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Lessons from Zen and Poetry: A Critique of Anthropocentrism

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Abstract

Various critiques stemming from feminisms, philosophy, animal rights, Indigenous studies and more have emphasized that anthropocentrism is endemic to most contemporary knowledge production whether it is science, history, politics, psychology, economics, feminisms, geography, philosophy and other fields. But is anthropocentrism a problem? What are the possible consequences of anthropocentrism? What would possible alternatives look like? By providing translations and commentaries on poems from Saigyō 西行 (1118-1190) and passages from Dōgen 道元 (1200-1253) in conjunction with insights from contemporary Zen scholar Abe Masao 阿部正雄 (1915-2006), this paper engages in preliminary steps to answer these questions, adding the voice of Zen Buddhist and Art to the critique. The paper concludes and confirms claims that Buddhist scholarship of various ages and traditions have always considered anthropocentrism to be a fundamental problem, and have consistently and deeply engaged with meaningful alternatives seeking to overcome it. The paper proposes that future research should actively foster and nurture serious engagement with different forms of knowledge produced by peoples of different places and times away from Eurocentricism.

我非生而知之者、好古、敏以求之者也。

“I was not born with the knowledge I have; I just like to study the ancients and pursue their ideas with diligence” – Confucius¹

Introduction

In a recent publication, Marcotte Bouthillier² analyzed the relationship between Nature and Aesthetics found within the works of Hegel, Kant, Heidegger and compared it with the thought of Japanese Aesthetic theorist Kusanagi Masao 草薙正夫. Strengthening the conclusions of various comparative philosophers such as Goulding³ and Parkes⁴, the paper concluded that “one of the most valuable first-step Western thinkers can do to engage with [East Asian] traditions while still remaining within a discourse that is familiar, is through Heideggerian thinking”⁵. From this connection, Marcotte Bouthillier⁶ very briefly alluded to the fact that both Heidegger’s and Kusanagi’s understandings of ‘Nature’ (as *Physis* φύσις and *Shizen* 自然 respectively) provides a subtle but important critique of the anthropocentrism inherent within the knowledge produced through Western Metaphysics, while simultaneously presenting an interesting alternative for all to contemplate which is Buddhist and Daoist-inspired.

Although the topic of anthropocentrism was not substantially engaged with in Marcotte Bouthillier’s article, it still beckons the reader to follow some important traces: What is anthropocentrism and why is it assumed as something problematic in the article? What would non-anthropocentric knowledges look like? What challenges and/or solutions can Japanese thinking provide with respect to the problems generated by anthropocentrism? This paper will thus walk the path opened up by Marcotte Bouthillier’s on the question of anthropocentrism and dig deeper into the relevance Japanese scholarship presents for understanding its consequences and possible alternatives.

Since Marcotte Bouthillier’s initial article emphasized Kusanagi’s enmeshment within the traditions of Zen 禪 Buddhism and Art Theory, this paper will deepen this trajectory by continuing to engage with authors who have written from either the perspective of Zen and Art. More specifically, this paper will, first, share the thoughts of Abe Masao 阿部正雄 (1915-2006) regarding the possible explanations for the emergence of anthropocentric thinking as well as its

tangible consequences for our world today. Secondly, this paper will translate and comment on particular *Waka* poems 和歌 of wandering Buddhist poet Saigyō 西行 (1118-1190) where a critique of anthropocentrism is implied while simultaneously proposing particular ways of conduct to avoid it. Thirdly, this paper will translate and comment on passages from the founder of the *Sōtō* school 曹洞宗 of Zen Buddhism, Dōgen 道元 (1200-1253) who also criticizes and proposes ways of escaping the trap of anthropocentrism. Finally, this paper will conclude by looking at common themes found across all thinkers to present a more holistic view of the challenge Japanese scholarship is offering contemporary philosophy, while re-stipulating the necessity for continuous cross-cultural dialogues among those who seek to distance themselves from Eurocentric and anthropocentric discourses.

Anthropocentrism

In the introduction to her book *Animal*, Erica Fudge elaborates on the first component of the two parts that comprise anthropocentrism: “the belief that the human is the centre of all things, that the world revolved around him”⁷. What is meant by this is that the human species (or things perceived to have human-like attributes) occupies the most prominent place in a type of hierarchy of beings. However, the less-discussed – but as impactful – component of anthropocentrism is that the human *perspective* is inherently superior to all other standpoints. Indeed, the most superior (thus most valid) assessment of reality is the one that is filtered through a human mind. Both of these components of anthropocentrism are not antagonistic and rather mutually reinforce each other. In sum, the world revolves *around* the human, the world is *for* the human, the world is created *by* the human, and the only perspective that counts is the one *of* the human. Various literatures emerging from animal rights, feminisms, indigenous thinking and much more all provide incredible insights into the nature, birth, growth, and problems of anthropocentrism. However, the scope of this paper does not allow for me to elaborate further on such comparisons. The goal of this paper here is mainly to add to this formidable literature by including another angle to the critique: that of Zen Buddhism.

The Contemporary Standpoint: Abe Masao 阿部正雄

Abe Masao is probably the second most known Japanese Buddhist scholar in Europe and North America following D.T. Suzuki 鈴木大拙貞太郎 (1870-1966). This is mainly due to his work on comparative religion and philosophy and his extensive travels to both continents where he gave numerous conferences, talks, and lectures over his lifetime. Although Abe's work does not precisely aim to dismantle anthropocentrism, various passages scattered across his work directly engage with the topic in a meaningful way. Overall, it is possible to see that Abe highlights the consequences of anthropocentrism mainly in four different spheres, while proposing a single solution that tackles all of them at once. In this first section, these scattered fragments will be excavated from Abe's work and presented in more a sustained format that clearly demonstrate the connections between the four critiques, as well as Abe's unique, all-encompassing solution to anthropocentrism.

The Religious Critique

The religious critique of anthropocentrism is certainly the least obvious space where the non-Buddhist reader would easily be able to recognize the problems of anthropocentrism due to difficulty connecting Buddhist cosmology and the operationalization of awakening⁸ or *Satori* 悟り. However, Abe's various angles used to criticize anthropocentrism are ultimately all rooted in this religious critique, thus it is imperative that this point be clarified first and in more details than his other critiques.

