John and Dōgen, and perhaps in all its instances, may be understood as an effort to purify consciousness of its ordinary willfulness. One of John's synonyms for the contemplative opus is, in fact, the "emptying of the will." The willfulness of ordinary consciousness is emptied, however--and here is the paradox--only through acts of will. What keeps the activity of contemplative willing from simply being an aggravation of the willfulness of phenomenal consciousness is its linkage to the transpersonal Will. For John, as for the majority of Christian mystics, the ultimate motif of contemplative transformation is the conformation of the human will to the will of God. Yet the purity of this linkage is constantly challenged by the soul's habitual reflex to identify with and attach itself to phenomenal supports:

Those who not only pay heed to these imaginative apprehensions, but think God resembles some of them and that one can journey to union with God through them, are already in great error and will gradually lose the light of faith in their intellects (A3,12,3).

Aware of this tendency, John resorts as always to the emptying posture of non-discursive contemplation. In willing to attend to no-object, the idolatrous willfulness of intellect, memory and will (i.e., the functions of consciousness) become "emptied"--transformed into the receptive willlessness of faith, hope and caritas:

And it is by means of faith that the intellect is united with God.... This union is effected by disuniting oneself from everything imaginative (A3,12,3; cf. A2,28,1).

...In the measure that a person dispossesses his memory of forms and objects, which are not God, he will fix it upon God and preserve it empty, in the hope that God will fill it.

John adds that "hope always pertains to the unpossessed (and unpossessable) object" (A2,6,3). His ontological hope is an intending of his entire being toward God as present. It is a waiting, open quality which grounds intentionality in that present. Though objectively distinct, hope and faith fuse indissolubly in the psychological subject: the unknowing openness of the faith is joined by the present-rootedness of the hope. Finally,

we would achieve nothing by purging the intellect and memory in order to ground them in the virtues of faith and hope if we neglected the purification of the will through charity (A3,16,1).

Even the soul's fierce longing for God (John often warns of spiritual gluttony) must be emptied into a profound acceptance. In the gesture of submission, the contemplative act-of-will achieves its greatest will-lessness. The unknowing of faith and the present-centeredness of hope are thus joined by a pure intentionality of surrender. For John, the language of attainment of these three virtues is a way of pointing to a single profound transformation of consciousness. They mark a "turning about at the seat of the mind," a turning about which re-turns the human will to its ontological Source.

Faith, hope and caritas thus seem to be interdependent aspects in the actualization of a single, unified intentionality toward God. The spiritual freedom (A3,5,3; A3,26,6; A3,18,8; A3,19,5; N2,7,4; N2,9,1; A1,4,6; C35,2-3) won through consciousness' gradual coursing in objectlessness seem to confer on that intentionality deeper and deeper degrees of nakedness. In its fully realized condition, this pure intention seems to be a personal will whose chief characteristic is, nevertheless, its letting-be--its 'rest' within a transpersonal Will. Here, and perhaps for the first time, the human will knows itself authentically, for here it is no longer deluded by the seeming reality of the self.

Though John expounds upon all three of the virtues, it is clear that he has a favorite. If he were to pick just one to stand for all three and to mark the quality of a

consciousness in transformation, thus intending, thus attending, it would be faith--empty, receptive, objectless, grasping no-thing.

2. DŌGEN: THE WILL AS FAITH, DETERMINATION, DOUBT AND KARUNA

Contemplative forms of Buddhism are often contrasted with its theistic forms and with other theistic religions in terms of the former's disregard for faith. This stems, we suggest, from either a too limited conception of faith or a misunderstanding of those contemplative forms. If faith is taken merely as an intellectual affirmation of unverifiable propositions (for which the term "belief" should now be reserved; "now" because Wilfred Smith [1979] has shown that, whereas belief originally meant more than knowledge--knowledge plus the resolve to act upon it--it now means less than knowledge), then it is true that Buddhist contemplatives have little interest in faith. But if faith is understood existentially as a predisposition of the heart, a deeply felt conviction of the truth of the Buddha's teaching that invites still deeper understanding, an intending of the conditioned self toward the Unconditioned Real, then to propose that contemplative Buddhism is antagonistic to such faith is crudely false. Here we shall test this thesis on Dōgen only. Dōgen, we shall argue, sees faith not only as a necessary predisposition for the journey to self-awakening but also as the very substance of that awakening.

The word "faith" in English translations of Dōgen's works is a translation of either the Japanese shin 信, or shinko 信仰, or of their Chinese originals. Dōgen, of course, got the language and the idea from the Chinese

who in turn were doing their best to translate the original Sanskrit. The original Sanskrit is sraddha and in the Samyutta Nikaya (V, 199-200), faith (Pali, saddha; Sanskrit, sraddha) is presented as the first of the five cardinal virtues of the Buddhist path (the other four being vigour, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom). Faith is called the "seed" without which the plant of spiritual insight cannot begin to grow (Samyutta Nikaya:76,181).

The Sanskrit sraddha is composed of srat (heart) and dha (to place or establish). It is thus a setting of the heart upon something--or better, the experience of finding one's heart established in a conviction of the truth (of the Buddha's teaching). "Heart" points perhaps to that hara-like place within us where the ordinary distinctions between will and intellect and mind and body melt in a superior fusion. Until one can abide in this heart, a radiating, hub-like center, one is condemned to live along the spokes and their oppositions. Buddhist sraddha, in any case, suggests an all-pervading unification of intention toward the Noble Path.

Dōgen scholar, Francis Dōjun Cook, finds the root srat interesting for another reason, namely its relation to sat, meaning real or true. Taking advantage of the semantic flexibility of srat and dha (evidenced by their longish entries in the Monier-Williams Sanskrit dictionary), Cook reads sraddha as "to possess the true" or "to generate the true". "In both scriptural and commentarial literature,"

he says, "it [sraddha] denotes a degree of spiritual development in which one has come into possession of the true and/or real in the sense that the real and true is an experienced fact" (personal correspondence).

Narada Thera complements and amplifies these notions of sraddha with his own summary of its meaning in the Pali Canon:

Saddha is well-established confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha. Purification of its mental associates is its chief characteristic. It is compared to the water-purifying gem of the universal monarch (which) when thrown into water, causes mud and water-weeds to subside. The water is consequently purified. In the same way Saddha purifies the minds of its stains (101).

Narada is saying that faith, like meditation itself, is psychologically potent. It purifies its "mental associates." Faith not only makes contemplative practice possible, it contributes to its psychotransformative power.

The esteem given to faith by the Buddhist tradition did not disappear during its sojourn in China. Perhaps its most striking example is Fa-tsang's Hua-yen i ch'eng chiao i fen-ch'i chang, wherein are discussed the 52 stages of the Bodhisattva career leading up to Buddhahood. Only stages 51 and 52 are de facto Buddhahood, that is, samyak sambodhi. This fact lends importance to another, namely, that the first ten stages are grouped under the rubric of "faith" 信. For Fa-tsang, "faith" is already a kind of Buddhahood. What Fa-tsang inherited and lent systematic order to was the

earlier Indian and Chinese Mahayanist sense that faith, far from being a mere provisional trust in doctrines which awaits later validation, is already prajna-wisdom itself in an early stage of its unfolding. The awakening of faith is a degree of the same insight or understanding which when ripe will be full Buddhahood.

Cook has also reminded us that the Chinese greatly radicalized the Indian Buddhist doctrine of the tathagathagarbha. If the fertile Void of Buddha-mind was ontologically prior to the individual self, a sect like Ch'an reasoned, then who is it that has faith, who is it that attains enlightenment? Ch'an taught that the arising of such things as faith, meditation practices and so forth are the activities of the seed-potential within each person. Cook interprets that "it is the Buddha we have (are) in the form of a seed-potential which has faith, begins to do zazen and so on. Faith, then, is of the nature of wisdom or understanding because it is in fact the first appearance in our life of this innate Buddhahood" (personal correspondence).

Dōgen not only shares such an attitude, he brings it to its highest pitch. Dōgen was an indefatigable proponent of zazen, the discipline through which the Zen aspirant comes to realize his True Nature. Exhortations to zazen are one of the most prominent aspects of his writings. Yet for Dōgen the vaunted jiriki or self-power of Zen was closely knit to an underlying attitude of faith. The concept of faith belongs to the basic tenets of his teaching and, says

Dōgen scholar Hee Jin Kim, "zazen-only cannot be fully understood apart from the consideration of faith--the element fundamentally important in Dōgen's thought" (Kim, 1975: 80). He elaborates:

Dōgen does not imply that faith precedes enlightenment or is eventually replaced by enlightenment. Throughout the ongoing advance in enlightenment (bukkōjōji) faith and enlightenment, believing and seeing are twin companions of emptiness and the Buddha-nature. ...For Dōgen, faith lies in original enlightenment, enlightenment comes from original faith (81).

"Original enlightenment" refers to the Zen view that ab illud tempore, in our very nature, we are perfectly awake and enlightened. The Buddha-nature and our own nature are non-different. It is because our intelligence thus participates in its Source that faith, as a motive power of being, can arise: "Faith lies in original enlightenment."

And it is the intentionality of faith--a profound receptivity, an emptiness of the grasping self before Reality, and thus the perfect existential reflection of zazen--that helps us to overcome our ignorance of the fact of original enlightenment: "Enlightenment comes from original faith."

The similarity to John of the Cross is most striking. In John, the kenotic attitude of pure and dark faith accompanies and reinforces the practice of imageless contemplation so that together the two are able to overcome existential

separation from God. Yet it is our given, ontic union with God which predisposes us both to the awakening of faith and the practice of self-emptiness. In Dōgen, original, primordial enlightenment makes faith possible. Faith, polished to adamantine lustre in zazen, is the "substance" of enlightenment.

All beings are Buddha, says Dōgen. And practice and enlightenment are identical. These two basic ideas of Dōgen shed light on his conviction that faith is the beginning and end of Buddhist practice. Because practice and enlightenment are identical, Dōgen says that practice is not to be thought of as instrumental, as something done in order to achieve the ultimate goal. Many, it seems, have wrongly taken this as Dōgen's denial that there is cultivation, transformation and progress in Zen practice. In fact, it is Dōgen's typically Zen warning to guard against the kind of mind that becomes egoically attached to its own progress. The Hindu proverb, "Act without seeking the fruits of action," is not a denial of action's fruits but a caveat addressed to the seeker and the quality of his attitude. Zazen, and Zen practice in general, does effect transformation, does contribute to the realization of innate Buddhahood. But to practice with attachment to results is self-defeating. Zen practice must be carried out with an empty will.

Dōgen evokes empty willing in his hearers by asking them to practice in full conviction that the practice itself is Buddha-activity, the actualization of the Buddha

that one already is and will 'more fully' be. Writes Cook:

Faith marks the beginning of the Buddhist practice because at that point there is a conviction concerning the truth of the Buddha's teaching. However, though practice progresses, it is to be understood as a greater actualization of Buddha-nature (one inch of zazen, one inch of Buddhahood) and increasing certitude with regard to the veracity of the Dharma. One never goes beyond faith, in a sense, though a partial understanding is supplanted by a deeper understanding (personal correspondence).

One cannot overstate the profound harmony that exists between Dōgen's existential faith and that of John and other Christian contemplatives. According to Augustine, John's mentor in faith, God tells the searching heart, "You would not seek me had you not already found me." The practical import of both of Dōgen's ideas--innate Buddhahood and the identity of practice and enlightenment--are present here. The Christian contemplative seeks because God is already within him/her. All beings are Buddha-nature. Prayer is the realization of right relationship to God-activity, as zazen is the realization of right relationship to Buddha-activity. Each is an end in itself. They are also means to deeper insight into the primordially existent situation. The entire armory of Zen paradox is directed against the false interpretation of this activity as one of a self making progress. The Christian doctrines of the supremacy of God's grace and the error of pride serve an identical psychological purpose.

Dōgen's pronouncements on faith vary in significance. As Abbot of trainees and Patriarch for Buddhist believers, he affirms and extols Buddhist beliefs as necessary to the cultivation of religious life. As mystic and Zen master he abandons conventional truth to speak, insofar as it is possible, from the standpoint of the Absolute. The following quotations are offered to suggest this exoteric/esoteric range in Dōgen's utterances on faith:

He who venerates [the Buddha] with a believing heart will surely be blessed.... For according to the Dharma left us by the Perfected One, Buddha image, sutra and monk contribute to the blessedness of both men and gods. He who respects them will assuredly be blessed, and he who lacks faith commits a transgression (Shōbōgenzō Juundōshiki, in Dumoulin, 1963:171).

It is imperative for those who practice the Way to believe in it. Those who have faith in the Way should know for certain that they are unfailingly in the Way from the very beginning... (Gakudōyōjinshu, in Kim, 1975:81).

