Zen and the Creative Process: The "Kendō-Zen" Thought of the Rinzai Master Takuan

Dennis LISHKA

"THE SWORD AS ZEN" AND ITS CONTEXT

After centuries of intense warfare interspersed by short-lived periods of peace, Japan abruptly entered into a new period of order from about 1600. The new era would bear its founder's name, being known as the "Tokugawa period," as most existing values and institutions at all levels of society would come to be affected by this founder's mark of totalitarian efficiency.

At no level of society would this new order signify change more dramatically than it would to the Japanese warrior or *bushi*. What had previously been his most valuable asset, his fighting skill and courage in battle, now increasingly became his greatest liability. His dedication to his master became the "moral pivot" on which his service would now be transformed from that of warrior to that of administrator and bureaucrat. This change, embracing an entire way of life, involved profound spiritual needs and adjustments—both for those who would rule and for those who would be ruled.

One Buddhist master who attempted to respond to such needs was the poet-abbot of the major Kyoto monastery Daitokuji and famed master of the "School of the Buddha-mind," the Rinzai Zen master Takuan Sōhō 沢庵宗彭 (1573–1645).[1] A

1. A critical biography of Takuan can be found in Lishka (1977). His life is a complicated study, with a fair amount of dispute regarding the dates of important events in his life and even the people he befriended and instructed. Because of Takuan's teaching of the Dharma through the vehicle of Japanese swordsmanship, his thought, writings, and life attained a minor upsurge of popularity from the beginning of the Shōwa period (1926–), encouraged by the rise of Japanese militarism. Thus a large part of the articles and even books written durng the twenty-year period from 1924–44 are speculative portrayals of various idealized Takuans, even to the extreme of a religious

diversely talented master who responded to the suffering on all levels of Tokugawa society, Takuan articulated to the warrior how the mind of Buddhist realization (the "no-mind") functions within the life-and-death context of the sword.

The soteriological creativity of this teaching is a continuation of the Mahayana Buddhist doctrine of wisdom (Skt., *prajñā*) and its application in creative response (Skt., *upāya*) to the suffering of sentient beings.[2] At the same time this responsive adaptation is the Ch'an and Zen schools's own creative use of an enormous variety of traditional Buddhist and non-Buddhist forms as tools to be taken up by the master when necessary to aid in a process of realization. Among such forms, the creative arts proved the most attractive to the laity, and it is Takuan's contribution of "the sword as Zen" that I wish to discuss as an exploration of the Zen "no-mind" and the creative process.

---

warrior. These documents do furnish information as to how the nation later viewed Takuan and constructed myths, etc., but they hinder a serious reconstruction of his life. A second difficulty occurs in the large number of anecdotes and tales about Takuan, material reflecting a popularity and admiration that arose after his death. These charming stories without verifiable authenticity are readily found in the pages of all but the best works about Takuan. For an example in English, see Leggett (1964, pp. 159–60). As of 1978, the reliable accounts and studies of Takuan's life are the following: (1) Harada (1940), a re-creation of major events in Takuan's life through lively conversation, with an excellent chronology; (2) Hayashi (1944, pp. 151–98), an accurate, scholarly biography; (3) Itō (1938); (4) Itō (1940); (5) Itō (1943), one of the better known and available biographies; (6) Matsuda (1943), a descriptive biography with a survey of Takuan's major writings; (7) Mochizuki (1954, p. 2376a, b, and c); (8) Nagata (1968, pp. 275–88); and Washio (1904, pp. 539–41).

2. This relationship is explained in most of the larger Prajñāpāramitā sutras and their commentaries, but Nāgārjuna elaborates it as the practice of the bodhisattva in his *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (*Taishō* vol. 25, no. 1509, pp. 57–756): "The bodhisattva practice has two aspects, one the practice of the *prajñāpāramitā* and the other the practice of *upāya*" (p. 754b and c). The entire text of the *Pancaviṃśatisā-hasrikā-prajñāpāramitā sutra* in ninety *chüan* (*Taishō* vol. 8, no. 223, pp. 217–425) is traditionally described as an explanation of this relationship—the first 66 *chüan* as an exposition of the practice of *prajñā*, the remaining 24 as an exposition of *upāya*.

Sword imagery before Takuan. Takuan's choice of the sword as an image and his choice of sword mastery as the context for his teaching are excellent indications both of his awareness of the Ch'an and Zen traditions that preceded him and of his response to the immediate values and needs of his warrior audience.

