1. Buddhism in its Northern, or Mahayana, form aims at and claims to reach an experience of oneness with all things. But this form of Buddhism does not offer an explicit metaphysical alternative to the theistic view of the all-inclusive reality; rather, it refuses to rationalize what is given in "satori," or enlightenment, being an intuitionism, not an explicit account of the whole. Buddhism is more a renunciation of theorizing than a theoretical rival to theism. The only clear-cut metaphysical theory in Buddhism is its analysis of "substance" into unit events or momentary states.

2. As for the relation of Buddhism to my kind of metaphysics, there are striking similarities as well as differences. So far as the similarities are concerned, the most important are: (1) the analysis of concretes as most fundamentally events, and of change, accordingly, as consisting in successive creation of new concretes rather than in successive states of old ones; (2) the attenuation, accordingly, both of the identity of, and of the nonidentity between, persons and things, which is significant for the whole question of motivation and of the relations between self-interest and altruism; (3) the inclusion of the entire cosmos in the generalized altruism, of which (self-interested) regard for self and (altruistic) regard for others are both special cases; (4) interpretation of the ultimate value as "peace" (or "nirvana"), which then finds expression in such generalized altruism or love; and (5) the rejection of materialism and dualism in favor of some form of idealism or, alternatively, of a strictly transcendental metaphysics beyond all forms of categorial metaphysics, idealistic as well as materialistic and dualistic.

3. So far as the differences are concerned, the most important is that between an analysis of the relations between concretes, i.e., events, as symmetrical—whether symmetrical independence as in the case of the extreme pluralism of Theravada Buddhism or symmetrical interdependence as in the case of the extreme monism of Mahayana Buddhism—and an analysis of the relations

between events as asymmetrical, in that events include their predecessors, their relations to which are constitutive of them as including but not of their predecessors as being included. Thus, in my view, "time's arrow" is much more sharply apparent, and the world hangs together through the one-way or nonmutual, nonsymmetrical relation of inheritance through objectification. The difference from Buddhism is not extreme, however, because, while relations to successors are not constitutive of events as relations to predecessors are, it is nevertheless the essence of an event that it will have some successors having constitutive relations to it. The class of "successors of event a" cannot be completely empty, even though it is nothing to a just what members of the class actually occur. On the other hand, b as a member of this class requires not merely that the class "predecessors of event b" not be completely empty, but just those events that in fact already occurred, including a. Ignoring this distinction between an event's general and indefinite requirement of successors and its special and definite requirement of predecessors, we can say that, on my view, also, there is a symmetrical relation between future and past.

4. There is, of course, the further difference that Buddhism is not, or, at least, does not appear to be, theistic, whereas my view is. But allowing that Buddhism is not explicitly atheistic or naturalistic and, therefore, does not offer a metaphysical alternative to my kind of neoclassical theism, one may say that the truth implicitly grasped in praxis, in achieving "peace" or "nirvana," can be explicitly formulated in theory only by something like this kind of theism. If the only way to explain theoretically why the passing moment is not simply "a passing whiff of insignificance" is by an understanding of God as the universal individual to whom every passing moment makes an abiding difference, then either Buddhism is implicitly theistic and should become so explicitly if it is to claim to be theoretically as well as practically adequate, or else its affirmations of the abiding

significance of achieving enlightenment must be allowed to be utterly groundless and arbitrary. After all, if the one and only metaphysical truth is that all things are impermanent, then all achievement, including becoming enlightened and working for the enlightenment of others, is vain. If this applies with obvious force to Theravada Buddhism, with its extreme pluralism, does it not also apply to Mahayana Buddhism, with its extreme monism—somewhat in the way in which it applies to classical theism and classical pantheism?

5. Perhaps the differences regarding both God and the asymmetry of time have to do with a Western bias toward a positive valuation of ordinary human life in the world as contrasted to an Eastern tendency to disvalue it. In any event, "peace" in my view may be the highest value, but it is certainly not the only value. And while love is, in one sense, indiscriminate, in that it includes all alike, it is, in another sense, discriminating, in that action on the basis of love takes account of the differences between things and is not indifferent toward them.