The spiritual realm of the Buddhas is totally incomprehensible. It is not reached by the workings of the mind; still less can it be known by a man of disbelief or inferior intelligence. Only a person of great capacity based on right faith is able to enter here (Bendōwa, Waddell and Abe, May 1971:138).

And, quite remarkably:

...while both your mind and your flesh may be at times in idleness or unbelief, confess it in utter simplicity to the Buddhas who come before you. This merit will richly nurture undefiled faith and spiritual

endeavor, which are unobstructed. As pure faith is realized, both the self and the others will be changed, and the sentient and the unsentient shall enjoy its efficacy far and wide (Shōbōgenzō Keiseisanshōku in Kim, 1975:81).

Nowhere else in Zen literature and rarely even in theistic literature is faith's power so highly extolled! Dōgen's utterance attributes to faith (rare though this particular species is) a power usually reserved solely for enlightenment, namely, a power which radiates from a personal locus to suffuse everything--the sentient as well as the unsentient.

In the following passage, Dōgen guards against the misunderstanding of faith as a superficial movement of the ego-will. The ontological primacy of the former cannot be the product of the derivative reality of the latter. Though the will-as-faith must seem to begin as a partial straining of one part of the personality against another, it discovers its own authenticity only when it suffuses the totality of man's mind-body. As such, it carries enormous psychotransformative power, coextensive with enlightenment:

The virtue of faith is engendered neither by the self nor by others. Because it is [generated] not by forcing oneself, by one's contrivances, by being coerced by others, or by fitting the self-made norm, faith has been imparted intimately through patriarchs in India and China. Faith is so called when the entire body becomes faith itself (konshin-jishin). Faith is one with the fruit of

enlightenment; the fruit of enlightenment is one with faith. If it is not the fruit of enlightenment, faith is not realized. On account of this it is said [in the Mahaprajna-paramita sastra of Nagarjuna] that faith is the entrance to the ocean of the Dharma. Indeed where faith is attained, there is the realization of Buddhas and patriarchs (Shōbōgenzō Sanjushichihon-bodaibumpō, in Kim, 1975:81).

Thus, for Dōgen, faith is not only a prerequisite and accompanying attitude to the practice of zazen, but an "attainment" as well. What begins, perhaps, as a relatively superficial assent to objects of faith, settles ever more deeply into the marrow of the psyche, transforming the will to that radical openness unto Reality wherein faith is no longer a means but an end, the very mark of the aspirant who knows his Principle and lives within Its Will. The praxis that clears the psyche of impediments so that gestating faith, increasingly object free, may descend to its root is, of course, zazen. Kapleau echoes the master's teaching on faith and zazen-only (shikantaza):

...the very foundation of shikan-taza is an unshakable faith that sitting...with mind void of all conceptions...is the actualization...of the inherently enlightened Bodhi-mind with which all are endowed. At the same time, this sitting is entered into in the faith that it will one day culminate in the...direct perception of the true nature of this Mind.... In authentic shikan-taza neither of these two elements of faith can be dispensed with... (Kapleau, 1965:7).

Joining the movement of the will as great faith (dai-shinkon) in Zen practice are two other intentional gestures: great doubt (dai-gidon) and great determination (dai-funshi). Dōgen does not mention these three as triad, but the tradition of doing so goes back at least as far as Hakuin. "A man who lacks any one of these," he says, "is like a three-legged kettle with a broken leg" (Miura & Sasaki, 1965:42-43). In contemporary Zen writing both Shibayama Roshi (1970:40) from the Rinzai tradition and Yasutani Roshi from the Soto (Kapleau, 1965:58-59) make mention of these three elements. If great doubt and great determination complete the tripod of Zen intention, they parallel, at least in structure, the hope and caritas which complete the Christian contemplative intention. The truest parallel to caritas is of course karuna or compassion and a reflection thereon will close this section. First, however, we shall look at great doubt and great determination in relation to hope and caritas, if only to enable these somewhat different species of religious willing to amplify one another.

Yasutani characterizes strong doubt (daigidon) in the following way:

Not a simple doubt, mind you, but a "doubt-mass"--and this inevitably stems from strong faith. It is a doubt as to why the world should appear so imperfect, so full of anxiety...when in fact our deep faith tells us the opposite is true.... It is as though we knew perfectly well we were millionaires and yet inexplicably found ourselves without a penny in our pockets. Strong doubt, therefore, exists in proportion to strong faith (Kapleau, 1965:59).

For John of the Cross, the awakening of faith carries with it the awakening of hope. When I know through faith that even as a sinner I am in essential union with God, that He seeks me and that "He is mine and all for me," I am allowed to hope, unceasingly, for the day in which his Presence will be fully known. This pure hope is the very opposite of phenomenal hopes and serves two purposes in John's scheme. It is both an antidote to vagabond memory that steals us from the present, and it is the burning flame of waiting and spiritual yearning which keeps contemplative stillness from degenerating into lassitude. It is not waiting for a future result so much as an emotive longing which is nevertheless grounded in the stillness of the present.

Zen's great doubt, or "perplexity" is a profound attitude of questioning that arises out of the inevitable paradox generated by the ideas of innate and acquired enlightenment. If this world and myself are in fact of the nature of the Buddha, why must I strive? The negative tone of "great doubt" contrasts rather sharply with John's positively toned "pure hope." Yet the gap seems bridged to some extent by the element of attentive intensity that each seems to engender. The tension arising from the paradox inherent in the great doubt--as well as the similar tension artificially generated in the koan exercise--keeps the fire lit, as it were, under the crucible of contemplative consciousness. When one is filled with the great doubt, one

is effectively prevented from slipping into the contentment accompanying the physiological serenity of deep samadhi. Great doubt may be likened to the red-hot iron ball of Mu (emptiness) which the practitioner is told to imagine he has swallowed and must disgorge.

Moreover, some of John's utterances lead us to believe that his hope is not far different from great doubt even in emotional tone. For since pure hope is kenotic or emptying-hope, it can often appear as yearning generated not positively, but negatively, by a kind of loving despair or great forlornness. Something of this may be glimpsed in John's reflections on hope in two verses of his Spiritual Canticle. On the one hand, John is convinced of his original union with God; on the other, he experiences the dissonance between the real and the apparent. The following verses suggest the same kind of present-centered yearning and perplexity, which, as with Zen's great doubt, add a crucial emotive energy to the contemplative opus:

How do you endure
O Life, not living where you live?
And being brought near death
By the arrows you receive
From that which you conceive of your Beloved (C8).

Why, since You wounded
This heart, don't You heal it?
And why, since You stole it from me,
Do You leave it so,
And fail to carry off what You have stolen? (C9).

John's comment upon the latter stanza is:

For the impatient love here manifested will endure no idleness and allow no rest to the soul in its affliction, but shows its longings in every way until it discovers a remedy (C9,2).

Similarly, Garma Chang says,

When working on Zen, the important thing is to generate the I-chin (doubt sensation).... The greater the doubt, the greater the awakening.... When working on Zen, the worst thing is to become attached to quietness, because this will unknowingly cause you to be engrossed in dead stillness... (Chang, 1959:95).

Thus, it would seem that hope and great doubt may similarly stand for an emotional intensity which exists importantly, albeit mysteriously, in the quietude of contemplation.

The final leg of this three-legged movement of the Zen contemplative will is determination. Hakuin testifies to its importance:

...But even though he has sincere faith, if a man does not bring concentrated doubt to bear...he cannot penetrate [the Fundamental Principle] completely. And, though this ball of doubt be firmly solidified, if it is not succeeded by great tenacity of purpose, it will not be shattered (Sokko-roku kaiken fusetsu in Miura and Sasaki, 1965:43).

Tenacity of purpose has of course been an essential element of the Buddhist path from its beginnings. The second of the five cardinal virtues spoken of in Pali scriptures

is vigour. Retaining its status as a cardinal virtue it also became in the embrace of the Mahayana one of the six perfections of the bodhisattva. Conze (1962:48) provides us with the synonym, "determination," which he takes from the Sanskrit adhimoksha, literally, the coming-ness of liberation. If determination and tenacity of purpose reach an apex anywhere in Buddhism it is in Zen where the teacher's strident exhortations regarding the mental effort of his students often take on a militant tone. Yasutani extends Hakuin's description of determination with his own:

From this feeling of doubt, the third essential, strong determination (dai-funshi), naturally arises. It is an overwhelming determination to dispel this doubt with the whole force of our energy and will. Believing with every pore of our being in the truth of the Buddha's teaching that we are all endowed with the immaculate Bodhi-mind, we resolve to discover and experience the reality of this Mind for ourselves (Kapleau, 1965:59).

Does Zen's "determination" bear a likeness to John of the Cross' caritas? To see the resemblance we must recall John's equation between growth in caritas and the emptying of egocentric willfulness. John does not seek to destroy the essential power of human will. In fact, if any 'faculty' provides the energy crucial for the psychotransformative opus, it is the will. The will makes possible the "loving attentiveness" in which non-discursive contemplation proceeds. It moves the intellect in faith and redirects the

memory in hope. Struggling against its own dispersion amid phenomenal objects, the will seeks its source in God.

Thus, when John calls for the denudation of the will, he directs his energies not against the will's essential power but against the egocentric valence which ensnares it. Ignorant of its final cause and lacking awareness of its union with God, the human will is perverted, dispersed. John wishes to turn the will's centrifugal dispersions into centripetal and unitive advances towards its own Source. It is as if John is aware that that which Spinoza called conatus, the essential will of individual being, is the will of God within him. Yet the voice of this ontic Will is drowned out by the clamor of phenomenal desiring and willing. To "empty" the mind of the self-reflexive tendency of phenomenal willing, would be to reveal the essential will of God within him. And one of John's names for the fruit of this realization is caritas.

With characteristic boldness, D. T. Suzuki provides us with a Zen rendition of the dynamic we are here trying to clarify in John of the Cross. Suzuki writes:

The truth is that what involves the totality of human existence is not a matter of intellection but of the will in its most primary sense.... The will...lies at the root of all existence and unites them all in the oneness of being. The one great will from which all these wills, infinitely varied, flow is what I call the...zero-reservoir of infinite possibility. The "Mu" is thus linked to [this ontological Ground] by working on the conative plane of consciousness. The koan

that looks intellectual or dialectical... finally leads one psychologically to the conative center of consciousness and thus to the Source itself (Fromm, et al, 1960: 48,51).

We are now in a position to answer the question regarding the likeness between Zen determination and John of the Cross' caritas. Insofar as each seems to mark the juncture at which the human will begins to know its divine Source, they could be said to play similar roles. But we have tried to show that both sets of three virtues are, at base, profoundly intentional--all three mark this crucial transformation of will. Determination and caritas cannot be uniquely linked on this point. Each shows a certain emotive intensity, but this too is not a strong point of comparison. It seems safe to say that "determination" has no parallel in John's intentional virtues of faith, hope and charity. The element of vigour must be presupposed in all John's metaphors of ascent, struggle and so forth.

The fullness of John's contemplative caritas finds proper reflection only in Buddhist karuna. Compassion is the mother of Zen practice; it gives birth to it and nurtures it. While marking a profound dimension of human emotivity, compassion's deepest meaning is not psychological but ontological. It is "in" and "toward" the compassionate dimension of reality that the individual, fragmentary will is to be transformed. It is not wrong to say that one can 'stir up' compassion. But the deepest experiences of compassion

occur when one is empty enough of self for it to manifest and flow autonomously. The entire contemplative opus toward wisdom, holiness and liberation begins, for Buddhists, with a movement of the heart toward the salvation and happiness of and care for all brother beings. Commenting on a compassionate verse in the first karika of Santideva's Sikṣasamuccaya, Lama Govinda writes:

Here we come to the heart of the problem and to the chief motive of Buddhist prayer: it is love and compassion, based on the profound knowledge of the essential unity of life and the mutual relationship of all sentient beings (23).

Dōgen takes up the same theme while instructing trainees:

When one awakens to True Wisdom, it means that one is willing to save all living things before one has actually saved oneself.... The Four Wisdoms--charity, tenderness, benevolence and sympathy are the means we have of helping others, and represent the bodhisattva's aspirations.... To behold all beings with the eye of compassion and to speak kindly to them is the meaning of tenderness.... Tenderness can have a revolutionary impact on the mind of man...O you seekers of Enlightenment, meditate deeply upon these teachings and do not make light of them (Shōbōgenzō Shushōgi, in Kennet, 1972:132-34).

Elsewhere in the Shōbōgenzō, Dōgen says:

Within this hall we must love each other and be deeply grateful for the opportunity of possessing a compassionate mind... (Shōbōgenzō Shuryōshingi, in Kennet, 1972:77).

In a Zen community one is constantly reminded of this profoundly intentional context of practice. The four vows of the bodhisattva, a refrain in Zen training repeated four times a day during a sesshin, begin with the vow of compassion:

However innumerable sentient beings are,
I vow to save them.