Within the early *prajñāpāramitā* or "Perfection of Wisdom" literature of the Indian Mahayana, the sword represented the swiftness and power of Buddhist wisdom to sever one's bondage to delusion and defilement. Within the esoteric mode, the Vajrayāna, the sword or *khadga* wielded by the sacred protector Acala, expressed the force of perseverance in realizing Buddhist wisdom.

The sword of course carried its own mythology in archaic Chinese martial lore, but it was the Ch'an schools from the mid-T'ang through the southern Sung dynasties that made the sword a major metaphor, absorbing much vernacular, legal, and military terminology to suggest Ch'an tenets in a new and vivid manner. Sword imagery is found in the major *kung-an* collections and *yü-lu* or "recorded sayings" of that time; one finds, for example, "the matter of raising the sword" (to destroy discrimination and conceptualization) in the *Lin-chi-lu* (*Taishō* vol. 47, no. 1985, p. 496c) and "raising the sword to discuss life and death" in the *Pi-yen-lu* (*Taishō* vol. 48, no. 2003, p. 193b). In Ch'an and Zen this figure of the sword came to symbolize various aspects of experience during practice: the total concentration of a practitioner's body and mind toward the moment of realization, the power of the Buddhist wisdom of a master in guiding and provoking his disciple's realization, and the insight of a person of realization in "seeing through" the delusions of others and in expressing Buddhist wisdom. Likewise in the *kung-an* anthologies, where the master-disciple relationship is taken as the context of Ch'an and Zen practice, this ability of the true master to use the individuality of each disciple to find his realization is the "sword that gives life" (realization) and "takes life" (delusion) in the *Pi-yen-lu* (*Taishō* vol. 48, no. 2003, p. 152c)

and in the *Wu-mên-kuan* (*Taishō* vol. 48, no. 2005, p. 299b).

In Japan the sword emerged as a symbol having its own mystique in archaic times. Its first appearance in literary form is in the myth cycles of the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*, where the sacred sword or "Murakumo-no-tsurugi" was given as one of the three sacred regalia to the first legendary emperor, Jinmu, by Amaterasu Ōmikami, the great kami of the sun, to establish sovereign and sacred authority over all the diverse clans and their deities in Japan. The ritual making of the sword by the smith, the etiquette of receiving and handling the sword, and the veneration of a renowned ancestor's blade by the successors of his clan gradually increased the ritual and aesthetic dimensions of this cult of the sword, particularly as the warrior class came to dominate Japanese political and cultural life from the twelfth century onward. In view of this ascendancy of the warrior class, Ch'an masters in Kamakura period Japan chose the moment of contest between combatants as an appropriate mode in which to explain Ch'an teachings. In one sense far more rigorous than the monastic environment, even an ultimate test of the heightening of the perceptive process and the functioning of the Zen "no-mind," *kendō* or the "way of the sword" would eventually develop into a fluid art form, a physical context of instantaneous tension between the total absorption in concentration necessary for success and the total lack of attachment to concentration necessary for maximum flexibility of response.

In his letters to the master swordsman Yagyū Munenori, Takuan proposed an essential explanation of how the "no-mind" functions as the only key to the resolution of this instantaneous tension.[3] These letters were subsequently collated into a text

3. Yagyū Munenori was associated with a swordplay tradition known as teh *shin kage ryū*, a vigorous style characterized by lightning-fast bold thrusts and slashes, founded by Munenori's father, Yagyū Muneyoshi (1527–1606), who himself had been a disciple of the Muromachi period swordmaster Maki'izumi Hidetsuna (? -1577). Within the great complex of traditions that evolved up to the early Meiji period, a definite tradition named the "no-sword practice" (*mutō ryū*) was developed by Yamaoka Tesshu (1836–88), one of the

entitled *Fudōchi shinmyō roku* [Record of the mysteries of immovable wisdom]. This text will serve as the basis of the present study.[4]

The Ch'an and Zen relationship to the arts. Takuan's artistry as a Rinzai master teaching the world view of his tradition lies in his efforts to portray the no-mind within the specific context of swordsmanship. Traditionally, masters introduced and defined Buddhist concepts and values in the linear, discursive manner of written commentaries and lectures. The reading or listening audience first had to juxtapose concepts that naturally stood as polar opposites, then to realize the tension between such dichotomies, and finally to negate and transcend these dichotomies-in-tension, to discover some small glimpse of Buddhist reality—in this case, the significance of no-mind. Such intellectual activity was a learning experience in a situation calling for the use of concepts in the process of thought.

