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Zen and Western Psychotherapy: Nirvanic Transcendence and Samsaric Fixation

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Summary

Much has been said about the relationship between Buddhism and Western psychotherapy. I argue that both the ends and the means of Buddhist practice far exceed the limitations of Western psychotherapy in its dominant forms. This claim is substantiated by examining the underlying views of human nature in the broader context of cosmic Nature, as these reflect the assumed nature of the therapeutic task. Special attention is given to the universal human encounter with death as the ultimate manifestation of dukkha. My conclusions may be summarized as follows:

1) Western psychotherapy, rooted in ancient Greek assumptions and represented by strains as diverse as Sigmund Freud and Abraham Maslow, essentially views human nature as internally weak and thus largely controlled by "objective" external forces. Consequently, it conceives of its task in terms of teaching patients to cope with existing conditions, that is, how to tread water in the samsaric sea. Its response to death, as expressed in Freud's later theory of the Death Instinct, is one of resignation as demanded by the scientifically validated fact of natural necessity.

2) One of the few variations on this therapeutic scheme, tending toward Buddhism in general and Zen in particular, is to be found in Viktor E. Frankl's Logotherapy. As revealed in Frankl's dimensional ontology, he is more sanguine about human prospects and our ability to achieve

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self-transcendence. Many parallels are to be found between logotherapeutic techniques and those of Zen, including glimmerings of enlightenmental insight into the key role of suffering. Yet, Frankl is never fully able to liberate either himself or Logotherapy from Samsāra, as reflected in his view of death as a necessary guarantor of life's meanings.

3) Only Zen is able to transcend both self (ego) and Samsāra, by means of the resources inherent in Original Nature. Its attitude of detachment toward death, without succumbing to denial, epitomizes its overarching efficacy.

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Much has been said about the relationship between Buddhism in general and Western psychotherapy. This is especially true in terms of various explorations of the "therapeutic" potential inherent in Zen Buddhism.^[1] In part, Buddhist tradition would seem to corroborate the comparison, as seen in the metaphor of Buddhism as a medicine or therapy dispensed by the enlightened physician, the Buddha, to cure our samsaric suffering.

Despite these apparent similarities, this discussion focuses on the need for caution in the pursuit of comparisons, for an uncritical association of Buddhism with existing forms of psychotherapy as practiced in the West carries the danger of reductionism, whereby both disciplines are

compromised. When Buddhism is reduced to being nothing more than another form of psychotherapy, with Sakyamuni Buddha himself identified as a proto-therapist, a valuable resource is lost for the West. In being so regarded, Western thinkers need not delve deeply to reveal Buddhism's uniqueness, but remain content with superficial similarities.[2] This leads to such absurdities as the assumption that psychedelic

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delic drugs can be a substitute for the self-discipline of meditational practice, in that they induce the same ecstatic state and represent a kind of expressway to enlightenment, or that meditation is primarily of interest as a means of stress reduction. Even those who more modestly suggest that drugs be used merely as a motivation for undertaking the arduous path of practice, by granting a glimpse of things to come, fail to heed Buddhism's fundamental precept against intoxicants.

In the following I argue that both the ends and the means of Buddhist practice far exceed the limitations of Western psychotherapy in its dominant forms. This claim is substantiated by examining the underlying views of human nature in the broader context of cosmic Nature, as these reflect the assumed nature of the therapeutic task. Special attention is given to the universal human encounter with death as the ultimate manifestation of dukkha .[3]My conclusions may be summarized as follows:

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self-transcendence. Many parallels are to be found between logotherapeutic techniques and those of Zen, including glimmerings of enlightenment insight into the key role of suffering. Yet, despite Frankl's nirvānic excursions, he is never fully able to liberate either himself or Logotherapy from Samsāra, as reflected in his view of death as a necessary guarantor of life's meaning.³⁾

Only Zen is able to transcend both self (ego) and Samsara, by means of the resources inherent in Original Nature. Its attitude of detachment toward death, without succumbing to denial, epitomizes its overarching efficacy.

I. Human Nature and the Nature of the

Psychotherapeutic Task: From Plato to the Present

To understand the aim of psychotherapy, and thereby evaluate its efficacy, one must first understand its subject. The terms "psychology", "psychotherapy", "psychoanalysis", and "psychiatry" all share a common etymological component, "psyche", indicative of this subject. Derived from the Greek, psyche^[4] (Latin, anima) originally referred to one's breath and eventually came to be associated with the soul or spirit. This was based on the belief that the soul departed from the body at death in one's last breath, a long-standing medical criterion of death. Hence psychology is the logos or study of the soul, psychotherapy attendance (therapia) upon it, and psychiatry the art of healing it (iatria).

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The psyche concept likewise reveals a fundamental assumption in Western culture, namely the separability (dualism) of mind or soul and body. In the *Phaedo* Socrates speaks confidently of this separation at death (presumably drawing upon his Orphic background and beliefs). A distinct preference also is shown for the psyche over the body, which last is assumed to be pure while its material prison is a source of defilement that must be overcome. Psyche alone constitutes the "real" me, the essence of my being. ^[5] This assumption became a key component of Christian theology (although contrary to the Old Testament views of Judaism, which often

posits a temporary separation that ends with the resurrection of the body at the Last Judgement [6]).

It is noteworthy that the same concept of the soul as "breath" is found in another Indo-European language, Sanskrit, giving rise to the word "ātman." [7] Thus, it may be said that psychology is devoted to the study of the ātman. Yet it is precisely this ātman, at the core of the Brahmanical literature, that the Buddha countered with his doctrine of an-ātman (anāṭta), the denial of

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ātman's reality. Accordingly, the task of psychotherapy to care for this very psyche/ātman is fundamentally wrongheaded Buddhistically-speaking. It amounts to attending to an illusion, and represents a state of being deluded by an illusion in making it the focal point of discussion.[8]

Freudian psychoanalysis is aptly named in the sense that it literally strives to breakdown (analyze) the psyche into its assumed constituent parts.[9] In fact, in his analysis Freud was heavily influenced by classical Greek sources (as he was with so many of his concepts), specifically Plato. A vivid and revealing image of a tripartite soul is offered in the Phaedrus:

Of the nature of the soul...let the figure be a composite--a pair of winged horses and a charioteer....the human charioteer drives his in a pair; one of them is noble and of noble breed, and the other is ignoble and of ignoble breed; and the driving of them of necessity gives a great deal of trouble to him....The chariots of the gods in even poise, obeying the rein, glide rapidly; but the others labour [sic], for the vicious steed goes heavily, weighing

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down the charioteer to the earth when his steed has not been thoroughly trained:--this is the hour of agony and extremest conflict for the soul.....The right-hand horse is upright and cleanly made; he has a lofty neck and an aquiline nose; his colour is white, and his eyes dark; he is a lover of honour [sic] and modesty and temperance, and the follower of true glory; he needs no touch of the whip, but is guided by word and admonition alone. The other is a crooked lumbering animal, put together anyhow; he has a short thick neck; he is flat-faced and of a dark colour; with grey eyes and

blood-red complexion; the mate of insolence and pride, shag-eared and deaf, hardly yielding to whip and spur. [10]

The two horses represent the motive force/energy of our inmost being, one of which can only be made to cooperate by repressing its natural tendencies. The task of the charioteer, representing reason, is to keep these two on the right path and compel them to work in unison. Significantly, without their efforts the chariot will go nowhere--nor can they be traded for a more manageable pair. Hence each of these three elements--reason, will, and passion--has an indispensable role to play in effecting the forward motion of the vehicle (body) despite the instability of their interrelationships.

The Freudian Vision of the Psyche

Down through the centuries the tripartite view of the soul (and, hence, of human nature), with its keynote of conflict and tension, became ingrained in

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Western consciousness through variations on the theme.[11] Inherited by Sigmund Freud, it was examined through the lenses of scientific materialism to produce his own unique reinterpretation. The essential mechanism of control, the assumption of a need to exert control over conflicting forces, remains unchanged, as does the sense of the regrettable, but necessary, evil inherent in our sources of energy. However, Freud's refinements seem to give the dark-horse of passion almost unstoppable power, while the willing white horse is envisioned to be a nay-saying nag.

This view of human nature has been aptly described by David Stafford Clark:

Freud,,.,struggled to help man find a way to elevate himself above the savage beast, which, through no fault of his own, is always a part of him, The doctrine of original sin found no opposition from Freud, although

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his explanation of it was biological rather than religious.[12]

What is unique about Freud's three components is that they are interconnected elements, rather than the three distinct faculties or entities implied in Plato's analogy. Each evolves out of its lower predecessor, struggling to raise itself above its own roots, in a psychic version of Darwinian evolution. The fundamental substratum, identified as the Id (in German, "Das Es"),[\[13\]](#) is an impersonal, seething sea of psychic energies, a microcosmic of the cosmic soup out of which the universe emerged. Freud links the Id with instinctual drives, most prominently the sexual energy of the libido. These drives represent our primal inheritance (original sin?) of human nature shared with all individuals, past, present, and future. It can also be equated with the "beast within", that aspect of human nature that directly links, or binds, us to the primitive, material world of animals. Precisely because of this beast that lurks within, the savage hidden beneath a thin veneer of civilization, social structures must be rigidly enforced and legal codes adopted. The alternative is to plunge back into the deplorable "State of Nature", characterized by primal instincts of aggression and desire run amuck.[\[14\]](#)

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Obviously such views of human nature and its roots contrast sharply with the "Original Nature" both valued and sought by Zen. How odd, then, that some have suggested Freud's morass of instinctual drives lodged in the Unconscious coincides with the goal of Zen mediation. For example, it is claimed that "[t]hrough the practice of zazen (Zen meditation), the discriminating mind (the conscious mind) is quieted and the intuitive mind (the unconscious) is liberated and identifies with the universal mind."[\[15\]](#) Such an interpretation is at best a partial truth, representing yet another manifestation of the reductionist fallacy responsible for serious misconceptions of Zen in the West.