Ad 1 and 4: whether Buddhism is an intuitionism that does not offer an explicit metaphysical alternative is, perhaps, questionable. There are forms of Mahayana Buddhism, certainly (such as Abe's, for instance), where the nontheistic meaning of Buddhism is explicitly claimed and asserted (cf. *Zen and Western Thought*: 157). In fact, if it is true that one of the essential claims of Buddhism is that the "truth of interdependence must be strictly applied to everything whatsoever without exception" (153), then Buddhism is essentially atheistic—as much so, indeed, as any empiricism that would insist upon the universal applicability without exception of the principle of factual falsifiability as the principle of cognitive meaningfulness. Thus the situation seems to be: whether or not Buddhism is positively nontheistic (in the sense of explicitly asserting its nontheism), it is evidently negatively so (in the sense of not explicitly asserting theism). Therefore, while certain of its claims—e.g., about the significance of

attaining enlightenment and of acting for the attainment of enlightenment by all others—may imply, or, at least, seem to theists to imply, theism, it either does not explicitly assert theism (and, therefore, is insofar incomplete), or else it explicitly asserts nontheism (and, therefore, is insofar self-inconsistent, its explicit assertion of nontheism contradicting the Atheism that other of its assertions necessarily imply). In Abe's case, at least, there appears to be no reluctance to rationalize or spell out the metaphysical implications of satori. The difficulty is, rather, that his explicitly nontheistic, not to say atheistic, metaphysics of universal impermanence, which, following Dogan, he asserts to be identical with Buddha-nature, seems incapable in principle of accounting for, indeed, outright to contradict, the positive significance he attributes both to attaining enlightenment and to historical action the ulterior purpose of which is to help others to attain it, too. In this respect, one's response to Abe's Buddhism must be similar to one's response to Camus' existentialism or to Dewey's naturalistic humanism (insofar as one disregards his occasional comments about the whole, etc.).

1. In Hartshorne's view, Mahayana Buddhism often seems close to Advaita Vedanta, i.e., "Sankara's view that the highest reality is not like a person loving other persons, but is entirely beyond plurality and relationships, being nontemporal, nonspatial, untroubled pure bliss" ("Theism in Asian and Western Thought": 401). Thus he naturally draws a comparison between a Chinese Buddhist thinker like Fa Tsang of the Hua Yen school and Western thinkers such as Spinoza and Bradley (cf., e.g., "'Emptiness' and Fullness in Asiatic and Western Thought": 412 f.; "Theism in Asian and Western Thought": 404). In this, he seems to be guided by Tscherbatsky's view, according to which while "the Hinayana or Theravada doctrine was a radical pluralism, the Mahayana [was] an equally radical monism" ("'Emptiness'," etc.: 416); and he can speak of "the extreme pluralism of the Theravada and the extreme monism of the Hua-yen doctrine of universal interdependence" ("Theism," etc.: 408).

2. Even so, Hartshorne recognizes a difference between Fa Tsang's kind of monism and Bradley's insofar as the first is merely an implicit denial of the reality of relations, while the second explicitly denies their reality. While Bradley denies the reality of relations together, Fa Tsang merely implies it by asserting the universal interdependence of each thing with every other ("'Emptiness'," etc." 418 f.). Thus while Fa Tsang's view that all relations are internal or constitutive is "a monism as extreme as a monism can be in terms of the internality—externality contrast," Bradley's view is, or at least seems to be, yet more extreme because it denies relations altogether." The only way to be, or at least seem to be, more extreme is to say, with Bradley, that really there are no relations because there are no terms but only the undifferentiated Reality, of which diversity is mere appearance, leaving the apparent relation of reality to appearance as a riddle. Sometimes Mahayana Buddhists say this, too. And in my opinion there is no straightforward conceptual distinction between unqualified internality of relations

and their denial as well. . . . If everything is in everything, then all distinction among things is distortion. Each thing has the same content as every other thing, namely the totality of reality" (413).