But according to premises that the Ch'an and Zen schools

---

greatest of early modern swordsmen whose craft in and reflection on the sword retained a deep relationship to the practice of Zen. For an excellent description of Yagyū Munenori, Yamaoka Tesshu, and other swordsmen with particular reference to the relationship between their practice and philosophies and Rinzai Zen, see *Ken to zen* [The sword and Zen] (1972a), written by a modern-day successor to Yamaoka and a fine swordsman in his own right, the Rinzai Zen master Ōmori Sōgen. For a general explanation of *kendō* in English, see Sasamori and Warner, *This is kendō* (1964).

4. The standard text is found in *Takuan oshō zenshū* [Complete writings of Abbot Takuan], vol. 5 (1929). Since, however, each test in this compilation has only its own internal pagination (and there is no pagination by volume), quotations to be cited in this study will be specified by text chapter rather than by page.

   For a list of different texts and pre-Taishō period editions of the *Fudōchi shinmyō roku*, see *Shinsan zen seki mokuroku* (1962, p. 405c). Translations of this text into modern Japanese and English may conveniently be divided into complete and partial. The complete translations are: Furuta (1971), Ikeda (1970), Lishka (1977), Saigusa (1936), Yuki (1941), and "Fudōchi shinmyō roku" (1976). The partial translations are: Nomura (1939), Ōmori (1972b), Suzuki 1959), and "Letter of Takuan to the Shogun's fencing master" (1969).

share with Mahayana Buddhism generally, thinking is an intellectual experience of manipulating concepts that represent only limited aspects of reality. The thinking process and the conceptual tools it uses are functionally deficient for the representation of Buddhist reality itself. This must be experienced in the total fusion of body and mind that in Japanese is called *satori* or "realization." In Ch'an and Zen teaching, the key to the teaching process leading to realization is "experience." If the audience can be led to learn about the no-mind through an experience they have "felt" and possibly shared, rather than simply through manipulating abstractions they may be hearing and learning about for the first time, their exposure to no-mind will have a potential for greater depth and significance. (This dimension of experience is basic to Buddhist monastic life, a structured environment of shared experience oriented to Buddhist values, and is particularly important when viewing the master-disciple relationship and the teaching and realization processes within the Ch'an and Zen schools.) If, however, Takuan had simply described no-mind as a single moment of someone's past experience, the resultant static characterization would have suffered from many of the same limitations as philosophical abstraction. What was needed was a dynamic image, potentially rich in doctrinal and aesthetic significance. The image was to be at once soteriological, enabling one to discover the Zen world view, and aesthetic, making this discovery of truth interesting and relevant to actual experience.

Takuan chose as his image, therefore, not a completed moment that his audience merely looked back on, but an event of their continuing experience—the activity of combat. (The life-and-death contest of the sword was *the* major event in his audience's experience.) This choice of experience had important epistemological ramifications, for Takuan did not attempt to explain what no-mind is but chose instead to describe *how no-mind functions*. More precisely, the audience is offered the potential for discovering what no-mind is by realizing how it works, how

people function, in the context of an experience they had long known—a "life-and-death" experience.

Herein lies the basis of the relationship between the Ch'an and Zen schools, on the one hand, and all the arts these schools used as teaching tools, on the other. A specific artistic process was a major experience that a particular audience valued and probably had attempted. Traditional Buddhist teachings of essential soteriological purpose, such as the difficulties of ignorance, binding desire, and the self in perceiving and realizing Buddhist reality, and the ultimate freedom and beauty of the universe as reality (Skt., *dharmadhātu*), were translated or applied by Ch'an and Zen masters within the context of a specific art form they learned to master. Mastery of an art form came to mean total freedom, creativity, and beauty within the context and discipline of the form.

The grand soteriology of the Mahayana was transformed by the Ch'an and Zen masters into the practical creativity of an art form. But a soteriological concern underlay this practical artistic creativity, for once the artist discovered freedom within a particular discipline and form, it was expected that his original motivation for mastery within an artistic process should inspire him to move beyond that art form into the practice of living itself. His pursuit of quality would be organic and dynamic, finding consummation not when a work of art had been executed but only when living itself had become the practice and work of art.