In a nutshell, in traditional Buddhism, all beings (*Shujō* 衆生) transmigrate between the six intersecting realms of existence⁹ which are all part of one and the same dimension called *Utpādanirodha* उत्पादनरोधा (jp. *Shōmetsusei* 生滅性) or the 'generation-extinction' dimension. Every single one of these six realms are part of this one dimension called 'generation-extinction' and as long as a being is part of this dimension it *will* endlessly be transmigrating between the six realms contained within this dimension. This cycle is called *Samsāra* संसार (jp. *Rinne* 輪廻), it is fuelled by *Karma* कर्म (jp. *Gō* 業) and is characterized by suffering or *Duḥkha* दुःख (jp. *Ku* 苦). Within this dimension of 'generation-extinction' all beings from all six dimensions are not

discriminated from each other: they will *all* equally continue to perpetuate the cycle the exact same way no matter which of the six realms they will transmigrate to/from for as long as that *Karma* continues to be produced. It is important to note that Buddhism understands *Karma* to be generated through actions and thoughts driven by intention or *Cetanā* चेतना (jp. *Omoi* 思), namely ignorance or *Avidyā* अविद्या (jp. *Mumyō* 無明), desire or *Tṛṣṇā* तृष्णा (jp. *Katsuai* 渴愛), and hatred or *Dveṣa* द्वेष (jp. *Shin* 瞋).

Based on the above explanation, Buddhism understands the only way out of *Samsāra* is through awakening (*Satori* 悟り) at the level of *dimensions*, and *not* at the level of the realm one is currently experiencing. Therefore, the only way for *any* beings (not just humans) to be free of the endless transmigration between the six realms, one must escape the entire dimension altogether, not just *one* of the realms. When the event of such awakening happens in *any* of the realms, *all* beings are concurrently awakened, “simply because generation-extinction itself, common both to humans and other creatures, is thereby overcome, and the true Reality [*Dharma* धर्म (jp. *Hō* 法)] is now disclosed universally”¹⁰.

But it does not stop there. According to Abe¹¹, Dōgen 道元 (1200-1253) posits that this ‘generation-extinction’ dimension that was earlier escaped through awakening is not free of any ‘centricism’ since this view privileges ending the transmigration of *beings* (living things) without consideration for *non-beings* (non-living things). Thus in order to reach *true* awakening, one needs to connect with an even deeper cosmological dimension called ‘appearance-disappearance’ (jp. *Kimestu* 起滅) or ‘being–non-being’ (jp. *Umu* 有無)], where *all* centricisms fall apart and no discrimination is possible. Attaining this is called *Nirvāṇa* निर्वाण (jp. *Nehan* 涅槃), described as an existential awakening to egolessness or *Anātman* अनात्मन् (jp. *Muga* 無我) which liberates from attachment to all discriminatory thoughts and dualisms¹².

There is plenty more to Zen’s theories of awakening and cosmology, but for the purpose of this paper these introductory remarks on realms and dimensions suffice to establish the foundations of Abe’s critique of anthropocentrism. For Abe, focusing on the supremacy of the ‘human experience’ over everything else (i.e. anthropocentrism) is out of place in a Buddhist cosmology which understands the Human Realm to be merely one of the six realms of the

‘generation-extinction’ dimension, where no realm holds any real supremacy over the others since they ultimately all participate equally and without discrimination in the perpetuation of the cycle of *Saṃsāra*. In fact, this attachment to the Human realm is precisely what prevents oneself as well as other beings in the ‘generation-extinction’ dimension from escaping the endless cycle of suffering because it produces *Karma* stemming from discriminatory thinking based in ignorance and desire. From this, what is important to emphasize is that *anthropocentrism is crucial in ensuring the constant perpetuation of suffering for all living beings within Saṃsāra*.

Before moving forward with Abe’s other analyses, it is imperative to bring forth Abe’s response to the critique that states that *Satori* still retaining traces of anthropocentrism due to prioritizing human beings as the ones who produce awakening. Abe explains that there are two aspects to Buddhist salvation. The first aspect is the existentialist and personalistic aspect, which emphasizes the salvation of a person because human beings alone have “the potential to become aware of and emancipated from the transience common to all things in the universe”¹³ due to them having self-consciousness and free will (this is usually what the critique focuses on). But what is often forgotten is the second aspect which consists of the fact that the necessary *basis* for Buddhist salvation is *cosmological* and *not personalistic* precisely because awakening does not emancipate only the human but rather *all things* that are imprisoned in *Saṃsāra*¹⁴. Both aspects need to be realized in order for *Satori* to be attained. This means that emphasizing Buddhist awakening to be performed only *by the human for the human* for the sake of ending *her/his* suffering only demonstrates that dualistic and discriminatory thinking is not overcome, and thus *Nirvāṇa* has not been reached. Abe clarifies the nature of such relationship better in his discussion *Dharma*: “although *Dharma* transcends everyone [...] there is no *Dharma* without someone to realize it. Apart from ‘the realizer’ there is no *Dharma*”¹⁵. Abe continues by explaining that:

“...one’s realization of the *Dharma* is nothing but *the Self-Awakening of Dharma itself*. Your awakening is, of course, your own existential awakening. It is *your* awakening to the *Dharma* in its complete universality, and this awakening is possible only by overcoming your self-centeredness, i.e. only through the total negation of your ego-self. This self-centered, or the self-centered ego, is the fundamental hindrance

to the manifestation of the *Dharma*. Therefore when the self-centeredness is overcome and selflessness is attained, i.e. *anattā* or *anātman* is realized, *Dharma* naturally awakens to itself. When *Dharma* awakens to itself *in you*, you attain *your true Self*; the selfless self is the true Self [...] *Dharma* is the subject of its own self-awakening and you are a channel of its self-awakening.”¹⁶

The Metaphysical Critique

Still operating under Buddhist Cosmology, Abe also criticizes the subject-object dualism stemming from Cartesian Metaphysics. Indeed, Abe explains that objectification operates through the placing of boundaries which separates the object from the subject who possesses the power to objectify things. Separated/discriminated things are then understood “only in so far as they are objectified and *not* as they are *in themselves*”¹⁷. This means that by objectifying things, humans centralize all significance and meaning within themselves – or at least in their potential as subjects-who-objectify. Abe also explains that this monopoly on knowledge production based on its concordance with the human perception is a result of this discriminatory thinking, which is itself a result of the ego-based consciousness of a Self which finds its place in a universe only through its comparison with an Other¹⁸.

However, in Buddhism, self-consciousness (and the anthropocentrism connected to it) is problematic because it prevents the possibility of engaging with things in their suchness or *Tathātā* तथ्यता (jp. *Shinnyo* 真如) Indeed, it is precisely because human engagement with things is mediated through discriminatory thinking between the conscious Self and an Other, that humans are unable to experience *Dharma* in its suchness – i.e. they cannot attain awakening¹⁹. Once again, then, the issue with discriminatory thought stemming from the object-subject dualism of Cartesian Metaphysics is not just an *individualized/personalized* problem; it is a *cosmological* one. It is cosmological because, the production of discriminatory thought emerging from ignorance generates *Karma* which is the fuel that propels the endless transmigrations of living beings trapped into the cyclical nature of the ‘generation-extinction’ dimension.