3. But now fully granting Hartshorne's point that the distinction between Fa Tsang's position, on the one hand, and Bradley's on the other, may be merely verbal, or, in any event, not straightforwardly conceptual, I still wonder whether the difference he recognizes is not suggestive of a somewhat different interpretation of the relation between Mahayana Buddhism, on the one hand, and Vedantism, on the other. Instead of thinking of Mahayana Buddhism as monistic in the sense in which Vedanta is, why not think of it as pluralistic in the same, or corresponding, paradoxical, not to say, self-contradictory, way? Whereas for Vedantism, there is a whole without real parts, anything that could be reckoned a part being "appearance" and not reality, for Mahayana Buddhism, there are parts without a whole, the only thing that could be reckoned as a whole being the boundless "emptiness" in which everything is in everything else and thus has the same content, namely, the totality of reality. One thing that commends this interpretation to me is that the riddle of the apparent relation of things to emptiness in Mahayana Buddhism seems to be the exact counterpart of the riddle of the apparent relation of reality to appearance in Vedantism. "Emptiness," like "appearance," seems to designate a reality alongside and distinguishable from what is noncontroversially real, and yet, being different from, or other than, all that is noncontroversially real, it neither is nor can be a reality, after all, Perhaps I am mistaken, but all the familiar puzzles and difficulties created by the Vedantist distinction between appearance and reality tend to reappear with the Mahayana Buddhist distinction between samsara and emptiness.

4. Another thing that commends this interpretation to me is that it does not require one to subscribe to Tscherbatsky's view, according to which Theravada

Buddhism is radically pluralistic, while Mahayana Buddhism is radically monistic. On the contrary, one can hold both forms of Buddhism to be pluralistic, and to differ primarily in the first's being more austerely practical and nontheoretical, while the second also makes explicit in theory what is implied by Buddhist praxis. Of course, there's no reason in principle why Tscherbatsky's view couldn't be correct. But it seems more likely, on the face of it, that the continuity between the two forms of Buddhism would be greater, especially if one keeps in mind that the earlier form must have been shaped decisively by what it denied, and thus by the one underlying substance whose reality it denies. The later doctrine of emptiness but explicates the "no soul, no substance" teaching, and Abe is warranted in claiming that while "in the doctrine of dependent co-origination expounded by the Buddha, the notion of absolute Nothingness was implicit," "it was Nagarjuna who explicitly enunciated this absolute Nothingness in terms of Sunyata" (*Zen and Western Thought*: 158; cf. also 159: "it was Nagarjuna who explicitly developed the notion of 'Emptiness' implicit in the Buddha's doctrine of dependent co-origination").

5. If this interpretation is accepted, however, Hartshorne's understanding of the meaning of "emptiness" in Mahayana Buddhism needs to be replaced by another. Since each thing is every other thing, or, in Hegel's language, is "its own other," "in one sense each thing is unreal, empty. For it is nothing simply in itself. Sunyata is the label for this lack of self-being. But in another sense each thing is quite real, for it is all other things, the very fullness of reality" ("'Emptiness'," etc.: 414). Elsewhere Hartshorne expresses the same understanding in these terms: "Things are interdependent, thus each thing implicates the cosmic system and is nothing—emptiness, sunyata—in itself. Each thing is, from one point of view, nonbeing, and from another it is all being. Thus each thing is every other thing" ("Theism," etc.: 404). On this understanding, "emptiness" comes to be used to

recognize and express the fragmentariness of each part, considered in itself, while "fullness" properly functions to bring out that each part, implicating and being implicated by every other, is also at one and the same time every other part. But if the interpretation I have suggested is correct, "emptiness" does not designate the fragmentariness of each part, but, rather, designates the whole of which each part is a part and which is also utterly present in, identical with each part individually and all parts together, as the whole "in" which they are real in their suchness, etc. Thus the fullness of reality—each thing together with every other thing—exists in emptiness; and it is both possible and necessary to say not only that each thing is empty, or nonbeing, but that all things, or what H calls "all being," or "the totality of reality," is also empty. This statement, as I understand it, is the exact counterpart to the monistic statement of Vedantism that all things are maya or appearance; for this statement does not mean that each thing, being but a fragment of reality, is merely apparent, but means, rather, that all things, the totality of reality, is but appearance of the one and only true reality. Interestingly, my understanding of "emptiness" might seem to come to pretty much the same thing that Hartshorne puts forward as his own metaphysical alternative to what Mahayana Buddhists mean by it. According to this alternative, "emptiness" properly designates "creativity, abstracted from any actual product or creatures," i.e., "pure or logical possibility," which "contains no definite things but only the undifferentiated potentiality for things," and thus is "everything in potency and nothing in act." Certainly, Hartshorne's descriptions of creativity thus understood as "the Tao that is nameless," or as "the formless source of all forms," ("'Emptiness'," etc.: 417) calls to mind Abe's talk about "dynamic sūnyatā," or about emptiness as "the unrestricted dynamic whole" that is "not only the deepest ground of one's subjectivity but also the deepest ground of the universe" (*Zen and Western Thought*: 161). But Hartshorne rightly adds that creativity so understood "is only

an abstraction." And so there remains a difference in principle between his creativity and Buddhist emptiness.