TAKUAN'S THEORY OF "THE SWORD AS ZEN"

What Takuan does in the *Fudōchi shinmyō roku* can be viewed at once as an explanation of the discipline involved in moving from novice to master swordsman and an explanation of the creative process in swordsmanship.

His articulation of the creative process, the focus of this study, is an attempt to apply Mahayana and specifically Yogācāra theories of perception to the artist's perception of his environ-

ment and the elements to be manipulated during the creative act. Thus in chapter 1, "Suffering as abiding in the ground of ignorance," he begins by discussing the deluded perception of any ordinary sentient being through defining and exploring the ramifications of what he terms "halting, stopping, or abiding."

> "Ignorance" (*avidya*) is a word which means "a lack of awareness," and it refers to delusion. "Abiding in a ground" indicates a position where there is resting or stopping. Within the Dharma of the Buddha there is the practice of the fifty-two stages [of the bodhisattva], and among these fifty-two stages wherever the mind stops upon anything—this is known as "abiding in a ground." "Abiding" has the meaning of "halting," and when there is halting in relation to any object whatsoever, this is the mind stopping on an object.
>
> Speaking in terms of your martial art, there may be a single glimpse of an opponent's slashing sword, and if one's mind meets or becomes attached to that sword—in this case the mind will "stop on" the opponent's sword. Here the freedom of one's own movement is lost, and the opponent will slice into you. This is a "stopping of the mind." There is perceiving in the process of experiencing an opponent's swinging sword—but the mind does not have to stop on it. And facing the instant of the opponent's striking sword, if his striking is not anticipated, there will be no lingering consideration or anxiety—no discriminative thinking. There will be no seeing of any sword being swung forward, and the mind will not stop anywhere at all. By taking advantage of exactly this situation, the opponent's sword may be caught at its most vulnerable point. And seizing the offensive as the opponent's sword comes forward, one's own sword will be able to bear down upon the opponent...
>
> If the mind stops on the slashing by an opponent or on the slashing from oneself, or again on the person slashing or the sword being swung or even the range, the rhythm, or the meagerness of these actions, one's own movements will be completely lost. This means it will be possible to

> cut into you. If one sets himself against an opponent, one's mind will be seized by that opponent. Do not position the mind on yourself either.... In terms of one's mind being seized by the sword, if the mind is so positioned for a single instant, the mind is captured for that instant. If the mind is placed upon one's own sword, the mind will be captured by one's own sword. If your mind stops within any of these [situations], you will be nothing but a corpse.

The ordinary mode of sentient perception is *vijñāna* ("knowing things through a dividing up"), that is, focusing only on specific forms and characteristics within the field of perception to the detriment of the basic unity of Buddhist reality. The purpose of Buddhist soteriology is, through the limitations and dynamics of various kinds of symbolic expression, both to stimulate a practitioner's transformation of consciousness and to suggest what the transformed perception of Buddhist reality may be. Takuan here applies this theory to the art and practice of swordsmanship and, by implication, to the creative act in general.

Flowing concentration. A swordsman's artistic concentration must be developed as a perfectly "equal" attention to all the factors of the situation: environmental characteristics, tools and materials used, technical and stylistic potential, the doer's past efforts, successes, failures, criticisms received, etc. All relevant factors must be regarded as "equally" significant by the performer. (Because of this "equivalency," it may be said either that all factors are equally important or that they are equally unimportant.) If any one aspect or factor becomes an object of attention or concern, the mind "stops" on that factor, even if only momentarily. (In traditional Buddhist "epistemontological" terms, the stopping of the mind is awareness of a definite object, and in awareness of a definite object the mind functions as a subject.) But the topic under discussion is that of action—a situation of motion or flow of activity in which any "stopping" of the mind

is obstructive, rendering the mind immobile and static.

The basic Far Eastern philosophical mode of synthesis is crucial here. This mode implies not merely establishing a relationship between elements or factors, but developing this relationship into a smooth and functional harmony. Equivalency in attention requires establishing a harmony of all aspects in perception and, on this basis, effective functioning by the performer. The performer must not only relate all factors into a harmony of equal values, but must also relate himself and his doing to this harmonious relationship. He must *become* the harmony as he acts.