Kennet Roshi's description of a layman's arrival to study Zen cites compassion as the "mental attitude to be adopted in daily life, as well as in zazen." She writes:

When a layman arrives to study, he is taken to the layman's meditation hall and shown the statue of Kanzeon [the bodhisattva of compassion]. He is told that he must become like Kanzeon.... Kanzeon [is] an image embodying the characteristics of mercy and compassion which the Zen trainee must find within himself...and cultivate to good growth through zazen... (1972:31,30).

Kennet Roshi concludes, "The first duty of a layman in studying Zen is to find and bring forth the heart of compassion" (33).

Buddhist compassion manifests itself in specific acts as well as in a contemplative state of being which reverberates to and embraces the entire expanse of sentient beings. It is the latter, ontological quality of compassion which is often contrasted with the supposed active and

busily heroic quality of Christian love. This contrast does exist, but only when one insists on comparing an esoteric or contemplative aspect of one religion with an exoteric aspect of another. John of the Cross, as contemplative, is well aware of the invitations to pride and the pitfalls of egoic heroism to which untempered Christian 'loving' can lead. In a striking passage, he paints a picture of an ontological caritas and love far more potent and deep than its active counterpart, a love suggestive of the quality which radiates from the Buddhist's empty center:

...when she [the soul] reaches that stage [contemplation] she ought not to occupy herself with other external works and practices which can hinder her...from that loving attention to God...because a little of this pure love is more precious...although the soul appears to be doing nothing, than all those works put together.... Whenever... a soul has some degree of this solitary love, harm would be done...if...people should... occupy her in...active things.... Let those who are very active and who think to encircle the world with their preachings and external works learn...that they would give much more... if they spent even half this time remaining with God in prayer. It is certain that they would do more and with less labour with one work than they now do with a thousand...; for to act in any other way is to hammer vigorously and accomplish little more than nothing...and it may sometimes even do harm (C29,2-4).

Acts of faith, hope and caritas may be the primer to a mature spirituality, but they fail to take significant root and become the pure theological virtues if unaccompanied by

a discipline of prayer whereby the self-willfulness of ordinary consciousness is constantly being undercut and transformed. So too in Zen. Strong faith, strong doubt, great determination and great compassion are each bound to begin as weak voices amid a crowd. Prerequisites to effective zazen all, they nevertheless reach their true depth and strength only in the zazen-centered and zazen-led process of consciousness transformation. Whole in themselves and distinguishable from one another, the contemplative virtues of John of the Cross and Dōgen (Zen) nevertheless bespeak at their most fundamental level a single, ardent intentionality constantly tempered in the well of emptiness: a movement of the will, at once assertive and receptive, toward the realization of its Source. It is in this willed will-lessness, this striving-of-letting-be that John of the Cross and Dōgen seek transformation in their deepest Nature, so as to actualize, from their personal loci within the sentient continuum, the wisdom and love which are that Nature's undying life.

V. Empty Willing: The Psychotransformative
Significance of the
Contemplative Gesture

When we analyze with all the tools modern psychoanalysis brings us, we shall find ourselves pushed back to the level of attention or intention as the seat of will.

Rollo May, Love and Will

1. ATTENTION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Without arguing about who is clever...
just do zazen. You will then naturally
improve.

Dōgen

a. The Question of Depth

Contemplative method, by the very fact of what it offers to man--the conformation of his living consciousness to Ultimate Reality (the Way, the Will of God)--claims to be a psychology of depth. Yet it differs starkly from the contemporary psychology that takes that adjective as its own in at least one crucial respect: contemplative method, as we have presented it through the writings of John and Dōgen, does not involve "the unconscious." More specifically, the psychotransformative paradigm behind contemplative praxis does not involve "bringing unconscious contents to consciousness." Neither John nor Dōgen pays particular attention to the examination or interpretation of the mind's autonomous productions in waking or dream life.

But neither does contemplative method spring to the usual alternative. It does not rely on conscious rationality over against an exploration of the unconscious. Rather, it stands a middle ground that refuses the lure of both. We have called this middle ground non-discursive attention. To understand its uniqueness, it will help us

to take a brief look at an operational paradigm of depth psychology.

Practitioners in the modern schools of depth psychology recognize two kinds of thinking, two languages, between which and by means of which psychic life is maintained. Freud's terms are primary and secondary process; Jung's non-directed and directed thinking. Primary process is the language or thought-process of the unconscious psyche. Like blood and breath it flows on ceaselessly beneath the surface skin of consciousness, a river of tendencies, impulses, predispositions, desires, anxieties and drives which influence and often determine behavior. Depth psychology attempts to alter behavior patterns by building bridges between secondary process (conscious rationality) and primary process though commerce on this bridge is conducted quite differently according to the different points of view of the schools.

For example, Freud saw primary process as basically unruly and chaotic, antagonistic to well-being, especially if left unconscious. Its instinctual demand and infantile character had to be tamed, educated and re-directed by the rational process if it was in any way to be turned from foe to friend. Jung, on the other hand, though warning of primary process' capacity to overwhelm and cripple conscious life, takes overall a more friendly view of it. Opposing Freud's tendency to see the psyche as an inexorable conflict of forces, Jung understands the domains of primary

and secondary process to be encompassed by a governing principle of equilibrium. Primary process is a friend to secondary process and, if consciously befriended, a boon to its life and creativity. It is a stream of affect, instinct and image that seeks somehow to describe and promote individual growth.

Despite different approaches, however, depth psychologists are united in their fascination with the vast, unexplored field of primary, non-directed mentation opened up by Freud's pioneering effort. It is little wonder that he, Jung and others invested all their creative energies in searching for the laws that governed this field. Nor is it surprising that their therapeutic, psychotransformative strategies came to rest on a single basic formula: the bringing of unconscious contents to consciousness. Different attitudes, as we have said, led to distinct ways of filling in the formula. Freud would defeat primary process, decipher its messages, explain it; Jung would befriend primary process, embrace its messages, consult it. Still, the "bringing of unconscious contents to consciousness" forms the strategic heart of each man's vision of psychological transformation.

The heart of the contemplative gesture, by contrast, is neither attention to primary process, nor reliance on secondary process nor any overt commerce between the two. It is, as far as we know, a form of mentation found nowhere but in spiritual tradition. This gesture, as we have argued

above, is the systematic, methodical use of non-discursive attention. It is neither primary process thinking nor secondary process thinking, but, as Dōgen calls it, non-thinking. The questions at hand are: is this gesture psychotransformatively effective--that is, does it alter the structural determinants of consciousness to a degree that merits the accolade "depth?" And, if so, how?

The answer to the first question from the camp of depth psychology, we might surmise, would be that it can do no such thing. Without an awareness of the unconscious or without a method of exploring and interpreting it, one is bound to be lived by it. The attempts of spiritual discipline to engender the "new man" without consulting the unconscious are attempts involving repression, regression and self-delusion on a grand scale.

But the record causes us to object. Certainly aberrant personalities dot the pages of religious history but generally speaking, the great contemplatives have offered images of the best that man can be. Regression and self-delusion probably attract little genuine love. Yet contemplatives and saints seem often to have been the magnetic center of great love and dedication, and remain to this day sources of inspiration. The ability of the religious will when joined to contemplative discipline to produce unusually deep transformations of the psyche is attested to by the psychoanalyst Medard Boss. Writing of his experience in India, he says:

...the Indian sages seem to have worked the miracle of truly freeing themselves from evil. I was forced to the conclusion that in them is nothing at all evil, covetous, destructive, fearful, guilty, or dark, to be consciously controlled and unconsciously repressed. No matter how carefully I observed the waking lives of holy men, no matter how ready they were to tell me about their dreams, I could not detect in the best of them a trace of selfish action or any kind of repressed or consciously concealed shadow life. They seemed to me to consist of pure love, which had long since redeemed in them all hate and desire (188).

Many great religious figures are not contemplatives in the practical, methodical sense here being investigated. Some have simply been possessed of an unshakable predisposition of the heart which results in a life of great creativity or outstanding service to mankind. Yet many others, like Catholic contemplatives and Zen Buddhists, take this predisposition of the heart as a starting point and from there endeavored to transform the structure of consciousness toward a new awareness, a new internal freedom and beatitude. We must take for granted that contemplative discipline can indeed issue in deep psychological transformation, but how does it work?

Depth psychology has taught us that meaningful psychological change occurs only as we become free of the conflicts and automatisms that have been etched into our psychic network. Whether we take Freud's "where id was there let ego be" or Jung's "walking through life" as opposed to "being dragged through," the goal of the work is to somehow get

beyond old, entrenched patterns of thought, behavior and emotive reaction which keep us on a psychic treadmill. The end of depth psychology is consciousness' right relation to its structural determinants and the personality's ability to be wholly and healthily in the world.

The operational paradigm of depth psychology is thus marked by a determination to clear vision. It is the determination not to cloud our vision with unconscious identifications, projections and compulsive acting out of what we see, but simply to see it clearly and relate to it rightly. Ann and Barry Ulanov compare the gradual process of freeing oneself from projection to Husserl's phenomenological epoche or "bracketing:"

If we could bracket all our preconceptions--lay them aside and look directly at what is before us--phenomena might be allowed to show themselves directly, in their and our immediacy. Depth psychology seeks to set aside the psychological blocks that efface such simplicity of vision, those neurotic biases, conflicts and problems which obstruct the bracketing and the freedom that it brings to contemplate the world as it is in itself (56).

Neither the phenomenologist nor the psychologist claims to arrive at the ding an sich; they claim only to erase certain modalities of phenomenal blindness. By such erasure, reality, whatever be its ultimate nature, is disclosed with purer accuracy to the inquiring mind and in more beneficent light to the undivided and unconflicted self.

Our reflection on the contemplative gesture shall continue along similar lines. This study attempts to keep the mystical experience and the claims surrounding it in the background. We have avoided the "peak experience" and turned our attention to the climb. Rather than attempting to explain the mystic's experience of the Absolute, we are taking a gentler approach, concentrating on how the practice of contemplation may be understood to erase modalities of human blindness, slash the cords of human bondage. In what follows we shall offer a psychospiritual understanding of contemplative method, seeking the answer as to how it makes its contribution to simplicity of vision, to the untying of psychological knots, to the undoing of the automatism and conflict in the self which place a veil between it and the world.

In our textual study of John and Dōgen we discovered two interrelated gestures comprising contemplative method--attention and intention. This section and the following one will consider each of these in turn. Propaedeutic to both treatments, however, is the task of marking out a broad philosophical horizon against which alone the fullness of meaning which the contemplative gesture has for man becomes clear. To this end we shall have to enter upon an excursus which is likely to seem an aimless digression. Indeed, some of the threads presently to be laid out will not be tied up until our final chapter. For this we beg the reader's patience.

b. Man's Dual Ontological Motives

Throughout his "tenacious exploration of the universe of desire" (Ricoeur, 1970), and his wish to understand the energetic Force which called the tune of the psyche's dance, Freud sensed an interplay, indeed a conflict of opposing elements. Characteristically, he revised and reformulated his understanding with each new vista opened by psycho-analytic investigation. Freud first conceived the antagonists as the survival instinct, which acted on behalf of the individual, and the sexual instinct which acted on behalf of the species. Later, as Freud shifted his attention from mapping the unconscious to more existential concerns and a developmental psychology of personality, the ego was understood as the pitiable slave of two diametrically opposed masters, the liberal id and the conservative super ego. But as Freud's mind moved to and fro between consulting room and culture, between ontogeny and phylogeny, between individual and world, he caught glimpses of the systole and diastole of all that lives, the expansion and contraction that manifests itself in all creation, differing from one locus to another only in rhythm and intensity. Faced with the omnipresence and irresistibility of these seemingly antagonistic forces, Freud gave them mythical names: Eros and Thanatos. Six years before his death he described them, simply, in the following words:

...the instincts that we believe in divide themselves into two groups--the erotic

instincts, which seek to combine more and more living substance into ever greater unities, and the death instincts which oppose this effort and lead what is living back into its organic state. From the concurrent and opposing action of these two, proceed the phenomena of life which are brought to an end by death (1964b:107).

Freud was not the first to formulate a total process in terms of the action between two complementary or opposing forces. Already in 800 B.C. the Chinese had formed a consistent theory of universal process with the principles of yin and yang. But Freud was the first to set the formulation atop a mountain of clinical evidence. The obviously archetypal nature of the idea of dynamic polarity, linked with Freud's evidence and persuasiveness, was more than enough to keep the Eros-Thanatos formulation from being easily dismissed. Moreover, Eros--the synthetic, unifying force in nature--was empirically evident. Not so, however, with its negative counterpart. The negative complement was logically and psychologically necessary, but even early on, to men like Jung and Rank, the idea of a 'death instinct' was weird, indigestible.