The Environmental Critique

In the environmental critique, Abe proposes that one of the roots of anthropocentrism appears in ‘Christian personalism’ meaning the “human responsibility to the word of God”²⁰. Basically, humans are created *Imago Dei* (in God’s image) which gives them the capacity to respond to the word of God; and since Nature is ruled by God through humans, it thus places humans (anthropo~) in a central (~centric) role with regards to other beings and therefore justifies their dominance of it²¹. Stemming from this, the destruction of the environment easily goes on un-problematized (even encouraged?) since a person “regards nature merely as a means or obstacle to the realization of selfish goals and thus continually finds ways to utilize and conquer it”²². For the purpose of this paper, what should be remembered here is that anthropocentrism, by affirming the superiority of the human over all things, justifies unbelievable environmental destruction *precisely and purely because it benefits the human and its egotistic desires*.

For Abe, this is untenable in Buddhist thinking, precisely because the basis for awakening is cosmological and not personalistic as in the I-Thou relationship with God²³. More specifically, the cosmological view of Buddhism “does not see nature as something subordinate to humans, but sees them as subordinate to nature [... which allows] humans to overcome estrangement from nature and to live harmoniously with nature without losing their individuality²⁴”. Still, the critique is not simply that anthropocentrism is problematic because it justifies environmental destruction. It is also that this environmental destruction serves to show the naturalization of discriminatory thinking stemming from *Avidyā* which produces *Karma* that perpetuates the cycle of *Samsāra*. Therefore, it is important to emphasize once again that the environmental destruction resulting from anthropocentrism is mandatory to overcome because of its cosmological impacts on *all* beings within the ‘generation-extinction’ dimension, including but not limited to humans.

The Political Critique

As mentioned earlier, Abe establishes that one of the catalyzers of *Karma* is *Avidyā* (ignorance) which manifests itself notably through discriminatory thinking. The most fundamental form of discriminatory thinking is that of the distinction between Self and Other conceptualized in Metaphysics as the subject-object dualism. The anthropocentric project which

establishes the superiority of the Human over all things thus continues the perpetration of this dualism at different scales, that of individuals, peoples, and mankind²⁵. Thus, for Abe, “[sovereign states] take as their basic principle a position of self-affirmation and self-assertion”²⁶ in the same way that an individual does when establishing itself as a subject-who-objectifies. This means that the concept of sovereignty needs to be transformed: “[i]t must no longer be a self-affirmative, self-assertive sovereignty wherein the individuals composing the human community are ordered to go to their deaths, or a sovereignty in which the special characteristics of the individual races and cultures are destroyed”²⁷.

Abe’s solution for the anthropocentric sovereign state and the suffering it causes is found in Buddhism’s self-negating emptiness or *Śūnyatā* शून्यता or (jp. *Kū* 空). Indeed, Abe posits that the sovereign state must be based in Buddhist-inspired self-negation and take “wisdom [*Prajñā* प्रज्ञ (jp. *Hannya* 般若)] and compassion [*Karuṇā* करुणा (jp. *Jihi* 慈悲)] as its principles rather than authority and justice”²⁸. However, for the sovereign states to operate according to *Śūnyatā* is only possible through an awakening to the truth of Reality, which would then allow for dualist categories such as individuals, peoples, and mankind to “make both self and others come alive completely without alienating each other”²⁹. Indeed, only in Self-awakening to the self-negating principle of Reality can a world government emerge as a unified and cooperative self-aware community which does not discriminate³⁰. Abe’s political critique and proposition allows one to escape anthropocentric positions precisely because it is anchored in an understanding that is thoroughly cosmological. In the words of Abe himself:

“[i]t is certainly true that the nation-state is now being transformed into a historical evil and that its control exceeds our individual power. And yet we must recognize that the source of this historical evil is rooted very deeply *within ourselves*. We ought not to criticize national egoism merely as an external force, but rather we ought to awaken to it as a collective responsibility deriving its reality from the human *Karma* of each of us. [...] An age wherein the power of the nation-state alienates the individual from mankind and does not truly enliven either the individual or mankind is precisely an age which also alienates mankind from the universe, or the

individual from the myriad phenomena of the universe, and pushes the simple harmony established between them toward disruption.”³¹

The Ancient Standpoint: Saigyō 西行 & Dōgen 道元

The scattered passages from Abe’s work that engage with the question of anthropocentrism seem to allude to the fact that there is something inherent within Zen thinking (particularly the Zen of Dōgen) which prevents the emergence and propagation of anthropocentric thinking. Put simply, anthropocentrism and Zen are presented to be purely and fundamentally incompatible. Still, although Abe’s critiques do not clearly provide ways to escape this ‘trap’ in concrete terms. It is especially true that Abe does not provide sufficient guidance to non-Buddhists for how to make sense of one’s common, everyday experiences outside of the currently-dominating anthropocentric perspective. That being the case, this next section will attempt to fill this gap by engaging with important Japanese writers (namely Saigyō 西行 and Dōgen 道元) in the hope of presenting different ways to engage with the topic of anthropocentrism while still remaining within the boundaries of the Buddhist tradition. This first part will provide my own translations and commentaries on four poems of Saigyō selected from his personal poem collections *Sankashū* 山家集 or “Collection of a Mountain Home/Hut”, believed to have been completed around 1180. The second part will also offer my own translations and commentaries on three passages from the 29th chapter entitled *Sansuikyō* 山水經 (Mountain and Water Fascicle) of Dōgen’s major work the *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏 (Treasury of the True Dharma Eye), written between 1231 and 1253.

Saigyō 西行

Saigyō is a major figure in Japanese cultural history for multiple reasons. Saigyō was born in a wealthy warrior family and suddenly abandoned this life at the age of twenty-two to enter Buddhist priesthood (this process is called *Shukke* 出家). The reason for this sudden decision is still debated to this day³², but this mysterious and unexpected change had far-reaching effects on his poetic style. This, coupled with the lifestyle of a wandering-pilgrim Buddhist poet,

allowed him to become the muse of many legends and stories for centuries after his death, cementing his title as “the poet-pilgrim par excellence for later generations of readers”³³.