One may distinguish, as Takuan did for the sake of his audience, between "external" factors (environment, tools, materials, etc.) and "internal" factors (the performer's awareness of doing what he is doing, awareness of technique and style, past efforts in relation to all external and internal factors, etc.). But in action the performer must harmonize his consciousness within the flow of his action into a unity, and he must work within this unity. Traditional Buddhist liberation (Skt., *vimokṣa*), that is, realizing the incalculable potential of the universe as the Dharma (Skt., *dharmadhātu*), is now seen in this new context as a state in which the performer's mind stops or abides nowhere. This absence of obstruction to the performer's immersion within the flow of action is the freedom that constitutes the basis for one's realizing his artistic potential for creativity.

Equivalence, freedom, and creativity. Takuan has described how the ordinary mind functions and how this ordinary functioning impedes one's actions and limits one's freedom to create. He now uses this image of the mind's stopping and abiding as a premise from which to develop and contrast various images of how the unobstructed and flowing consciousness functions in the realization and exercise of the artistic potential of creativity.

In chapter 2 he discusses the mind's "not stopping or abiding."

> For example, ten men, each with a sword, attack one's sword. In warding off a sword, one's mind does not stop upon any traces. Even though there be ten men, one's movements toward them will not be lost if one selects traces by abandoning traces. With ten men there will be ten minds functioning, but if one's own mind does not stop on even a single man, the activity of directing attention to each successive opponent will not be lost. If your mind comes to stop on a single person before you, even though you should be able to ward off one striking sword, you may not be able to escape [harm] when there are two. The bodhisattva Sahasrabhujāryāvalokiteśvara has one thousand hands, each holding an object. If his mind stops on the [particular] hand holding a bow, all the other nine hundred and ninety-nine hands will not be used. If the mind does not stop on any single position, all the hands will be used. How is it possible for a Kuan-yin to possess a thousand arms on a single body? If immovable wisdom is revealed, a form may be produced to show people what is being referred to as the use of a thousand arms on a body.
>
> Suppose one is facing a solitary tree. If one sees only one red leaf on it, all the other leaves will not be seen. If one's eyes are not confronted by a single leaf and there is not any kind of mind to be struck by the single leaf, all the leaves without exception will be seen. If the mind is seized by a single leaf, all the remaining leaves will not be seen. If the mind does not stop on one, one hundred thousand leaves will all be seen. A person who achieves this in mind is like the thousand eyes and thousand arms of Sahasrabhujāryāvalokiteśvara.

Not stopping the mind on any single element in a situation is precisely the source of the freedom to create within that situation. The elements are to be related in equivalence, but in a brief survey of the creative situation it is difficult to understand how such disparate factors can be viewed as equivalent. Of course their presence in the same situation makes all of them factors, but this category includes, as we have seen, quite diverse phenomena: environmental characteristics, concrete objects such as

tools and materials, abstract data such as techniques and styles, the mental influence of one's awareness of the quality of past efforts, etc. To "relate in equivalence" here suggests the relationship between the particularity of each factor and the potential of each factor as an element for creative use. Thus the factors must be realized as "equal" in their potential to contribute to a new creating and a new creation. The factors appear unique and disparate, but they must function as equal in potential.

It is the performer who must realize the ramifications of this relationship. He must see the potential in each element that constitutes its uniqueness as an individual element and simultaneously see the creative potential that each element possesses because it is present in this creative action. Furthermore, the performer must realize that the "internal" complexities in the interrelation between himself as doer and the action he is doing are again nothing but elements that must be integrated into this relationship. This becomes clear when an artist of a specific technique, style, or material abruptly begins working in a medium new to him. He does not simply create successfully. He must work and become familiar with this new and foreign element (whether technique, style, or material) before he can integrate it within this relationship of equivalency.

Against this background one begins to see why Ch'an and Zen masters could utilize the artistic modes, even the linear, discursive modes, as teaching devices or "advertising" to communicate the Zen world view to lay people. Far more masters than it is usually admitted were long-term practitioners in specific disciplines of calligraphy, ink-wash painting, and Chinese and Japanese styles of versification. They were practicing artists as well as monks, and thus could be expected to produce art just like any secular artist who devoted his life to a specific form.

There were also, however, many masters who had little experience in any particular artistic discipline and yet produced works of striking creativity. The reason they could do so was

not they they had realized the equivalency of elements within a limited situation of artistic creativity, but that their realization (Jps., *satori*) of Buddhist reality enabled them to see the equivalency of elements within *any* life situation, whether artistic, moral, or soteriological.[5] This creativity is appropriately illustrated by Takuan himself, who, it appears, rarely touched a sword and never engaged in a contest of swordsmanship, and yet could so vividly discuss the Zen world view in this specific context. It is, then, as the mind grows more and more capable of realizing this relationship of equivalency and functioning or "flowing" within its harmony that the Ch'an or Zen master is often enabled to be extraordinarily creative, whether in guiding his disciples or working within an artistic or literary form.