As a force which, in Freud's words, "works silently within the organism towards its disintegration," Thanatos had at least some resonance with the second law of thermodynamics. But, as Koestler has suggested, the latter applies only to closed systems not to living organisms. (64n). Moreover, Koestler puzzles, it is hard to understand

how this silent disintegrative force is linked to overt aggression, a phenomenon for which Thanatos was also used as an explanatory principle:

Freud's death instinct which works so quietly within the organism, appears, when directed outward, as active destructiveness or sadism. How these two aspects of Thanatos can be harmonized and causally connected is difficult to see. For the first aspect is that of a physico-chemical process which tends to reduce living cells to quiescence and ultimately to dust; while the second aspect shows a coordinated, violent aggression of the whole organism against other organisms. The process by which the silent sliding towards senescence and disintegration is converted into the infliction of violence on others is not explained by Freud (64-65).

Koestler also marshals recent biological research into the protozoa to argue that neither senescence nor natural death are inevitable consequences of life qua life. In many primitive, multicellular animals senescence and death are absent. "Fusion" and "budding" leave no residue behind. In the long view of evolution, the phenomenon of natural, biological death is a relatively new thing. Koestler concludes that "Freud's primary drives, sexuality and the death-wish cannot claim universal validity; both are based on biological novelties which appear only on a relatively high level of evolution" (66).

Koestler, however, does not reject the idea of dual ontological motives. Far from being a mere debunker of Freud, he is interested in finding a formulation that can

claim universal validity. The phrase "dual ontological motives," we might add, is not Koestler's. It belongs to Ernest Becker. What is interesting is that, in quite independent works, Koestler, working from the outposts of biology and physics, and Becker, forging a synthesis between psychoanalytic genius and the insight of the western existential-theological tradition (1973) have arrived at virtually the same formulation. We find this convergence compelling. And because no human psychology, including the psychology of contemplation, should fail to take account of an interplay of forces that is found alike in protozoa, people and planetary systems, we are offering these "ontological motives" as a horizon against which we can frame our understanding of the contemplative response to reality.

A suggestive sketch need not detain us long. It begins with a reflection on the meanings of "part" and "whole." "Part" usually conveys the meaning of something fragmentary and incomplete, something which finds its existence or function only as part of a larger whole. "Whole" usually conveys something complete in itself, existing autonomously. These meanings of part and whole are ingrained in our speech and thought. But the more closely we examine the world within us and around us, the more we find that "parts" and "wholes" in any absolute sense do not exist--neither in the domain of living organisms, nor in social organizations, nor in the encompassing universe.

Each part we seize upon will be seen to consist of constitutive parts which then make that "part" a quasi-autonomous whole. Yet each "whole" is but a sub-whole of a larger, more encompassing whole in which it performs its function. The reader will admit that he or she is something of an autonomous whole, yet the 'partness' of an individual, both within the social organization and the biosphere, is obvious. As we descend into the living organism we find the same pattern. The body is not a complex chain of quarks (as of this writing, the closest physicists have come to "ultimate" particles) telling each other what to do, but a multi-leveled, stratified hierarchy of sub-wholes--the circulatory system, the digestive system, the autonomic nervous system, and so forth--which in turn branch into sub-wholes of a lower order, such as organs and tissues, down to individual cells, and the sub-wholes by which they are constituted.

Koestler has coined a term for these hierarchically arranged sub-wholes found throughout the manifest world: holon. A holon is a part of some larger whole, yet in its own right, a "stable, integrated structure, equipped with self-regulatory devices and enjoying a considerable degree of autonomy and self-government." Koestler says:

Cells, muscles, nerves, organs all have their intrinsic rhythms and patterns of activity, often manifested spontaneously without external stimulation; they are subordinated as parts to higher centers...

but at the same time function as quasi-autonomous wholes. They are Janus-faced. The face turned upward, toward the higher levels, is that of a dependent part; the face turned downward, toward its own constituents, is that of a whole of remarkable self-sufficiency (27).

The interdependent functioning of sub-wholes is apparent not only in the continuity of the life-process of an organism, but in cognitive and motor processes as well. Driving a car does not consist in the conscious activation of individual muscles in the driver's brain, but in the triggering of sub-routines, functional or behavioral holons like accelerating, braking, changing gears, and so forth. Chomsky's school of psycholinguistics understands the act of speech as a kind of spelling out of an intention or amorphous idea through a step by step activation of sub-wholes which terminate in the actual motion-pattern of the vocal chords.

Koestler's mentor in all of this is general systems theory which proposes that the more we understand of the interdependent parts of the universal continuum the more we see the stratified structure of sub-wholes co-operating in a chain of higher, more inclusive centers. Koestler's point is that whether we take the astronomer's view of the wheels-within-wheels display of solar systems, or the astounding complexity of a cell, or, between them, the undeniable wholeness/partness of the human individual, it should be at least conceivable that we are living in a

system of holons, a "holarchy."

Now, if we human beings are holons in the universal continuum, we too are Janus-faced entities. We too have a face turned upward toward the higher and more inclusive levels of the holarchy, the face of a subordinate part in a larger system, and a face turned downward to the holons of which we are composed showing us to be quasi-autonomous wholes in our own right. Not only "we" as whole organisms but every part of the "we" possesses this Janus-faced disposition. This implies, since we are living organisms in process, that every holon of which we are composed, including the holon that we are is possessed of two opposite tendencies or potentials. Koestler calls them the integrative tendency (or "participatory" or "self-transcending") to function as part of the larger whole, and a self-assertive tendency to preserve its individual autonomy. In other words:

The self-assertive tendency is the dynamic expression of the holon's wholeness, its integrative tendency the dynamic expression of its partness (58).

If the universe is a holarchy in somewhat the same manner as Koestler suggests, and if these two dynamic tendencies are simultaneously in act throughout the numerous dimensions of the holarchic order, we might very well suppose them to be deep-rooted dynamics within human beings. Indeed, the self-assertive tendency and the integrative

tendency, when moved from the cosmic to the psychological order, are Koestler's version of Freud's Eros and Thanatos. The crucial difference is that, in Koestler's formulation, the barren negativity of Thanatos becomes a creative negativity: the self-naughting involved in any genuinely integrative or self-transcending activity. It becomes the negativity through which the destructive potential of the self-assertive tendency is checked. In his own remarkable study of Freud, Ricoeur (1970), also pondering the oddity of a death instinct, puts it perfectly:

Do we not find [in the idea of Eros/Thanatos] the beginning of a genuine dialectic of desire in which negation is placed at the very center of desire? Are we not invited thereby to reinterpret the death instinct and relate it to the negativity through which desire, Eros, is educated and humanized? (482).

Indeed we are. And it is Ernest Becker who responds to the invitation with the decisive psychological formulation. No one, it seems, needs to be convinced of the individuating, self-assertive force that pulses through all forms of life. Before Freud, Spinoza had given this force a powerful rendition in the term conatus, Schopenhauer in the term will. Becker is content to keep Freud's term, Eros. But he too is dissatisfied with both Freud's name and Freud's understanding of that mysterious countervailing force.

Both Koestler and Becker wonder why Freud did not reach for the obvious existential explanation of aggression: that it is a pathological extreme of the self-assertive tendency when frustrated or provoked beyond a critical limit. Such an explanation, as Koestler says, would not require the "gratuitous postulate of a death instinct for which there is not a trace of evidence anywhere in biology" (65). We may also note that sexuality in this new reading of the ontological motives is not to be classed under Eros at all. For Eros embraces the self-striving, individuation urge which at a pathological level becomes aggression. Sexuality, by contrast, is mainly in the service of the species, the larger whole. Sex is a specific manifestation of the agapaic, integrative tendency, the desire to submit, to merge oneself with the whole and only in connection with an individual's assertive desire, turned pathological, does it become a form of aggression. Ironically, this formulation echoes back to Freud's earliest formulation of the instinctual dualism as that between individual and species survival.

In any case, the idea of a "death instinct," says Becker, can be safely relegated to the dust bin of history" (99). Instead, Becker, standing on the shoulders of Rank and Kierkegaard, calls it Agape. Agape is that self-negating, self-transcending tendency which can be morbid and destructive if left unbalanced, but whose proper role in the heart of man is to shape Eros toward its true End.

Becker's Eros and Agape, cast in the language of depth psychology and the existentialist philosophical tradition, reads as a psychological instance of Koestler's more encompassing theory:

We...introduce a paradox that seems to go right to the heart of organismic life and that is especially sharpened in man. [It] takes the form of two motives or urges that seem to be part of creature consciousness and that point in opposite directions. On the one hand, the creature is impelled by a powerful desire to merge himself with the rest of nature. On the other hand he wants to be unique, to stand out as something different and apart....

We see...the ontological tragedy...so peculiar to man. If he gives in to Agape he risks failing to develop himself, his active contribution to the rest of life. If he expands Eros too much he seeks cutting himself off from natural dependency, from duty to a larger creation; he pulls away from the healing power of gratitude and humility that he must naturally feel for having been created (153-54).

If this is an accurate casting of man's psychological predicament at its most generalized level, then it follows that what is most fruitful and good for man would stem from a life that somehow harmonizes these two motives. Becker, like Ricoeur, argues that the potential for such harmony is available in a life of mature religious faith, though both admit that the religious way is replete with the kind of projective, self-deceptive pitfalls which led Freud to categorically dismiss it as illusion.

For the remainder of the dissertation, we shall be carrying Becker's thesis forward, though we shall be working with a very particular species of religious faith, namely, the contemplative gesture. Indeed, we shall imply that the contemplative gesture is the epitome of religious faith and, as such, holds forth to man the most perfect balance of the ontological motives he can achieve.

c. Man's Psychological Predicament: A Closer View

With our philosophical horizon in place, we may now descend to take a closer look at man's psychological predicament and how the contemplative gestures of attention and intention lead to freedom therefrom. The role of intention, or contemplative will, will be examined in the final section. The remainder of this section will concern itself with attention as a psychotransformative strategy.

The self-assertive motive in nature, so necessary to the individuation of living forms, is in self-conscious, reflective man prey to complication. For it thrusts upon him at birth the difficult project of achieving his own self-esteem. Difficult, because that unavoidable internal sense of being the center of things bequeathed to him in early years demands continuation and expansion in a world where he is decidedly not the center. The inescapable narcissism of the self-assertive tendency forms in the growing child a reflex that will shape the very structure of his consciousness: the denial of contingency. For in order to

fulfil that profound ontological motive he must defend himself against those truths of thought and experience which emphasize his contingency, while playing up those phenomena which support the self-project. By the time he is old enough to take an objective view of the project, he is already hopelessly enmeshed in it, with little chance to escape from its incessant demands. The naked urge for importance unfolds into an egocentric system in which one's beliefs, feelings, perceptions and behaviors are automatically viewed and assessed around his sense of value and worth as an individual.

The assessment process, automatic and barely conscious, is basically simple. Experiences, external and internal, are divided according to whether they expand or diminish us, affirm or negate our being. A whole webwork of likes and dislikes gradually develops, forming the personality in the same way that black and white dots can create the illusion of a face.

We are speaking here of emotive assessments which are distinctly psychological. Parenthetically, however, we may note that this yes/no, on/off reactivity takes place even in the midst of discursive thinking and logical assessment. This basic, reactive flip/flop of the mind, it seems, cuts deep into its structure. Logical assessments, however, seem less automatic and less determined than the emotive assessments. The latter, too, seem to leave deeper tracks, to weave greater numbers of ensnaring strands in the ego-referential web.

Emotive reactions do not appear and disappear in consciousness like snow on the water. They leave traces which are then susceptible to being re-aggravated by ongoing conscious experience which acts to catalyze associational chains. Since this is perhaps a bit abstract, we offer an illustration (in the first person for simplicity's sake) of what we mean. Suppose I were presenting this part of my thesis to a professional audience, full of hope that it would be persuasive and speak well of my intellectual prowess and so forth (thus temporarily "winning" the case for self-esteem). If at the conclusion I received a favorable response, my psyche would note it and be pleased. But it would not stop there. That affirmation of my being would kick off an associational chain, of which I may be only partly aware, which reels off a litany of what a clever and finely appointed fellow I am, painting my inner environment in rather bright colors. Like all highs, however, it would eventually stumble into the limits of the temporal plane and there begin its search for the next affirmation.

Similarly, if I received an unfavorable response, my psyche would have momentarily failed in its constant erotic quest to be somebody. This would result in some degree of existential and emotional pain. But surely the drama would not stop there. The negation or diminishment of my being would ignite its own associational chain and I would be subjected to a command performance by the chorus of my contingencies.

There is nothing wrong of course with emotions as such. They are natural manifestations of real joy and real pain. Zen masters cry (Schlagel:21), and Christian contemplatives burn with love. But our every day imaginary associations prolong emotive experience into a spasm or cramp that afflicts our entire reception of and response to the world. And at our worst we simply move from cramp to cramp.