尋ぬれば 聞きがたきかと 郭公 今宵ばかりは 待ちこころみん³⁴

tatsunure ba
kiki gataki ka to
hototogisu
ko yohi bakari wa
machikokoromin

having difficulties to hear
the hototogisu
makes us search [for it];
still, it is best to wait
for another time

Zen thought, influenced by Daoist thinking, often advocate for non-action (*Mui* 無爲). In its most simplistic form, *Mui* means trying to act according to nature’s ways, rather than against it. In this poem, Saigyō alludes to this by proposing that humans need to let things manifest on their own time. Firstly, there is a situation which pushes Saigyō to seek resolution – having difficulties to hear (*Kikigataki* 聞きがたき). However, the cause of this issue does not come from a place of necessity or difficulty, but rather from desire, longing and intentionality (*Tatsunureba* 尋ぬれば). The poem ends with the auxiliary particle ん which possesses meanings of appropriateness and proposal. This particle thus invites the reader to attempt (*Kokoromi* こころみ) a different approach to the resolution of desire: waiting (*Machi* 待ち). This proposal for waiting is paired with two expressions that indicates indeterminacy. The first one, *Ko Yohi* 今宵, can mean many things from “this evening” to “last night”, but also “the night before” or even “the day after”. Secondly, the expression *Bakari* ばかり offers approximations such as “about” or “around”. Thus, Saigyō seems to indicate that the Human is not the one who decides when the period of waiting ends. Indeed, human beings cannot make the *Hototogisu* sing when it suits *their* time no matter how strong the longing, the only thing to do is wait, indeterminately, until the *Hotogogisu* is ready to sing again – on *its* own time!

Allowing things and events to unfold to us by themselves changes the relationship dynamic from human beings acting as masters of nature, to companion and protector. By remaining open to being called when the time is right, humans are not just a passive actor in the face of nature. Instead they become an active participant in its authentic preservation. Even more importantly, the poem emphasizes how humans should avoid seeking to make events happen on

our own terms in order to fulfill our own egoistic desires. In sum, this poem gently warns the reader about the danger of acting into the world from an anthropocentric space. More precisely, the danger is found in prioritizing perspectives of time that are based in desire and attachment, over the cosmological time which flows naturally. Dominating nature and forcing it into acceleration to fulfil human desires would not only disrupt the earth's environment by imposing human temporality over all other things (anthropocentrism); but it would also disrupt cosmological harmony by generating *Karma* and perpetuating suffering through fuelling the cycle of *Samsāra*.

郭公 思ひもわかぬ ひと声を 聞きつといかが 人に語らん³⁵

hototogisu
omoi mo wakanu
hito koe o
kikitsu to ikaga
hito ni kataran

Hototogisu,
how should one speak
about not understanding
a voice that is heard
and longed for?

This poem possesses a strong feeling of uncertainty (*Utagai* 疑ひ) just as many other poems from Saigyō. First is an uncertainty that stems from experiencing strong emotions (*Mo* も) from something that is longed for (*Omoi* 思ひ). Second is an uncertainty emerging from a feeling of not appropriately grasping (*Wakanu* わかぬ) a frequently-encountered phenomenon. Third is an uncertainty regarding one's capacity to adequately speak about an experience with other people (*Kataran* 語らん). Saigyō here seems to posit two problems simultaneously: (1) how it is possible to teach/convey something that is experienced but not understood?; and (2) how to explain a longing for the singing of the *Hototogisu* 郭公 when one is supposed to be getting rid of attachments? The first problem is epistemological and admits to the incapacity of the human mind to properly conceptualize particular experiences, while simultaneously highlighting the limits of language in sharing particular experience with others. These two activities (understanding and speaking) are two human-based actions which are generally understood to be stemming from reason and consciousness. In other words, things *only a human can do*. Saigyō's implicit critique of these two essentially human activities directly targets the assumed human exceptionalism at the heart of anthropocentrism, and therefore participates in decentering the place of the human as the most significant being through which all valid

experiences are filtered and understood. The second problem seems to offer a critique of particular Buddhist doctrines which Saigyō interprets as devaluating the intrinsic beauty found in the natural world. It is often that Saigyō's poems are permeated with entanglements (*Kattō* 葛藤³⁶) between his fascination for the natural beauty of the world and his struggle to accept particular Buddhist concepts which urges one to let go of one's desires/longing while trying to escape this world.

In any case, an important aspect of this poem is Saigyō's action of questioning. More specifically, who is Saigyō's interlocutor? The interlocutor here is Nature or the cosmos itself, symbolized by the *Hototogisu*. What needs to be emphasized here is that the answers to Saigyō's interrogation regarding the epistemological finitude of human beings, the limits of human speech, and the difficulty of getting rid of one's entanglements with desires are *not found in the human*. On the contrary, answers will come precisely *when* one realizes their own human limits and turns towards to nature's many teachers for guidance. Therefore, Saigyō's simple action of questioning the *Hototogisu*, combined with his implicit critique of human exceptionalism, once again participates in shattering the anthropocentric position of the human while simultaneously opening up the space for Nature/cosmos to take back its original place.

つくづくと 軒の雫を ながめつつ 日をのみ暮らす 五月雨の頃³⁷

tsukudukuto
noki no shiduku o
nagame tsutsu
hi o nomi kurasu
samidare no goro

Spending the day
doing nothing but gazing admirably
at the scenery of a water drop
on a building's eaves;
the period of the rainy season

This poem conveys a strong emotion of powerlessness (*Muryokukan* 無力感) in the face of natural phenomena, which in this case takes results in isolation. More precisely, the heavy rain of the rainy season forces Saigyō to remain in isolation since traveling is impossible due to flooded roads and disappearing paths. In this case, this forced isolation and the resulting loneliness is not something negative as it allows for one to repeatedly reconnect with the beauty of cosmological Being (Nature). To fully capture the intricacies of this poem, it needs to be opened up further. The poem projects a strong feeling of meditateness and peacefulness of the

scene that is accentuated by the use of the adverb *Tsukudukuto* つくづく と (keenly, deeply, etc.) paired with the verb *Nagame* 眺め meaning “to gaze at admirably”. Here, Saigyō uses a popular literary technique called an *Engo* 縁語 (associating word) to offer the reader a play-with-word around the verb *Nagame* ながめ. Notice that the verb in the passage is written in phonetic alphabet (*Hiranaga* 平仮名) instead of Chinese logograms (*Kanji* 漢字). This allows for the reader to alter the words’ meaning by interchanging words that are pronounced the exact same way even if they are written differently when using *Kanji*. Here, within the strict grammatical context of the sentence *Nagame* means 眺め or “to gaze at admirably”; but *Nagame* also shares the same pronunciation with the word *Nagame* 長雨 which means “long rain”. In fact, this play-with-word between *Nagame* as 眺め and *Nagame* as 長雨 was extensively used in Japanese classical poetry to generate an emotionally-filled image of a person admirably gazing at rain that simply never stops falling. This very contemplative gaze into the beauty of nature combined with the intense meditative and existential experience of loneliness offers a chance for one to experience their positionality within this greater cosmological Being that is Nature, provided they are ready to be called by it.

