



A Huayan Critique of Heidegger: The Quest for a Non-Obstructed *Mitdasein*

Patricia Huntington

Arizona State University, USA

ABSTRACT

Based on its radical view of the non-obstructed interpenetration of noumenon and phenomena, Huayan Buddhism develops a comparably richer understanding of interrelationality than does Heidegger. First, it overcomes a problematic tension in the early Heidegger between the positive quest for authenticity and the negative assessment of *Mitsein*. Second, it avoids two dualistic mistakes, the assertion of an authentic solitary self who is set apart from inauthentic others and the mischaracterization of being-with as a form of merging with the universe of another. The former obscures the noumenal reality of interpenetration, while the latter denies phenomenal difference and diversity. A liberating *Mitdasein*, as Huayan teaches, emerges neither through self-appropriation nor through self-denial but rather through the removal of mental and affective obstructions that engender artificial distance from or unnatural proximity to others.

KEYWORDS

Heidegger, Huayan, *Mitsein*, inter-relationality, authenticity, non-obstruction, in-betweenness (*ningen*), feminist

“A stone woman bears a child by night.”
Mountains and Waters Sutra

“Ontologically speaking, it is because of Totality that Non-Obstruction can be reached,
but causally speaking, it is through a realization of Non-Obstruction—the complete
annihilation of all mental and spiritual impediments and ‘blocks’—
that the realm of Totality and Non-obstruction is reached.”
Garma C. C. Chang

Only in Huayan with its incredulous depiction of the universe as a “vast Ocean-Mirror,” a “kaleidoscope of multi-dimensional, mutual projections and interpenetrations,” Garma C. C. Chang argues, do we understand the “far-reaching implications” of the Mahāyāna doctrine of emptiness (*shūnyatā*).¹ Whether in the image of Indra's net or the Great Hall of Mirrors, the philosophical notions of interpenetration and mutual containment show that the identity of each phenomenal thing (*dharma*) in the universe is determined by every other (all *dharmadhātu*). Each jewel in Indra's net affects all other things but also contains the aspects of every other, as one could imagine if she stood, like Empress Wu, in a great hall of mirrors where each thing was refracted in every other. Chang describes it thus: “as a solar system contains its planets . . . a ‘larger’ universe always includes the ‘smaller’ ones” but “a ‘small’ universe . . . also contains the infinite ‘larger’ universes” and “thus establish[es] the genuine Totality of Non-Obstruction.” These images convey the basic idea of co-dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*): that each phenomenal thing (*dharma*), because empty of self-subsistent existence, arises in dependence on other phenomena. Yet they also express a radical view of interdependence in that all phenomena penetrate and contain one another. The deep mystery of emptiness is not simply that entire universes play out in a blade of grass but more vitally that each thing penetrates every other without obstruction. No thing obstructs the expression of any other thing either noumenally or phenomenally.²

The marvel of this cosmic vision gave birth in Mahāyāna Buddhism to advanced metaphysical considerations as well as to a practice of non-attachment that strips away mental obstructions. But the aim of Huayan, as Thomas Cleary and Chang each contend, is not to wax speculative about metaphysics and ontology but rather to effectuate “a shift in perspective” that anchors one in the cosmic vision of “realms beyond that of conventional experience.”³ In his fine introduction to Huayan, Cleary states emphatically that, however intriguing its depiction of the universe may seem, the primary concern of Huayan metaphysics was practical:

. . . the philosophy may be considered not so much the establishment of a system of thought for its own sake or as an object of belief or ground of contention but rather as a set of practical exercises in perspective—new ways of looking at things from different points of view, of discovering harmony and complementarity underlying apparent

¹ Garma C. C. Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa Yen Buddhism* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press), x.

² *Ibid.*, 10-11, 12.

³ Thomas Cleary, *Entry Into the Inconceivable: An Introduction to Hua-yen Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983), 18 and 2.

disparity and contradiction. The value of this exercise is in the development of a round, holistic perspective which, while discovering unity, does not ignore diversity but overcomes mental barriers that create fragmentation and bias.⁴

However distinct their approaches, Chang and Cleary share a pronounced sense that genuine entry into this “inconceivable” cosmic vision arises through a practice that dramatically transforms mental outlook. As Chang articulates this relation, Chan or Zen is the practice of Huayan, while the cosmic vision of Huayan clarifies and fulfils Chan practices.⁵

Non-obstruction, though a feature of reality, most emphatically forms *the pivotal existential praxis* of Buddhism.⁶ Although it lies beyond the scope of this paper to address the comprehensive nature of Huayan teachings, Tu Shun articulates the non-obstruction of phenomena (*shih*) and noumena (*li*) in ten aspects.⁷ At least two of these aspects are immediately invoked in the doctrine of co-dependent origination. These are, first, that noumenon (*li* or the principle of emptiness) pervades phenomena (existence) because each thing has only transient, relative, and conditional existence but does not enjoy intrinsic nature of its own; and, second, that phenomena pervade noumenon because emptiness does not exist in-itself outside phenomenal reality. Even as the ten aspects unfold the rich and complex meanings of conditional inter-dependence, this paper focuses simply on an initial application of this Huayan view of the non-obstructed interpenetration of phenomena and noumena to a critique of Heidegger's conception of authentic intersubjective relations.

While primarily centered on the first, this paper will address two implications of the radical conception of interpenetration advanced in Huayan. First, the Huayan practice of realizing a non-obstructed mental outlook overcomes a problematic tension in Heidegger between authenticity and the socially conditioned nature of existence. It shows that this tension rests upon a faulty view of the quest for authentic *Mitdasein* as a positive lived relation of self-appropriation rather than a practice rooted in the removal of obstructions. Viewed through the lens of Huayan, that tension comprises a form of mental obstruction and shows a philosophical limitation in the conception of *Mitsein* or being-with-others. Huayan implies that human minds penetrate and thus know one another by virtue of the fact that noumenon pervades phenomena, even as each person interprets that interpenetrating awareness differently because noumenon does not exist separate from phenomena. The prospect of a non-obstructed embodiment of intersubjectivity, I hope to show, not only presupposes an essential lack of obstruction between persons but also requires the dissolution of a false sense of boundedness. Were the reality-realm not such that phenomena and noumenon do not interfere with one another, human persons would not be able to realize a non-obstructed perspective and non-conflictual modes of interaction. Focusing on the existential significance of non-obstruction, it can be said, following Chang, that

⁴ Ibid., 1-2.

⁵ Chang, *Buddhist Teaching*, x.

⁶ Ibid., 18-21.