Under the sway of the self-assertive tendency, then, the functioning of ordinary human consciousness is to a great extent automatically reactive and associative. Its life of incessant emotive assessment--"Am I a somebody?"--results in an endless stream of imaginary elaborations that color and determine one's state of consciousness and thus one's entire sense of the internal and external world.

On the internal side, there constellates what may be called a "self image"--a general sense of self that remains somewhat constant throughout existential episodes. The self-image of course represents but a fraction of the total self, yet we begin to mistake it for the latter because of its ability to hold our attention in thrall. The self-image is like an ongoing abstract of the total imaginary/emotive film which is being spun, beyond our control, around our experiences. The production of this film, we may suppose, requires significant quanta of energy which might otherwise be stored up or more profitably used. What is in fact a drain of energy is experienced by the consciousness habituated to it as the normal state of things. This

chronic self-centeredness and the distance it creates between the person and reality makes it easier to understand the psychological point behind the Christian's insistence on the pervasiveness of sin and the Buddhist's on the deep-rootedness of ignorance.

Moreover, John and Dōgen would have us understand through their similes of light and purity that consciousness, in itself, is a pure, empty reflecting medium. Put in a clumsy quantitative metaphor, consciousness must achieve its own emptiness before "God can fill it" or "Original Mind can be perceived." For consciousness, in its ordinary development, becomes bound up and indistinguishable from the objects which flow upon it. Perhaps the most tragic event in this process is that the abstracted self-image, actually a composite content of consciousness, becomes promoted to the status of that which has and exercises consciousness (Washburn, 1979:74-86). To the eye of the contemplative, this is a very fundamental category mistake. We have created something where there is nothing. The self is consequently unable to see that its erotic completion lies in seeing through itself, and instead is pointed toward the objects of consciousness as those upon which to carry out the self-assertive project. It matters little whether the dominant theme of those objects is intellectual enrichment, scientific discovery, monetary gain or sexual conquest. Their psychological common denominator is the self-assertive project. This project, with its inherent

need to deny contingency, aggravates the reactive, imaginative film in a virtually inescapable cycle. As long as consciousness remains identified with its objects, this self-aggravating system knows no end.

On the external side, our imaginative-emotive film not only incessantly comments on our incoming experience, but superimposes itself upon it, colors it, obscures it. Here, it should be mentioned that there are actually two films in consciousness, the imaginary one we have been describing and the real, imaginal film based on our primary perception of the real present. Neither John nor Dōgen, nor any contemplative with which we are familiar, objects to sensory images or the activity of the senses in general. The two films, however, are closely interwoven in consciousness so that the quality of the imaginary film cannot but affect the real film of primary perception. As a result of our own longing for significance and the emotive reactivity which it spawns, we limit, select, organize, and interpret the data of experience. Each of us is involved, in Castaneda's words, in a "personal construction of reality." Our inner world, then, becomes a representation according to a personal order, an interlocking network of compensations which, says H. Benoit:

is like a special section cut in the volume of the universe.... Every compensation is essentially constituted by an image involving my ego, by an image center around which is organized a multitude of satellite images....

The essential character of a compensation is not that it should be agreeable to me, but that it should represent the universe to me in a perspective such that I am at the center of it (136) /13/.

d. Contemplation: The Strategy of Non-Discursive Attention

Behind John's and Dōgen's talk of purity, emptiness and non-thinking, we want to suggest, is a program to deproject, deautomatize and disassemble the personal, egocentric construction of reality. If this false superimposition is largely a reflex of the self-assertive motive, we now want to propose that the religious impulse in man is essentially a reflex of its complement: the integrative, self-transcending motive.

The self-transcending motive is not without its dangers. Grown cancerous it leads to neurotic masochism--self-naughting gone pathological. It must not stand in absolute opposition to the erotic motive, only complementary to it. Pan-religious testimonies to the insidiousness of pride, however, evidence the ease with which the self-assertive motive undermines its complement and uses it as a mask. For holy acts, religious imaginings and God-talk, however subtle, nevertheless hold out a hook on which man can hang his ego, provide a ground upon which he can stand to claim, if only to himself, his own importance. Many who embrace religious faith succeed only in building another altar to another false God.

It is because the contemplative gesture undermines even this most subtle potential for clinging that we have called it the epitome of religious faith. For it includes the integrative tendency of the religious posture as such, but adds to that a 'fail safe'--a discipline to transform consciousness, to break it of its deeply ingrained habit of identification, attachment and idolatry. The job of the spiritual warrior, says Casteneda's Don Juan, is to "stop the world"--to cut off the self-elaborating imaginary film. And he calls the sine qua non element of that work "stopping the internal dialogue." "All else," says the brujo, "is just padding" (22). Thus from the mouth of this Mexican shaman comes, we think, the universal contemplative credo. The single, all-important gesture of non-discursive attention lies at the heart of the contemplative work. With it the contemplative begins to dismantle the personal construction of reality, bringing its subtle iconoclasm to the innermost altars of the mind.

Let us look more closely at how non-discursive attention works. Above we have suggested that in the course of human development, constellations of emotive structures /14/ are built up by many and complex variations on the themes of affirmation and negation of one's will to be. Our long-term desires, aversions, sore spots and fixations are nodal points in the constellation, yet each nodal point is less like a star than a black hole. We may think of each as automatically drawing psychic energy to itself disintegrating

it into the image-films and commentaries that hold consciousness in thrall (Tart, 1975:21-23). The mental mode which allows this state of affairs to preside is inattention. In a phrase attributed to J. Krishnamurti, "The machine that builds the image is inattention" (Wilber, 1976:319).

It should be self-evident that when the mind is not focused on any particular task or thought, for example, when staring out the window of a train, the image stream flows freely. We are stolen from the present, fascinated. In fact this relaxation of conscious attention in order to experience the spontaneous activity of fantasy is a common technique of therapists interested in getting at primary process, the speech of the emotive structures.

What is less evident, however, is that that which we ordinarily consider attention is still, by contemplative measure, not truly deserving of the name. For example, you are at this moment following my argument, paying close attention to what you are reading. Surely this is attention rather than inattention. The contemplative would agree. But he would add that this attention is discursive, and thus, passive. In this particular case, our words are doing the 'discursing' for your attention. If you turned away from this paper to work out a theological formula or a verse of poetry, you would still do so largely in a mode of passive, discursive attention. You would be engaged in accepting and rejecting and sorting out what the mind presents to you. In less intellectualive and concentrative modes

the phenomenon is still clearer. We may feel ourselves to be in attentive control, yet the mind takes us where it pleases. Jaynes has argued, cogently we think, that ordinary thinking requires no attention whatsoever (39ff.). The sea of everyday mind is a busy, choppy one and ordinary attention is passive, discursive, even dispersed. The least bit of introspection will show this to be so. Ordinary attention, then, is hardly a state of acute active vigilance. It is more accurate to say that attention is awakened, conditioned and led by mobilizations of energy in our organism so that when it confronts its objects it is always faced, as it were, by a fait accompli (Benoit:187).

We may note in addition that when the mind is engaged in acutely rational and intellectual processes, imaginative-emotive activity is greatly reduced. This is presumably why Spinoza proposed to think has way into psychological freedom and thus stands in the ranks of the jnana yogins of history. Raj yogins, however, of which John and Dōgen are outstanding examples, want to non-think their way into psychological freedom. John was possessed of a superior creative imagination and Dōgen is considered one of the subtlest philosophical minds that Japan has produced, but each felt that 'prayer' (contemplative, non-discursive attention) was the vivifying source of their creative gifts and the psychotransformative method par excellence for the practitioners within their tradition who wished to win freedom of the spirit.

The mental posture of the contemplative, therefore, is distinct not only from inattention but from ordinary discursive, passive attention as well. It is an act of non-discursive, active attention which is, in fact, quite extraordinary. For there are many of us who in all our uncountable billions of mental moments and in all their variety, have never known a moment of truly active, non-discursive attention. Such a moment curtails the autonomous activities of ordinary psychological activity. If the reader doubts this, he or she may perform a simple experiment (Benoit:191). Take up a 'speak-I-am-listening' attitude of acute attention toward the screen of consciousness standing close guard, as it were, at the place where the contents of consciousness are born. For as long as one is able to hold this posture of intense active attention, the inner dialogue and the flow of images will be stopped. As Benoit proposes:

Our attention, when it functions in the active mode, is pure attention without manifested object. My mobilized energy is not perceptible in itself, but only in the effects of its disintegration, the images. But this disintegration occurs only when my attention operated in the passive mode; active attention forestalls this disintegration...(1959:40).

Active attention is what is called for in the Zen mondo, "Attention, Attention!" (attributed to Ikkyu). Active attention is the substance of John's ceaseless exhortation to "peaceful, loving attention to God...beyond

all thoughts and images." In fact, if we may step outside the proper bounds of our thesis, we can suggest that active attention is the fundamental 'mechanism' behind the various forms of mankind's contemplative methods: the prayer of unknowing (Johnston, 1973); the centering prayer (Keating, 1978); the Jesus prayer of Eastern Orthodox Christianity (Kadloubovsky and Palmer, 1951); Maimonides' practice of the presence of God (1956:384-392); the Muslim's mental dhikr (Schimmel, 1975:72); the tso-wang of the ancient Taoists (Waley, 1958:44ff,116-120); the samatha of the Theravada Buddhists (Thera, 1973,1971:121); the koan concentration of Rinzai Zen and Patanjali's classic definition of Hindu yoga as the "arresting of mental substance" (Mishra, 1973:161). Each of these surround the practice of active, non-discursive attention with various accompaniments, taking it down many paths of many names to variegated ends. Yet this single gesture seems common to these higher forms of contemplation.

Returning to our discussion, we note that for the beginner, and perhaps for a long way down the contemplative path, the gesture, as we have just described it in its purity, is difficult to maintain for any significant duration. Thus, there has evolved a corollary to this gesture, a second movement, as it were. Given the fact that the energy of the emotive structures and its imaginary film will repeatedly overpower a still weak concentrative ability, and assuming that the practitioner will repeatedly

attempt to reestablish active, non-discursive attention, his companion in all of this is impartiality. Images and thoughts arise but their lure is not taken. Disidentification with the contents of consciousness, impartiality in the face of images, choiceless evenness of the mind: this is the correlative gesture. Under the sway of this gesture, associational chains are deprived of a chance to chain-react. Non-reactive awareness directed to the beginnings of the associational process and disidentification with its products tends to undercut its ability to automatically stimulate other associational chains and thus activate emotions. Tart suggests that

non-identification with stimuli prevents mental energy from being caught up in the automatic, habitual processes involved in maintaining the ordinary [state of consciousness]. Thus while awareness remains active, various psychological subsystems tend to drift to lower levels of activity.... If one is successful in practicing non-attachment, the machine of the mind runs when stimulated, but does not automatically grab attention/awareness so readily; attention/awareness remains available for volitional use (1975:44).

The systematic practice of non-discursive attention would thus appear to stem the habitual, automatic flow of energy to emotive structures. Just as Freud compared his investigation of the unconscious to the draining of the Zuider Zee, or a vast reclamation project, we may metaphorize the practice of non-discursive attention as a technique

of starvation. Deprived of nutriment and stimulation, most emotive structures begin to lose their energetic integrity. The fear-and-desire bound natural man begins to wake up. The vagaries of the mind begin to lighten. Those imaginative-emotive processes, once characterized by automatization, begin to become deautomatized--a process Gill and Brennan have defined as

...a shake-up which can be followed by an advance or retreat in the level of organization.... Some manipulation of the attention directed toward the functioning of the apparatus [is necessary] if it is to be deautomatized (1959:178).

Such a shake-up in mental organization under the aegis of the contemplative's will to actualize in his own person the buddhic or christic archetype could gradually render less autonomous the structures that rule the emotive life, leading to a reconstellation of those structures as well as of the other structures whose interaction determines our ordinary mode of consciousness, our entire internal sense of what reality is.

In John's and Dōgen's emptying we have the systematic attempt by a human self to dwell in that attitude of nada, that place of mu, wherein the self, refusing the lure of all images and ideas, disinterested in all objects of consciousness, descends toward freedom from imaginative-emotive bondage. Organismic energy formerly bound in the

maintenance of these psychological constructions is freed for use according to the religio-ethical ideal with which the practitioner aligns himself. Energy formerly bound in emotive spasms, ego defense and fear now becomes the very delight of present-centeredness and a reservoir for compassionate service. As the structures of the old man are de-automatized, new structures are formed in magnetic alignment to the underlying intention of the aspirant. The purification of thought and its consequent deautomatization of psychological structures leads to a new reticulation of those structures and, consequently, to the general traits of consciousness to which they, in interaction, give rise. Man, by gradually emptying himself of the beloved vagaries of his emotional life, finds a new life of internal freedom, spiritual clarity and even sensory richness (Deikman, 1966b: 321-338). The creative possibilities of emptiness show themselves in Ulanov's description of the disidentified ego who becomes

free of unconscious identification with bits and pieces of his own personality and fragmentary parts of his world.... The disidentified ego can enter into any part of life with gusto...but is no longer unconsciously compelled to develop and support particular associations, intrigues, rituals of status...or certifications of possessions.... The disidentified ego can take or leave things, enter into them and yet not be bound by them (188-189).