The Ego develops out of the Id, serving as mediator between the latter and the "real" or social world. Since the Ego is derived from sense data and memories, what Buddhism refers to as the five skandhas, it constitutes individual consciousness and the sense of personal identity. In turn, the Super-Ego emerges out of the Ego, two steps removed from the Id, by means of social conditioning, the product of external impositions, the

demands made upon us, particularly by parental and other authority figures. The Super-Ego's function is essentially to inhibit the selfish (natural) tendencies of both the instinct-driven Id and the self-interested Ego. More informally referred to as the conscience, the Super-Ego is responsible for instilling feelings of guilt and anxiety that may in certain circumstances escalate into psychic imbalance.

In a "normal", integrated personality, the Ego assumes the reins, holding in check the recalcitrant Id without capitulating to the excessive demands of the nagging, negating Super-Ego. Despite the liabilities of both the Id and the Super-Ego, the Ego cannot afford to eliminate either. That would amount to

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self-mutilation, as well as undermining the delicate balance of power, The only hope for the Ego is to keep both Id and Super-Ego in check by constantly shifting alliances with their polar opposites. In fact, Freud declares "Man is lived by the unconscious,"[\[16\]](#) meaning that our life energy derives from this source and that our instincts are "the ultimate cause of all activity."[\[17\]](#) When we fail to give the Id and the Unconscious due respect, Freud observes, neurosis results.

The primary task of psychotherapy, then, is to help the individual (in the person/ persona of the Ego as would-be controller) to cope with the natural contentiousness of these three forces and reinstate a balance among them.[\[18\]](#) Regression lies at the root of the neurotic imbalance. A psychic mechanism of great functionality, repression can at times be too effective, too efficient, in its attempts to tame the Id, thereby thwarting the flow of psychic energies. Furthermore, by Freud's psychological version of the scientific law of the Conservation of Energy, this energy can be neither created nor destroyed, only transformed. Out of this transformation, neurosis arises.

Consider the example of anger, as viewed within the Freudian framework. Two options are recognized when this emotion begins to bubble up from the primeval sludge of the Id into consciousness: one may express the anger (literally, press or squeeze it out) or re-press/sup-press it (press it back or under). The Super-Ego, as guardian of social order and harmony, often

inhabits direct expression of our anger, particularly if it is directed toward what is deemed to be an inappropriate object (e.g., an authority figure such as

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one's father or mother). The psychic strategy of the Ego in such cases may be to banish the anger from consciousness. Nonetheless, the energy so generated cannot be destroyed, merely rechanneled, and so it is relegated to the wilderness of the Unconscious. Freud warns that this strategy leads to a potentially explosive situation, for the repressed anger will eventually seek expression in other, more indirect forms. These may be as harmless as Freudian slips or jokes or as serious as neurotic manifestations of paralysis or hallucinations.

In this dualism of expression versus repression, Freud sees no solution but to dredge the Unconscious (through Dream Analysis, Free Association, etc.) in order to drag the repressed emotion to the surface. Once exposed in the light of consciousness, its hidden energies become dissipated. It is assumed that only by venting the anger in a controlled situation can we avoid suffering the affects of its distorted mutations. Fritz Perls echoes the Freudian line when he states "Any anger that is not coming out, flowing freely, will turn into sadism, power drive, and other means of torture."[\[19\]](#)

Debates persist within the psychotherapeutic community on the veracity of this analysis. Recent studies have suggested that the mere fact of discussing one's anger (much less expressing it) has the effect of aggravating rather than ameliorating it. This implies that the situation is much more complicated than Freud's mechanistic model realizes. Unlike hot air in a overfilled balloon, we cannot simply find a way to release anger in order to prevent it from exploding.

The dualistic nature of Western thought processes illustrated by the Freudian model equally can be applied to any emotion or instinctual drive--from hunger and sex to fear and aggression. This either/or positing of a forced choice between polar extremes presupposes the existence of an unresolvable dilemma intrinsic to human nature. The psyche thus is conceived as a veritable battlefield upon which natural instincts (the Id) are pitted against civilized standards of conduct (the Super-Ego), in the midst of

survival imperatives (the safeguarding of which is the primary responsibility of the Ego).

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Comparing the Freudian analysis of emotion with Buddhist accounts, we see that Buddhist theory allows for a third option over and above the extremes of Western dualism: extinction. Anger (dosa) is a particularly apt example, inasmuch as it is identified as one of the three "poisons" (along with greed, lobha, and ignorance, moha)[20] The Dhammapada devotes an entire chapter (XVII) to the topic of anger, recognizing it as a self-imposed "fetter" (fu²) we must liberate ourselves from.[21] Significantly, this same passage (221) cautions against clinging to either the body or the mind (psyche). The image of the chariot also appears, bringing to mind Plato's analogy: "Whoso, as a rolling chariot, checks his uprising anger, him I call a charioteer; other folk merely hold the reins" (222). The element of control highlighted here would seem to correspond to the prevailing Western models. Nonetheless, it is not repression that is being advised--this would merely preserve the unavoidable state of tension. Rather, we are instructed to eradicate the negative emotion. This is borne out by the subsequent passage (223), where the methodology is clarified--the anger (fen⁴) is to be "conquered" (sheng¹) by means of non--anger (pu⁴-fen⁴). The Sūtra of Beguethed Teaching recommends patience in such cases, for "the angry mind is worse than a fierce fire" while anger and rage "steal your merit and virtue"[22] Thus, anger or any other negative emotion is not to be repressed, but replaced. We thereby avoid the future dangers for both ourselves and others latent within it.

Buddhism, then, allows us to transcend the Freudian dilemma of expression versus repression by means of this third, transcendent option. The

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extinction of negative emotion can be likened to the "blowing out" of Nirvāna itself, so that no smoldering ashes remain from the fire of anger that could later be rekindled. Accordingly it is said "Defilements of those who are ever vigilant, who train themselves day and night, who are wholly intent

on Nibbāna, fade away." [23] Others have compared it to the uprooting of a tree:

In the primitive Buddhist view of human nature *nāmarūpa* (name-form) was also called *nāmakāya* (name-body) and *satkāya-dr̥ṣṭi* (the attachment to one's own body). It was seen as being in this world by sinking roots in the form of worldly passions, while the co-dependent element of *vijnāna* [consciousness] was the trunk that grew out of these earthly roots, opposed to the earthiness of the roots by the principle of clarity or knowledge. This would seem to head us in the direction of an opposition between light and darkness, but in fact both are fed by the same sap of *kleśa* (worldly passions) that flow through the human mode of being. The rational discrimination of consciousness and the correlative judgments of good and evil may prune the branches of appetite but they do not uproot the tree. When the violent wind of impermanence strikes terror into one then the extinction of all suffering and *skandhas*, the elemental negation of the human mode of being, becomes a real possibility. That is the real issue in the extinction of lust. Those who ignore the co-dependency of clinging--lust and think it enough to deny the burning thirst of desire reduce the problem to a simple matter of trimming branches. [24]

If we interpret the Ego as *vijnāna* and the Id as *kleśa*, with the Super-Ego being represented by "judgments of good and evil", we see that Freudian therapy's

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denial of desire (repression) is just so much tree trimming. It cannot hope to uproot the fundamental cause of tension in human life. Buddhism's daring encounter with "the violent wind of impermanence", most especially reflected in its approach to death, will be dealt with later. Here let us examine more closely the Buddhist doctrine of human nature that allows its radicalization or uprooting activity to succeed, in contrast to the absence of this possibility in Western views.

The Buddhist option, which offers a way out of the endless cycle of *Samsāra* rather than simply helping us to keep our heads above the *samsāric* waves, is difficult for the Western mind to fathom, inasmuch as it poses a direct challenge to the reigning world view. It implies a degree of self-control that

defies the deterministic "laws" of science. Thus, Freud condemns the concepts of freedom and choice as "unscientific,"^[25] even though he himself also described the task of the therapist as giving "the patient's ego freedom to choose one way or another."^[26] Simply stated, the Western view envisions the human being as irrevocably subject to external controls, whether in the form of a divine being or the forces of Nature.

In contrast, Buddhism, and Zen in particular, espouses a doctrine of self-reliance bolstered by the efficacious internal resources of Original Nature (hsing) . The significance of this difference is reflected in the role of moral precepts in the respective traditions. In keeping with the Freudian model, ethical principles tend to be seen in the West as externally-imposed universal

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standards handed down by God, or, as for Freud, an incorporation of external authority figures in the guise of the Super-Ego. Thus, the human response to the Moral Law is characterized by compulsion. Immanuel Kant, despite his description of humans as legislating the Moral Law by virtue of innate reason, uses language clearly indicative of force and conflict.^[27] A contemporary scholar, under the obvious influence of Freudian thought, succinctly observes: "Morality is the means by which we accomplish our repression".^[28]

For Buddhists, however, the moral precepts or śīla are regarded in a different light. Moral precepts are not imposed upon the individual from without, but are voluntarily observed as an expression of Buddhist compassion.^[29] Although compared to "a yoke upon the organs of sensation," they do not constitute a form of repression. Rather than seeking to tame what has already "gone astray", the precepts act as preventive measures:

śīla exponentializes negation to the power of infinity until at last it steps outside the social realm of ethical order altogether and takes the radical form of a withdrawal from the world--asceticism and poverty--that is almost inhuman in form.^[30]

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Two points in this passage are especially deserving of note: 1) the way in which the `sila transcend social convention, including the Super-Ego, and 2) the further transcendence of humanness itself. The latter point, a unique aspect of Buddhism's radicalization of our being, ties in with Mahayana's assumption that the Buddha-nature pervades all beings, as reinforced by the universal compassion expressed in the ahimsā(non-injury) precept.