In sum, the image of a peaceful meditative scene supported by the strong-emotionally charged tone of the play-on-words, reinforces this feeling of powerlessness that Saigyō is experiencing from his forced isolation. This forced isolation is precisely caused by a natural phenomenon that is beyond the control of the Human, and from which the Human has no choice but resign to themselves to. This poem, therefore, is unique as it provides an insight into the personal existential experience of what this non-anthropocentric position of the Human *felt* like for Saigyō: powerlessness. In contradiction to the anthropocentric position which actively seeks to posit itself as the central, most powerful being; here *acceptance* of this feeling of powerlessness in realization of the Human’s non-central positionality within a cosmology of beings at the mercy of Nature is *precisely* what allows Saigyō to be able to admirably gaze at the water drops and be moved by its beauty with such emotional intensity. This acceptance of non-anthropocentrism is also what enables Saigyō, once again, to propose *Mui* 無爲 or non-action as the ‘best’ attitude to follow. Indeed – just like the first poem analyzed above – by not seeking to control it to satisfy his own egoistic desires, Saigyō becomes a companion to Nature’s own

self-unfolding rather than its master, which then allows both Nature and Saigyō to gain insight into their true Self since they both dwell in their suchness without discrimination.

五月雨に 干すひまなくて 藻塩草 煙も立てぬ 浦のあま人³⁸

*samidare ni
hosu hima nakute
moshihogusa
keburi mo tachitenu
ura no amahito*

During the rainy season,
ceaselessly drying
the seaweed;
the smoke doesn't even raise
on the saltmaker's seashore!

In this poem, Saigyō is offering a feeling of dependency, even almost subordination (*Jūzoku* 従属). First, Saigyō is referring to the process of using seaweed to produce salt (*Moshihogusa* 藻塩草), which is made by burning seaweed that has been sprinkled with seawater to ashes, followed by placing the ashes in boiling water in a cast iron pot until it concentrates to become a salty substance. This process thus requires the combination of resources (fire, seawater, wood, etc.) that are provided by nature and extensive human labour. However, at the same time, the natural phenomena of the heavy rain of the 5th month prevent this process from taking place (*Keburi mo tachitenu* 煙も立てぬ). This means that the dependency is doubled: first there is the saltmakers's (*Ama/Amahito* 海人) dependency on natural resources and, secondly, there is the saltmaker's dependency on favorable weather conditions. Moreover, Saigyō uses of the bound particle *Mo* も translated here as “even” which, in this context, serves the purpose of emphasizing the emotive aspect of the poem. Ultimately, by invoking the emotively-charged image of the saltmaker's smokeless-seashore, Saigyō's poem allows the reader to be reminded that although human beings depend on the environment in order to be able to sustain themselves, this environment is also what determines whether they will be able to do so or not, with ease or with difficulty, and so forth.

Once again, this emphasized dependency of the human on nature points to the Human's non-anthropocentric positionality in the unfolding of phenomena. The earth and its environment is not there *for* humans to exploit, it is not created *by* humans for themselves, and it most certainly not under their *control*. Realizing this non-anthropocentric positionality is a mandatory event in one's actualization of *Satori* precisely because one's ‘true’ awakening only happens *if* it

brings salvation to *all beings* which, again, is impossible if the focus is being put exclusively on the salvation of the human/individual for the benefit of the human/individual *only*. This is why the ego-Self (which is the basis for anthropocentrism) needs to be discarded completely in order to experience Reality from its cosmological standpoint. In this sense, Saigyō's poem serves as a helpful reminder that the Human is only *a* part of this cosmos; a cosmos that the Human ultimately depends on for its experience as a 'living being'; a cosmos in which the Human participates in its perpetuation (through *Karma*) to the same extent as *all other beings* within the 'generation-extinction' dimension.

These four poems written by Saigyō invites the reader to engage with the various feelings blossoming out of everyday common experiences who reminds us of our non-anthropocentric positionality within a universe that is bigger than ourselves. These everyday experiences are still available for all to engage within even in this day and age if we allow ourselves to be called by them. Nonetheless, having some guidance to help us along the way is valuable and Dōgen provides us with some insights as to what these guides are, how important they are and where we can find them.

Dōgen 道元

The major position Dōgen occupies in Japanese religious history cannot be understated. Dōgen is revered as the founder and highest patriarch (*Kōso* 高祖) of the *Sōtō* school 曹洞宗 of Zen Buddhism. After training within the *Tendai* tradition 天台宗 (School of Celestial Platform), Dōgen rejected the teachings and left for China in 1223, where he eventually became the student of Tiāntóng Rújìng 天童如淨 (1163-1228) of the Cáodòng school 曹洞宗 (School of Cáo and Dòng) of Chán/Zen 禪 Buddhism. After receiving succession of the school from Rújìng, Dōgen returned to Japan in 1227. At first Dōgen failed to install his practice close to urban centers due to being continuously persecuted and having his temples burned by opposing and politically-supported Buddhist schools. Eventually with the help of powerful patrons, Dōgen built its first major monastic center which is now called *Eiheiji* 永平寺 (Temple of Eternal Peace) into the remote area of Echizen 越前. It was Keizan, great patriarch (*Taiso* 太祖) and considered the second great founder of *Sōtō* Zen, who was able build the populist base for Dōgen's Zen by

introducing various practices and imageries from popular/folk religion and Buddhist esotericism, which eventually allowed for *Sōtō* Zen to become the most flourishing school of Japanese Buddhism and currently the largest of three traditional Zen schools³⁹. Currently, both Dōgen's *Eiheiji* and Keizan's *Sōjiji* are considered *Daihonzan* 大本山 (Head Temples) of the *Sōtō* tradition. The purpose and scope of this paper does not allow for an overview of the major ideas springing forth from all of Dōgen's extensive literature, thus only four passages relevant to the discussion of anthropocentrism are going to be engaged with. It is worthy to note, however, that the earlier discussion pertaining to Buddhist cosmology in Abe's work is found in one of his essay dedicated to analyzing a particular chapter of Dōgen's major work⁴⁰. The influence of the latter on the former is thus not only visible; it is proudly affirmed.

山はそなはるべき功德の虧闕することなし。このゆゑに常安住なり、常運歩なり。さの運歩の功德、まさに審細に參學すべし。山の運歩は人の運歩のごとくなるべきがゆゑに、人間の行歩におなじくみえざればとて、山の運歩をうたがふことなかれ。⁴¹

The mountains do not lack virtuous deeds. They are constantly worryless and constantly walking. This virtuous deed of walking should certainly be studied with clarity and detail. Because the walking of the mountains can be the same as the walking of people, just because it does not happen to show itself resembling the walk of humans, do not doubt the walking of the mountains.