Contemplative "emptying," like an ecological strategy, may thus be thought of as a revivification and renewal of balance in our internal environment. Through systematic practice of non-discursive attention in periods of contemplation, the mind acquires the new habit of spending less energy on the imaginative elaboration of desire and anxiety that haunt being-in-the-world. Fear, desire and the full range of emotions are still experienced. But the contemplative mind, the emptying mind, is less easily caught up in spasmodic reactions to and reverberations of the actual emotion. The latter begin to be experienced in more or less purity, leaving no tracks, as Zennists are fond of saying.

Benoit, whose lead I have followed at crucial junctures in this chapter, describes the deautomatization of the imaginative-emotive network as a "subtilization of image-material." He proposes that in the slow, steady praxis of contemplative attention

our images lose little by little their
 apparent density...their power of causing
 our vital energy to well up in emotive
 spasms decreases. The whole imaginative-
 emotive process loses its intensity...
 (36).

This quotation is taken from Benoit's psychological study of Zen, but Carl Albrecht, a German scholar of Christian mysticism, refers to a similar process in that tradition.

He describes the core of the Christian contemplative opus as one of "abating image formation:"

...the character of authenticity is strengthened and the possibility of deception weakened more with every stage of abating image-formation.... The series of decreasing images is equivalent to the degrees of increasing Presence. The series of increasing image-forms is equivalent to the degrees of decreasing Presence (Enomiya-LaSalle, 1974:37).

Here, in Christian dress, is the equation between the emptying mind and increased contact with the formless energy, the actus purus that some men call God.

But as John of the Cross says, we flee from what most suits us. The deautomatization of my imaginative life, that scene of endless delights and pains and all those exquisite self-involvements can only seem like the murder of the inner life. We take a final counsel from Benoit:

In reality the imaginative film is not life. Produced by the disintegration of my energy... [it] is really an abortive process; the birth of what I call my inner world is...the repeated miscarriage of the 'new man.' The suppression of this abortive process is not therefore contrary to my life.... Impartiality in the face of my images, in fulfilling itself, accomplishes the integration of the Self (40,234).

This last is truly an extraordinary utterance. As modern men, our common Freudian inheritance makes us

uncomfortable with the idea that such pervasive factors in mental life as emotive reactivity and non-integrated structures can be beneficially transformed simply by sitting still and paying attention, with one's heart set on an ethical ideal and an inconceivable Absolute Reality /15/. Surely we must do something more subtle, more involved, something along the lines that Freud and Jung suggested: delving into the unconscious, sifting through its contents, integrating them into the domain of the ego's understanding, interpreting them for insight into our unconscious makeup, and so forth. In truth, the contemplative does do more than sit still and pay attention, but even so there is a point here that deserves to be underscored. Contemplative praxis can help 'normal' people become free (or freer) but it is of dubious value in the effort to make ill people well. Because of their generality, contemplative techniques may indeed be the 'ultimate' psychotransformative tools but as Tart warns:

There may be some psychological structures in the personality that have so much energy, are so implicit, or are so heavily defended that they must be dealt with by using specific psychotherapeutic techniques to dismantle them (1975:31).

Nevertheless, in no way do we wish to undercut the psychotransformative value that contemplative praxis holds out to man. Especially arresting in this context is an

opinion rendered by the Jungian, Erich Neumann. Neumann's major works have been learned exercises in Jungian hermeneutics. In both theory and practice he has spent his life crossing the conscious/unconscious bridge, exploring the complex relations between the Self and its images and symbols. In a paper called "The Psyche and Transformation of the Reality Planes," Neumann enters deeply into the subject of individuation, the summum bonum of the Jungian school. He speaks of it as the journey along the ego-Self axis, wherein the personal ego is gradually transformed and liberated 'into' the deeper, wider plane of the archetypal Self. He leads his theme to new and, even for a Jungian, rather bold metaphysical heights. At the paper's end, he feels compelled to return to earth, to say something about the actual human approximation of these lofty psychotransformative visions. Neumann writes:

It seems to me that the unity experienced by centered human beings is seen most distinctly... in Zen...masters...in their behavior and their being, and in their unity of inner and outer, ego and Self.... It...seems...that, by means of a gathered spontaneity of action and being, they achieve a unity of psyche and world which resembles that of the primary unitary field. And the center of this action and being is no longer the ego. Though the ego is not cut off, the activity of the ego-Self axis is so great that it seems to lead even to an identity between ego and Self. The lack of imagery [emphasis mine]...belongs to this experience.... And it is not a regression in the sense of an abaissement du niveau mental [Jung's repeated derogation of Asian psychotransformative technique] but rather a further advance in the direction which has led from field-knowledge

to the knowledge of consciousness and now beyond it.
 ...[In the Zen master] man is revealed as the highest and most significant form of life, and the centered human being appears as the incorporated spontaneity of creativity as one grasping and grasped by numinosity, and also the enlightener and knower, in whom the luminosity of the world apprehends itself...(110-11).

We cannot claim that Neumann would say the same thing about the Christian contemplative. What we wish to emphasize, however, is that in this Jungian's view, "the best that man can be" is reached by a long coursing in a psycho-transformative method which has little to do with the standard depth psychological paradigm. We need not equate zazen and John's contemplation to see that they are vastly more similar to each other than is either of them of the method employed by psychologists of the unconscious.

Needless to say, the mystical experience which we have endeavored to keep in the background, plays, finally, a crucial role in the entire process. Without those quantum leaps of "transforming union" and "kensho" the work can never be called complete. Still, we must remind a final time that the "love" and "enlightenment" toward which the aspirant travels signify existential qualities of the total being, noetic and behavioral wholes which require a total transformation of the personality. As such, they can never be fully accomplished in a momentary experience no matter how extraordinary that experience is. Whether contemplative

praxis is a sine qua non of the mystical experience is, of course, an open question: historical accounts in both Buddhism and Christianity seem to make room for a high order of transformative experience due to no other reasons than a serendipitous ripeness or God's will.

For John and Dōgen, however, contemplative praxis is an all-encompassing mode of being-in-the-world which allows the fruit of gnosis both deep seed and full blossom. In the Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki, Dōgen says:

To do away with mental deliberation and cognition and simply to go on sitting is the method by which the Way is made an intimate part of our lives...(Kim, 1971:45).

Could we not put the following words into the heart of John of the Cross?

To do away with mental deliberation and cognition and simply to go on contemplating God in peaceful, loving attention is the way by which His Grace is made an intimate part of our lives.

Non-discursive attention, we have argued in this chapter, is the radiating core of contemplative praxis. But such praxis is carried out by a human being who lives in the world and thus does more in it than sit or kneel or lie down for a certain period each day to attend to God's Presence, to Thusness. Non-discursive attention is a

gesture within a more encompassing gesture, one that comprehends the whole of human being. We are referring to contemplative intention, the movement of will, of which non-discursive attention is but one, albeit perhaps the most important, manifestation. It is to an understanding of contemplative willing that we now turn.

2. WILL AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Do you do unto others what you will they do unto you--by willing only one thing? For this will is the eternal order that governs all things, that brings you into union with the dead, and with men whom you never see, with foreign people whose language and customs you do not know, with all men upon the whole earth, who are related to each other by blood and eternally related to the Divine by eternity's task of willing only one thing.

Soren Kierkegaard

If our investigation of contemplative method has touched its marrow, we must admit therein the central importance of the phenomenon of will. In the previous section we examined the meaning and power of the will's most circumscribed and concentrated manifestation: the gesture of attention. Here, we shall move to the broader realm of intention in which that gesture is situated.

Intention, it seems, is like a multidimensional field which surrounds the contemplative, magnetically drawing the sum of his sensibilities toward a dimension of being-excellence, adumbrated in the images of his own particular mythos. We might put this statement into the active voice and still retain a part of the truth: Intention is a multidimensional force field with which the contemplative surrounds himself and by which he thrusts the totality of himself toward that dimension of being-excellence. Herein do we see the paradox of the contemplative will: it seems as

much a willful reaching toward as it does a willingness to be drawn. At different times, and sometimes simultaneously, it is both a push and receptivity to a pull. This dual dynamic appears to cut through the various levels of will function, manifesting itself on both the attitudinal macro-level presently to be examined and the micro-level of attention we have just discussed. For the gestures of active attention and non-reactivity describe a movement of the will that is intense yet relaxed, on guard yet surrendered.

The substance of this section will be an attempt to understand the meaning and power of the dual dynamic at work in John's and Dōgen's actualization of the will-as-faith. Under the aegis of contemplation, the will-as-faith, we shall suggest, supports, at an attitudinal level, the deprojecting, disassembling work taking place in consciousness and at the same time provides a restructuring and integrating force which elicits from an increasing inner 'poverty' a new richness and resilience of psychological unity. Through an understanding of the dynamics of the will-as-faith, our effort to describe the psychotransformative dynamic within the contemplative gesture will be completed. We begin by setting our discussion in the context of modern thought.

a. The Crisis of Will in Modern Thought

The will has a long and colorful history in western thought (Assagioli:235-247; Bourke, 1964; Pruyser in Lapsley: chapter one), but those colors laid on top of one another result only in a blur. In 1967 a group of thirty-two philosophers, theologians and psychologists convened for a conference on the subjects of will and willing. The book that arose from that conference, The Concept of Willing (Lapsley, 1967), shows only too clearly the difficulty of arriving at a univocal, consensus definition of will and the Tower of Babel effect in which such an attempt results. Yet the latter part of the book's subtitle, "An Outdated Concept of the Essential Key to Man's Future?" suggests that amid the confusion (it may be of interest to note that in the world of strictly experimental psychology, the nature of volition remains an utter mystery (Jaynes:71)), there remain intimations of a remarkably potent force.

The common-sense notion that there is some kind of intentional force at work within human individuals has never been seriously questioned. What has been questioned by ages of philosophic reflection is whether man has any real choice in the matter, and, of course, whether or not that force has any clear telos or purpose. The difficulty inherent in the word "real" has often led such inquiries, no matter how empiric their starting point, into the land of unverifiable metaphysical presuppositions. Leaving such

debates in the stratosphere, pragmatic and action-minded philosophers have always seemed to return to the fact that if I will to move my pen across this page, I do so, and therefore, along with the general populace, go right on willing. Dr. Johnson's words are enough for most of us: "Sir, we know our will is free and there's an end on't."

With Freud, however, even the practical and psychological notions of willing faced a profound crisis. Under his systematic disclosure of the nature of unconscious processes, individual responsibility and will were threatened with extinction. Describing how (unconscious) "wish" and "drive" move us rather than conscious will, Freud exposed the ego's claim to will-power as a web of rationalization and self-deceit. "The deeply rooted belief in psychic freedom and choice," he wrote, "is quite unscientific and must give ground before the claims of a determinism which governs mental life" (1935:95). The assumption that a single partial aspect of the organism (will-power) could with impunity subdue and defeat other aspects that failed to meet its conscious demands certainly needed tempering. The very persuasiveness of Freud's analysis, however, seems to have carried the devalorization of the existential will too far. So far, in fact, that R. May has called attention to a "crisis of will" in modern psychotherapy (1969:184). "Among the sophisticated," writes Allan Wheelis,

the use of the term "will power" has become perhaps the most unambiguous badge of naivete....

The unconscious is heir to the prestige of will. As one's fate formerly was determined by the will, now it is determined by the repressed mental life. Knowledgeable moderns put their backs to the couch and in so doing may fail to put their shoulders to the wheel. As will has been devalued, so has courage; for courage can exist only in the service of the will.... In our understanding of human nature we have gained determinism, lost determination (Wheelis:256, quoted in May:184).

In the early decades of psychoanalytic thought, no one tried harder to reverse this trend than Otto Rank. He wrote that "the essential problem of psychology is our abolition of will" (1968b:10). In Art and Artist he confesses that "for me the problem of willing...had come to be the central problem of all personality, even of all psychology" (1968a:9). Like Jung, Rank found the determinism that underlay Freud's psychology of the unconscious repellent, and he sought instead to provide a wide-ranging historical and psychological understanding of the purposiveness and creativity inherent in human nature (Progoff:188-253).

