

■ Gilles Deleuze and Daisaku Ikeda: Between Immanence and Buddha-Nature

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Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the relationship between Gilles Deleuze's idea of immanence and the notion of Buddha-nature in Daisaku Ikeda's philosophy. Although much has been written about Deleuze's idea of immanence, relatively little has been focused on the relationship between this idea and the concept of Buddha-nature in Ikeda's philosophy. This paper aims to argue that there is a structural similarity between these two ideas. Namely, that both affirm immanence in opposition to transcendence. In the first section, we will examine how Deleuze constructed an immanent ontology by drawing from conceptual resources provided by philosophers such as Scotus, Spinoza and Nietzsche. In the second section, we will examine how Ikeda's idea of Buddha-nature is informed by a line of thinking that is centred around Nichiren, Saichō and Zhiyi's idea of Buddha-nature in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Towards this aim, we will refer to a number of passages in Deleuze's *Difference* and *Repetition* and Ikeda's philosophical writings.

Keywords: Buddha-nature, immanence, transcendence, ontology

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Introduction

Immanence is probably one of the most important concepts in Deleuze's philosophy. Deleuze is known for having pursued immanence throughout his philosophical career and this has sometimes been contrasted with other thinkers such as Derrida, who was better known for having taken the trajectory of transcendence (Smith, "Deleuze and Derrida" 46). In general, this division between immanence and transcendence has been used in three distinct areas of philosophy—subjectivity, epistemology and ontology. Within the context of ontology, transcendence refers to the view that there is a Being which stands over and above particular beings. The Platonic Idea serves as a good example for this. Eternal and unchanging, it stands over and above particular and mutable beings, and serves as an unchanging form that these beings participate in and approximate towards. Once these ideas are accepted, however, there is a tendency to see particular beings as *lesser* in relation to the Idea (Smith, "Deleuze and Derrida" 48). Unfortunately, transcendence is not restricted to the field of philosophy but can also be found in religious and theological discourse. The idea of God in Christian theology, for instance, posits a personal Being who stands over and above his created beings. This Being is necessarily "perfect" while his created creatures are "imperfect." Once we accept this idea, however, beings are again reorganized into a *hierarchy*, with Being on top of this hierarchy and beings occupying various positions of subordination. While such a hierarchy provides a scale by which we may measure the individual beings' approximations to the One, the gap between the two can become so great that it can create a sense of powerlessness and impotence in beings. Thus, far from making us "better," transcendence can separate us from our capacity to act, thereby making us worse. It was in response to this that Deleuze sought to engage in the project of "overturning" (*renversement*) Platonism (Smith, "The Concept" 3). In this regard, Deleuze was not unlike many philosophers in the twentieth-century who sought to overcome metaphysics in various ways. What is unique about the Deleuze's approach, however, is that his project does not involve the abandonment of ontology. Deleuze would later insist that "going beyond metaphysics or the death of philosophy" had never been an issue for him (*Negotiations* 88). Instead of abandoning ontology, Deleuze sought to reconstruct an *alternative* ontology, one which does not submit to transcendence but is based firmly on the dignity of immanence (Smith, "Deleuze and Derrida" 49-50). The priority that Deleuze has given to immanence resonates with the doctrine of Buddha-nature (仏性 *Busshō*) in Mahāyāna Buddhism. In the history of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought, the doctrine of Buddha-nature essentially says that

all sentient beings possess the Buddha-nature and that this can be revealed once their conceptual defilements have been removed. This means that Buddhahood is not a “result” that comes at the end of one’s religious practices, much less a “gift” that comes from a transcendent source, but a state of life that one is equipped with from the very beginning. This doctrine has been highly controversial in the history of Buddhist thought and it has generated many debates, because it appears to be contradictory to Buddhist teachings which were centred around the concept of “non-self.” When we see this from a Deleuzian perspective, however, there are some resonances between the idea of Buddha-nature and immanence because it suggests that one is already complete from the very beginning and fully equipped with the power to change things, without the need to rely on any transcendent Being. In the following section, we will begin by examining how Deleuze sought to construct an immanent ontology by drawing from the conceptual resources provided by philosophers such as Scotus, Spinoza and Nietzsche.