6. My own kind of theism, by contrast, allows that both parts and whole are real, and real in the same general sense of being real for other real things and, insofar as they are concrete and singular, themselves being such that other real things are real for them. Thus over against Vedantist monism it asserts that there is a real plurality of terms and relations and that actualities and possibilities alike are, in their respectively different ways, really and significantly different from one another. Thus even the least real and significant part is real and significant both for the whole and for at least some of the other parts. (Allowing for the full range of possible differences between the ways in which parts may be real and significant for one another, one can even say, with Whitehead, that each part is present in, and thus real and significant for, every other.) Over against Mahayana Buddhist pluralism, on the other hand, it asserts that the one whole of which all things are parts is itself real in the same general sense in which the plurality that it unifies is also real. Thus, while the whole as concrete and singular is really, internally related to its parts, each of them, insofar as it is concrete and singular, is also really, internally related to the whole. The importance of thus allowing for the full reality and significance of both parts and whole is that there is at least the possibility of developing a clear and consistent account of our existential experience of ourselves and of ultimate reality. We experience ourselves, together with the other persons and things that constitute our world, as parts of an encompassing whole. But if either the parts or the whole is taken to be unreal, or real in some utterly different sense from that in which the other is real, inconsistency can be avoided only by lack of clarity, and vagueness can yield to clarity, only at the cost of inconsistency. Above all, if there are not real relations between the parts and the whole and the whole and the parts, events in time, and thus human existence and praxis, cannot

have any ultimate reality and significance. Self-contradictorily, then, the event of attaining enlightenment—or, more generally, the event of transformation, i.e., of transition from inauthentic to authentic existence—can be no more real or significant than any other; and the whole basis of religious praxis, just as much as secular, is undercut.

7. That any properly religious outlook has and must have properly metaphysical implications, however, is no reason to confuse it with a metaphysics. As such, it is an existential self-understanding that has as much to do with understanding what it means to be authentically human as with understanding what the ultimate reality is that authorizes such a self-understanding as authentic. From a religious standpoint, therefore, the question is whether or to what extent there are differences between the kind of self-understanding and praxis, secular as well as religious, taken to be normative in Mahayana Buddhism or Vendantism and the kind taken to be normative in Christianity. How, if at all, do Mahayana Buddhist existence and action differ from Vedantist or from Christian? My guess is that, insofar as each mode of existence and action is that of an "ultimate," as distinct from a "natural," religion it will tend to converge toward each of the others—or to what is religiously true in it, and that it will therefore represent some form of the dialectic of being in the world even while being inwardly free from it and for it. But I also incline to suspect that the different styles of such representative forms will tend to be present <u>within</u> different religious traditions, and not simply <u>between</u> them. At bottom, however, each form will be like every other in understanding itself to be the way of existing and acting humanly that is uniquely authorized as authentically human by the way things ultimately are. Thus each will have a metaphysical aspect consisting in some understanding of the meaning of ultimate reality for us as well as a moral aspect consisting in some understanding of authentic human existence. But this metaphysical aspect as well

as its properly metaphysical implications is to be distinguished from the explicit metaphysics through which it can alone be expressed, just as the moral aspect and its properly moral implications are to be distinguished from the explicit morality through which it can alone be specified. Certainly, it is always possible that one's "lived" metaphysics and morality may be only very inadequately formulated or specified by one's explicit beliefs and actions. The common religious problem both of Mahayana Buddhism's metaphysics of radical pluralism and Vedantism's metaphysics of radical monism is that the transition to authentic existence in the world in freedom from it and for it is as significant or as insignificant as everything else that occurs. Thus affirmation of its unique significance takes place in spite of, rather than because of, one's belief in either metaphysics. On the other hand, affirmation of my kind of theistic metaphysics makes it only reasonable to affirm the unique significance of ultimate transformation even while affirming the full reality and significance of everything else.