The original mind. In chapter 7 of the *Fudōchi shinmyō roku* Takuan, having characterized the non-stopping of the mind by means of the spatial image of "flowing," goes on to identify this fluidity of the mind with the "fundamental or original mind" of the *Ta-ch'êng ch'i-hsin-lun* [Awakening of faith in the Mahayana] (*Taishō* vol. 32, no. 1666, pp. 575-83):

> There is what is called the original mind and the deluded mind. The original mind is not stopping on a single position. It is the mind expanding and extending through one's whole body and whole substance. The deluded mind is the mind frozen in a single position by constant concentration. The original mind, gathered [or concentrated] and stiffened in a single position, becomes what is termed the deluded mind. The original mind vanishes when its functioning in position after position is lost, and it is unified when it is not lost.

5. This is the fundamental difference between a true Ch'an or Zen master, on the one hand, and someone who practices a specific discipline in which he attempts realization for the purpose of functioning creatively within that context, on the other. The artist has as his context the creative process of his art, whereas the Ch'an or Zen master has as his context living itself—the context for all possible contexts.

> For example, the original mind is like water, not stopping any place [as it flows]. The deluded mind is like ice; one cannot wash his hands and face with ice. One can melt ice, and it will become water, and as it flows everywhere, one can wash one's hands and feet and anything else. If the mind stops as a thing frozen in a single position, one cannot speak of using solid ice freely, and this is like not being able to wash one's hands and feet with ice. Using the mind in such a way so as to thaw it out and let it flow like water through the entire body is using it by sending it to any position one wants to dispatch it to. This is what is called the original mind.[6]

Takuan also adds a temporal dimension to his discussion of the mind's flowing. In chapter 7, "Not even a hair's breadth between," he puts it thus:

> There is what is spoken of as "not even a hair's breadth between." It can be compared to your martial art. "Between" means the space interjacent to two objects when they are placed one on top of another so that there is not even an opening where a single hair could enter. For example, when one hand hits the other [in clapping], in exactly this situation the sound "crack!" comes out. In the interval after the clapping of the hands, there is not even an instant to stick a single hair within—because [immediately] the sound comes out. After clapping one's hands, there is no interval [during which] to put anything in before the sound appears. The hands clap, and just like that—the sound appears.
>
> If the mind stops on a sword while it is striking someone, it is possible for there to be an interval. In this interval one's movements can be lost. If not even a single hair can be stuck into the interval between one's movements and the opponent's slashing sword, the masterful sword will be

6 Takuan reinforces this interpretation through the very titles he gives to the chapters of the *Fudōchi shinmyō roku*. Chapter 8 is entitled "Throwing a round gourd into the water—push it down and it never stops spinning." Chapter 12 bears the title, "Tossing a ball upon a swiftly flowing stream—thought after thought it never stops flowing."

> one's own.... Moving in the manner of a ball floating down a swiftly flowing stream, the mind rapidly floating along without stopping even a little, is priceless.[7]

The mind's not stopping can be described as a flowing within action. It is related to both spatial and temporal perception. In actuality, of course, this flowing cannot be divided into spatial and temporal aspects, for any division obviously destroys its fluidity and renders it static. Then we would be speaking about how the mind stops.

One's ordinary awareness of the particularity of elements implies a spatial discrimination of the elements present. But this spatial dimension shows the mind stopping in a static sense and of itself is inadequate to the task of making it clear that the mind cannot stop within the constantly changing flow of action. Thus the temporal dimension must also be articulated, for it is only when both dimensions of the mind's stopping are simultaneously realized that we can begin to understand what the mind's not stopping actually means.

Spontaneity. A more positive, vibrant image of the flowing of the mind may be found in Takuan's reference to the value of spontaneity. This reference occurs in chapter 4, in a discussion of the Ch'an or Zen master-disciple context.

> In the Zen schools if one asks "what is the Buddha?", a fist should be raised. If there is the question "what is the ultimate meaning of the Dharma of the Buddha?", before the sound of the question has ended there has to be the reply "a single twig of plum blossoms" or "there's a little oak tree out in front of the garden." This is not [a matter of] choosing any "good" or "bad" in these replies. This is [a matter of] valuing the mind that does not stop. A mind that does not stop is not influenced by appearances or smells. The substance of the mind that is not influenced is cele-

7. This matter is discussed again in chapter 3, "The instant of a flash," and in chapter 12, where Takuan takes up a phrase from the *Vimalakīrti sutra*, "The discontinuity of the past and the future."