Delving more deeply, the Buddhistic concept of human nature emerges, sharply contrasting with the dominant Western view discussed above:

the human person is basically pure, but in allowing oneself to be exteriorized one takes evil karma upon oneself, just like iron that rusts because it has been left exposed to the elements. That evil karma then rusts the subject to the core, like rust corroding the iron. It is something that takes place without and yet penetrates within unhindered to corrupt the core of the subject. The fault here lies completely and totally with the subject.[31]

Yet, precisely because the responsibility lies completely within ourselves, we likewise have the means to become purified. As an oft-quoted passage of the Dhammapada (165) states:

By oneself, indeed, is evil done; by oneself is one defiled; by oneself is evil left undone; by oneself, indeed, is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. No one purifies another.[32]

In Buddhism, then, one must be a savior only to oneself and cannot fulfill this function for, or expect it to be fulfilled by, another. This is both possible and necessary because one has the responsibility and resources to do so.

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Among all Buddhist sects, none is more adamant about self-reliance than Ch'an or Zen, as is repeatedly emphasized by Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch, in his Platform Sūtra. Here -śila is referred to as one of the five forms of incense (along with samādhi, prajñā, liberation, and liberational knowledge),

which "perfumes us from within; we should not seek it without." [33] Hui-neng refers to the twofold process of letting go of past misdeeds and guarding against future ones, tasks to be performed by ourselves alone. Our Original Nature, in sharp contrast to Freud's nefarious Id, is not the source of our problems but rather of their solution. The "repentance ritual (hui³)" described by the Sixth Patriarch does not require another to whom our appeal is directed nor anyone from which forgiveness is received. Although it involves a vow for the deliverance of an infinite number of sentient beings, the vow is similarly explained as being self-directed:

It does not mean that I, Hui-neng am going to deliver them. And who are these sentient beings, potential within our minds? They are the delusive mind, the deceitful mind, the evil mind, and such like -- all these are sentient beings. Each of them has to be delivered by one-self by means of one's own Essence of Mind [Original Mind]; only by one's own deliver-ance, is it genuine.

The ultimate refuge, then, lies not beyond us, but rather in our Original Nature; each should take refuge in the Buddha within. No reference is made to any other Buddhas: "hence if we do not take refuge in the Buddha of our own Mind-essence, there is nowhere else for us to go." In this respect Hui-neng is in perfect accord with the teachings of the First Patriarch, Bodhidharma, and his

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key insight that "This mind is the Buddha", [34] which has been described as "Mahayana Buddhism in a nutshell." [35]

Zen Repentance is suggestive of existential therapy's task to "to de-repress, to re-acquaint the individual with something he or she has known all along....Above all, the philosopher and the therapist must encourage the individual to look within and to attend to his or her existential situation." [36] The similarity in perceptions does not, however, translate into practice. "Existential guilt," the sense of self-transgression or failure to realize one's full potential that emanates from regret remains steadfast. Confrontation with one's responsibility is necessary to expiate such guilt, but too often it remains repressed until the self-victimizing victim succumbs to death.

Irwin Y'alom discusses the pervasiveness of existential guilt in Western society in terms of both clinical experience and contemporary literature. In the latter context he provides an insightful analysis of Franz Kafka's modern classic, *The Trial*, as an explication of one man's self-indictment, self-conviction, and self-avoidance, ended only by his death:

Kafka's man from the country was guilty--not only guilty of living an unlived life, of waiting for permission from another, but he was guilty, too, of not accepting his guilt, of not using it as a guide to his interior, of not "unconditionally" confessing--an act which would have resulted in the door "springing open."[\[37\]](#)

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The presupposed limitations of human nature would seem to be instrumental in these failures. Conspicuously lacking is Buddhism's structural basis for implementing the necessary self-assertion, what Hui-neng outlines as "the Ritual of the three-fold Guidance", in terms of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.[\[38\]](#)

Beyond the Freudian Vision: Original Nature versus Original Sin

It may be objected that there is more to Western psychotherapy than Freud, and this is indeed true.[\[39\]](#) Many therapists, from Freud's own time until today, have taken issue with this all-encompassing determinism regarding human nature and human motivations. In particular there have been many whose evaluation of the Unconscious has been much more positive than Freud's fear and trembling over our latent instinctual drives. C.G. Jung, for example, redefined the Unconscious in terms of its collective resources of creativity. Moreover, a self-styled "Humanistic" trend has taken hold in America, purporting to offer an alternative to both Freudianism and Behaviorism, which heretofore have dominated the psychotherapeutic scene.

These claims notwithstanding, an abiding consistency in the view of human nature as inherently weak and constitutionally inept in its dealings with natural forces remains. The assumption of a fatal flaw has gone largely unchallenged. Buddhism's emphasis on self-reliance goes against the grain

of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The latter is constructed around the core assumption of Original Sin passed on from the primal parents (and beyond our control). The corollary of this theological assumption is Christianity's need for a sacrificial victim, in the person of Jesus, to expiate our collective guilt as Savior of all humanity. That this assumption continues to suffuse Western culture is evidenced by Jean Delumeau's exploration of the "cultural history of sin in the West":

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I think that sin exists, I feel its presence in me. Furthermore, I cannot see how one can eliminate the idea of an Original Sin, whose scars we still bear.

Freud felt this and tried to explain it, while both Bergson and Gouthier observed that "everything happens as if there were an original defect in man."

My book must therefore not be taken either as a refusal of guilt or the need for a consciousness of sin. On the contrary, I think it will shed light on the excessive sense of guilt and "culpabilization"...that has characterized Western history.[\[40\]](#)

One corroborating example from the realm of psychology can be found in Abraham Maslow. Heralded for his upbeat theories, Maslow emphasizes an optimistic striving to reach the pinnacle of one's individual potential under the banner of "self-actualization." Despite this effusive terminology, however, Maslow has little hope concerning the self's ability to thwart impinging forces, especially when compared to Zen's confidence in our Original Nature. While Maslow asserts the goodness or neutrality of what he deems our "inner nature" in the grounding assumptions of his psychology, he goes on to provide the following characterization of that nature:

It is weak and delicate and subtle and easily overcome by habit, cultural pressure, and wrong attitudes toward it....Even though denied, it persists underground forever pressing for actualization....every falling away from species-virtue, every crime against one's own nature, every evil act, every one without exception records itself in our unconscious and makes us

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despise ourselves.[41]

This passage resonates with both Freudian views of the psyche as a plaything of external powers and the experience of existential guilt. Conditions beyond our control occasion denial/repression of certain fundamental aspects of our inner nature. The insistence on commitment to our "species-virtue" also demonstrates that Maslow is not prepared for the radical transcendence of humanness required in Buddhism's conception of Original Nature.

Similarly, Maslow's oft-cited "Hierarchy of Needs" reflects a recognition of human limitations. According to this theory, five successive levels of needs, expressive of universal human nature, must be met:

- 1)physiological needs
- 2)security
- 3)social, interpersonal needs
- 4)self-esteem
- 5)self-actualization

Satisfaction of the "higher" needs presupposes prior satisfaction of the "lower". A species of determinism is at work here, though it is much more subtle than the determinism in Freud's system. Maslow assumes that 1) our physical needs (food, sleep, etc.) are the sine qua non, the bottom line, in human life. Thus, only when they are first fulfilled can we seek 2) to solidify our position psychologically, from which point we can move on to 3) human interrelationships. After the need for others has been realized we must 4) acquire a positive self-image before we are able to 5) maximize our potentials in the fullest sense. Such, for Maslow, is the irrevocable demand of human life, a universal and inter-cultural phenomenon.

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The model found in Buddhism again differs greatly. Even if we assume that the fifth and final stage, self-actualization, is inclusive of enlightenment (a most optimistic assumption), the other four steps pose the possibility of indefinite postponement. When, indeed, can we be certain those other needs

have been fulfilled, such that we are at last liberated from natural necessity? How far do our physiological needs really extend--how much food, sleep, etc. is necessary before progressing to a sense of security? What is an appropriate means of assuring security--a stable job, a six-digit income? Without human bonding is a sense of security indeed impossible? Even then how broad and intricate must this human network be in order for one to feel fulfilled? Most problematic of all is the emphasis on self at what are assumed to be the highest levels of development. Zen practitioners would seem to defy their own nature when they defy the promptings of what Maslow takes to be natural necessity. What shall we say of those who forego fulfillment of the lower level needs while meditating --abjuring food, sleep, human interaction, and all sense of self (much less self-esteem!). Are they, then, not human? Buddhism's element of self-transcendence, including a transcendence of the human, is again crucial here. Perhaps Maslow has misjudged human nature, ascribing to it limitations that are neither universal nor insurmountable.

Another problematic aspect of Maslow's view is his emphasis on the polarities of growth and deficiency. We must either move forward or remain defective. The "process of healthy growth" is elaborated in terms of mutually exclusive choices: "a never ending series of free choice situations, confronting each individual at every point throughout his life, in which he must choose between the delights of safety and growth, dependence and independence, regression and progression, immaturity and maturity."[\[42\]](#) In Zen, however, realization rather than growth is the focus--realization of our pre-existing and pristine Original Nature. There is nowhere to grow to, nor is there an innate weakness or defect to be healed.

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Death: The Ultimate Challenge

Of all the dualisms that riddle psychotherapy in the West, the most challenging of all revolves around life and death. Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz fantasizes escape from this inescapable and terrifying reality:

...for a short time there is no death

And time does not unravel like a skein of yarn

Thrown into an abyss.[43]

Like its religious predecessors, psychotherapy is challenged to offer a response to the fact of human mortality. Western religion's response has largely taken the form of denial, made possible by positing the existence of another realm beyond the material. Thus, our mortality is limited to our physical being and does not affect the soul or psyche. Accordingly, the central event of Christian theology--ritualized in the Mass--is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through his own conquest of death, Jesus has imparted salvation and immortality to all believers, precisely as the primal guilt of Adam and Eve has been imparted to all human beings. The sins of the parents are visited on the children while, conversely, the glory of the "Son of Man"/"Son of God" is equally available to all.