Deleuze and Immanence

One of the first thinkers that Deleuze relied on in constructing his immanent ontology is the 13th century Franciscan thinker Duns Scotus. Scotus is famous in the history of medieval philosophy for introducing the doctrine of “univocity” into philosophy. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze declares that “There has only even been one ontological proposition: Being is univocal” (35). The doctrine of “univocity” essentially says that God’s “existence” and man’s “existence” are “univocal.” This means that when we say God “is” and man “is,” both must be understood *in the same sense* (Smith, “Doctrine of Univocity” 31). The significance of this fact becomes apparent when we situate the doctrine of univocity within the context of a theological debate with Thomistic-Scholastic thinkers who were well-known for arguing that the relationship between God’s existence and man’s existence is an *analogical* one. Scotus saw that the analogical view of being effectively implies that we can never gain access to God’s existence, because his “existence” is merely an analogy. Thus, Deleuze believes that Scotus’s doctrine of univocity is central because it restores man’s access to God’s existence.

Deleuze saw that while Scotus’s doctrine of univocity affirms man’s capacity to know God’s existence, it is nevertheless unable to fully restore the dignity of immanence because God remains transcendent and is superior to man. This is why Deleuze also turned to Spinoza’s idea of “substance” and his account of

causation to construct his new ontology (Deleuze, *Spinoza* 63). In Spinoza's philosophy, substance is characterized by a causality in which its effects do not *emanate away from* but which remain *immanate within it*. This means that the "effects" of the causal substance are not seen as separate substances that are necessarily lesser than itself, but as "modes" that are based on one substance. The "effects" remain within the cause no less than the cause remains in itself as "substance" (Smith, "Doctrine of Univocity" 33). This idea is opposed to the traditional notions of a *transitive* cause and an *emanative* cause, in which a cause leaves itself in order to produce, and what it produces, namely its effect, is outside of itself and remains inferior to itself. These traditional notions of causality sustain a *hierarchical* view of reality in which beings are viewed as either having more or having less reality depending on their relative proximity or distance from the One. Spinoza's "immanent" ontology, on the other hand, holds that Being is not only equal in itself *but it is also equally and immediately present in all things without mediation or intermediary*, thus suggesting a radical equality, and even anarchy, of beings in this world. This brings about what Deleuze calls a "pure ontology," that is, *an ontology in which there is nothing beyond or outside or superior to Being*. In this pure ontology, being is identified with Being, the "modes" of Being are no longer lesser but become *expressive* and affirmative of the being that is none other than their power. Thus, Deleuze has a special regard for Spinoza's philosophy because he never compromised with transcendence but "hunted it down everywhere," seeking to bring back the dignity of immanence. In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari states:

Spinoza was the philosopher who knew full well that immanence was only immanent to itself and therefore that it was a plane traversed by movements of the infinite, filled with intensive ordinates. He is therefore the prince of philosophers. Perhaps he is the only philosopher never to have compromised with transcendence and to have hunted it down everywhere. . . . He discovered that freedom exists only within immanence. He fulfilled philosophy because he satisfied its prephilosophical presupposition. Immanence does not refer back to the Spinozist substance and modes but, on the contrary, the Spinozist concepts of substance and modes refer back to the plane of immanence as their presupposition. (48)

Although Spinoza's idea of substance has a special place in Deleuze's philosophy, he is also aware that there is a danger of a new dependency on "substance" (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 40). If the "effects" stay within their causes, the difference between the two may have been reduced, but there is nevertheless a priority that is given to substance as a first term. Deleuze believes that Nietzsche's idea of "eternal return" provides a way out of this impasse. Here, Deleuze does not interpret Nietzsche's idea of "eternal return" in the usual *cosmological*

sense that things repeat themselves eternally from a first term, but in a *transcendental* sense that in a series there can be a repetition of conditions without the need for a first term. Once the necessity of such a first term is removed, there is no longer the danger of a new dependency on the notion of “substance” for the infinite series of terms to be generated. In “eternal return” there is only a pure repetition of difference itself without the need for a ground. Deleuze believes that Nietzsche’s idea of “eternal return” is critical to an immanent ontology because it liberates beings from their obsession and dependency on the One (*What Is Philosophy?* 41).

Deleuze’s immanent ontology can be seen as resulting from a creative assemblage of the ideas of Scotus, Spinoza and Nietzsche. It is important to remember that Deleuze did not construct such an ontology purely from theoretical and philosophical interests, but did so in order to bring about a “overturning” of Platonism and its notion of ethical praxis. Such an ontology enables us to ask truly *ethical* questions instead of merely *moral* ones. Instead of asking the question “What *must* I do?” which is in reality a *moral* question, an immanent thinker asks the truly *ethical* question of “What *can* I do?” From an immanent standpoint, the thinker asks “given my existing powers, what are my capabilities, what are my capacities, and how can I come into active possession of my power so that I can live a fuller life?” From this immanent perspective, ethics is a set of “facilitative” rules that measure the extent to which we have lived a life of intensity (Smith, “The Place of Ethics” 147). These questions represent a significant reversal from an orientation which is reliant on a *transcendent* Being, to one which is based on *immanent* expressions of power. Deleuze was not unaware of the difficulty of bringing about this reversal. Although immanence is our birth right, there is fear with regards to immanence. This is witnessed in philosophy’s persistent turn towards transcendence in the history of thought. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that this is because an immanent thinking is always more dangerous than a transcendent one, because, “one does not think without becoming something else” (*What Is Philosophy?* 42). This is the reason that philosophy has often been marginalized and regarded with much “indifference,” and when real philosophy happens, rendering such indifference impossible, it is usually greeted with a strong and instinctive disapproval in “public opinion” (*What Is Philosophy?* 42). This, however, does not stop Deleuze and Guattari from giving us the antidote to transcendence. Deleuze and Guattari maintain that:

Immanence is immanent only to itself and consequently captures everything, absorbs All-One, and leaves nothing remaining to which it could be immanent. In any case, whenever immanence is interpreted as immanent *to* Something, we can be sure that this Something reintroduces the transcendent. (*What Is Philosophy?* 45)

Hence, we are to avoid thinking of immanence as an immanence “to Something.” This simply leads to a confusion between the plane and the concept, so that the concept in the end becomes a transcendent universal and the plane becomes an attribute in the concept. When such a misunderstanding arises, the plane of immanence revives the transcendent again because it is now regarded as nothing more than a field of phenomena that possesses “attributes” of the transcendent only in a secondary way (*What Is Philosophy?* 45). Deleuze believes that the real task of philosophy is to address the question of how can we acquire an immanent consistency without losing the infinity into which thought plunges. This is unlike science, which seeks to provide chaos with reference points and which, in the process, renounces the infinite (*What Is Philosophy?* 42). Philosophy asks how we can have reference points without losing the infinite. In *What Is Philosophy?* Deleuze holds that the supreme task of philosophy may not be to think *THE* plane of immanence but simply to show that it is there, as the base of all planes and as such immanent to every plane. It is that which remains unthought—it is that which cannot be thought but which *must* be thought, and which was thought once, as Christ was incarnated once, to show the possibility of the impossible (59-60).

Daisaku Ikeda and the Buddha-Nature

Daisaku Ikeda is generally known as a philosopher of global peace and the leader of the lay Buddhist organization called Sōka Gakkai. In *Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy of Peace* (2011), Olivier Urbain argues that what is distinct about Ikeda's theory of peace is that it does not merely deal with peace at the institutional level but provides us with a comprehensive theory of peace that both involves the individual as well as public institutions. Ikeda maintains that, in order to achieve global peace, individuals must not simply look to social and political institutions to help them, but must also adopt a philosophy that empowers them to bring about self-transformation and global transformation, without recourse to transcendence (Ikeda, *Unlocking the Mysteries* 162). Although much research has been focused on Ikeda's theory of peace, it is also important to recognize that it is based on his understanding of idea of Buddha-nature (仏性 *Bussō*) in Nichiren Buddhism. In *Choose Peace* (1995), Ikeda states:

Nichiren Daishonin identified compassion and the Buddha nature as the central feature of the world governed by causal origination and pointed out their effects on such phenomena as earth, water, fire, wind and air. In a poetic fashion, he said that the contributory (as distinct from direct) causes of spring wind and rain make plants

bloom, whereas the contributory cause of autumn moonlight brings trees to fruition. Nichiren Daishonin taught that all sentient and non-sentient things in the universe are cultivated by the Buddha nature on which all things, including causal origination, depend. The Buddha nature is one with the force of life, the dignity of which must be recognized as both an internal and a universal value if the ethos of symbiosis is to become real and effective. (Ikeda and Galtung 94-95)

This passage makes it clear that the doctrine of Buddha-nature is central to his theory of peace as it is the basis for an “ethos of symbiosis.” The idea that a philosophical idea can have global implications in some sense resonates with the Deleuzian idea that immanence is not merely a matter of “theoretical” concern but has practical implications. In fact, this passage suggests that Ikeda would even go to the extent of maintaining that without a correct philosophy of life there could be no peace in the world. In a more recent work, *Unlocking the Mysteries of the Birth and Death* (2003), Ikeda maintains the importance of the Buddha-nature by saying that:

The significance of Buddhism lies both in the discovery of the Buddha nature in all beings and in the establishment of a practical method for bringing it out, so that human beings can derive maximum meaning from their lives. Both these features are especially relevant to modern civilization, which has long been trapped in a sort of spiritual quicksand. We can escape the quicksand by calling forth the supreme human potential available to each of us. Desires, if properly channelled, can fuel our spiritual development. If they are improperly channelled, they become a liability. (Ikeda, *Unlocking the Mysteries* 182)

Ikeda’s emphasis on the Buddha-nature can be understood in the context of Nichiren’s interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra*. In *The Wisdom of the Lotus Sūtra* (2001), Ikeda reiterates the importance of the *Lotus Sūtra* because it teaches that every human being has a Buddha-nature. Ikeda states:

The doctrine of the mutual possession of the Ten Worlds indicates that evil exists even within the life of the Buddha, and that the Buddha nature exists even within the lives of evil people. (Ikeda et al., 86)

In the *Lotus Sūtra*, the doctrine of Buddha-nature is pushed to its logical extreme when “evil” people are also included within its fold. This idea resonates in some sense with Deleuze’s idea of immanence—if all “effects” are expressions of substance and are not distinct from that substance, and since substance is perfect, then every single expression must also be “perfect” in some ways.

Ikeda’s idea of Buddha-nature is in fact derived from Nichiren’s interpretation of the Buddha-nature in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. In Nichiren’s interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra*, Buddhist practice is not about reliance on external and *transcendent* powers, but about manifesting one’s innate Buddha-

nature, a nature that lies *immanent* within the depths of one's life. This immanent reading of the *Lotus Sūtra* can be found in many of his letters and treatises where he insisted that the "fundamental object of worship" (*Gohonzon*) is, in fact, not some transcendent power but a power that is *immanent* to our lives. In one of Nichiren's most significant letters *The Real Aspect of the Gohonzon*, Nichiren states:

Never seek this Gohonzon outside yourself. The Gohonzon exists only within the mortal flesh of us ordinary people who embrace the Lotus Sūtra and chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. The body is the palace of the ninth consciousness, the unchanging reality that reigns over all of life's functions. To be endowed with the Ten Worlds means that all ten, without a single exception, exist in one world. Because of this it is called a mandala. Mandala is a Sanskrit word that is translated as "perfectly endowed" or "a cluster of blessings." This Gohonzon also is found only in the two characters for faith. This is what the sutra means when it states that one can "gain entrance through faith alone." (Nichiren, *Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* 832)

Nichiren was a controversial figure in the history of Japanese Buddhism because of his sharp polemics against other schools of Buddhism in Kamakura Japan. One of the targets of his polemical attacks was Hōnen, the founder of the Japanese Jōdo or Pure Land school of Buddhism in Japan. Hōnen basically held the view, widely accepted during the Kamakura period, that people can no longer attain Buddhahood because the world has entered into a degenerate period called "the Latter Day of the Dharma" (*mappō*). Hence, Hōnen taught that people should hope for rebirth in the "Pure Land" by relying on the power of Amida Buddha. This means that instead of relying on their own efforts, they should rely on Amida's "other-power" (*ta-riki* 他力) for salvation. Nichiren criticized this teaching because it promoted an ethos of "shunning this defiled world and aspiring to the pure land" (Stone, "Realizing This World" 221). Nichiren refused to accept this idea because of his recognition of the inherent dignity of this world. In fact, he would even go to the extent of saying that there is no "Pure Land" that is transcendent to this one, that this "Impure Land" in which we live in is the "Pure Land" itself. In one of his treatises *On the Contemplation of the Mind and the Object of Worship* (*Kanjin honzon sho*) he writes "The Sahā world of the present moment, which is the original time, is the constantly abiding pure land, separated from the three disasters and beyond the four *kalpas*" (Stone, "Realizing This World" 221). Likewise, instead of relying on "other-power," Nichiren insists that we must rely on "self-power" (*ji-riki* 自力) for salvation.

Nichiren's philosophy is itself derived from a line of thought which can be traced back to the teachings of Saichō. Saichō is known for introducing the doctrine of "original enlightenment" (*hongaku* 本覺) into Japanese Buddhism. This doctrine basically says that sentient beings are enlightened from the very

beginning and not as a result of their practice (Stone, *Original Enlightenment* 3). The idea that one is already possessed of an immanent state of perfection resonates with Deleuze's immanence. In fact, Saichō would push this idea to its logical conclusion by maintaining the possibility of "realizing buddhahood with this very body" (*sokushin jōbutsu* 即身成佛) (Groner 53-74). This must be read in the context of the earlier Buddhist teachings that stressed the near impossibility of reaching this goal. While these Buddhist teachings seem to support a transcendent and hierarchical view of spiritual progress, the *Lotus Sūtra* teaches that all sentient beings have the Buddha-nature and assures us that women, evil men and persons of the two vehicles, as well as people who were denied Buddhahood, are all guaranteed the attainment of Buddhahood (Stone, "Placing Nichiren" 402). But more importantly, Nichiren also shared with his Tendai contemporaries a particular respect for the "origin teaching" that is located in the second fourteen chapters of the sutra. The *Lotus Sūtra* was divided into two divisions for exegetical purposes with the first fourteen chapters being known as the "trace teaching" (*shakumon* 迹門) and the second fourteen chapters known as the "origin teaching" (*honmon* 本門) (Stone, "Placing Nichiren" 402). The two divisions differ in their conception of the Buddha. In the "trace teaching" the Buddha is the historical Shakyamuni who achieved supreme enlightenment under the bodhi tree, but the "origin teaching" goes beyond this to assert that the Buddha first realized Buddhahood over an unfathomable, staggering number of eons (*kalpas*), measurable only by analogy to the innumerable particles of dust yielded by reducing countless billions of world systems (Stone, "Placing Nichiren" 402). In addition to this, the *Lotus Sūtra* also asserts that the Buddha did not pass into extinction but is still somehow present here in this world. In Chapter 16 of the *Lotus Sūtra*, in "The Life Span of the Thus Come One," the Buddha declares that ever since he has attained enlightenment, he has been "constantly dwelling in this Saha world sphere, preaching the dharma, teaching and converting" beings in incalculable worlds (Hurvitz 220). Nichiren likewise places an emphasis on the difference between "trace-teaching" and "origin-teaching." In an important passage from the treatise *The Opening of the Eyes* (*Kaimoku shō*), he states:

When one arrives at the origin teaching, because [the view that the Buddha] first attained enlightenment [in this lifetime] is demolished, the fruits of the four teachings are demolished. The fruits of the four teachings being demolished, their causes are also demolished. The causes and effects of the ten realms of the pre-*Lotus Sūtra* and trace teachings being demolished, the cause and effect of the ten realms of the origin teaching are revealed. This is precisely the doctrine of original cause and original effect. The nine realms are inherent in the beginningless Buddha realm, and the Buddha realm inheres in the beginningless nine realms. This represents the true mutual in-

clusion of the ten realms, the hundred realms and thousand suchnesses, and the three thousand realms in one thought-moment. (Stone, “Placing Nichiren” 403)

Thus, in Tendai philosophy, the “trace-teaching” represents the perspective of “acquired enlightenment” (*shishaku* 始覺) while the “origin teaching” represents that of original enlightenment (*hongaku* 本覺). This implies that Buddhahood is somehow immanent in all sentient beings from the very beginning. The “origin teachings” represents a complete reversal of the traditional understanding of the relationship between practice and the attainment of the goal of Buddhahood. While the “trace teaching” represents the conventional perspective in which the practitioner cultivates practice, accumulates merit, extirpates delusion and reaches an enlightenment that is understood as the culmination of a linear process which proceeds from cause (practice) to effect (enlightenment) (*jūin shika* 從因至果), the “origin teachings” reverses this by not seeing practice as a “cause” that leads to the “effect” of Buddhahood, but our original Buddhahood as a “cause” which led to the “effect” of practice. This is a process that proceeds from effect to cause (*jūka kōin* 從果向因) (Stone, “Placing Nichiren” 403). In the words of Jacqueline Stone, “It is to shift, from linear time, in which practice is first cultivated and enlightenment later achieved, to mandalic time, in which practice and enlightenment are simultaneous” (“Placing Nichiren” 403).

Saichō’s philosophy is in turn related to the philosophy of Zhiyi (538-597 CE), the founder of Tiantai Buddhism in China. Zhiyi is famous for advocating the idea that “one moment of thought contains the three thousand realms” (*ichinen sanzen* 一念三千). This refers to the idea that all phenomena (“three thousand realms”) are included within one moment of thought, and that they constantly interpenetrate and include one another. This teaching is reflected in the teaching that “There is not a single color or scent that is not the middle way” (Stone, “Realizing This World” 211). Integral to Zhiyi’s system was the inseparability of living beings and the realm in which they inhabit. (*Mobe Zhiguan* T46:54a 3-6). The basic idea is that one’s mind and the cosmos are mutually encompassing so that all the levels of sentient existence, from hell to Buddhahood, as well as their corresponding environments are inherent in each moment of consciousness (Stone, “Realizing This World” 211). Nichiren accepted Zhiyi’s idea of *ichinen sanzen*, however, he regarded this as an *ichinen sanzen* in terms of principle (*ri no ichinen sanzen* 理の一念三千) the theoretical potential for Buddhahood in human beings. What he did not reveal was the “three thousand realms in actuality” (*ji no ichinen sanzen* 事の一念三千) which is found only in the origin teaching and hidden in the Lifespan chapter of the *Lotus Sūtra*. This practice in actuality is none other than the invocation of the five characters of the *Namu-myōhō-enge-kyō*” and the object of worship of the origin teaching

(Stone, “Placing Nichiren” 406).

Thus, Ikeda’s philosophy can be traced back to an idea of Buddha-nature which has been interpreted by Nichiren, Saichō and Zhiyi in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. There are areas of similarities and differences between this and Deleuze’s idea of immanence. The idea that the Buddha-nature is immanent in sentient beings resonates with Deleuze’s immanent ontology. In the context of ethical praxis, there is also a shift in one’s understanding of the relationship between cause and effect—Buddhahood is no longer seen as an effect of one’s practice, but the cause of one’s practice. In the Deleuzian framework, on the other hand, the focus seems to differ—the immanent thinker shifts from a moral mode of existence to an ethical one, because the interest is in shifting one’s life away from a hierarchical scale of value to an alternative scale of value which is measured in terms of *intensity*.

Between Immanence and Buddha-Nature

We have observed how both Deleuze and Ikeda developed their idea of immanence and Buddha-nature respectively, by drawing from lines of thinking that were found in their distinct philosophical contexts. At first sight, nothing could be more different than the contexts in which they found themselves. There appears to be no relationship whatsoever between the two ideas. While Deleuze drew nourishment from thinkers such as Scotus, Spinoza and Nietzsche, Ikeda drew from thinkers such as Nichiren, Saichō and Zhiyi. Yet, despite their apparent differences, there seems to be a structural similarity between the two—both affirm immanence in opposition to transcendence. Deleuzian immanence was but an attempt to affirm life, in a way that reminds us of Nietzsche’s project, by resisting the powers of transcendence. Ikeda’s idea of Buddha-nature, on the other hand, affirms the power of each individual to bring about positive change without recourse to an external transcendent power. This by no means implies that the idea of immanence and Buddha-nature are identical, or that they intersect at some point in the history of human ideas. But, at one point, Deleuze’s immanent thought comes very close to the idea of Buddha-nature. In Deleuze’s *Two Regimes of Madness*, there is a cryptic and almost mystical remark that in a state of pure immanence, “The rock, the lily, the beast, the human equally sing the glory of God in a kind of crowned anarchy” (261). While this remark expresses an idea that is well-informed by a philosophical tradition which may be alien to Nichiren, there is resonance when we read it beside Nichiren’s statement that in the state of Buddhahood, we are

“precisely unborn and unperishing. And the land is also thus. (When we so awaken), the oxen, horses, and six kinds of domestic animals in this land are all buddhas, and the grasses and trees, sun and moon, are all sage beings” (Stone, “Realizing This World” 221).

Conclusion

In this paper, we have examined the relationship between Deleuze’s immanence and Ikeda’s idea of Buddha-nature and found that there is a structural similarity between the two concepts. While Deleuzian immanence resists transcendence, the doctrine of Buddha-nature also affirms the inherent value of each sentient being and their power to bring about positive change without recourse to any transcendent powers. This does not necessarily mean that the two thinkers have identical ideas as both of them worked within vastly different cultural and philosophical contexts, but the resonances between the two should provoke us to think further as they suggests of a new becoming.

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德勒茲和池田大作： 在內在性和佛性之間

摘要

本文探討德勒茲的「內在性」(immanence)和池田大作的「佛性」之間的關係。儘管有不少學者已在探討德勒茲的「內在性」，但探討「內在性」與「佛性」的關係的學者不多。本文通過池田大作的「佛性論」探討這兩個哲學概念的關係。本文指出它們都同時在肯定「內在性」和抵抗哲學思想中的「超越性」(transcendence)。在第一部分中，我們將研究德勒茲如何在司各脫(Scotus)、斯賓諾莎(Spinoza)和尼采(Nietzsche)的哲學基礎上構造他本身的內在性本體論。在第二部分中，我們將研究池田大作如何在日蓮(Nichiren)、最澄(Saicho)和智顛(Zhiyi)的「佛性論」大乘佛教哲學基礎上推廣他的和平哲學。在探討中我們將會參考德勒茲的《差異與重複》和池田大作的哲學作品。

關鍵字：內在性，超越性，佛性，本體論