For Rank all crippings of the psyche stem from misuse or denial of the will, and all its healing and higher functions depend on the will's proper and unimpeded use. Without sacrificing depth, Rank revolted against the psychology of the unconscious and began to build a theory and practice based on the idea of will as the essence of human being. Rank came to see will as not only a power of the unconscious personality but a supra-individual force with which consciousness could align itself. He defined it as "an

autonomous organizing force in the individual constituting its unique creative expression" (Rank, 1958:50). With the psychology of the unconscious still in its infancy, he abandoned "bringing the unconscious to consciousness" as a therapeutic agent, arguing that such a procedure merely exacerbates the ego's illusion that it could understand or control forces beyond itself. Progoff (206) points out that in its later stages Rank's conception of the will approaches Jung's conception of Self--an inner wholing principle embracing the entire personality and inviting the participation of the ego.

More recently, Rollo May has questioned whether in our concern with the unconscious we have lost touch with the creativity of the will. Resisting the latter's defeat by the "autonomous" powers of the unconscious, May argues that the unconscious derives its meaning solely in contrast to consciousness and is therefore part of a greater whole. It cannot be considered autonomous:

Neither the ego nor the body, nor the unconscious can be "autonomous" but can only exist as parts of a totality. And it is in this totality that will and freedom must have their base.... The compartmentalization of the personality into ego, superego and id is an important part of the reason why the problem of will has remained insoluble within the orthodox psychoanalytic tradition.... This means that autonomy and freedom cannot be the domain of a special part of the organism, but must be the quality of the total self--the thinking-feeling-choosing-acting organism (199).

To distinguish the will-quality of the total self from phenomenal or ego-willing, May uses the term "intentionality." He says that

intentionality is what underlies both conscious and unconscious intention. It refers to a state of being and involves to a greater or lesser degree the totality of the person's orientation to the world at that time...(234).

"Intentionality," he says, "goes with conscious purpose" but also beyond it "to the more total organic, feeling and wishing man" (234-35).

The writings of R. Assagioli are, among those from the discipline of psychology, perhaps the most passionately concerned with the issue of human willing. Assagioli writes that "fundamental among...inner powers, and the one to which priority should be given, is the tremendous unrealized potency of man's own will" (1976:6). He, too, distinguishes phenomenal or superficial willing from that energetic totality properly called will. Assagioli thus perceives man's journey to selfhood as one from having a will to being a will.

In the domain of theological reflection, Ray Hart's study of the function of the religious imagination also involves a revisioning of the will. He calls will "the ordering power or principle of our active being" (136, n.47). Phenomenologically it seems both free and determined ("in its voluntary situating the will has always to reckon with an involuntarily situated base" (loc.cit.)). The will itself,

however, is not merely psychic nor derivative, but ontic and basic: "will is the one ontically active and passive power we grasp from the inside" (132).

Yet perhaps the most fundamental casting of the dual aspect of the human will and the unitive totality which it is at its deepest level comes neither from a psychologist, nor a theologian, but a philosopher. The idea of will as a phenomenon of totality is suggested by Heidegger's analysis of care. In his vocabulary, "will" is a derivative of care, part of care's ontological nature, but not the fulness of care itself. His "will" is what we have been calling superficial or phenomenal willing, a will among wills, a partial aspect of the conscious personality. Heidegger speaks of care in the way we would speak of will proper, a power only potential in ordinary consciousness, a trait of being toward which being-in-the-world moves and in which it finds its authentic nature. Yet even in phenomenal willing, says Heidegger, "the underlying totality of care shows through" (239). When Heidegger seeks to lay bare the "totality of that structural whole [Dasein]...in an existential-ontological manner," he turns to the reality of care. He calls care the "single primordially unitary phenomenon behind Dasein" (226), and speaks of it further as

...a primordial structural totality that lies
'before' every factical attitude and situation....
The phenomenon of care in its totality is
essentially something that cannot be torn
asunder; so any attempt to trace it back to

special acts or drives like willing and wishing or urge and addiction, or to construct it out of these, will be unsuccessful (238).

Urge and drive, says Heidegger, are phenomena in which care has not yet become free, not yet discovered itself in its true nature (240). Mere willing and wishing remain such because of the everydayness of their concerns; they become "tranquilized" by the "actual" (so-called reality) under the dominance of the "they." Under the sway of the idolatrous herd, Dasein--the psyche and its structures--presents possibilities to itself in such a way that they are a mere wishing. The state of wishing is, essentially, a cramp that never leaves the being satisfied with what is "present to hand." The present, the Now, is never enough. This results in a chronic "hankering" after possibilities which, dividing Dasein against itself, vitiates those very possibilities.

For Heidegger the link between conflicting, multiple, phenomenal 'wills' and the integrated unity of authentic care is resoluteness. Resoluteness, it would seem, is merely another will among wills, the voice of will power amid the self's cacophony of motives, desires and wishes. Yet despite the potential for confusion and self-deception in the self's wish to lift itself up by its own bootstraps, unless it begins, somewhere, to will resolutely, it will never be able to come to the experience of its own freedom

and self-transcendence in the knowledge of the "primordially unitary phenomenon" in which it is grounded. Though willing must begin from an inauthentic, even illusory, base (given the fragmented nature of the phenomenal ego), unless it begins somewhere, it will remain so situated. Only by willing is the first step of the thousand-mile journey toward real willing, the actualization of the will-as-care, taken. What this means for our present subject is this: Only by resolute effort can the contemplative aspirant come face to face with the contradictions inherent in his/her own willing, and only in and through that painful confrontation can he/she find releasement into that primordially unitary phenomenon in which his/her willing is grounded. Only when the fragmented "I am," by willing itself toward a dimension of being-excellence, finds both that "I am not" and that "It is," only then does the full reality of the will-as-care and the will-as-faith take possession of the human existent.

The conceptions of will just reviewed are not, of course, interchangeable. For each thinker, the conception has taken shape in a different context and has been elaborated differently. Yet behind them all there seems to lie a common, insistent intuition: the phenomenal will(power), so paltry and poor a thing in itself, is nevertheless the harbinger of an ontic will, releasement into which brings some sort of fulfillment or wholeness to the human existent. Assagioli speaks of the movement from having a will to being

a will; Heidegger speaks of the transition from mere wishing to resoluteness and finally to care or authentic willing. Rank, May and Assagioli seem unanimous in saying that the dynamic behind psychological integration is a willing that gradually becomes less a partial and polarizing force and more a unitive force embracing the whole self, possessed of considerable psychotransformative power and capable even of affecting and 're-aligning' unconscious structures. Let us now look more closely at the dynamics of contemplative willing.

b. The Contemplative Will-As-Faith

Along the more profound reaches of its continuum, faith, as Kierkegaard has said, is no longer the content of an idea, but a form of the will (Lowrie:II,316)/16/. As we shall be speaking of it here, faith is not to be confused with belief in certain propositions or any solely mental act at all--even though that phenomenon may linger in faith's atmosphere. Rather, faith, as we attempted to show in the chapter on contemplative virtue, is an attitude or posture of being, a sustained act of bodymind, an existential mode in which one relates to and constantly engages oneself with a transcendent dimension.

As we prepare to examine the power of the will-as-faith, we should remind ourselves of the demure that runs the full length of the contemplative path, namely, that the aspirant,

in reality, is powerless. Along with constant exhortations to do one's utmost to reach awakening, reminders of the self's powerlessness are everywhere. These two themes, in tension, are signs not of metaphysical confusion but of psychological wisdom. There can be no psychic integration without a task that invites the individual to heroic endeavor. Tribute must be paid to the ontological, self-assertive motive. But the need for self-transcendence and self-forgetfulness must also be respected. The hero is accordingly reminded of his own nothingness. Psychologically, the doctrines of grace and anatta (or, on the positive side, dependent co-origination), serve the same purpose: in the midst of striving for enlightenment the aspirant is reminded that a ripeness, beyond his control, is all. The will to attend and the will to intend are kept delicately balanced by an awareness that neither constraint nor struggle will aid the inner work. Only letting-go, decontraction of the egoic grip and surrender to a higher will can decisively effect the transformation. Precisely this delicate dialectical complementarity gives the will-as-faith its power.

In his recent historical study of the meaning of faith in the world's religious traditions, Wilfred Smith notes that the original meaning of Christianity's credo referred not to belief in propositions but to an all-encompassing self-involvement of the personality. It was, as its etymology suggests, an attitude of the heart--that universal

signifier of man's totality. Credo is a compound of cor, cordis, "heart" plus do "put, place, set," also "give." It is the setting of the heart on something, a giving of one's essential energy.

As such, credo is first cousin to the Indian and Buddhist sraddha. Sraddha is also a compound of srat, "heart" and dha, "to put." Though sraddha appears in a vast variety of contexts, it never signifies the something toward which one is setting one's heart, but rather the very quality of the resolute heart. Sraddha is open-ended, says Smith; no particular object or type of object defines it. Western analyses of sraddha, he argues, have largely fallen victim to our tendency to analyze faith according to its objects. But sraddha primarily refers to a dimension within. "It has to do with man's capacity to become involved: the tendency or quality inherent within each human person to move outside him or herself and to become engaged" (1979:62).

To the intentional thrust of sraddha Smith adds, via Sankhara, an attentional one as well. For Sankhara, the mind in sraddha contrasts with a mind that "is elsewhere." Sraddha is a quality of mind which contrasts with a wandering mind. Conversely, asraddha is equated with diffuseness and irresolution. "The opposite of faith is not disbelief so much as either indifference or scattering of concern: absence of faith is ego-diffusion" (Smith, 1979:63).

Faith's connection to the "heart," to totality and singlemindedness, suggests its psychotransformative potential

a truth not lost on psycholocially sensitive religious thinkers. "Purity of heart," says Kierkegaard, "is to will one thing" (1938), and that "one thing" can only be the infinite, unpossessable God. Everything less is "double-mindedness." "Willing one thing," Kierkegaard's synonym for mature faith, is alone capable of conquering the double-mindedness whose outcome is despair.

In his work on "faith development theory," contemporary psychologist of religion James Fowler, testifies to faith's ability to unify the self and by reflection, the world in which the self lives. Faith, he writes, is an "activity of knowing and being in which the self makes a bid for relationship to a center of value and power which is adequate to ground, unify and order the force field of life taken as a totality" (Chamberlain, 1979).

Perhaps the boldest vision of faith's transformative potential comes from Tillich. "The disrupting trends of man's consciousness," he says,

are one of the great problems of personal life. If a uniting center is absent, the infinite variety of the encountered world as well as the inner movements of the human mind, is able to produce the complete disintegration of the personality (1957:107).

In this context he proposes that

faith...is an act of the will...the most centered act of the human mind.... It is... embedded in the totality of psychological

processes.... In the act of faith every nerve of...body, every striving of...soul, every function of...spirit participates.... The body, soul and spirit are not three parts...[but] dimensions of being, always within each other; for man is a unity not composed of parts. Faith is the centered movement of the whole personality toward something of ultimate meaning and significance (7,8,106).

The psychological assertions of Tillich and Fowler propel our analysis of John's and Dōgen's willing into a realm wide and deep enough to comprehend and unify their specific Buddhist-Christian differences. For we have argued that John's faith, hope and caritas, as well as Dōgen's and Zen's faith, determination, doubt and karuna, are but nuanced shades of a single thematic unity of intention, and that "faith" is both one of those shades and a symbol which represents the 'force-field' of their unity. Under our analysis, the multiple contemplative virtues and undertakings find their source in a single, seamless unity of the will--a faithing toward awakening. And, as this potential unity becomes actual, to that extent does the contemplative discover the meaning of his/her awakening, released from a selfhood that never was.

We must not, of course, let Tillich's facile portrayal of integral faith blind us to the difficulty and rarity of its realization. In its most profound manifestation faith may indeed accomplish precisely what Tillich describes, but the obstacles to such a maturation are numerous. The

will-as-faith, no less than any other species of the self-assertive tendency, is prey to idolatry. In its youth, the will-as-faith thrives on images of transcendence. Like the analysand who transfers onto the analyst during the psychotherapeutic process of death and rebirth, the religious person, and a fortiori, the contemplative, transfers onto the image of God or of sainthood--and can get stuck there. Images of transcendence, though an integral part of every religious mythos and crucially important to the awakening of will in the contemplative aspirant, nevertheless, like language and concept, conceal as well as reveal. They snag as well as draw.

The will-as-faith constantly faces the threat of getting hung up on one of its phenomenal supports. Guided by the symbols of its tradition and the imaginative participation which ordinary consciousness affords, the will is nevertheless called to know its proper Object in its true nature, to surpass in every instance the particular symbolism upon which it depends and to free itself from those phenomenal supports. The genius of John's and Dōgen's empty willing begins to show through. Therein the mind's last bastion of unchecked self-fascination--consciousness' identification with its objects--is broken. John attempts to follow Eckhart's admonition that one must know God "without semblance...without image" and Dōgen knows, like all Zen practitioners, that the Buddha met on the road must be an impostor. Each aspirant seeks to surpass in

his/her search for the ultimate object of human yearning even the subtlest constructions of the mind.