Freud, of course, was less sanguine and as a scientist had grave reservations about religion, characterizing it as "an attempt to get control over the sensory world, in which we are placed, by means of the wish-world, which we have developed inside us as a result of biological and psychological necessities. But it cannot achieve its end....Its consolations deserve no trust." [44] In his later years Freud was compelled to confront the perennial problem of death without the benefit of religious consolation. Most importantly, he was forced to modify

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his earlier view of human nature as motivated exclusively by the Pleasure Principle to explain the persistence of contradictory behavior. Hence, to the primal instinct for pleasure, identified as Eros, was added the "Death Instinct"—Thanatos.[45]

A new manifestation of the eternal inner conflict ensued from these dual manifestations of the Id, with the forces of life (sexuality) confronting those of death. Thus, according to Freud's analysis, the human being seeks both pleasure or prolonging/propagating life and its extinction in death. Somewhat paradoxically, both of these instinctual drives are grounded in the same end--homeostasis or the elimination of tension. The tension, experienced as pain created by unfulfilled instinctual drives, is eradicated by

satisfying those drives, as pleasure results from the reinstatement of balance in the organism. Death, on the other hand, represents the elimination of all tension, by eliminating the organism along with its potential for both balance and imbalance. Ultimately, then, the instinct for self-destruction detected by Freud seeks to return us to pre-life oblivion.

It has been suggested that Freud sought in the Death Instinct "a natural correspondence between the inevitability of physical death and the drive of the human personality to accept this, even to seek it unconsciously in a mixture of biological fulfillment and resignation."[\[46\]](#) In other words, this was Freud's means of making scientific sense out of an indisputable fact, fitting death into the deterministic scheme of things as a "natural" consequence. Freud himself alludes to the comfort that can be derived from the Death Instinct hypothesis: "If we are to die ourselves, and first to lose those who are dear to us, it is easier to submit to a remorseless law of nature, to the sublime necessity, than to a chance which might perhaps have been escaped."[\[47\]](#) Indeed, Freud speculated

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that the "pleasure principle seems actually to serve the death instincts,"[\[48\]](#) giving the latter ultimate priority in the psychic realm--pleasure as the means to the end of death. As Freud himself puts it 'the aim of all life is death'.[\[49\]](#)

The fact that no alternative exists may seem to provide scant comfort, especially when compared to the "escape route" outlined by the Buddha in the Four Noble Truths, and the Eight-fold Path in particular. Ironically, or perhaps simply misguidedly, Freud uses the term "Nirvāna-principle" as identical with the Death Instinct designating a stabilizing force with "the aim of extinguishing, or at least maintaining at as low a level as possible, the quantities of excitation",[\[50\]](#) representing "a need to restore an earlier state of things".[\[51\]](#) Yet, it also offers a point of entry for exploring the differences between Western psychotherapeutic and Zen approaches to death.

The major trends in Western psychotherapy, as exemplified in Freud, teach people how to cope or come to terms with existing social reality. The focus

is on balancing inner drives and outer expectations. Freud offers an insightful description of his own intentions:

We have formulated our therapeutic task as one of bringing to the knowledge of the patient the unconscious, repressed impulses existing in his mind and, to this end, of uncovering the resistances that oppose themselves to this extension of his knowledge about himself....out hope is to achieve this by exploiting the patient's transference to the person of the physician....I have expounded elsewhere the dynamic conditions in the new conflict we lead the patient through, which we have substituted in him for the previous conflict of his illness. [52]

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However, while one may cure a neurosis by treating it as an aberrant attempt at conflict resolution and make one fit to re-enter human society, no cure is offered or sought for the more fundamental problem of Life and Death. Thus, psychotherapy serves primarily as a means of self-adjustment to Samsāra (aptly rendered as Life and Death in Chinese). Dukkha, reinterpreted as tension, is dealt with by reference to the instinct for pleasure or the elimination of tension in homeostasis. But, being ultimately a futile endeavor, the Death Instinct alone provides the final resolution of all tensions. Awash with determinism, Freud's view seems congruent with the Buddha's Noble Truths, at least in part:

I. Life is dukkha/tension.

II. Dukkha/derives from taṇhā/ instinct.

III. To end dukkha/ tension we must eliminate taṇhā, as the proximate cause of dukkha or, more fundamentally, eliminate the ignorance (avidyā) which is its root cause (that is, satisfy instincts through the Pleasure Principle or else obliterate them through the Death Instinct).

Conspicuously absent is the fourth and final truth outlining the Eight-fold Path. No practice leading to transcendence is offered. Without this component the analysis of Life and Death loses the optimistic edge of Liberation, being replaced by Freud's resignation to "sublime necessity."

The transcendence of Samsāra for Nirvāṇa--or the Zen realization of Samsāra as Nirvāṇa, Nirvāṇa in Samsāra--is likewise unimaginable.

To summarize, for Freud and most psychotherapists in the West, human nature is hopelessly burdened by the collective weight of the Id forces that forever dictate and delimit our actions. "Original Nature" thus represents a kind of enslavement rather than Zen's means of liberation. All that remains is to make the best of a bad situation by rationalizing it scientifically. For Freud the problem of Life and Death is biologically posed, and hence must also be resolved biologically (that is, through the Death Instinct). In Zen, however, the self-generated bonds of desire, clinging, etc. allow for our own action to dissolve the problem of Samsāra by seeing its mergence in Nirvāṇa.

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Although both psychotherapy and Zen recognize our problems as self-generated--whether in the form of existential guilt or "sin"--only Zen provides the means for "conquering" conditioned genesis by opting out of the cycle completely. At the root of this difference lies psychotherapy's fixation on the psyche -- ātman, the illusory ego-self--as opposed to Zen's adherence to the real or Original Nature, characterized as anāṭta/anātman. As a consequence, psychotherapy is not only seeking solutions in the wrong place (namely Samsāra), but also is searching for the wrong object (ātman). Hence we cannot help but remain enmeshed in impermanence (anicca) and delusion.[53]

II. Variations on the Psychotherapeutic Theme: The Logotherapy of Viktor E. Frankl

Not all forms of Western psychotherapy fall into the same traps as those noted above. In the following I shall discuss one school--Logotherapy--that manifests certain qualities indicative of a striving for transcendence in the direction of Zen. At the same time, it falls short of a complete liberation

from samsāric bonds. The reason for this failure further illuminates the differences between Zen and Western psychotherapeutic trends.

Logotherapy--literally "therapy through meaning" (logos) --originates from Viktor Frankl's sense of the limitations and misperceptions of his predecessors. More specifically, Frankl offers his own "dimensional ontology" to supplement the oversights of Freud (whom he studied) and Alfred Adler (Freud's erstwhile student and one time heir apparent whose school Frankl once belonged to). Frankl asserts that Western psychotherapy has failed to grasp the

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complexity of human nature. He seeks to expand the definition beyond reductionist tendencies that make the human "nothing but" another organism governed by drives for sexuality or aggression (the rat model) or malfunctioning component (the machine model).[\[54\]](#) It is here that Frankl begins to resonate with Zen's insights.

Frankl's scheme can be summarized as follows:

Freud--Will to Pleasure, the physiological dimension (sexuality, sensuality, hedonism--the infant stage)

Adler--Will to Power, the psychological dimension (money, politics, fame--the adolescent stage)

Frankl--Will to Meaning, the noological dimension (spiritual--the adult stage)

Love/experiential values, what one takes from the world (an external source of meaning in other human beings, Nature, etc.)

Work/creative values, what one gives to the world (an internal source through service, creations, etc.)

Suffering/attitudinal values, one's interaction with and response to the world.

Of special significance in Frankl's ontology is his attempt to account for transformational elements in human nature, our inherent human resources for self-transcendence able to act alongside and beyond instinctual drives. In

this "ontological" dimension lies his "height psychology", countering the "depth psychology" of Freud and others. Frankl's discussions do not focus on the conflicting forces of Id, Ego, and Super-Ego; nor does his therapeutic interaction with patients necessitate delving past experiences, particularly childhood traumas, as the causes of present neuroses. Frankl supplements the scientific methods of Freud with existential philosophy (and at one point even referred to his school as Existential Analysis). He describes the pan-determinism

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or all-encompassing sense of determinism inherent in Freudian thought. In its place he proposes a reinstatement of freedom and responsibility. Unlike the majority of therapies, Logotherapy is receptive to the healing potential of spirituality, seeing such currents as part of the cure rather than a symptom of neurosis.[\[55\]](#)

Nonetheless, as a scientifically trained professional, Frankl is not completely comfortable with the inclusion of religion. His coinage of the term "noological" (from "noos" and "nous", "mind"), although essentially descriptive of spiritual expressions, allows him to clothe his discussions in a mantle of respectability imparted by a Greek derivation. Despite his advocacy of "cosmic meaning", Frankl's treatment of religion tends to be similarly circumspect. In general God remains for Frankl an indispensable, but eternally unprovable, hypothesis, much as it is for Immanuel Kant in his "als ob" moral philosophy. [\[56\]](#)

By putting meaning uppermost in his analysis of human nature, Frankl orients his therapy toward helping patients to realize their personal life meaning. The lack of such meaning Frankl identifies as the mass neurosis of modern times--the Existential Vacuum--a gaping hole resulting from a disconnectedness between fact and values that can only be bridged by meaning. The parallels to Buddhist Sunyata are manifest here, although in the latter case no pejorative value judgment is attached to this ultimate expression of reality. The Vacuum or Void then becomes our final target rather than something to be avoided.