> brated as a kami and rewarded as a Buddha, which is none other than the Zen mind and the ultimate significance. But if a person speculates "what superb wording and profundity of expression!" after such has been said—this is the suffering of abiding in a ground.

Spontaneity became a major value of functioning in realization. Within Ch'an and Zen practice it provided a criterion for the master to sense when his disciple's mind had entered the mode of "not stopping," and it was a way of acting by the disciple in response to the master's actions and provocations. Spontaneity became a mode of practice, almost an institutionalized mode, in the sophisticated evolution of the *kung-an* (Jps., *kōan*) of later Ch'an and Zen. Again, in the utilization of the arts by Ch'an and Zen masters, it was particularly calligraphy and ink-wash painting, media requiring swift and unpremeditated action with a highly visible result, that readily indicated the spontaneity of the mind's flowing. The contest of the sword was an even more intense and manifest test of this quality, for it was quite literally a "life-and-death" contest.

Antithesis and no-mind. In the thirteen chapters of the *Fudōchi shinmyō roku* Takuan combines various aspects and themes to suggest how the mind can function creatively. His central theme has been how the ordinary mind apprehends Buddhist reality in discriminatory fashion and how this discrimination relates to the way one acts in a creative process. Discrimination is a stopping or obstruction of the mind as it perceives the process in which it is the actor. Spatial and temporal discrimination interrupt the performer's harmony or "relationship of equivalency" that should obtain among himself, his acting, and the situation. The performer must establish this harmony and function within it, must become the harmony by acting within it. This is the flowing or non-stopping of the mind, the freedom that enables creativity, the spontaneity of the creative act.

The manner in which the mind then functions Takuan calls

"immovableness," and he alludes to the perseverance symbolized by the Vajrayāna protector Acala ("the immovable"):

> The mind's not stopping even with a single glance refers to [its being] "immovable." The reason is that if the mind does stop on something, there are various discriminations (Skt., *vikalpa*) in one's breast and various movements in one's breast. If the mind stops, it is moving, but if the mind does not stop, it is not "moving."

Thus Takuan applies "immovableness" to the mind's flowing in a strikingly antithetical manner. The mind must move; it must flow and never stop. Yet it must flow unwaveringly and unceasingly; it must be "immovable" in its flexibility.

The use of antithesis is a major form of Buddhist and particularly Ch'an and Zen statements about Buddhist reality. It is also antithesis that gives aesthetic significance to the "no-mind" concept as used by these schools when they speak of "the mind of no-mind." Takuan formulates his own statement about this matter in chapter 7, "The mind of the existing mind, the mind of no-mind."

> There is what is termed the mind of the existing mind and the mind of the no-mind. The mind of the existing mind is identical with the deluded mind, and as the title [of this concept] "existing mind" is read as "the existence of the mind," it is a position packed with one-directional thought toward anything. When discrimination and conceptualization produce thoughts in the mind, it refers to the mind of the existing mind.
>
> The mind of the no-mind is the same as the previously-described original mind; it is a mind free of solidification and settling and discrimination and conceptualization and the like. It extends through the entire body, and the mind that moves around and through the complete substance is called the no-mind. This is the mind that is not positioned anywhere. It is not, however, like wood or stone. Not stopping on any position is called the no-mind. In stopping there is something in the mind, but in not stopping on

> any position there is nothing in the mind. Nothing in the mind is called the mind of the no-mind, and it is [also] called no-mind and non-thought.
>
> If one is able to thoroughly practice this mind of no-mind, one will not stop on a single thing, and one will not lose a single thing. Constantly, like being filled with water, it exists in this body and responds in functioning when needed.

It is characteristic of Far Eastern Buddhism, and especially of these schools, to explain what something is by discussing what it does or how it functions. This is the reason that Takuan has devoted the greater part of his text to describing how this no-mind, this mind of realization, is the foundation for creative action. Yet all the aspects and themes of the mind's flowing, as he describes them, are the no-mind; for the no-mind cannot be understood as what the mind "is," but what the freely and creatively moving mind "does."