⁷ Cleary, *Entry*, 96-109. A full explication would discuss the ten stages of enlightenment and the four realms of reality – the realms of phenomena (*shih*), of noumenon (*li*, the principle of emptiness), of the non-obstruction of noumenon and phenomena, and of the non-obstruction among phenomena. On Tu Shun's four realms or dharmadhātus and ten aspects, see Chang, *Buddhist Teaching*, 141-55 and Cleary, *ibid.*, 24-42, 56-59, 83-85, 91-107. On the ten stages, see Chang, *ibid.*, 34-47 and Cleary, *ibid.*, 3-9. On interpenetration and intercausality, see also Francis H. Cook, *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), chs. 4-6.

the practice of removing “all mental and spiritual” blockages leads to apprehension of the marvelous truth of Indra's net.⁸

The second implication cautions comparative scholars not to be overly energetic in characterizing a non-obstructed outlook as an experience of merging with the cosmos. While the first implication addresses a fastidious interest in demarcating one's self-existence from others, the second overcomes a fallacious tendency to deny difference and diversity in the name of interpenetration. In broaching the question concerning what integration into the great cosmic perspective of Huayan might mean for intersubjective relations, this paper proposes that a liberating *Mitdasein* only truly arises upon realization of a non-obstructed mental outlook. Like the lotus beneath the bodhisattva, the acquisition of this outlook shifts the “groundless ground” of one's existence from being centered in the back-and-forth hold of intersubjective dynamics to becoming buoyed by the cosmic reality of Indra's net. This marvelous Huayan vision informs us that nothing short of the Chan or Zen practice of realizing the inherent emptiness of all manner of self-identification can free us to live openly our persistently embodied lives.

I. A Critique of Self-Appropriation

It has long been remarked that Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, while advancing a provocative sketch, nevertheless offers an incomplete model of authentic being-with-others. It has fallen to his interpreters either to challenge Heidegger for his cursory treatment of human relations or to expand the proto-ethical aspects of *Being and Time*. Lawrence Vogel, in *The Fragile “We”*, perspicaciously demonstrated that there are three plausible interpretations of authentic existence to be found in *Sein und Zeit*. I mention two: “the existentialist” and “the historicist.”⁹ On the existentialist view, the authentic individual remains a “solitary, private hero who makes his own decisions without regard for the demands of a larger public order.”¹⁰ The historicist view, by contrast, emphasizes the fact that an authentic individual remains thoroughly ensconced in tradition and creatively appropriates possibilities from out of those conditions. Feminist analyses also fall along this fault line. Even given the turn to a hermeneutically, historically, and culturally embedded model of intersubjectivity, Heidegger's specific manner of conceptualizing authenticity as a non-relational moment of individuation – an existential praxis of self-appropriation – raises red flags for some feminists and for comparative philosophers.

On the historicist side, Lauren Freeman defends Heidegger's conceptual critique of the Cartesian subject because it “overturns” the idea that “the *I* or *ego* is an *internal* thing, isolated from an *external* world.” Heidegger, she argues, “rejects the subject as an enduring, self-identical substance” and develops a model of selfhood as “situated, self-critical, evolving, and most importantly . . . relational.”¹¹ The historicist view emphasizes that we are “defined and constituted by our relation to time, place, history, temporality, by our self-understanding.” As the

⁸ Chang, *Buddhist Teaching*, 4.

⁹ Lawrence Vogel, *The Fragile “We”: Ethical Implications of Heidegger's “Being and Time”* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press), 7. Early Heideggerian phenomenology arguably opens terrain for enriching ethics and moving beyond possessive conceptions of the individual. Lawrence J. Hatab demonstrates, for example, that attunement plays a significant role in ethical judgment in *Ethics and Finitude: Heideggerian Contributions to Moral Philosophy* (Lanham, MA: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000). Vogel's three readings walk us across this terrain.

¹⁰ Vogel, *ibid.*, 8.

¹¹ Lauren Freeman, “Reconsidering Relational Autonomy: A Feminist Approach to Selfhood and the Other in the Thinking of Martin Heidegger,” *Inquiry* 54, no. 4 (August 2011): 366.

products of dependencies on “parents or caregivers,” we define and comport ourselves through the values, traditions, and discourses inherited from others.¹² Freeman underscores Heidegger's claim that, because “Dasein ‘is’ essentially for the sake of Others,” there are authentic forms of “Being with one another understandingly.”¹³

Heidegger claims that *Mitsein* “implies the understanding of Others,” yet this point finds its fuller and non-conflicted articulation in Huayan.¹⁴ As Erin McCarthy argues, Heidegger's concept of *Mitdasein* retains a residual focus on a solitary self and fails to give “a full account of the inter-relational and embodied nature of being-in-the-world.”¹⁵ Despite the promise of Heidegger's insight, this focus introduces contrary elements into the discussion of authenticity. Based on a comparativist orientation, McCarthy turns to the Japanese philosopher, Tetsurō Watsuji, because he critiques Heidegger precisely for perpetuating the Western philosophical conception of the self as one “that possesses an identity that is intrinsic to it and is only contingently related to other human beings.” In contrast to such an historically embedded *yet discretely constituting self*, Watsuji articulates the view that “self is ‘between persons’” (*ningen*). He thus locates ethical transformations “precisely in the in-betweenness of person and person” dynamics.¹⁶

This subtle shift from a historical conception of relatively discrete selves-in-relation to an entirely co-dependent notion of *Mitdasein* challenges the foundational model of intersubjectivity in Heidegger and, most significantly, his manner of articulating the practical goal of authenticity as a lived ideal. The model of “betweenness” emphasized in McCarthy and Watsuji stands in keeping with the Buddhist idea of dependent co-origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). On this thorough conception of inter-relationality, decisions and dilemmas unfold precisely within the shifting networks of relations of persons. One's individuality emerges, dies, and reemerges within evolving and changing social relations because it is not distinct from these matrices. There is, then, no inherent tension between becoming authentically oneself and the everyday conditions of life.¹⁷

Contrary to Freeman's claim, a fundamental tension in the early Heidegger severs the connection between the death-analysis (non-relational individuation) and the analysis of historicity (inter-relationality), and it cannot be remedied on early Heideggerian turf. A resolution would require (a) the adoption of some perspective, like that of Huayan, that conceives inter-relationality in terms of a non-obstructed mutual penetration and (b) a radical critique of the model of self-appropriation as hermeneutically vicious. Rather than designate a contradiction in levels of analysis, these tensions emerge because of intrinsic limitations in Heidegger's views of authenticity and mineness (*Jemeinigkeit*).

The fracture—between the ontology of intersubjectivity and the praxis of self-appropriation—sparks McCarthy's and Vogel's evaluations. Each author shows that Heidegger

¹² Ibid., 369 and 370.