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The Logotherapist and the Zen Master

Frankl's therapeutic method manifests certain similarities to Zen. For example, like a logotherapist, the Zen Master's finger points to the moon of Original Nature without being able to impart that nature to the disciple.

Moreover, the importance of self-reliance is stressed in both Zen and Logotherapy--as Frankl notes "truth imposes itself and needs no intervention".^[57] Frankl rejects an approach that would presume to give meaning to the patients or it create it for them, since each person possesses the freedom and responsibility to realize their unique meaning, for "the meaning of our lives is not invented by ourselves, but rather detected".^[58] Thus, he compares the role of the logotherapist to that of an ophthalmologist, that is, one who corrects the patient's vision so that they may see reality for themselves, as opposed to a painter who presents a picture of reality to the patient: "The logotherapist's role consists in widening and broadening the visual field of the patient so that the whole spectrum of meaning and values becomes conscious and visible".^[59]

Yet another area of congruence is found in their respective methodologies. A characteristic logotherapeutic technique is to help the patient realize their own unique meaning and responsibility in life. This is comparable to the dynamics that exist between the Zen Master and the disciple aspiring toward seeing their Original Nature. The patient, like the Zen practitioner, begins at the level of hyperreflection--an excessive concern with one's own problems to the exclusion of all other concerns. In the patient, this condition may manifest itself as a wallowing in self-pity, one is deeply sunk in one's own Existential Vacuum, and oblivious to the surrounding reality. The Zen student, although intellectually aware of the samsāric nature of this suffering (dukkha)--as well as its universality--seeks the Buddhist means of ending it, as outlined in

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the Four Noble Truths. However, existential or lived awareness is lacking.

The problem then becomes fixation on enlightenment, becoming what Pai-Chang aptly describes as "one who is fond of the raft and will not give it up," "intoxicated by the wine of pure things."[\[60\]](#)

The initial task of the logotherapist/Zen Master is thus to broaden the vision of their charges through the process of dereflection, gradually turning the focus of attention toward reality as a whole. In the context of Logotherapy, this may take the form of paradoxical intention, an unexpected response to the patient's seeking of solace. For example, in response to a distraught patient's litany of travail Frankl pointedly asks "Why do you not commit suicide?"[\[61\]](#) The similarity to the Zen koan is obvious here.[\[62\]](#) Both pose a jarring challenge to our trite expectations, thereby challenging us to draw upon more than mere conditioned response--the primal resources of Original Nature in Zen and the noological dimension in Logotherapy. Both thus demonstrate Frankl's insistence on the need for creative tension as "an indispensable prerequisite of mental health"[\[63\]](#) -- in sharp contrast to Freud's assumption of homeostasis as the optimum state of an organism. For Frankl, one "is questioned by life; and ...can only answer to life by answering for his own life",[\[64\]](#) a process facilitated by the person of the Zen master or logotherapist. Moreover, paradoxical intention is seen to be "a useful tool in treating obsessive, compulsive and phobic conditions, especially in cases with underlying anticipatory anxiety."[\[65\]](#) What better description could be given of the dukkha inherent to the human condition, infected by the three poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance!

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If successful this technique elicits detachment or a distancing from one's obscuring self-involvement. Thus, the distraught patient is stimulated by the shocking counter-question of the logotherapist to provide a multitude of reasons as to why he or she should not commit suicide, whereas previously they were passively waiting to be provided with that meaning. Correspondingly, in Zen the apparent request for a logical response to the counter-logical koan question belies the true intent of drawing upon the student's trans-rational resources, rooted in Original Nature. In both Logotherapy and Zen, humor is recognized as an effective expression of paradoxical intention. Frankl's own experiences in the death camps of World

War II Frankl confirmed that "humor, more than anything else in the human makeup, can afford an aloofness and an ability to rise above any situation, even if only for a few seconds." [66] Given sufficient prior cultivation, satori may indeed be attained within these few seconds.

An interesting integration of Frankl's technique of paradoxical intention is found in the story of Ch'an master Hsien-yai's successful intervention (by non-intervention) in a marital conflict. While traveling the Master encountered a couple engaged in a violent quarrel, hurling threats and counter-threats at each other. Rather than trying to reason them out of their anger or address them directly, the Master called on passers-by to come and see the excitement, luring them with the prospect of an imminent homicide. When someone in the crowd objected to such behavior on the part of a monk the Master replied that this was quite consistent with his calling, since it represented a good opportunity to earn some money by performing funeral services. As the argument between the Master and the irate spectator escalated, the couple was distracted/dereflected from their own hyperreflective state. This humor-induced detachment paved the way to a final resolution of both the quarrel and their dysfunctional mode of interaction.

The final stage in the therapeutic process is in Logotherapy
self-transcendence

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dence and in Zen enlightenment. Here Frankl has made a valuable contribution to psychotherapy by pointing beyond both Freud's self-involved Ego/Id/Super-Ego construction and Maslow's culminating point in self-actualization, Ego-centrism is at last decentralized, edging close upon Buddhism's anātta insight. Frankl even flirts with non-duality by insisting that our own happiness is only possible when we are willing to forego it for the sake of something or someone outside ourselves. He employs the analogy of the boomerang, which, like happiness, returns to us only when it has first been thrown away. Taken a step further, this leads to a recognition of the artificiality of ego-boundaries, such that self and others are not separated. However, Frankl's Western-trained sensibilities seem to prevent him from taking this final step into the nirvānic Void.

As illustrated through these paralleling processes, the role of the logotherapist is far closer to that of a Zen Master than to a Freudian psychoanalyst. The latter functions as a mediator, an object of transference, who all too often induces a state of utter dependency in the patient. There is in Freud's therapy a presupposed ideal of how the psychic elements of Ego, Id, and Super-Ego are to be integrated, set limitations for handling repressed instincts, definite expectations as to the value of sublimation. This authoritarian stance is largely absent in logotherapeutic theory, and even moreso in Zen, both of which emphasize self-reliance. Both also share a common optimism about the patient's ability to reveal pre-existing values, either in the form of meaning or the Original Nature.

Finally, Frankl's approach is future-oriented, is focussed on a goal to be accomplished or meaning to be realized. The past is not allowed to be used as an excuse for shirking present responsibilities. As Frankl tells a patient: What counts is not what lurks in the depths but what waits in the future, waits to be actualized by you."[\[67\]](#) Like the Buddha, Frankl counsels against speculating on

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the causes for one's condition, and instead encourages the patient to simply get on with their life task. Just so, Hui-neng exhorts us to non-attachment by declaring "let the past be dead".[\[68\]](#)

Love, Work, and Suffering; Wisdom, Compassion, and Practice

Comparisons also exist with regard to the three sources of meaning recognized by Frankl. The experiential values reflected in it may be correlated with wisdom (prajna), the creative values of work with compassion (karuna), and the attitudinal values of suffering with practice. These pairings also serve to disclose the limitations inherent in the logotherapeutic methodology, revealing its groping toward the insights that reach their full realization only in Zen. Frankl sees these as three equally accessible avenues to meaning, three interchangeable routes to satisfying the will to meaning. Nonetheless, suffering is said to hold the promise of meaning only when it concerns an "inescapable, unavoidable situation", as "a last chance to actualize the highest value, to fulfill the deepest meaning".[\[69\]](#) In Buddhism, however, the first Noble Truth recognizes that

suffering (dukkha) in its myriad forms pervades the life experience. Accordingly, a vehicle to meaning, it does not represent a "last chance", but rather is an integral part of all meaning. Suffering as dukkha is indeed the one and only means to meaning. Furthermore, the division of experiential, creative, and attitudinal values is merely provisional, for in essence they are inseparable.

Frankl characterizes love as something to be experienced or "taken" from the world, from which one might assume it has more in common with the emotion of compassion than wisdom. However, the Buddhist practitioner does not merely experience the world through love, but actively seeks to transform that world. Wisdom, then, seems a more appropriate parallel here, in the sense of its being an existential acquisition by means of lived experience. The limitation in Frankl's conception, from the Buddhist standpoint, is seen in his description of experiential values as being "realized by the passive receiving of the

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world (nature, art) into the ego".^[70] This quotation reveals that the self/other distinction, the illusion of ego/ātman, is itself the limiting factor here. The redeeming aspect is that love also is said to open the lover to a broader and deeper vision of the cosmos, which in turn may serve as the occasion for removing that selfsame dualistic delusion.

Work, like compassion, constitutes a creative expression, what we "give" to the world, thus a natural progression beyond the acquiring of insight. Buddhist love, unlike its more mundane human expression, fits this description by being rooted in meditational practice. It is a microcosmic-macrocosmic merging or dissolution of the ego-self,^[71] a mystical love made possible by detachment from the samsaric realm, while simultaneously rendering service to those who remain deluded by Samsāra. On this point the Buddhist approach comes into conflict with Frankl's emphasis on the indispensibility, irreplaceability, uniqueness, and singularity of the individual as an active agent.^[72] Such assumptions are indicative of being enmeshed in the "demon net" of the would-be Bodhisattva or "warrior for enlightenment".^[73]

A liability of both experiential and creative values in Frankl's approach is that he often discusses them in terms of "the optimism of the past"--a perspective that envisions the past as a permanent storehouse of values. This contradicts Hui-neng's directive to "let the past be dead". Only the attitudinal values of suffering, practice (dhyana leading to samadhi), is present and future-oriented. Suffering also offers the most promise here as a catalyst for what I refer to as "serendipitous enlightenment", that is, a crisis situation that has the effect of allowing an individual to achieve insight into reality through a critical reconsideration of their past value system. Such an experience thrusts the person

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headlong into the Existential Vacuum. and may even induce the symptomatology of existential neurosis. Numerous cases are to be found both within and beyond the logotherapeutic literature. All share a common core experience -- an accidentally provoked crisis that serves to expose the superficiality of previously held goals, thereby precipitating a confrontation with one's life task from the vantage point of a new, broader perspective.