Similar to Saigyō's second poem analyzed earlier, in this first passage Dōgen proposes an epistemological critique by emphasizing that the human way of knowing is not the only way in which knowing can manifest. Also similar to Saigyō's poem is the emphasis the limits of language in expressing and sharing the manifestation of particular experiences or phenomena. Here, the action of walking (運歩) has a particular shape or form that is established based on the way human beings walk (人間の行歩). This human way of walking then becomes the standard of evaluation for all things to be either qualified as 'walking' or 'non-walking'. For example, we would say that a dog or a cat walks, because the movement they execute somewhat resembles the kinds of movements humans perform in the action of walking. However we would refuse to say that snakes or a fishes walk (and even less so of mountains!) because even though they move, they do not do so in a way that is 'human-like' (おなじくみえざれ). What is particularly notable here is Dōgen's use of an *inanimate* thing (the mountain 山) to convey a concept related *movement* (walking). This helps in further disrupting the usual logic of current forms of human

thinking which would not only discriminate between ‘walking’ and ‘non-walking’ *beings* but also discriminate in prioritizing the ‘living/animate’ over the ‘non-living/inanimate’, and so forth. Let us now consider the following passage:

しるべし、山は人間のさかひにあらず、上天のさかひにあらず。人慮の測度をもて山を知見すべからず。もし人間の流に比準せずば、たれか山流、山不流等を疑著せむ。⁴²

Appropriately understood, mountains are not in the human realm and are not in the realm of the heavens above; insights into the mountains should not be happening by means of the measure of human thought. Supposing that it is not similar to the flow of humans, why should someone carry doubts about whether the mountains flow or do not flow?

While it was implied before, now Dōgen explicitly affirms that human beings need to avoid extracting insights (知見す) into phenomena exclusively through the measure of human thinking (人慮の測度). Nonetheless, the reason for is a bit clearer: each one of the six realms (さかひ) are going to provide a different *experience* for any phenomenon. This means that when a flower blooms, the flower does not bloom in the Human realm *only*. Indeed, the phenomenon of the blooming flower discloses itself in all six realms simultaneously, and the Human experience is simply *one* of all its possible experiences. In other words, this is what Dōgen is prompting us to doubt (疑ふ): why would the experience of a phenomenon in *one* realm be superior or truer than the experience of the same phenomenon in *another* realm if all of these realms play an equal role in the perpetuation of the ‘generation-extinction’ dimension? If mountains manifest themselves as flowing (山流) in another realm, does it mean that mountains do not flow (山不流) simply because they manifest as immovable, static and worriless (安住) in the Human realm? Dōgen’s position is very clear and prescriptive: one ought not to doubt that mountains walk or flow just because they do not conform to the human experience of their multiple trans-dimensional manifestation. In fact, both positions are equally true since the mountains are flowing (in another realm) and not flowing (in the Human realm) simultaneously. Dōgen’s proposition is not to say that the Human experience is irrelevant and should simply be discarded, but rather to convey that the multiplicity of possible experiences springing forth from the event of a disclosing phenomenon should be regarded as equally valid and legitimate irrespectively of their *perceived* position in the hierarchy of beings (and non-beings) who was *arbitrarily created* by the Human. If human beings (and therefore all beings) are to be awakened

to the true Reality of the cosmos, they need to see reality for what it *is*, in its *suchness*; not just what it is *for the human*. This brings us to this next passage:

しかあればすなはち、現成所有の功德をあやしむことあたはず。しばらく十方の水を十方にして著眼看すべき時節を參學すべし。人天の水をみるときのみの參學にあらず、水の水をみる參學あり、水の水を修證するがゆゑに。水の水を道著する參究あり、自己の自己に相逢する通路を現成せしむべし。他己の他己を參徹する活路を進退すべし、跳出すべし。⁴³

That being so, it is not reasonable to think that the virtuous deed of completely and naturally appearing as such without hiding is a strange thing. The occasion where for a moment the ten directions of water can be seen in the ten directions should be studied. It is not a study of the particular time when humans and/or deities see water; it is a study of the water that sees water, because water practices and witnesses water. There is the truth-seeking of water arriving at the way of the water, the passage where the mutual meeting of the Self of the self can completely and naturally appear in suchness without hiding. A way of life where the self-perceived-by-other of the self-perceived-by-other pierces through and can freely do as it pleases, appropriately springs forth.

When looking at the previous translated passages, it is possible to see a progression where Dōgen, first, delegitimizes the anthropocentric standpoint. Following this, Dōgen seems to propose a form of epistemological relativism where all phenomena are encountered through a thing's particular experience, and where no particular experiences should be valued better or 'truer' than another. Indeed, it looks as if Dōgen claimed that the truth is found in the culmination of standpoints where all participate in their own way in creating a matrix of meaning over a phenomenon. However, this last passage moves in another direction by specifying that truth-seeking (參究) happens not from any perspectives other than that of the phenomena that perceives itself. Indeed, truth-seeking is not about any *one* perspective nor about the *culmination* of perspectives (人天の水をみるときのみの參學にあらず); rather it is about reaching the point of no-perspective, where a phenomenon completely and naturally appears as such without hiding (現成所有), or 'just as it is'.

This point of no-perspective is precisely the actualization of one's awakening (*Satori*) to the ontological Reality of the cosmos (*Dharma*); that is emptiness or *Śūnyatā*. Abe describes *Śūnyatā* as the "boundless openness freed from any sort of 'centrism', including egocentrism, anthropocentrism, cosmocentrism and even theocentrism. In *Śūnyatā* everything without

exception is realized as it is in its suchness and yet as interrelated and interpenetrating each other⁴⁴. Whether this principle is called *Kyōge Betsuden* 教外別傳 (Transmission Outside the Scriptures) by Dōgen or *Mujō Seppō* 無情說法 (Non-Sentient Expounding Dharma) by Keizan⁴⁵, the idea is that that every single thing around us can serve as a guide or a teacher that we can learn from. In order for this to take place, it is necessary to understand to speech of these teachers if we are to be helped to reach awakening *through* them – remember Saigyō’s *Hototogisu*? Nevertheless, the first step of this journey is to have the humility to admit and accept that the overwhelmingly naturalized anthropocentric standpoint of modern systems of knowledge production are *not* the ultimate form of understanding there is; quite the contrary, it is very much a hindrance and major obstacle in making *all beings* (including the Human) reach emancipation and salvation. Even though this cannot be further elaborated in this paper, it is important to note in passing that, for Dōgen, *Satori cannot* be achieved using the mind’s thinking since it will deterministically leads to a type of ‘centrism’. Instead, the actualization of emptiness happens through *meditation*, especially *Zazen* 座禪 or seated meditation.