Contemplative strategy demands that the self leave itself no satisfaction with beyonds that are reachable. Should someone object that "satori" or "enlightenment" are quite reachable, we would ask, "for whom?" suggesting that this is too narrow a view of enlightenment. For the desire to enlighten even the grass is but the Buddhist portrait of the universal ethical horizon against which the evolution of awakening is endlessly pursued (Cook:36). Thus are John's and Dōgen's heroic strivings constantly faced with an infinitude that humbles all the powers of the self. The contemplative will, even at its most acute pitch, is reminded of its emptiness, its interdependent status. Amid John's vigorous "Ascent" and Dōgen's earnest zazen, there lies a similar sense that such gestures are but the heart's consent to a work which can be accomplished only by the Principial Will. Becker proclaims the psychological wisdom behind that integrally willed surrender we call faith:

One should not...circumscribe his life with beyonds that are near at hand, or created by oneself. One should reach for the highest beyond of religion: man should cultivate the passivity of renunciation to the highest powers no matter how difficult it is.... Do Freud and others imagine that surrender to God is masochistic, that to empty oneself is demeaning?....It represents, on the contrary, the fulfillment of the Agape, love-expansion, the achievement of the truly creative type...(1973:174).

Certainly mere surrender and self-abnegation, when left uncomplemented, easily degenerate into neurotic, defensive, masochistic strategies. This aspect of religious behavior met, and deserved, the full force of Freud's critique of idols. By contrast, unbalanced heroic striving leads to rigidity and brittleness of soul, a fact to which J. Hillman has repeatedly called our attention (1972, 1975, 1979). But for John and for Dōgen the will-to-awaken (pure "faithing"), fired by compassion and tempered in the pool of nada, the ocean of sunyata, begins to fuse into a perfect alloy of the self-assertive and self-transcending tendencies. Though working outside the purely contemplative context, Becker's description of the fusion is flawless:

Once the person begins to...refashion his links from those around him to that Ultimate Power, he opens up to himself the horizon of real freedom...to infinity...to the very service of God.... He links his...inner yearning for absolute significance to the very ground of creation. Out of the ruins of the broken cultural self...this invisible mystery at the heart of every creature now attains cosmic significance by affirming its connection with the invisible mystery at the heart of creation.... One goes through it all to arrive at faith...that despite one's true insignificance...one's existence has a meaning in some ultimate sense because it exists within an eternal scheme of things brought about and maintained to some kind of design by some creative force (1973:89-91).

The two ontological motives are both met: the need to surrender oneself...by laying down one's whole existence to some higher meaning; and the need to expand oneself as an individual heroic personality (1973:203).

Becker's analysis, performed in the light of Kierkegaardian faith, is even more applicable in a contemplative context. For Kierkegaard's Eternal, against whose inscrutability faith purifies itself, retains its cosmic status in John and Dōgen, but in addition, becomes the inner, uncarved block against which the very structure of consciousness is emptied and transformed. Dwelling attentively in the inscrutable, coursing in the realm of objectless attention, contemplative consciousness descends to nothingness and, in the Ulanovs' phrase, "carries nothingness into containment" (1975:188). Seeing into its own utter contingency and nevertheless embracing it, contemplative consciousness begins to understand its unbreakable link with and its undying life in the All. As it becomes authentically nothing, it is supported by everything.

The actualization of the integral will-as-faith, which proceeds in direct proportion to the integral devalorization of egocentric life through contemplation, brings to the contemplative gesture its full psychotransformative power. Old automatized structures of consciousness, weakened in their integrity through the discipline of attention, become reformed and realigned under the intentional regime of faith. As the former personal construction of reality is disempowered and dismantled, the ordering power of the will draws formerly conflicted elements of the self into an integrated unity. With every increment of this intensity-of-connectedness the authentic will comes closer to being truly born.

The self becomes less torn by disparate "hankerings," begins to escape the dominance of the "they," sees beyond the "everydayness" of its concern and approaches the authenticity of willing that which is present.

Mysteriously, as if it had been happening all along, the will-as-faith begins to discover itself not as an assertion but as a reception. If faith, as Tillich testifies, can move "every nerve of body, every striving of soul and every function of spirit" it seems clear that such faith has gone beyond the ego-assertive, ego-projective domain of ordinary willing. The latter simply cannot claim this power. What can claim it is the faith that for Dōgen is the "fruit of enlightenment" and that for John is "union with God." This willing is no longer mustered; it is experienced. It is a transpersonal current in which one's being is subsumed and by which every aspect of it is affected. It is in alignment with this transpersonal force that "every nerve, every striving, every function" is shaped.

If this notion seems to smack of the most groundless kind of vitalism, we should remind ourselves of the recent reflections of the biologist Lewis Thomas on the micro-organismic system that comprises the humble termite:

There is an underlying force that drives together the several creatures comprising myxotricha, and then drives the assemblage into union with the termite. If we could understand this tendency, we would catch a

glimpse of the process that brought single cells together for the construction of metazoans, culminating in the invention of roses, dolphins...and ourselves. It might turn out that the same tendency underlies the joining of organisms into communities, communities into ecosystems and ecosystems into the biosphere (1974:33).

If the president of the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Research Center can seriously consider such a biological 'wholing' force, are we not entitled to imagine its psycho-spiritual complement? For contemplative texts seem to indicate a profound sense that the rivulet of contemplative striving somewhere becomes connected to the river of the Transpersonal Will. At a certain level of insight along the Buddhist contemplative path, for example, one is said to have "entered the stream." It is a truly breathtaking image: caught for aeons in the samsaric whirlpool of self-referential striving, the individual, as if by some quantum leap, is released into the Dharmic current. The gravitational pull toward final salvation is now irreversible. At some similar existential juncture, the Christian celebrates the conformation of his will, indeed its engulfment, by the Will of God. The will-as-faith in its deepest dimension is a highly individual and individuating act, whose substance, nevertheless, is a profound surrender to an ontological force. Will is neither fully human nor fully actual until it acknowledges and affirms its transpersonal source. (For this reason, merely psychological

attempts at "growth" and "self-realization," which lack a dimension or religious surrender, are doomed to narcissism and solipsism and are rightly criticized as such (Vitz, 1977).)

This exquisite project for the human will can be seen behind the Buddhist and Christian contemplative's yearning to vanquish "desire" and only a slight twist of our vocabulary is necessary to lay it bare.

As the force of desire is experienced within the human existent, it is usually turned outward as the desire for some objective condition. Religious contemplatives, however, have always sensed that desire--as desire for an objective condition--cannot make ultimate sense. The ephemeral world mocks our attempts to hold it fast, to arrange it according to our liking. Even if that desired objective condition should be the unassailable perfection of the self, reality will at some point insist on presenting a mirror to our broken faces and reminding us of our fundamental dispensability. No, desire for an objective condition must be complemented by, subordinated to, another desire, a desire which does make sense of our endless human longing. This desire is desire for a subjective condition and the name of that subjective condition is will. We desire to will but usually only hanker. Purged of the desire for that which is not, will is a willing of that which is--that which exists, independently, of one's self. Desire is but a full, clamorous and confused willing. But leading itself

beyond itself, desire becomes transformed into empty willing.
 "Union with God" and "Enlightenment" may be understood as
 expressions announcing the dawn of authentic willing, a
 willing now that

seeks, and can receive, no explanation outside
 itself...in terms of something desired. Nor
 is this a question of some inner well-being...
 operating in isolation.... It is precisely
 the oneness of willing with attunement to an
 independent reality that is the substance of
 the delight. In this delight, will is identi-
fied as willing that which independently is,
I am identified as willing that which is. In
 this experience I know myself as self-tran-
 scendent; and this is not a knowing something
about myself; it is a knowing of myself
 (Moore:116).

Moore mars this splendid utterance by claiming its
 Christian particularity. But we wish to share it with all
 his non-Christian brothers. They, too, evidence the de-
 light of attuned willing. They, too, know themselves for
 the first time in the time when they are not. "In those
 privileged moments when the essence of willing is laid bare,"
 says Moore, "I know that all-controlling independent will
 outside of which I have no being" (116). Shall we call it
 Suchness or Dependent Co-origination--that all-controlling
 independent will outside of which Dōgen has no being and in
 whose rhythm he dies to live?

John seeks his life as an instrument of God's will;
 Dōgen his as an embodiment of Tathata. Both employ a method
 whose essential ingredient is the practice of sustained

non-discursive attention, an element which contrasts sharply with the ordinary flow of phenomenal consciousness. But this method, though crucial, takes its place and finds its meaning only in a life whose many aspects are permeated by an intentionality toward Awakening. These two existential gestures or postures--attention and intention--complement, strengthen and amplify one another as the personality of the aspirant is transformed from a riot of desires into a unity of will. That unity is expressed equally well by the words "faith" and "care." From this fundamental transformation of character comes a knowledge, not merely intellectual, which alone deserves the name prajna or wisdom. The content of this wisdom, insofar as it can be expressed, is that one's personal willing is empty vis-a-vis the Transpersonal Will of which one is an expression. In this realization there is delight and freedom and in it John and Dōgen, and perhaps all those we call mystics and contemplatives, find the life they seek.

NOTES

/1/ Though the friendship was indeed close, it is said that John's piety and contemplative purism occasionally irked the more active Teresa (Brenan: 22-24).

/2/ The major works of John of the Cross are The Ascent of Mount Carmel, The Dark Night of the Soul, The Living Flame of Love and the Spiritual Canticle. Hereafter, they are abbreviated A, N, F, C. Unless otherwise noted, all references to John of the Cross are taken from the translation of his collected works by Kavanaugh and Rodriguez, 1973.

/3/ From "Dying Because I Do Not Die", translated by Lynda Nicholson in Brenan: 171.

/4/ An epithet offered by Zen scholar Reiho Masunaga.

/5/ Dharma and Buddha-nature, though connoting different things, equivalently denote Ultimate Reality for the Zen Buddhist. In fact, these are but two of many equivalent expressions for the ontological Absolute in Buddhism. In the teachings of Zen Master Huang-Po, for example, one finds no less than twenty-six names for this all-embracing Principle, a Principle, it would not be too much to say, in which all Buddhists and all beings live and move and are (Blofeld, 1958).

/6/ Ko-i or "matching concepts"-- the Chinese reliance on indigenous concepts in the process of assimilating the foreign religion of Buddhism (Wright: 36-38 and Ch'en: 68-70).

/7/ The other five perfections of the Bodhisattva are giving, patience, vigor, meditation and wisdom.

/8/ John sometimes groups memory with imagination and fantasy and calls all three "interior senses". The interior senses properly belong to the sensitive part of the soul, but because of their inwardness and nonmateriality, they seem to partake of the spiritual part as well, thus causing John to also group memory along with the intellect and will under the spiritual part of the soul.

/9/ Though, one approximation is the modern Chinese master Hsu Yun (Chang, 1959: 83).

/10/ De Silva has traced Buddhism's inchoate theory of unconscious mental functioning back to the Pali scriptures (49ff.).

/11/ For similar opinions, c.f. Kapleau, 1965:190; Suzuki, 1974: 25,38; Enomiya-Lasalle:52; Izutsu, 1973:9; and, outside Zen, Shah:305

/12/ We will continue to use the Latin form rather than the English "charity" because of the many misleading associations attached to the latter and because the sound of the former blends well with karuna and with Heidegger's "care" (sorge), linkages we will be making later.

/13/ The present discussion owes much to Benoit's remarkable book (1959).

/14/ Rappaport and Gill define psychological structures as "configurations of a low rate of change within which, between which and by means of which, mental processes take place" (157-58). Tart has used the term similarly to refer to "a stable organization of component parts that perform one or more related psychological functions" (1975:18).

/15/ We are not implying that the efficacy of contemplative method says anything conclusive about the existence of such a Reality. But we do affirm that contemplative method, as we have described it here, is unthinkable without faith in an ontological power (Process, Law, Will, Stream) into whose 'hands' one can entrust the fate of one's efforts.

/16/ "The knowledge of faith," says Aquinas, "proceeds from will" (Commentum in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi, Dist.23, q.2, a.1,3. Quoted in Maguire:87). And Augustine: "Faith...is in the will" (De Praedestinatione Sanctorum, 5/10; quoted in Smith, 1979:275).

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BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: Philip Charles Novak

Date and Place of Birth: December 28, 1950
Chicago, Illinois

Elementary School: St. Anthony School
Cicero, Illinois
Graduated 1964

High School: Fenwick High School
Oak Park, Illinois
Graduated 1968

College: University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana
B.A. 1972

Graduate Work: Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York
Graduate Assistantship 1974-75
M.A. 1975

Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York
Teaching Assistantship 1975-76
University Fellowship 1976-78