While Logotherapy does not advocate that the individual actively seek such crises (which, according to Frankl, would amount to masochism), it does propose a structure within which they can be made meaningful when unavoidable. Buddhistically speaking one may say that suffering in general -- the samsaric cycle of dukkha -- is unavoidable, and hence every experience is potentially enlightenmental. But Buddhism, and Zen in particular, goes even further to propose a plan of action or practice under these circumstances, as contained in Buddhist Dharma. What in Frankl's scheme represents a negative happenstance that is therapeutically transformed, in Zen becomes the ground of the human condition (as well as the non-human), and the focal point of Buddhist "therapy". The Zen Buddhist thus does not masochistically pursue suffering, but does undertake to deal with the fact of its existence.

If successful, self-transcendence follows from working through the process from hyperreflection to dereflection and detachment. One example concerns a young man from Texas who aspired to every boy's dream -- the life of a cowboy. His goal was within his reach when in his late teens a tragic accident left him a quadriplegic. Obviously, he could not be a wheelchair

cowboy. After considerable soul-searching and inspiration derived from Logotherapy his serendipitous enlightenment led to a personal transformation. He concluded that rather than being worst off after the accident he was in fact blessed, for it forced him to reconsider his options in life. He decided to continue his education, which otherwise would have ended after high school, in pursuit of a degree in psychology, toward the end of counseling those who has undergone similar life-shattering and potentially life-transforming experiences. Here he found the meaning of his tragedy, making it an opportunity for self-transformation and

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enlightenment.

As testimony to Frankl's insights about the pervasiveness of the Existential Vacuum in contemporary society, we may cite the trend toward crisis-inducing organizations. These may take the form of intensive group therapy sessions, isolation tanks, or wilderness survival courses. Such programs as "Outward Bound" are particularly designed to provide rehabilitation and therapy to juvenile delinquents. The intent is to instill a realization of inner resources as a means to building self-confidence and bolstering self-esteem, such that the individual becomes a productive member of society. Herein lies the problem, for even if they are successful, such experiences serve only to bolster the (illusory) ego-self and reinforce samsāric fixation. Moreover, the artificiality of these self-induced and other-directed crisis situations differs greatly from Zen's recognition of the existing life crisis of Samsāra. What is lacking in the Western models is a firmly grounded philosophical basis and discipline, a set of guidelines for venturing into the very depths of the samsāric Void.

Extending Buddhism's broadened view of suffering as pervasive of life experience, we can take a fresh look at Frankl's most influential and widely-known work, *Man's Search for Meaning*. Originally entitled *A Psychologist Experiences the Death Camp*, the text is divided into two parts: the first details Frankl's experiences as a prisoner in the Nazi concentration camps, while the second outlines his logotherapeutic principles. It is perhaps not inappropriate to see the concentration camp as a metaphor for samsāric existence in general.

The condition holds either directly (in the case of the inmates) or indirectly (as in case of their overseers, who envision themselves as inflicting, rather than being subjected to, suffering). The three stages experienced by the prisoner in Frankl's account then are applicable to the broad spectrum of humanity. The first of these stages--the delusion of reprieve--aptly characterizes the state of those who look to some divine force to provide salvation from the human condition, usually in the form of a paradisiacal afterlife. Western science has discredited this hope, as reflected in Freudian psychotherapy. Hence, there is a

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move toward the second stage of Adjustment, the most complicated as well as the most long lasting phase. For the camp inmate this stage requires a gradual acceptance of the abnormal as normal, including emotional hibernation, desensitization, and overall apathy. The concerns of life take on a primal immediacy, eliciting the very instincts Freud deems to be the source of human energies. The only remaining course, as Freud counsels, is resignation to irrevocable, natural necessity. Only Zen ventures beyond, to offer the prospect of liberation, in the sense of escape from Samsāra and realization of the co-existing nirvānic state. In what Frankl refers to as a "rehumanization" process, we can conceive of the liberated inmate's re-establishment of contact with Original Nature, which has been thwarted and obscured by samsāric submergence.

Thus, we see in Logotherapy a much more successful attempt to deal with the human condition than Freudian theory -- much more optimistic about the inherent powers of human nature. Nonetheless, in lacking the structural basis for the enlightenment process, for cultivation prior to enlightenment, and its dependence on the unreliability of "serendipitous enlightenment", it continues to lag behind Zen. Unaware of the universality of suffering, it therefore relegates the approach needed for nirvanic liberation to extraordinary circumstances.

Death as the Sine Qua Non of Meaning

The final topic to be considered in the light of Logotherapy is that of death and its relationship to life. As seen above, Freud ultimately was moved to posit a Death Instinct in order to bring some semblance of rationality to this

universal human phenomenon. Death proved no less troublesome for Frankl, and in fact constitutes the beginning point of his therapeutic search. He recounts his own precocious encounter with the mortality at age four.[74] This catalyst launched his lifelong search for meaning. Given the fact of death, he queried, how could life hold any meaning? His answer was phrased in terms of the meaning of death itself, or, more precisely, the fact that death imparts meaning to life. Thus, in the context of Logotherapy, death becomes not a necessary

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evil of Nature to which we must resign ourselves, but a guarantor of the meaning life, and hence a focal point of discussion.

How does Frankl accomplish this transformation of death? He begins by delving the etymology of the word "finite", a word of usually negative connotations. Western culture has evidenced an overwhelming preference for the infinitem, the eternal, qualities associated with divinity. Frankl argues for an attitudinal change in terms of our sense of the word, which thereby entails a change in our attitude toward death.[75] The word finite, says Frankl, has a dual meaning, derived from the Latin "finis", which signifies both a limit, a boundary, or ending point and a goal. If we conceive of death in the former sense, as a limitation, as is usually done, then it becomes a barrier for us, something that represents the termination of life. If, however, we explore the possibilities inherent in the second meaning of a goal, death becomes integrated as an intrinsic part of the entire life process; it is the finish line toward which we are continually striving, the time limit that puts all that precedes it into proper perspective.

Frankl then asks us to consider the consequences of having no such final goal. Without the incentive (creative tension) evoked by impending death, our lives would be characterized by interminable postponement, under the assumption of immortality. There would be no need to compete or even pursue any project now, or to strive after professional or personal goals immediately, since we would literally have all the time in the world to fulfill any and all of them. As a consequence, we would most likely accomplish very little and so suffer the overwhelming effects of Existential Vacuum for eternity.[76]

Aldous Huxley offers a fictional account of just such a terrifying immortality in his novel *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*. In the story an incredibly wealthy man devotes his entire fortune to finding the secret to life extension, only to learn that there are inevitable negative accompaniments to

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this goal. In living far beyond the human norm, he becomes sunk in a Freudian-esque oblivion of primal drives. Death under such circumstances emerges not only as meaningful, but moreover as a welcome relief.

III. The Zen Transcendence

Turning now to Zen proper, we see that the dualism of life and death has been left behind, as mere relics of the now transcended Samsāra. Hence the therapeutic goal differs enormously from the Freudian resignation to death. The means to this goal, while related to logotherapeutic methods, far exceed the scope of the latter. Rather than teaching one to cope with samsāric existence--however that may be conceived -- Zen radicalizes our very being. The Zen practitioner is not content with an occasional glimmer of serendipitous enlightenment, but actively engages in Zen practice to evoke that experience. Most fundamentally, the difference can be traced to Zen's profound grasp of the mechanism underlying Samsāra (conditioned genesis), along with practical methods of escaping its grasp (meditation, etc.). Zen transforms our way of seeing the world by pulling aside the veil of illusion. In so doing it reveals our Original Nature and exposes the delusive fallacy of self-development and progress beyond an assumedly defective point of origin.

The crucial difference between Zen and Western psychotherapy in terms of attitudes towards death may be expressed as a difference in eschatology. The term itself, derived from the Greek "eschatos", denotes what is "further" or "ultimate". Invariably it has been used with reference to death as the assumed ultimate for human beings. Despite their disagreements on the details, this interpretation seems valid for both Freud and Frankl. Freud resignedly perceives death as a matter of natural necessity, while Frankl

rationalizes its necessity in terms of imparting meaning to the finitude of life.

In Buddhism there is no eschatology, strictly speaking.[\[77\]](#) To imagine an ultimate

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beyond the eternal present, an end point in a progression to perfection, is contrary to Buddhist thought. Both progress and death alike belong to the samsāric realm. Enlightenment itself involves the "Great Death" of the psyche, an experience far surpassing mere physical death in significance and profundity. Zen offers detachment from life as well as death, without denial or redefinition. Every moment is simultaneously samsāric and nirvānic, simultaeously life and death -- and neither life nor death, in terms of the Original Nature. Zen's attraction for the Japanese samurai stems from this same insight, as expressed in the following verse:

Some think that striking is to strike:

But striking is not to strike, nor is killing to kill,

He who strikes and he who is struck--

They are both no more than a dream that has no reality.[\[78\]](#)

The death scenes of great Buddhist figures bear out this death-preparedness. Sakyamuni Buddha, for example, passed from physical realm with an exhortation to his disciples to apply themselves to their enlightenment. Prior his death Hui-neng observed: "It is only natural, death is the inevitable outcome of birth. Even the Buddhas as they appear in the world must manifest an earthly death before they enter Parinirvana. There will be no exception with me; my physical body must be laid down somewhere. Fallen leaves go

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back to the place where the root is."[\[79\]](#) Numerous death scenes of Ch'an Masters demonstrate their ability to maintain equanimity in their final moments.[\[80\]](#) Master Nan-ch'üan P'u-yüan even manages to insert a

humorous note when he tells an inquisitive disciple that after he dies he intends to go "down the hill to be a water buffalo".[81]

There is in Zen no sense of tragic loss, no need to vanquish the "enemy" of death. Conflict and duality are let behind, and a new attitude ensues:

In life one is not stayed by life; in death, one is not obstructed by death. Though within the clusters [skandhas] Of matter, sensation, perception, coordination, and consciousness, it is as if a door had opened, and one is not obstructed by these five clusters. One is free to go or to stay, going out or entering in without difficulty. [82]

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禪與西方精神治療—涅槃超脫與生死固執

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提要

關於佛教與西方精神治療的關聯課題，已有不少討論。我認為佛教實踐的目標與進路，遠遠勝過頗有限制的代表性西方精神治療學說。此一評價可由在廣大的宇宙性（佛家稱為法性）脈絡裡有關人性觀點的考察得以證實。本文特就人與（做為「一切皆苦」的終極彰顯的）死亡之間的普遍交遇加以討論。我的結論共有下列三點。

其一，西方精神治療有其古代希臘的人性論根基，而在其現代發展可以看到弗洛伊德（Freud）與馬斯洛（Maslow）的代表性對立看法，本質上所強調的是人性的內在脆弱一面，由於內在脆弱性格，人的生命多半受制於外在「客觀上的種種情勢條件」。由是，西方精神治療的基本課題，乃存在於教導患者如何應付生命的負面條件；如用佛家比喻說明，就是祇不過教我們在生死大海之中勉強過水而已。以弗洛伊德晚期的死亡本能理論為例，它對死亡只能表示我們人類的無奈認命，藉

助於所謂「科學證實的不可迴避的事實」，來說明此一負面現象罷了。其二，在現代西方精神治療的種種進路之中，傅朗克（Frankl）的意義治療法（logotherapy）可以說是最能契接佛教與禪的主要代表。正如他的「層面存在論」（dimensional ontology）所提示，他對我們生命的上進與獲致自我超克的能力較有樂觀的看法。我們在意義治療法與禪的方法之間可以發現許多契接點，包括對於生命苦惱的深刻的洞見慧識在內。不過，從禪的觀點去看今傅朗克未能把自己或意義治療從生死大海中真正解放出來。他那「死亡是生命意義的必需保證」看法即是一例。

其三，相比之下，禪能夠根據本心本性的內在資源超克自我與死亡。禪並毋需否認死亡，卻對死亡能夠建立徹底解脫的健全態度，充分體現它的極大功能。

[1] For example, see Erich Fromm and D.T. Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Harper, 1960) and Alan W. Watts, *Psychotherapy East and West* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1961). The parallels are more subtly suggested by Frederick (Fritz) S. Perls in his *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim* (Lafayette, California: Real People Press, 1969), where the text is sprinkled with references to Zen and terms such as satori are used interchangeably with psychotherapeutic concepts.

[2] The same reductionism is appallingly present in the many attempts to provide convenient, but simple-minded, contrasts based on the geographical categorization of East and West. Buddhists would rightly be shocked to read the following description of the "Eastern" world view by Irwin D. Yalom:

The Eastern world never assumes that there is a 'point' to life, or that it is a problem to be solved; instead, life is a mystery to be lived. The Indian sage Bhaqway Shree Rajneesh says, "Existence has no goal. It is pure journey. The journey in life is so beautiful, who bothers for the destination?" Reconciling this beautiful journey with the reality of Samsāra is indeed problematic. Even more disconcerting is the fact that Yalom seems to derive his conclusions from D. T. Suzuki, as indicated in the discussion prior to the above passage. *Existential Psychotherapy* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1980), p. 470.

[3] It is significant that the Chinese translation of Samsāra (sheng¹ ssu^{3a}) literally means "Life and Death".

[4] In Greek mythology the character of Psyche is the feminine Personification of the soul. Her life story includes a forced marriage to a mysterious stranger (subsequently revealed to be Eros or Cupid) and conflict with her unsympathetic mother-in-law (Aphrodite, goddess of love), as detailed by Apuleius in his *Metamorphoses*. The plot, suffused with Freudian symbolism, later re-emerged in the fairy tale of Beauty and the Beast. See Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meanings and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), "Cupid and Psych", pp. 291-303; "Beauty and the Beast", pp. 303-10.

[5] In the course of the Socratic dialectic of the *Phaedo*, the participants come to a consensus on the fact that "death is nothing more or less than this, the separate condition of the body by itself when it is released from the soul, and the separate condition by itself of the soul when it is released from the body" (Plato: *The Last Days of Socrates*, Hugh Trendennick trans. (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 108). Socrates goes on to recommend this separation, stating "So long as we keep to the body...our soul is contaminated with this imperfection" (p. 111). Hence, "true philosophers make dying their profession" (p. 113).

[6] Daniel 12:2 states: "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt", while Isaiah 26: 19 proclaims: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Quoted by Jacques Choron in *Death and Western Thought* (New York: Collier Books, 1963), p. 81. Choron blames Paul for importing this "pagan" idea of the resurrection of the body into Christian theology; p. 84.

[7] The Indo-European root "anh" ("breath, soul, spirit") provides the point of derivation for myriad linguistic developments -- including the Latin "anima", Sanskrit "atman" and English "animate". See Robert Claiborne, *The Roots of English: A Reader's Handbook of Word Origins* (New York: Timnes Books, 1989), p. 48.

[8] Grave consequences follow from this revelation with respect to the Western philosophical tradition, which also has made psyche (in its

intellectual aspect) a focal point of investigation. From a Buddhist perspective this too has been the pursuit of an illusion, a series of footnotes to Samsāra, from Aristotle's *On the Soul* through Descartes' meditations to Kant's transcendental ego and Husserl's own Cartesian meditations. The case of Descartes does, however, merit further study from a Zen viewpoint, inasmuch as he begins by marshalling the forces of "Great Doubt" needed for enlightenment. Unfortunately for Descartes, his "Great Faith" rested in Catholicism, which in turn made the sine qua non of a "Great Death" impossible for him or, more precisely, unthinkable.

[9] Freud is himself well away of these etymological connections, as he notes while describing the psychoanalytic method: "We have analyzed the patient, i.e. separated his mental processes into their constituent parts and demonstrated these instinctual elements in him singly and in isolation; what could be more natural than a request that we should also help him to make a new and better re-combination of them?"; *Turnings in the Ways of Psychoanalytical Therapy* (1919) In *Collected Papers, Vol. II*, John Riviere trans. (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1959), p. 394. Freud even compares the process to that used by chemists in distinguishing between substances in their laboratories.

[10] Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. Benjamin Jowett and included in *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 7 of *Great Books of the Western World* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), 246-47, 253; pp. 124-25, 128. The means by which the "evil" steed is to be restrained are graphically presented later in the text (254; p. 128) : "the charioteer...with a still more violent wrench drags the bit out of the teeth of the wild steed and covers his abusive tongue and jaws with blood, and forces his legs and haunches to the ground and punishes him sorely. And when this has happened several times and the villain has ceased from his wanton way, he is tamed and humbled, and follows the will of the charioteer."

[11] On a mundane level, we have the model of the guardian angel or conscience opposing devilish temptations, both of which vie for the attentions of the befuddled decisionmaker. Under the influence of Aristotelian philosophy (*On the Soul*, Book II, 413b), the seventeenth century British philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, speaks of the nutritive, motive, and rational faculties of the soul (*Leviathan*, part II, chapter 29). The three branches of the American political system may similarly be cited here:

controlling executive branch/ President, inhibiting judiciary/Supreme Court, and grass-roots legislature/Congress. More recently, theories about the "triune brain" have emerged in scientific circles whereby "three basic brains show great differences in structure and chemistry, yet all three must intermesh and function together" (Paul D. MacLean, *A Triune Concept of Brain and Behavior* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 7. The assumption of potential conflict among three forces, which nonetheless must work together, is perpetrated here. The parallels to the Platonic vision are striking, although now the ephemeral soul is replaced by the "objective" fact of the brain. A layering effect is posited in the human brain: the core resides in the brain stem, designated the reptilian brain, source of our survival functions, and those recalcitrant passions represented by Plato's dark horse; a mammalian overlay keeps us within the animal realm of the white horse, who is more refined in its motives and behavior than the reptilian root; the crowning achievement of the sophisticated neocortex, however, is confined to primates, representing the rationality of the charioteer who must strive to remain in command of the whole.

[12] David Stafford-Clark, *What Freud Really Said* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 243.

[13] Debates have arisen as to the appropriateness of standard translations of Freud's terminology. The problem seems more crucial in the case of "Id" than that of "Ego." Bettelheim suggests that we refer to the former as "the It" and the latter as "the I," while the "Super-Ego" becomes "the Over-I". Having noted the controversy, I shall continue to use the traditional renderings here.

[14] Descriptions of this "State of Nature" can be found in Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*, one of the foremost spokespersons for this dominant self-vision in the Western world. A terrifying fictional account of the degeneration of civilization occurs in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1954), chronicling the savagery that emerges when a group of English schoolboys is marooned on an island, turning them from well-mannered little gentlemen to murderous brutes. Nor is the problem of psychic conflict deemed to be confined to the human race. The intergalactic dimensions of this phenomenon are set forth in the classic science fiction film *"Forbidden Planet"* (1956). In the story remnants of an advanced, non-human civilization are discovered by Professor Morbius of

planet Earth. Their mysterious demise is ultimately traced to a "dark, terrible, incomprehensible force", which turns out to be none other than "monsters from the Id". As the hero of the piece states: "We're all part monsters in our subconscious. That's why we have laws and religion."

[15] Claire Myers Owens, "Zen Buddhism" in Charles T. Tart ed., *Transpersonal Psychologies* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 156.

[16] Freud as quoted by Yalom, p. 288, from Rollo May, *Love and Will* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 183.

[17] Freud, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*. 1939. Vol. XXIII Standard Ed., p. 150, quoted by Stafford-Clark, p. 136.

[18] In a popularized adaptation of Freud's tripartite model, the more personalized labels of Parent (Super-Ego), Child (Id), and Adult (Ego) have been utilized. Nonetheless, the Platonic and Freudian goal of constructing an integrated, well-balanced personality under the control of reason remains unchanged.

[19] Frederick S. Perls, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim*, John O. Stevens ed. (Lafayette, California: Real People Press, 1969), p. 76.

[20] See, for example, the Kalama Sūtra, in which the Buddha argues for the centrality of these three emotions based on empirical data derived from his listeners.

[21] The Dhammapada, trans. into Chinese from Paali by Shih Liao-Chau and trans. into English from Paali by Narada Thera, in *Vo.II, Sutras and Scriptures*, the Bilingual Buddhist Series (Taipei: Buddhist Culture Service, 1962), pp. 27-28.

[22] The Sūtra of Bequeathed Teaching, 6, trans. into Chinese from Sanskrit by Kumarajiva and trans. from Chinese into English by Chou Hsiang-Kuang, included in *Vol.I of Sutras and Scriptures*, pp. 223-24.

[23] The Dhammapada, XVII, 226, pp. 27-28.

[24] Takeuchi Yoshinori, *The Heart of Buddhism: In Search of the Timeless Spirit of Primitive Buddhism*, James W. Eisig ed., trans. (New York: Crossroad, 1983), pp. 95-96.

[25] Sigmund Freud, as cited by R. May, *Love and Will*, and quoted by Yalom, p. 288.

[26] Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, vol. XIX, Standard Ed. (London: Hogarth Press, 1961, originally pub. 1923), p. 50: cited by Yalom, p. 288. The incompatibility of the free will assumed by Western morality and religion with the determinism demanded by science continues to be a key point of tension and contention. Numerous creative attempts have sought to resolve the unresolvable--for example William James' candid assertion of his personal preference for indeterminism in his seminal essay, "The Dilemma of Determinism". Here again Buddhism offers an option to transcend--and dis-solve--the problem.

[27] See, for example, Kant's discussion, "On the Relation of Theory to Practice in Morality in General", in *On the Old Saw: That May Be Right in Theory, But it Won't Work in Practice*, E.B. Ashton trans (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press): "duty is itself nothing but the will's restriction to the condition of a universal legislation; "(pp.46-47) "being virtuous, one bows to his duty in the act(pp.48); self-denial"(pp.52); "man will revere his duty above all else, will wrestle with the countless ills of life as well as its most seductive temptations (pp. 54).

[28] Paul Bohannon, "Go to the Ant, Thou Sluggard", *Science* 82, April, an essay included under the column heading "Being Human". Specifically Bohannon is referring here to the social need to repress individual drives of sexuality and aggression, citing as an authority Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

[29] For an enlightening discussion of this point see Lily de Silva, "The Scope and Contemporary Significance of the Five Precepts", in *Buddhist Ethics and the Modern World*, Charles Wei-hsun Fu and Sandra A. Wawrytko eds., (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1991).

[30] Yoshinori, p.29.

[31] Yoshinori, pp.29-30.

[32] Dhammapada, p.77.

[33] These and subsequent references to the Platform Sūtra or Sūtra Spoken by the Sixth Patriarch, Chapter II, are taken from the record of Fahai, Wong Mov-lam trans., rev. by Dwight Goddard, included in Vol. I of Sutras and Scriptures, pp.365-73. The English rendering has been amended in some places.

[34] Bodhidharma. "Bloodstream Sermon" included in The Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma, Red Pine trans. (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1989), p.9. Bodhidharma further insists that one must look into one's Original Nature in order to discover a Buddha and assiduously avoid savior figures in the forms of external Buddhas or bodhisattvas, which are but illusions associated with the mortal realm.

[35] Red Pine, in his commentary to the "Bloodstream Sermon", p. 16, note 12.

[36] Yalom, p.16.

[37] Yalom, pp.280-85.

[38] Hui-neng, p. 370.

[39] Nonetheless, Yalom observes "Freud's ideas have so influenced the field that to a great extent the evolution of dynamic thought is the evolution of Freud's thought"; p. 59.

[40] Jean Delumeau, Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture, 13th-18th Centuries (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

[41] Abraham Maslow in his Introduction to Toward a Psychology of Being, 2nd ed. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1968), pp. 3-5. Under these same assumptions Maslow discusses the nature of anger; his comments invite comparison with the Buddhist notion of the "three poisons" mentioned above: "Anger is in itself not evil, nor is fear, laziness, or even ignorance. Of course, these can and do lead to evil behavior, but they needn't."

[42] Maslow, p. 47.

- [43] Czeslaw Milosz, "The Garden of Earthly Delights", Unattainable Earth (1986).
- [44] Sigmund Freud, new Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, Lecture 35. "A Philosophy of Life" included in Vol. 54 of the Great Books, p. 878.
- [45] See Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920).
- [46] Stafford-Clark, p.193.
- [47] Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Standard Ed., Vol. XVIII, James Strachey trans. (London: Hogarth Press, 1968), p. 45.
- [48] Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, p. 63.
- [49] Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, p. 38.
- [50] Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem in Masochism", Sigmund Freud: Collected Papers, Vol. II, Joan Riviere trans. (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1959), pp. 255-56.
- [51] See Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, pp. 56-57.
- [52] Freud, "Turnings in the Ways of Psychoanalytic Therapy", pp. 392-93.
- [53] Fritz Perls illuminates this point: "This is Freud's great discovery--that there is something between you and the world....Freud's idea that the intermediate zone, the DMZ, this no-man's land between you and the world should be eliminated, emptied out, brainwashed or whatever you want to call it, was perfectly right. The only trouble is that Freud stayed in that zone and analyzed this intermediate thing. He didn't consider the self-awareness or world-awareness; he didn't consider what we can do to be in touch again."; pp. 49-50.
- [54] See Viktor E. Frankl, The Unheard Cry for Meaning: Psychotherapy and Humanism (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978), pp. 55-57.
- [55] In this regard, Frankl quotes a letter from Sigmund Freud to Ludwig Binswanger in which Freud states that he had "already found a place for religion, by putting it under the category of the neurosis of mankind." Frankl goes on to observe that "Even a genius cannot completely resist his Zeitgeist,

the spirit of his age"; *The Will to Meaning: Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy* (New York: New American Library, 1969), p. 27

[56] Frankl's ambivalence toward religion is perhaps best seen in the closing lines of his unpublished play, "Synchronization in Buchenwald", where the protagonist calls out in turn to his dead mother, brother, and God. The first two respond from their afterlife environment, while the response from God is simply a thundering silence.

[57] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p. 175.

[58] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy* (New York: Pocket Books, 1963), p. 157.

[59] See Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p. 174.

[60] *Sayings and Doings of Pai-Chang*, Thomas Cleary trans. (Center Publications), pp. 30-32.

[61] See Gordon W. Allport's Preface to Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*. p. vii.

[62] A discussion of this topic can be found in Cliff Edwards' "Logotherapy and Zen: Anecdotal Approaches to Meaning" in Sandra A. Wawrytko ed., *Analecta Frankliana: The Proceedings of the First World Congress of Logotherapy* (1980) (Berkeley, California: Institute of Logotherapy Press, 1982), pp. 301-09

[63] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p. 164.

[64] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p. 172.

[65] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p. 201.

[66] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p.68.

[67] Viktor E. Frankl, "Fragments from the Logotherapeutic Treatment of Four Cases" in *Modern Psychotherapeutic Practice*, A. Burton ed. (Pale Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books, 1965), pp. 365-67.

[68] Hui-neng, p 391.

[69] Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, p. 178.

[70] Viktor E. Frankl, *The Doctor and the Soul: From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy*, Richard and Clara Winston trans. (New York: Vantage Books, 1973), p. 105.

[71] For an elaboration of the intricacies of Buddhist love-in the forms of mettā, karunā, muditā, andupekkhā -- see Yoshinori, pp. 42-47.

[72] Frankl, *The Doctor and the Soul*, p. 35.

[73] Pai-CVhang, p. 35.

[74] See Stephen Kalmar, "A Brief History of Logotherapy" in *Analecta Frankliana*, p. xvi.

[75] Frankl devotes an entire section of his text, *The Doctor and the Soul: From Psychotherapy to Logotherapy*, to "On the Meaning of Death" (New York: Vintage, 1973), pp. 63-92.

[76] See Frankl, "On the Meaning of Death", *The Doctor and the Soul*, pp. 63-92.

[77] Thus, Yoshinori observes "viewed in its authentic sense, the dharma of the Buddha is eternal and there should be no such thing as an eschatology in Buddhism"; p. 60.

[78] Quoted by Daisetz T. Suzuki in *Zen and Japanese Culture* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 123, Yamamoto Tsunetomo (Jōchō) echoes this same sentiment: "I have discovered that the Way of the samurai is death....In order to be a perfect samurai, it is necessary to prepare oneself for death morning and evening, day in and day out...One begins each day in quiet meditation, imagining one's final hour and the various ways of dying....When a warrior is constantly prepared for death, he has mastered the Way of the samurai".

Quoted by Stephen Addiss and G. Cameron Hurst III in *Samurai Painters* (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1983), p. 45.

[79] Hui-neng, p. 443.

[80] See Philip Kapleau ed., "Dying: Of the Masters" in *The Wheel of Death: A Collection of Writings from Zen Buddhist and Other Sources on Death-Rebirth-Dying* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), pp. 63-75.

[81] *Original Ch'an Teaching of Buddhism: Selected from The Transmission of the Lamp*, Chang Chung-yuan trans. (New York: Pantheon Books), p. 163.

[82] *Pai-Chang*, p. 32.