¹³ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John MacQuarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962) and *Sein und Zeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klosterman, 1977), H 123-24. H refers to the margin numbers.

¹⁴ Ibid., H 124.

¹⁵ Erin McCarthy, *Ethics Embodied: Rethinking Selfhood through Continental, Japanese, and Feminist Philosophies* (Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2010), 21.

¹⁶ All quotes are from McCarthy, *ibid.*, 13. See Watsuji Tetsurō, *Watsuji Tetsurō's Rinrigaku: Ethics in Japan*, trans. Yamamoto Seisaku and Robert E. Carter (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 9-15.

¹⁷ Alternatively, Mariana Ortega enriches Heidegger by articulating a multiplicitous view of self who dwells between-worlds in *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016).

never develops a positive conception of everyday ways of being-with-others. The dictatorship of the “they” (*das Man*) designates an ontic or existentially inauthentic mode of being-with-others in which each person abdicates responsibility to be thoughtful and instead follows the rot of fake news and readily falsifiable claims simply because others do. A tension arises, however, because Heidegger conceives authenticity as appropriation of self from out of the very nexus of inter-relationality in such a manner that he confounds inauthentic relations with inter-relationality as such. The result is that the individual stands related to others only in inauthenticity when she is not herself, while authenticity cannot be formed through a constructive engagement with others. McCarthy insightfully argues that, “[w]hereas for Watsuji being-with-others is part of the true nature of *ningen*, for Heidegger, being-with-others in the they hides the true nature of Da-sein—its individuality.”¹⁸

In parallel fashion, Vogel maintains that Heidegger's negativistic conception of everyday sociality proves deficient because it relegates “morality tout court to the domain of ‘the Anyone.’”¹⁹ The call of conscience pulls us not simply out of tranquilizing forms of everydayness but out of everydayness as such. On the one hand, anxiety before death signals that I must take up my own existence because flight from death-awareness tempts me to pawn off responsibility on others, on conventional morality, and on culturally inherited ideas. On the other hand, Heidegger tends to equate both conventional and post-conventional morality with inauthentic forms of being-with, Vogel argues. He thus misconceives authenticity as the individual's breaking wholesale with the purportedly dominating sway of *Mitsein*.²⁰

Some argue that Heidegger's conception of authenticity reflects a value-bias in that it seems to disallow productive usages of gossip and everyday speech. More vital for our purposes, however, is that this bias belies a more basic failure to articulate authentic being-with-others as a form of reconciliation to the ontological realities of conditioned existence. Heidegger drives a wedge between authentic self-becoming and the reality that life is co-conditioned, for the self is never other than as it arises co-dependent upon and conditioned by others. Conceptual attempts to thicken the historicist reading of the early account of authentic *Mitsein* do not resolve the ultimate dilemma, namely, that the very quest for authenticity through self-appropriation presupposes and compels one to build a boundary between self and other. Authenticity

¹⁸ McCarthy, *Ethics Embodied*, 21. See Michael Theunissen, *The Other: Studies in the Social Ontology of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Buber*, trans. Christopher Macann (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1984), 189-92. Gereon Kopf's traces the egological tendency in the tradition of phenomenology in *Beyond Personal Identity: Dōgen, Nishida, and a Phenomenology of No-Self* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), 83-123.

¹⁹ Vogel, *The Fragile “We”*, 14.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 18, cf. 15. This problem spawned political critique of Heidegger's *Existenzphilosophie* for advancing a decisionistic paradigm; that is, one that fails to locate authenticity within a social world of public accountability or to address the symbolic nature of all decisions and valuations. Additionally, I have argued that Heidegger transcribed his conception of authenticity in the *Rektoratesrede* into a form commensurate with the Germanic *masculine ethos* that ran from WWI to National Socialism and was documented by Klaus Theweleit. See Patricia J. Huntington, *Ecstatic Subjects, Utopia, and Recognition: Kristeva, Heidegger, Irigaray* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), ch. 2, 33-75; and Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*. Vol. 1. *Women, Floods, Bodies, History*, trans. Chris Turner, Stephen Conway, and Erica Carter (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). See also Reiner Schürmann, “Political Thinking in Heidegger,” *Social Research* 45 (Spring 1978): 191-221. Ernst Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970). Richard Wolin, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Northwestern University Press, 1973).

counterpoises the self not only to everyday forms of gossip and evasion but also to another authentically constituting self. The implication is that, by defining oneself over against, rather than within, a specific modality of self-other "between-ness," the self is conceived in partial abstraction from its own conditioned existence.

In Huayan and Chan terms, there are no fixed borders of self because phenomenal presencing is fluid, conditioned, and matrix-like. Connectedness is not between two discrete selves but denotes the arising of distinct nodes of perception within the nexus of forces and relations that develop. The power of McCarthy's critique rests on the fact that she shifts the ground model of inter-relationality away from a Heideggerian ontology of selves-in-relation and onto a Buddhistic-inflected notion of in-betweenness. Heidegger arguably succumbs to a category mistake by grounding the "non-relational" moment of individuation in a future-oriented temporal ontology rather than a here-and-now sense of co-dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) or related notions like Watsuji's in-betweenness. Although a fuller treatment would address these temporal matters, what can be argued here pertains to praxis: *Heidegger (mis)articulates the praxis of realizing authentic individuality as a heroic surmounting of the everyday in a futural reach toward death, rather than as an existential transformation within the here-and-now matrix of everyday sociality and modes of discourse, including messy phenomena like gossip and superficial talk.*

The death-analysis *bespeaks anxiety over inter-relational embeddedness as such* because it remains wedded to an unexamined idea of self-appropriation. Because co-dependent origination and fundamental ontology conceptualize interrelationality differently, they embrace forms of praxis that move in divergent directions: the appropriation of self and a deconstructive negation of self-constituting activities. From the standpoints of Chan, Zen, and Huayan, a genuine model of authentic praxis cannot rest on the task of becoming a self who mounts dread/angst and stares death down.²¹ Quite the contrary, Buddhism rejects such proclivities as temptations to the delusional desire for distinction. The very need to define the self proves misguided. This fallacious desire comprises the problem that Buddhism diagnoses; it is the stuff of *dukkha*, the cause of suffering. The I-maker (*ahamkara*) creates an obstructing boundary where "my" self begins and ends, a wall dividing me from you.²²

Although we exist as selves phenomenally, the idea of self is an abstraction that is rooted in "faulty reasoning" for two fundamental reasons. First, there is no unchanging and separate self, and, second, engendering a fixed idea of self begets greed or the sense of "I want" and "I must make something my own to have meaning."²³ So understood, the idea of a discrete, defined, and composite self refers not to the phenomenal reality of changing existence but rather to the mental constructs we practically invent and sustain. The feeling that I need to separate "my" self from conditioned existence engenders an erratic quest, a fake and not an authentic self. This quest tacitly projects an oppositional image of an authentic I over against inauthentic others. It is the alpha and omega of duality and divisiveness. In the words of Rupert Gethin,

²¹ David Chai's analysis of the differences between a Zhaungzian and Heideggerian view of death are instructive: "On Pillowing One's Skull: Zhuangzi and Heidegger on Death," *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, 11. No. 3 (2016): 483-500.