REFERENCES

FURUTA Shōkin 古田紹欽, transl.
1971 Fudōchi shimyō roku 不動智神妙録 [Record of the mysteries of immovable wisdom]. In *Butten kōza* 仏典講座 [Buddhist classics series], vol. 40, pp. 15–52. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppansha.

HOSODA Harayoshi 細田源吉
1940 *Takuan oshō no issei* 沢庵和尚の一生 [A life of the monk Takuan]. Tokyo: Tokyo Shobō.

HAYASHI Taiun 林岱雲
1944 Takuan oshō den 沢庵和尚伝 [A biography of the monk Takuan]. In *Takuan zenji no kenkyū* 沢庵禅師之研究 [Studies of the Zen master Takuan], pp. 151–98. Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha.

IKEDA Satoshi 池田諭, transl.
1970 *Fudōchi shinmyō roku* 不動智神妙録 [Record of

the mysteries of immovable wisdom]. Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten.

ITŌ Kōan 伊藤康安

1938 Takuan oshō no shisō to seikatsu 沢庵和尚の思想と生活 [The daily life and thought of the monk Takuan]. *Koten kenkyū* 古典研究 3: 42–52.

1940 *Takuan no shōgai to sono shisō* 沢庵の生涯とその思想 [The life and thought of Takuan]. Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai.

1943 *Takuan* 沢庵. Tokyo: Yūsankaku.

LEGGETT, Trevor

1964 *The tiger's cave.* London: Rider and Co.

LISHKA, Dennis

1977 Buddhist wisdom and its expression as art: The Dharma of the Zen master Takuan. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin.

MATSUDA Bugyō 松田奉行

1943 *Takuan* 沢庵. In the *Zen sōsho* 禅叢書 [Zen library], vol. 6. Tokyo: Kōbundō Shobō.

MOCHIZUKI Shinkyō 望月信享

1954 *Bukkyō daijiten* 仏教大辞典 [Buddhist encyclopedia], vol. 3. Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai.

NAGATA Hōjū 永田豊州

1968 Takuan 沢庵. In *Kōza zen* 4: *Zen no rekishi —Nihon* 講座禅 4: 禅の歴史～日本 [Zen series, vol. 4: Zen history: Japan], NISHITANI Keiji 西谷啓治, compiler. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō.

NOMURA Seizō 野村政造

1939 *Takuan to fudōchi no taigen* 沢庵と不動智の体現 [Takuan and the expression of immovable wisdom]. Kyoto: Jinbun Shoin.

ŌMORI Sōgen 大森曹玄

1972a *Ken to zen* 剣と禅 [The sword and Zen]. Tokyo: Shunjusha.

1972b Fudōchi shinmyō roku 不動智神妙録 (partial translation). In *Kōza zen* 7: *Zen no koten* 講座禅 7: 禅の古典 [Zen series, vol. 7: Zen

classics], Nishitani Keiji 西谷啓治, compiler. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō.

Saigusa Hiroto 三枝博音, transl.

1936 Fudōchi shinmyō roku 不動智神妙録 [Record of the mysteries of immovable wisdom]. In *Dai nihon tetsugaku zensho* 大日本哲学全書 [Greater library of Japanese philosophy], vols. 1 and 2. Tokyo: Dai Ichi Shobō.

Sasamori Junzo and Gordon Warner

1964 *This is kendō.* Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co.

Suzuki Daisetz T.

1959 *Zen and Japanese culture.* New York: Pantheon.

Takuan 沢庵

1929 Fudōchi shinmyō roku 不動智神妙録 [Record of the mysteries of immovable wisdom]. In *Takuan oshō zenshū* 沢庵和尚全集 [Complete writings of the monk Takuan], vol. 5. Tokyo: Takuan Oshō Zenshū Kankōkai.

1969 Letter of Takuan to the Shogun's fencing master. In Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *The Buddhist tradition*, pp. 376–80. New York: The Modern Library.

1976 Fudōchi shinmyō roku. In *Traditions* 1:9–34.

Washio Junkei 鷲尾順敬, compiler

1904 *Nihon bukke jinmei jisho* 日本仏家人名辞書 [Biographical dictionary of Japanese Buddhist monks]. Tokyo: Bijutsukan.

Yuki Reimon 結城令聞, transl.

1941 Fudōchi shinmyō roku 不動智神妙録 [Record of the mysteries of immovable wisdom]. In his *Ken zen ichi'nyo* 剣禅一如 [The identity of the sword and Zen], pp. 87–196. Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha.