

Zensho W. Kopp

Consubstantiality

Transcription of a talk
by Zensho W. Kopp, held at the
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The great Christian Mystic Dionysius Areopagita says:

Beyond everything that sense and reason can understand, the splendour of boundless divine light reveals itself.

With this he points to the fact that the intellect is very one-sided and limited in its ability to understand. It is not possible for it to grasp what lies beyond thinking and the possibilities of the senses. The intellect has no other possibility than to operate with pre-existing facts. It can compare with what it already knows, it can weigh up, it can form a thesis, an antithesis, and can take on a mediating position in terms of a synthesis.

Yet everything with which the intellect operates is information which comes to it from the outside. There is nothing of its own. To be exact, it is the refuse of what other people have thought before it.

And especially in religion, in philosophy this is very characteristic. Everything that any religious or philosophical persons have thought, regardless of how pleasant and good it may be, is just grafted knowledge, and grafted knowledge which comes to you externally it not your own experience. It is not vivacious, it does not blossom. It is not that which is known as the blossoming of inner heart-wisdom. It is old, dead, withered leaves without any life.

Yet beyond everything that sense and reason can understand, the splendour of divine light reveals itself – the radiating glory. And the great Christian Mystic Meister Eckhart says:

Everything you can say about God is by no means God at all. For you can only perceive what God truly is when you have been translated into a light which is God Himself.

Since this is so, it is so that people who have much knowledge resulting from their intellect and then come to a master – come to me – have a closed heart. They know very much and this intellectual knowledge has condensed to a solid, impenetrable concept of erroneous assumptions so that I cannot reach them with my heart. Just as it is said in Zen: There is no comprehension through words, just an understanding from mind to mind.

In Chinese, the word “mind” is called “Shin”, but at the same time it also means “heart”. Therefore, it is said in Zen: from my heart-mind to your heart-mind, from my heart to your innermost essential-ground, which is completely identical with my reality, with my true self. For my true self and your self is one self. There are no different selves.

For this reason, it is a very essential starting point in Mahayana-Buddhism that you achieve the realisation of consubstantiality. Only when you have experienced consubstantiality can you reach true compassion and truly experience compassion and thus achieve true tolerance.

It is no inflexible, pre-defined practice of virtue which you just complete, but rather the result of spiritual maturation to the effect that through meditation practice, you immerse yourself more and more in your innermost essential-ground, and this causes you to see things differently. You hear differently, you see differently, you understand things differently and you perceive everything in a completely different way.

For, in immersion in your innermost essential-ground, you reach the all-embracing wholeness of the one essence, beside which nothing else exists. And you no longer experience things as separate from you. The tree standing there is not just a tree. There is not just a thing standing around there, or a flower, or a dog walking past, but rather, as it is said in Zen in the words of Zen Master Huang-po:

All Buddhas and all sentient beings are nothing other than the One Mind, beside which nothing else exists.

Everything is one mind, and from this experience you recognise, you understand, you experience your affinity with all being, with all people, with all animals, with all plants, with all flowers. For plants have a consciousness too, just like an animal or a person. Indeed, modern science has long since proved this. And this means: Everything is filled with the all-fulfilling fullness of divine fullness. Everything is the One Mind, everything is One.

Consequently, we can assume that whoever reaches this higher consciousness-experience, this higher mystical and thus inner-

most understanding, perceives, understands, knows: All suffering that I inflict on any being whatsoever, I equally inflict on the divine Universal Mind, divine reality, which is my self and your self.

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The Tao-Chan Zen Center is directed personally by Zen Master Zensho W. Kopp. During his many years as an active spiritual master, a large community of students has gathered around him, whom he regularly instructs.

Twice a month, the Tao-Chan Zen Center in Wiesbaden organises an open Zen-day, directed by Zen Master Zensho W. Kopp.

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