²² This analysis does not evaluate feminist conceptions of relational autonomy, yet Huayan challenges any philosophy that posits an inherent obstruction or divide between persons.

²³ Rupert Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 146-7.

[m]y continued grasping at self . . . sets my self over against others' selves. We all become rivals in the fruitless struggle of trying to find something in the universe which we can grasp and call 'mine'. Selves thus cause problems for all concerned, and the aim of Buddhism is therefore to realize selflessness, both metaphysically and ethically.²⁴

And that is precisely the source of a residual feeling of isolation, for it rests upon an obstructed mind-to-mind, self-to-other relation. Articulating authenticity as an illusory quest to mark out my distinction from others deprives the early Heidegger of a deepened and enriched understanding of *Mitdasein* or being-with-others.

II. The Cosmic Outlook of Non-Obstruction

“Buddhism is praxis,” Francis Cook intones. Since meditation and ethical conduct typically form the conduits of praxis, Huayan philosophy, with its great vision of cosmic interconnectedness, works like a “lure which attracts the aspirant to the practice which will presumably culminate in an existential, or experiential, validation of what was before only theory.”²⁵ The praxis of shedding mental constructs delivers one to ocean-mirror *samādhi* and the realization that one's awareness is commensurate with the entire universe. In spite of difficulties in defining *samādhi*, it is clear that Buddha-mind, though not “in essence different or isolated from any man's mind (*sic*)” is as vast as the universe.²⁶ Non-obstruction liberates us from the narrow, enclosed, and absolutized perceptual frame of “small ego.” Ocean-mirror *samādhi* extinguishes the raging “bondage of time, space, ego, desires, and clingings.”²⁷

In Huayan, two people are not merely historically and linguistically interrelated selves; each mind mutually contains and refracts the other. The glorious cosmic vision of worlds embracing worlds means that “little” human minds interpenetrate and know one another because they are never truly reducible to themselves alone.²⁸ The habits of one's personal mind do not mark the true border of one's aware existence. As depicted in the image of small worlds containing large worlds and large worlds containing small worlds, each little mind (or phenomenal locus of perception) is at root large mind (cosmic awareness or Buddha-mind). Each thus enjoys boundless interpenetrating awareness. Conceptually, it would be a mistake to idealize Buddha-mind (noumenon) and render it a transcendent substratum, as doing so would obscure the reality that noumenal awareness does not exist outside phenomena. Also mistaken, and arguably more pernicious, is the pervasive existential assumption that one's subjective mental patterns and world-horizon define the true scope of perceptual, affective, and mental outlook.

These two conceptual tendencies to idealize or blot out Buddha-mind are rooted in mistakes of lived practices. The nondual experience of a boundless, non-positional noumenal awareness can only be realized within a phenomenally positioned existence. Fastidious and anxious concern to grasp, defend, or assert one's empirical self produces delusion in that it locks one into the small world of a discrete and enclosed mental perspective. By contrast, the desire to merge with the universe produces a fantastical idealization that obliterates the reality of

²⁴ Ibid., 147.

²⁵ Cook, *Hua-yen Buddhism*, 109.

²⁶ Chang, *Buddhist Teaching*, 125.

²⁷ Ibid., 53.

²⁸ Ibid., 126.

phenomenal life. The Huayan understanding of the simultaneity of mutual containment and refraction dwells in the middle where ocean-mirror *samādhi* realizes boundless non-positional awareness from within a localized phenomenal and embodied consciousness. To realize Buddha-mind is not thus to merge into a vast monistic ocean of boundless awareness and lose concrete existence but rather to dissolve the illusion of sharp borders between inner and outer, no longer to be defined by the mere continuum of a set of habituated mental and affective states that erect falsifying lines of demarcation between you and me.²⁹

Buddha-mind, when actively realized, enables one to see beyond the limitations of an embodied and embedded perspective from its point of origination. A stream of personal memory, a specific vocabulary, and a reservoir of experiences may remain as points of reference for interpretation in *samādhi*. Yet because such mental and affective memories are no longer bound by a continuous and relatively fixed idea of self, they too become freed from the initial, selective, and highly bounded interpretation that a historical narrative of self ascribes to them. That is why the *Heart Sutra* can proclaim that even sensation, perception, memory, and consciousness are empty.³⁰ At times, habituated proclivities of mind and heart that cast a reductive hue on events – paranoid, romantic, skeptical – may rear their heads out of the once annulled karmic reservoir of habituated patterns of identification. Whether such proclivities point to simple re-inscriptions of memory or greater inclinations to re-reify local perspective, these require what Hee-Jin Kim calls “negotiation of the way”; that is, they must be operatively released and ever more penetratingly seen in their emptiness as energetic and spiritual blockages that threaten to reinstate the “old bag of bones” once taken as a distinct, continuous, and permanent sense of self. A vast difference nevertheless separates the art of negotiating such mind turns at ground zero from the reactive life that repeatedly circles round in its own reified world horizon. Not giving birth to a concept of “self” makes the very “universe” as we once knew it forever more vanish into the delusion that it is of a self-writ-large and a cosmos shrunk into the stingy scale of my mental projections.³¹

Ocean-mirror *samādhi* funds open and genuine intersubjective dynamics. Prior to becoming anchored in the great mirroring nature of the reality-realm, person-to-person interactions tend to be perceived reductively as a twofold intersubjective relation rather than a fourfold cosmic dynamic of simultaneous containment and refraction of minds.³² From the standpoint of clinging attachment, each little mind projects onto the mirror of another mind but sees itself and the other always circumscribed within its projected world-horizon. Two opposed perspectives, when set in dialogue across such self-anchored projections, may lead one to modify personal understandings, adjust horizons, enlarge affective mentalities, and inch the way toward correcting biases. Yet in the measure that a concept of “I” circumscribes and contains perspective, disputes will re-reify around the stubborn blockages of attachment at the outermost limit of each personal horizon, habitual biases will not dissolve at root, and refraction will not be

²⁹ Ibid., 121-40. See Kopf, *Beyond Personal Identity*, 98.

³⁰ “*Evam eva vedana sanjna sanskara vijñanam*” in *The Heart Sutra: The Womb of Buddhas*, trans. Red Pine (Washington, D.C.: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2004), 86.

³¹ Hee-Jin Kim, *Dōgen on Meditation and Thinking: A Reflection on His View of Zen* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 1-2. See also *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*, trans. Norman Waddell and Masao Abe (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002) and *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*, trans. Thomas Cleary (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986).

³² Cleary, *Entry*, 126. Chang discusses the fourfold image of the monk and the disciple in *Buddhist Teaching*, 126.

lived freely in the true measure that it reveals us to ourselves from out of nothingness, that is, the ground zero of our fallacious habituated patterns of self-and-world construction.

Full and free refraction cannot occur, as this would reveal the highly specific and biased nature of one's attachments to self and projected world-horizons. Nor will the beauteous mirroring of others from out of their own ground be disclosed. Only when anchored in the Great Hall of Mirrors can we begin the lucid study of the illusory tendencies of mind-heart and the freeing of others from our falsely contrarian mental constructs. From the ground zero praxis of annulling self-and-world construction, we begin to apprehend the other not merely as "I" see them but as refracted by the cosmos, as a three-dimensional being whose insights and struggles hold their own kernel of validity and illuminate mine. This noumenal reach of mind alleviates the one-dimensionality of the localized view and sets the phenomenal dynamics of self-other relations of difference in proper light.

Entry into the "inconceivable" mirroring nature of reality offers a more apt perspective for articulating the dynamics of an authentic *Mitdasein* than Heidegger's existentialist view because it rests upon an acute sense of the non-obstructed nature of inter-relationality. The ground zero perspective discloses, first, there is no inherent obstruction between lives at a noumenal level. Each local view, when rounded out and transformed by *samādhi*, gives perspective on the ultimate nature of the reality that unfolds among people. Huayan claims, secondly, that there is no intrinsic obstruction between phenomena. This claim may seem counterfactual, given the thick embodied realities of sexed, gendered, racialized, historical, cultural, and linguistic lives. But it cautions that I might nurture a diametrically opposed view to my current perspective if I occupied other conditions. It unravels the confining attitude that I could never comprehend viewpoints I find utterly distasteful. Even more pointedly, the non-obstruction of phenomena insinuates that I likely indulge, admittedly in variable aspect, some of the attitudes and ideas I hate or reject in the alter, even as my broader stance seems 180 degrees antithetical to the other. That minds contain one another suggests that a simple and complete diametrical opposition does not exist because human persons, regarded in a three-dimensional view, are never reduced to the confused attitudes or totalizing absolutizations they project as the horizon of life. Right intuition, the seed of valid insight, or want of sound understanding may underlie the mistaken conclusions and twisted worlds we weave out of them, yet reification of a local "me" perspective prevents one from seeing nondifference and splits worlds apart.

Without detailing these epistemological considerations and the intricate dynamics of self-alter perceptions, it is important to bear in mind two points. First, obstruction emerges because we reify local perspectives. The non-obstruction of phenomena thus becomes obscured, and abstraction from noumenal non-interference results. Second, the capacity to live out of a free, open, and nonobstructed outlook eliminates all baseline senses of obstruction, though it does not remove social and political fights over values and forms of governance. This embrace of Huayan does not imply the latter, even as it highlights the importance of a dramatic realization of a non-obstructed being-with-others. The genuine ground zero of interdependent existence shows that all forms of appropriation and self-constitution stem from mental obstructions; that is, from the falsifying supposition that minds do not already know connection with one another (noumenon pervades phenomena) and that distinction must be built, created, and asserted (as if phenomenal existence erected a noumenal divide that must be bridged). Yet each – containment and distinction – manifests naturally as part of the inter-relational fabric of being.

III. A Faulty View of the Dynamics of *Mitdasein*

In its general articulation in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger's model of authenticity remains descriptively false, I wish to claim, even in the richest and most productive interpretation that authenticity restores genuine solicitude with others.³³ Heidegger's critical point can be embraced, viz., that to adopt the average, everyday viewpoints that hold currency (the "they") is neither to see nor to exist thoughtfully. Still, three aspects of Heidegger's analysis of authenticity confine "being-with-others" to a problematic twofold "discrete selves-in-relation" perspective. These are the quest for distance, the counter-pull, and the simple equation of illusion with *das Man*. Before proceeding, let me return to Freeman's rich view. In her effort to embrace the spirit of Heidegger's inter-relational understanding of Dasein, Freeman notes "a few rare and often neglected passages"³⁴ in the 1928 essay, "On the Essence of Ground": "And only being able to listen into the distance awakens Dasein as a self to the response of the other Dasein in whose company [*Mitsein*] it can surrender its I-ness so as to attain itself as an authentic self."³⁵ Such wonderful passages merit thought, yet they speak a language quite different than that of 1927 critiqued by Vogel and McCarthy. Losing I-ness marks out a dramatically different form of praxis than appropriating the self. A fuller turn in Heidegger to the language of *Gelassenheit* does not appear until 1942 after his Nietzsche lectures, when he examines the association of non-willing with releasement from the projective nature of Dasein's subjectivity. Without realizing it, Freeman anticipates, but does not conceptualize, this critique of the model of appropriation and an alternative view of inter-relationality.

Allow me, then, to highlight three questionable aspects of authenticity as articulated in 1927. The first is distance. Heidegger takes pains to convey that the critique of *das Man* does not deny the ontological reality of interrelatedness but only rejects one mode of interrelatedness. Inauthenticity rests upon anxious concern over "the way one differs from" others. By fastidiously measuring oneself by others, one feels that one's uniqueness is "taken away by the others." On this model, the proper distanciality that should mark off *Jemeingkeit* – that one's existence is one's own – seems to be "levelled down" by *das Man*.³⁶ Inauthenticity expresses a dynamic mode of self-evasion. While casting oneself into the tranquilizing hustle of busy-ness, one evades choice; by indulging an interminable self-dissection, one destroys the ability to accept the finitude of one's decisions. A turbulence, an inquietude, a form of motion undoes the self and impedes action.³⁷ Below I elucidate how this descriptive analysis, while immensely compelling, mischaracterizes the process of realizing a liberating *Mitdasein*.

Authenticity requires, secondly, a counter-pull back from conventional modes of interaction to realizing my own self. Only by projecting upon the end of all ends, death, can one's horizon of interpretation mirror one in such a manner that one can no longer hide behind superficial conventions. This provocative and promising analysis, nevertheless, does not break through to a richer conception of the great mirroring universe beyond the projective horizons of

³³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, H 297-98.

³⁴ Freeman, "Reconstructing Relational Autonomy," 370.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 371. Heidegger, "On the Essence of Ground" in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 135.

³⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, H 126-28.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, H 178; cf. "Everyone is the other, and no one is himself," H 127-28.

intentionality, even as it diagnoses a failure, in conventional modalities of interaction, to question the sources of one's projected horizons of world. The Huayan notion of mutual penetration shows that our minds and hearts are not essentially caught in world-horizonal projections. The battle is not, thus, to project upon and surmount death in order to liberate self-becoming from the coercive force of cultural conventions but instead to relinquish projection and therewith a woefully reductive sense of being-with-others.

Most encompassing is the third element: illusion is equated with self-evasion, though its source is *das Man* or a conventional way of embodying self-other relations. In one of the more suggestive passages of *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger articulates the "non-relational" moment of individuation as being "released from the Illusions of the 'they.'"³⁸ Death-awareness breaks the cowardice promoted by the "they" and it does so by "anticipating" the certain yet indeterminate nature of death. Breaking with conventionally-reinforced patterns of perception, speech, and interaction dispels the fastidiousness of anxiously measuring oneself according to worldly determinations because there is no absolute measure for one's existence.³⁹ This important analysis of illusion aspires to clarify that breaking with *das Man* does not annul sociality but rather a particular conventional form of it. Yet here is the difficulty: what if the authentic self that one longs to become proves equally illusory as the "they"? What if seeking to become authentic creates an artificial distance between self and other? What if the way out of the sway of conventional habits does not lead through a shattering counter-pull but involves simply waking up? What if a liberating *Mitsein* arises not through appropriation but rather by intensifying the feeling of being oppressed by conventional patterns until the realization dawns that one is not essentially caught and that everydayness need not debilitate?

Heidegger theorizes the illusions of *das Man* but not those of self-existence.⁴⁰ However close he comes to articulating the erratic tendency to merge with everyday forms of *Mitsein*, Heidegger does not isolate clinging, attachment, and self-identification as root causes of evasion. In *Sein und Zeit*, illusions stem from the effects of socialization and the shallowness of everyday discourses. Although this claim is not without validity, it remains partial. The rich description of the struggle with immersion in conventional perspectives remains skewed because the very conception of authenticity rests upon the limited idea of *Jemeinigkeit*, that existence is my own, a position heartily contested by Huayan and most all varieties of Buddhism. If mutual containment is true, then I neither own my nor anyone else's mind. Heidegger clearly states that Dasein gets bogged down in an entanglement with "itself."⁴¹ Yet because his articulation of self-evasion displaces the source of turbulence solely onto conventional forms of interaction, it overlooks self-becoming as a cause of agitation. The Buddhist perspective alternatively proposes that the desire to be this rather than that kind of self creates friction, even though conditioned existence need not cause turbulence. *Dukkha* or anxiety and turbulence are symptomatic of that desire because it sets one at odds with existence.

Huayan counsels that both the desire to evade self and the desire to stand on my own (*Jemeinigkeit*) can take root in reified conceptions of self. Both a relational and a non-relational orientation can feed self-identification. One difficulty, then, with Heidegger's model of authenticity is that it fails to diagnose the illusions of self-evasion as reifications of mental

³⁸ Ibid., H 266-67.

³⁹ Ibid., H 294 and 263 respectively.

⁴⁰ Ibid., H 298.

⁴¹ Ibid., H 178-79.

projection. *Das Man* – the “they” – is itself a reified view of being-with. This is not to say that people do not behave evasively or hide behind group formations. Everyday modes of sociality may deserve critique as a phenomenon of group soup, for the manipulative force of group think has its reality; nevertheless, to experience those manipulations as *threatening* is already to fall prey to attachment and a projected construction of “I.” This feeling forms a displacement. Rather than diagnose self-attachment, it projectively displaces the very anxiety over an idea of self onto “they” as if “they-think” could hold force were I not identified with a “threatened self.” This perspective cloaks the reality that little minds “always already” interpenetrate one another. There is no pulling back from or out of that factual origination; there is only waking up to the misconstrued ways we perceive, feel, and undergo co-conditioned existence as if it were inherently conflictual. Such misconstruals reduce being-with to the psychological dynamics of intersubjective entanglements. This distorting and anxiety-driven lens, which generates walls of obstruction, dissolves on pain of seeing obstructions for the illusions that they are.

All three elements in Heidegger's analysis – the quest to distance oneself from others rather than greet others in freedom, the felt-need for a counter-pull rather than an examination of the illusory threatened self, and the wedding of illusion to everydayness rather than an entanglement rooted in attachment – falsify inter-relationality and becloud the great fourfold reality-realm. Whatever the rigors and challenges may be of contending with the closed horizons of others, people are neither for nor against me at root, as can be apprehended in the nondual mirror of reality.⁴² The anxious need for a counter-pull bespeaks a failure to diagnose the problem within one's mental orientation rather than project an obstruction onto everyday conditions. Others may be deluded but this need not define me. Fastidiousness is simply an illusory and unnecessary erratic feeling toward the other. The other, even when attached, refracts my existence *naturally* at a noumenal level through no manipulative effort but out of ocean-mirror *samādhi*. Awareness of this refracting process proves vital to ongoing liberation. However divergent in social, political, or moral orientation, an authentic “round-outlook” does not imprison one in a one-dimensional reification of being for or against another, as if there were an inherent obstruction of one mind to another from which I must save myself.

In *Sein und Zeit* there is no adequate consideration of the prospect that “I” is a fabrication of even the projection upon death, the outermost possibility not to be outstripped. Anxiety is not grounded in a failure to appropriate possibility fully but instead proves symptomatic of the deep suspicion that “I” do not exist as I imagine. What I evade is not, as Heidegger holds, standing on my own amidst everyday practices but rather releasing the felt-need for a concept of self. That “I am not I” is not, as some existentialists hold, a call to make myself. It points to the prospect that the added feeling of “I” need not attach to existence in the face of others.⁴³ The whole point of Zen – the practice of Huayan – is to move forward without such a concept of self. The problem is precisely to awaken from a tranquilized and immediate immersion in the historically conditioned perspectives I have adopted but without referring thoughtful existence back to a newly minted idea of self. This is the force of the claim that there is no self outside its manifest forms of conditioned and interdependent arising, no wave other than the ocean.

⁴² Heidegger's rich descriptions of death-awareness capture sound aspects of the struggle to live truly, yet resoluteness does not lead to awareness of the inherent emptiness of the self (ibid., H 297).

⁴³ Ibid., H 118: “others” are those from whom one does not stand out.

Heidegger wants aware living in transparency to the groundless ground of existence. There is a decisive difference between a life lived by blind adherence to conventional dictates and the supreme effort to form a self – a perspective, a set of attitudes, a stance in the world, and an ethic – based on actively taking critical distance on the situated character of life. Self-appropriation may be said to break through a first layer of the vicious hermeneutic circle of adhering to what others say and do, to moral conventionalism, and to a set of social pressures. Huayan, however, shows that, if we are to arrive at a transparent relation to existence, it is necessary even to relinquish the idea that I create the self. The discovery of groundlessness points to the need for a second realization that negates the new anxieties born out of artificial forms of distancing self from others. Detachment from the vicious hermeneutic and anxiety-based circle dispels any intrinsically oppositional view of self-other mind projections.

One need not begin in anxious quest of self; one can begin by dissolving any conception of self, whether grasped as relational or as non-relational. Huayan extends the conception of co-dependent origination – that no self subsists in itself alone – to the practical realization that I do not own a self or my mind. (My) mind is not neatly circumscribed by impermeable interior borders and in fact does not belong to me simpliciter; that existence is not mine but something far greater, a dance of cosmic proportion. The self in quest of authentic appropriation equally as the "they" reflect illusory forms of reification of mind-projections.

IV. Non-Obstruction as Neither Distancing Nor Merging

Huayan literature tends to conceive ocean-mirror *samādhi* as a form of merging with the cosmos. As significant as it is to critique Heidegger for misconstruing authenticity as a distancing and self-constituting praxis, it proves equally vital to correct the misconception that realizing Buddha-mind prizes a transcendental and mystical union with the universe at the expense of the phenomenal, embodied, and interdependent nature of life. There are sound and intricate reasons why translations of Huayan sources, like those by Chang and Cleary, employ the language of merging to describe *samādhi*; and why Carter uses it in his explication of Watsuji's notion of in-betweenness. The language of merging captures a potent aspect of the ontology of interdependence, namely, the identity or nondifference of noumenon and phenomena. Chang thus affirms that "all dharmas are able to merge in the great Dharmadhātu."⁴⁴ Explicating Tu Shun's "Cessation and Contemplation in the Practice of the Five Doctrines" (*Wu Chiao Chih Kuan*), he punctuates "the mutual-merging aspect of the void and the existent," insight into which proves efficacious for detachment.⁴⁵ In his discussion of Tu Shun, Cleary testifies to the transformative power of allowing two views of truth – the relative existence of phenomena and their ultimate emptiness – to "merge without interference."⁴⁶ Nevertheless, when applied to the dynamics of intersubjectivity, the language of merging all too readily misconstrues the nondual nature of inter-relationality and mischaracterizes authentic forms of praxis.

Since "discriminating awareness cannot exist without the whole basic awareness underlying it," Huayan subscribes to the view that we can and do understand one another.⁴⁷ The mutual penetration of mind-hearts does not, however, imply that I know and experience your mind as you interpret yourself, even as it articulates the intuitive and sensitive ways that human

⁴⁴ Chang, *Buddhist Teaching*, 51.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁴⁶ Cleary, *Entry*, 64.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

persons do know, see, and feel one another. That awareness is boundless expresses a certain transparency of minds and the prospect that some people in whom intuitive or prophetic capacities are highly evolved may enjoy a pronounced sense of that transparency with other minds. Rather than think *Mitdasein* in terms of existential struggles with groundlessness, Huayan directs us to reconfigure the dilemmas of intersubjectivity as rooted in dualistic delusions. Erratic tendencies to forge connection or assert distance can thus be treated as reactions of vulnerability occasioned, though not necessitated, by mind-to-mind interpenetration.

Gendered dispositions could exemplify this way of rethinking intersubjective dynamics. On an existential spectrum of habituated patterns of embodiment, "relationality" denotes a dispositional orientation that historically has been associated with women's proclivity for making context-sensitive moral judgments but also for caring for others to the neglect of self. The non-relational or autonomous disposition, by contrast, has defined a masculinist orientation to self-assertion. Notably, as Rita Gross puts it in *Buddhism After Patriarchy*, the feminine orientation toward self-effacement is "just a style of ego different from [the masculine disposition toward] self-aggrandizement."⁴⁸ Thought in Huayan terms, the twin impulses to protect the borders of my mind and to rush headlong into mergence with another mind can be understood as confused responses to interpenetration. The former falsely construes another mind's way of organizing the universe as a threat to my own. The latter, romantic instinct to go wild over an intuited transparency implicitly strives to annihilate the phenomenal reality of self. Dissolution of self-attachment cannot result from the compulsive desire to merge with the cosmos or the universe of another mind. Notably, the desire to do away with oneself, Buddhism has long counseled, does not eliminate but only fortifies self-identification in a negativistic modality. The self that wants to do away with itself, equally as the self that wants to be the center of the universe, does not understand that it is empty of inherent being (noumenally).

In his critique of existentialist models of appropriation, Carter proposes an alternative, Buddhist-inflected view of authenticity but he characterizes it as "a nondualistic merging of self and other" that opens the person up to "a sense of relatedness—intimate relatedness—with a greater whole, whether it be that of people in love or that of a family, group, nation, or even some sense of cosmic consciousness."⁴⁹ By speaking of merging upon dissolution of attachment to an overly individualistic and dualistic perspective, Carter's language threatens to undermine the sense of the nondual he seeks to express. Such comments could easily mislead because the notion of merging evokes a desire for an order of union that obscures the real nature of interconnectedness and the fact that connectedness already obtains. Self and other may *feel as though* they "merge" in the sense that one awakens to mutual penetration and loses the false perspective of being two neatly discrete and enclosed mental spaces that we call selves. The experience of moving from self-isolation to nondual mutual containment is not one of loss of separation so much as the realization that dualistic separation was a delusion. The initial feeling of merging retains far too much of the force of the falsified perspective that one is losing. Realization is of what is and naturally occurs, viz., noumenal interpenetration in and as phenomenal differentiation.

Two senses of merging must, then, be clearly distinguished. For awakening from the delusion of discrete separateness to experience the joys of nondual interpenetration does not

⁴⁸ Rita M. Gross, *Buddhism After Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis, and Reconstruction of Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993), 162.

⁴⁹ McCarthy, *Ethics Embodied*, 17-18. Carter, "Interpretive Essay," 334.

involve a destructive rush to blot out the phenomenal self. The nondual experience of mutual penetration supports balanced interactions between persons because it removes cause for agitation. It extinguishes the squeamish fear of proximity and the fastidious need for distance. Minds may anticipate one another. One may intuit another's unspoken secrets or see what another cannot see. This level of sensitive, intuitive connectedness finds no obstruction and forms a natural part of the Great Hall of Mirrors. Anxieties over protecting and hiding interiority can give way as active inherence in the cosmic mirroring process progressively unfolds. Even the desire to steal from others what rightly falls to the purview of their minds and hearts can be laid to rest as competition to patrol and lay claim to egoic perspectives subsides. The cosmological reality of mutual containment holds the gift of a genuine other-orientation, for only in that freedom from anxiety that knows no ultimate separation, no principled need to withhold, no erratic desire to protect, no competitive theft of your phenomenal sensibilities does right disposition arise. Like the bodhisattva floating on the lotus, dwelling on the sea of cosmic interconnection supports action tempered to the other without obstruction.

Proximity, undergone as an intrinsic feature of co-dependent arising, does not obliterate difference. Mutual penetration eludes capture in strict boundaries of self and other. Like the resonance of sound that defies boundaries of inside and outside, mutual penetration depicts the experience of being "within" the other while not being the other and the other being "within" though she exists beyond oneself. On the basis of abiding in that uncreated reality, one would not pretend to inhabit the other's existence as she does herself, no matter how intimately two minds suffuse and resonate within one another, interpenetrate without clear lines of demarcation, and arouse feelings, insights, and shifts in mental and emotional bearing.

We can set the confounded "relational desire to rescue other people in the name of love in this context. For such an inter-suffusing of minds and hearts does not necessitate the dubious "relational" act of appropriating the other's emotional and psychological pain (*dukkha*) as if it were one's own. This gesture stems from self-identification and carries its own aggrandizing shadow. One may literally feel another's pain as part of pure co-dependent arising; one may glimpse or sense it, yet the additive creation of an extra feeling of being the "I" who carries and must process or alleviate the other's pain does not infect and destroy the mutuality of penetration. Nor would there be a principled refusal to assist the other as if doing so would detract from who I am or want to become. For I "am" only in co-conditioned arising. The dynamic of assistance – the when, how, and whether – would not succumb to the twin illusory demands to assume false burden or withhold stubbornly. One could avail oneself fully without fear. For to allow the heart to beat to cosmic sway is to go when bidden, to retreat when timely, to feel with and for the other while mirrored by the painful yet pellucid clarity that it lies not within one's power to rescue the other from delusion and unnecessary suffering.

Non-obstruction rests on willingness to allow a free interpenetration of minds without adopting an artificial distance but also without a destructive and unnatural merging. The reality of interpenetration initiates an amazing yet courageous process of apprehending the baseline falsities of one's own mental proclivities in the mirror of the other; it fosters the ability to see and be patient with the disease of self-identification in wildly divergent patterns of perceptual and affective turns of mind. The dynamics of collapsing into and merging with the needs of the other (the rescue mission) or those of carrying the world alone (the Atlas syndrome) dissolve as subtle but erratic urges to create a construct of self are persistently laid to rest. The echoes of these antithetical urges – to forge relational care and assert an unconditioned freedom – may sound in the non-obstructed manifestations of intimacy and distinction. But a liberating intimacy rests

upon no sense of lack. The Mahāyāna understanding of the great marvel of the cosmos is not first a move to speculative abstraction, as it seems at times in Huayan literature. The beckoning allure of the Great Hall of Mirrors, the inducement of Indra's Net, and the appeal of the kaleidoscopic nature of the multi-universe issue what proves to be a serious invitation to dispel fractious obstructions conceptually and existentially. For that is the price for realizing the sustaining joys of living life with others as it arises – always conditioned, ever changing, and rigorously challenging – but beyond obstruction.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, Theodor W. *The Jargon of Authenticity*. Translated by Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- Carter, Robert E. "Interpretive Essay: Strands of Influence." In *Watsuji Tetsurō's Rinrigaku: Ethics in Japan*, 325-54.
- Chai, David. "On Pillowing One's Skull: Zhuangzi and Heidegger on Death." *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, 11, no. 3 (2016): 483-500.
- Chang, Garma C. C. *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa Yen Buddhism*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991.
- Cleary, Thomas. *Entry Into the Inconceivable: An Introduction to Hua-yen Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983.
- Cook, Francis H. *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977.
- Dōgen. *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*. Translated by Norman Waddell and Masao Abe. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.
- _____. *Shōbōgenzō: Zen Essays by Dōgen*. Translated by Thomas Cleary. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.
- Freeman, Lauren. "Reconsidering Relational Autonomy: A Feminist Approach to Selfhood and the Other in the Thinking of Martin Heidegger." *Inquiry* 54, no. 4 (August 2011): 361-83.
- Gethin, Rupert. *The Foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Gross, Rita M. *Buddhism After Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis, and Reconstruction of Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York, 1993.
- Hatab, Lawrence J. *Ethics and Finitude: Heideggerian Contributions to Moral Philosophy*. Lanham, MA: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000.
- The Heart Sutra: The Womb of Buddhas*. Translated by Red Pine. Washington, D.C.: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2004.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.
- _____. "On the Essence of Ground." In *Pathmarks*, 97-135. Edited by William McNeill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- _____. *Sein und Zeit*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klosterman, 1977.
- Huntington, Patricia J. *Ecstatic Subjects, Utopia, and Recognition: Kristeva, Heidegger, Irigaray*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.
- Kasulis, Thomas P. *Intimacy or Integrity: Philosophy and Cultural Difference*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002.
- Kim, Hee-Jin. *Dōgen on Meditation and Thinking: A Reflection on His View of Zen*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007.
- Kopf, Gereon. *Beyond Personal Identity: Dōgen, Nishida, and a Phenomenology of No-Self*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001.
- McCarthy, Erin. *Ethics Embodied: Rethinking Selfhood through Continental, Japanese, and Feminist Philosophies*. Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2010.
- Ortega, Mariana. *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016.
- Schürmann, Reiner. "Political Thinking in Heidegger." *Social Research* 45 (Spring 1978): 191-221.

- Theweleit, Klaus. *Male Fantasies*. Vol. 1. *Women, Floods, Bodies, History*. Translated by Chris Turner, Stephen Conway, and Erica Carter. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
- Theunissen, Michael. *The Other: Studies in the Social Ontology of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Buber*. Translated by Christopher Macann. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1984.
- Tugendhat, Ernst. *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970.
- Vogel, Lawrence. *The Fragile "We": Ethical Implications of Heidegger's "Being and Time"*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1994.
- Watsuji, Tetsurō. *Watsuji Tetsurō's Rinrigaku: Ethics in Japan*. Translated by Yamamoto Seisaku and Robert E. Carter. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Wolin, Richard. *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.