Summary and Analysis

It is apparent that not only do Abe, Saigyō and Dōgen offer profound insights into the essence and emergence of anthropocentrism, but they also provide thoroughly-considered and innovative alternatives. To start, Saigyō and Dōgen both initially proposed that the multiplicity of possible experiences that spring forth from the event of a disclosing phenomenon should all be regarded as *equally* valid and legitimate, and that claiming one’s own experience to be the *only* valid and legitimate one is foolish and absurd. In other words, both *first* affirmed the *necessity* to overcome anthropocentrism. The four translated poems from Saigyō provided the reader with an opportunity to experience what having our beings-in-the-world decentered would *feel* like, more precisely: uncertainty/doubt (Utagai 疑ひ), powerlessness (Muryokukan 無力感) and subordination/dependency (Jūzoku 従属). These three emotions were coupled with a suggested behavior to adopt: non-action (Mui 無爲), which consists of remaining open to be called by things and letting things unfold on their own time rather than force them to unfold based on

Human-centered time. This attitude changes the relationship dynamic from human beings acting as masters of Nature to companions and protectors, thus allowing them to become active participants in the authentic preservation of the event of a disclosing phenomenon without directing its course and outcome to suit human-based desires and attachments.

Following this, both Saigyō and Dōgen strengthen their critique of anthropocentrism by emphasizing that the many guides and teachers which helped them along their journey were *non-human* and even sometimes *non-living*. For Saigyō, these guides were animals like the Mountain Cuckoo (*Hototogisu* 郭公), but also various natural phenomena which triggered the above-mentioned feelings such as the long rain (*Nagame* 長雨) of the rainy season (*Samidare* 五月雨). For Dōgen, these guides were also animals such as fish (*Io* 魚) and dragons (*Ryū* 龍), as well as geographical manifestations such as mountains (*Yama* 山), water (*Mizu* 水), seas (*Umi* 海) and large rivers (*E* 江), or even manifestations of particular actions such as flowing (*Riu* 流) or walking (*Unbu* 運歩). However, contrary to Saigyō, Dōgen emphasizes that although these various guides help in realizing the relativist nature of Truth, awakening is found where the point of no-perspective is reached: where all phenomena completely and naturally appears as such without hiding (現成所有). This point of no-perspective is precisely the actualization of one's awakening to the ontological Reality of the cosmos; that is Emptiness or *Śūnyatā*. Dōgen's emphasis on meditation, especially *Zazen* 座禪 or seated meditation, corresponds in a similar but different way to Saigyō's advocacy for non-action, in that both of them seek to become active participants in the authentic preservation of the event of a disclosing phenomenon without directing or taking control while simultaneously proposing ways to trans-descend into the primordial ground of Nature.

Inspired by the assessments of Saigyō and Dōgen, Abe agrees that one of the major source of anthropocentrism is found in discriminatory thinking, which results in the naturalization and perpetuation of dualisms⁴⁶. Whether the source is to be found in the cradle of Western Metaphysics, in the over-valuation of the Cartesian Subject, or the advent of Christian personalism, it remains that the overwhelmingly unquestioned belief in the superiority of the human and human experiences of the world still permeates anthropocentric products such as democracy, capitalism, socialism, communism, technocracy, nation-states, politics, science,

history, philosophy, etc. causing untenable and substantial damage to the earth and its many dwellers. However, anthropocentrism is precisely what prevents us from acknowledging the full impact of this damage on the environment as well as on human and non-human lives, because we focus on what impacts *us* and try to find solutions that matter and make sense only to *us*. From this, Abe concludes that anthropocentrism is plunging mankind into a trap of its own making⁴⁷, one that must be overcome if we are to “awaken to the collective responsibility for the Karma rooted deeply into the basic character of mankind [...] We must enter the third historical age of mankind, namely, the age of Self awakened cosmology”⁴⁸.

Merging together Dōgen’s cosmological assessment, Saigyō’s solutions, and Abe’s contemporary understandings, it is possible to imagine and construct general guidelines as to what the solution to anthropocentrism could look like. Since the problem is found in the *Karma* that results from discriminatory thinking which causes the wheel of *Samsāra* to constantly spin condemning *all beings* (not just humans) to *Duḥkha* (suffering), the problem is a *cosmological one* and thus, it needs to be engaged with precisely *at this cosmological level*. Dōgen, whose perspectives are supported by Abe, maintains that this cosmological connection is always-already within us and, therefore, the solution requires for us to first be able step-back into ourselves to *let go of our Selves*; which is facilitated by *meditation*. This, in itself, already prevents anthropocentrism from emerging. However, our ultra-accelerated capitalist culture does not provide many opportunities to achieve this. In this case, Saigyō’s poems inform us that this meditative and peaceful space can be summoned at *any* time provided we let ourselves be captivated by the *beauty* of natural phenomena always unfolding all around us. In this sense, we need to *let* Nature and its various teachers *guide* us to the right path. This, once again, continues to keep anthropocentrism at bay. From there, Abe tells us that this awakening to the self-negating principle of *Śūnyatā* inherent within all things (beings and non-beings alike), when attained at the various levels of *individuals, peoples, mankind, and the myriad phenomena of the universe*, can lead to the establishment of a single government for all mankind that operates based on wisdom and compassion. At this point, the perpetuation of anthropocentrism and its resulting problems would become purely impossible.

Conclusion

“The fundamental alternative to a set of Western assumptions is not another set of Western assumptions but the genuinely different presuppositions of much Eastern thought. Such an alternative occurs in one of its most powerful and thoroughgoing forms within Buddhism, and specifically in the philosophy of Zen” – John Hick⁴⁹

The purpose of this paper was not to unequivocally affirm that the constructed solution mentioned above is the only way to proceed to problematize and tackle anthropocentrism. Rather, the purpose of this paper was humble, and was simply to participate in the formidable – but yet (too) small – literature critiquing anthropocentrism by adding another voice to the choir: that of Japanese Zen Buddhism and Japanese Art. To do so I have engaged with the work of Abe Masao 阿部正雄 (1915-2006), as well as translated and commented on poems of Saigyō 西行 (1118-1190) and passages from Dōgen 道元 (1200-1253). This exercise demonstrates a strong support for the claims of Marcotte Bouthillier, Abe and other comparative philosophers who allude to the fact that Buddhist scholarship of various ages and traditions have always considered anthropocentrism to be a fundamental problem, and have consistently and deeply engaged with meaningful alternatives seeking to overcome it.

In this sense, this paper can (and should) be used to reinforce the idea that incredibly deep engagements with the question of anthropocentrism have been produced by various peoples of various times and places. Believe it or not, anthropocentrism is not just a modern phenomenon that only matters to us. Rather, it is a problem that is fundamental to all forms of human epistemologies, and a problem that is – more often than not – left completely unacknowledged in current dominant systems of knowledge production. Indeed, the overwhelming Eurocentrism of current dominant forms of knowledge production often use various mechanisms to delegitimize and prevent serious and meaningful engagement with what has been constructed as “Others”. The Buddhist (Zen) critique found in this paper is thus helpful in pointing to the fact that continuing to leave *unquestioned* the naturalized knowledges embedded in anthropocentrism – consciously or not – by claiming to their inherent *superiority* while simultaneously *dismissing* the importance of intercultural dialogue is a *strategy* that actively seeks to *ensure* the perpetuation current forms of *power* and *domination*. In other words,

if we are to be able to dismantle the various oppressions resulting from the intersecting structures of patriarchy, sexism, racism, capitalism, technocracy, nationalism, science, history, philosophy, and much more, it is imperative to critically engage with the common anthropocentric belief found at the heart of all of these structures which is key in furthering their legitimization⁵⁰. Finally, it is important to reiterate that dominant institutions of knowledges need to actively foster and nurture serious engagements with different forms of knowledge production stemming from different peoples of different places and times if they are to meaningfully participate in tackling problems that not only transcends national borders, but also the borders of the Human realm.

End Notes

¹ Tsai, Chih Chung. *Confucius: The Analects*. Trans. Brian Bruya, (United-States: Princeton University Press, 2018), 108

² Maxime Marcotte Bouthillier, “Dialogue on Nature with a Japanese Aesthetician” in *Proceedings of the 2019 Annual Conference of the Japan Studies Association of Canada: Japan and the Environment: Lessons for the World* (forthcoming): 1-21.

³ See: Jay Goulding, "The Forgotten Frankfurt School: Richard Wilhelm's China Institute", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*. 41. 1-2 (2015): 170-186; and Jay Goulding, “Unity Through Diversity: Inter-world, Family Resemblance, Intertextuality”, *Journal of World Philosophies*. 3 (2018): 142-150.

⁴ See: Graham Parkes. "Lao-Zhuang and Heidegger on Nature and Technology", *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 30.1 (2003): 19-38.

⁵ Marcotte Bouthillier, “Dialogue on Nature with a Japanese Aesthetician”, 19.

⁶ Marcotte Bouthillier, “Dialogue on Nature with a Japanese Aesthetician”, 16.

⁷ Erica Fudge, *Animal* (United Kingdom: Reaktion Book, 2002), 14

⁸ I have decided to use the word awakening to translate *Satori* 悟り instead of enlightenment. This is in order to avoid misinterpreting it in terms of the European intellectual revolution and the ‘enlightenment’ thinkers. In fact, it is very crucial to not interpret *Satori* as action taking place and the level of the mind through rational means.

⁹ See: Abe Masao, *Zen and Western Thought*. ed. William R. Lafleur, (United-States: University of Hawai'i Press. 1985): 28. These six realms are respectively *Deva* देव (jp. *Ten* 天 – Heavenly Existence), *Manuṣya* मनुष्य (jp. *Nin* 人 – Human Existence), *Asura* असुर (jp. *Ashura* 阿修羅 – Fighting Spirits), *Tiryagyoni* तिर्यग्योनि (jp. *Chikushō* 畜生 – Animals), *Preta* प्रेत (jp. *Gaki* 餓鬼 – Hungry Ghosts) and *Naraka* नरक (jp. *Jikoku/Naraku* 地獄/奈落天 – Hell)

¹⁰ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 32.

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- ¹¹ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 35.
- ¹² Abe Masao, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, ed. Steven Heine, (United-States: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995): 75
- ¹³ Abe, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, 81
- ¹⁴ Abe, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, 81
- ¹⁵ Abe, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, 187
- ¹⁶ Abe, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, 187 (emphasis in original)
- ¹⁷ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 217. (emphasis in original)
- ¹⁸ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 223.
- ¹⁹ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 226.
- ²⁰ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 210.
- ²¹ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 210.
- ²² Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 211.
- ²³ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 211.
- ²⁴ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 212.
- ²⁵ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 252.
- ²⁶ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 252.
- ²⁷ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 253.
- ²⁸ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 253.
- ²⁹ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 253.
- ³⁰ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 253.
- ³¹ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 255-257.
- ³² Jack Stoneman. "Why Did Saigyō Become a Monk? An Archaeology of the Reception of Saigyō's *Shukke*", *Japanese Language and Literature*, 44.2 (2010): 69-118.
- ³³ Stoneman, "Why Did Saigyō Become a Monk? An Archeology of the Reception of Saigyō's *Shukke*", 69
- ³⁴ Saigyō 西行, *Sankashū* 山家集 (Japan: Kadokawa, 2018), poem 183
- ³⁵ Saigyō 西行, *Sankashū* 山家集, poem 193

³⁶ See: Dōgen 道元. “Kattō 葛藤” in *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū* 道元禪師全集. ed by Ōkubō Dōshū 大久保道舟. Japan: Chikuma Shobō. vol. 1 (1969): 331-336.

³⁷ Saigyō 西行, *Sankashū* 山家集, poem 211

³⁸ Saigyō 西行, *Sankashū* 山家集, poem 215

³⁹ See: Bernard Fauré, *Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, trans. Phyllis Brooks, (United-States: Princeton University Press, 2000)

⁴⁰ For Abe’s analysis, see: Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 25-68. For Dōgen’s text, see: Dōgen 道元. “Busshō 佛性” in *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū* 道元禪師全集. ed by Ōkubō Dōshū 大久保道舟. Japan: Chikuma Shobō. vol. 1 (1969): 14-35.

⁴¹ Dōgen 道元. “Sansuikyō 山水經” in *Dōgen Zenji Zenshū* 道元禪師全集. ed by Ōkubō Dōshū 大久保道舟. Japan: Chikuma Shobō. vol. 1 (1969): 258.

⁴² Dōgen 道元. “Sansuikyō 山水經”, 266.

⁴³ Dōgen 道元. “Sansuikyō 山水經”, 264-265.

⁴⁴ Abe, *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*, 55

⁴⁵ See: Bernard Fauré, *Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, 193.

⁴⁶ See: Val Plumwood. “Dualism: The Logic of Colonisation” in *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. United-Kingdom: Routledge (1993): 41-68

⁴⁷ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 259.

⁴⁸ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, 260.

⁴⁹ Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, ix

⁵⁰ See: Max Weber, “The Profession and Vocation of Politics” in *Weber Political Writings*, ed. Peter Lassman & Ronald Speirs (United-States: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 309-369. In all of his work this lecture is the clearest space where Weber explicitly mentions the strong relationship between power/authority, belief and legitimacy. More specifically, Weber explains that no structure of power is legitimate on its own. Rather, a structure of power is legitimate *only* when people *believe* it to be legitimate.

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