

“Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan” and Psychoanalysis

MIWA Zeho

Introduction ‘*Ichinen-sanzen* 一念三千’ that was explained in “*Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan* 摩訶止觀,” the transcript of *T’ien-T’ai Chih-i* (532–597)’s lectures, as is well known, is a technical term that represents the mystery of our mind or psyche. ‘*Sanzen*,’ meaning three thousand, is the number achieved by multiplying ‘*Jūnyoze* 十如是 (a composing element of phenomenal world)’ in the Lotus sutra, ‘*Jikkai* 十界 (the ten dharma realms: from the Hell to Buddha)’ and ‘*Sansyu-seken* 三種世間 (the three types of worlds: the world of sentient beings, the world of the five skandhas, and various lands).’ In his teaching, these elements that originally our mind has constituted our mind, and therefore our mind has characteristics of another’s. Then in this study, we consider about the theory of ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*’ particularizing human psyche—not the mind that we hypostatize but the psyche being leads to expression by the relation nature—based on two perspectives that psychoanalysis proselytizes, the ego and the subject, we will attempt a consideration about the human existence and mind that both “*Mo-Ho chih-Kuan*” and the psychoanalysis expound.

1. The theory of *Ichinen-sanzen* of “*Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan*” ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*’ is described in chapter 7, ‘*Shosyu* 正修 (the best practice),’ of “*Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan*.” In the preface, the details of method are explained. The following sentences are from ① to ⑩, and ⑪ is the sentence describing ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*.’

① I will expound ten [objects of] Chih-Kuan 止觀. (snip) There are two reasons why skandhas [and the sense fields 陰入界] come at the beginning: first because they are readily manifest, and second because this follows the sutras.¹⁾

② Again, one who practices has bodily experiences; who does not have the heavy burden of directly experiencing the [five] skandhas and the sense organs and objects? Therefore, these are the first to be contemplated.²⁾

③ The skandhas are called “overshadowing darkness” because they obscure and

cover good dharmas; this terminology is based on [the skandhas as] cause [for the arising of evil dharmas]. Again, the skandhas are an “accumulation,” the recurrent alternation of [the cycle of] birth and death; this terminology is based on [the aggregates as] the results [of your actions]. The [twelve senses] “entrances” that is, the six sense organs and their objects] are so-called because [of their roles in] “stepping or passing into” [sense experience]; they are also called the “gates for turning [in and out]” [of experience]. The [eighteen] “realms” [that is, the six sense organs, their six objects, and their six consciousnesses] are so-called “the individual nature.” (snip) Again, there are nine types of distinctions. (snip) These various types [of five skandhas] all have their basis in the mind. (snip) both with in this world and transcending this world, there is no [sense experience] that is not created through the mind.³⁾

④ In any case, all skandhas and sense entrances—whether part of this world or the realm beyond delusions—all arise dependent on the mind. (snip) The Treatise (*Ta-chih-tu-lun*) says, “In the entire world there is only name-and-form. If you wish to contemplate reality as it is, then you should merely contemplate name-and-form.” The mind is the basis of delusions, and this is the meaning. (snip) you should leave behind the other four skandhas such as form, and only contemplate the skandhas of consciousness. The skandhas of consciousness is the mind.⁴⁾

⑤ The first [mode of] “contemplating thought” 觀心 is [to contemplate] objects as inconceivable. It is very difficult to explain these objects [as inconceivable], so first I will clarify objects as conceivable. Then it will be easy to manifest objects as inconceivable. (snip) “Dharma realm” has three meanings. The number “ten” refers to that which depends on 能依 [that is, their multifarious conventionality]; the “dharma realms” refer to that which is depended upon 所依 [that is, their emptiness], and since they are merged together they are called “ten dharma realms.” Again, each of the ten dharma has its own causes and own results that are not mixed or confused with the others; therefore, they are called “ten dharma realms.” Again, these ten dharma are each in themselves and in essence all the Dharma realm, therefore they are called “ten dharma realms,” and so forth.⁵⁾

⑥ The “ten dharma realms” are also known as [various amalgamations of] the aggregates, the senses entrances and the sense realms, but in reality they are [each] not quite the same. The three [evil] destinies consist of defiled and evil skandhas, sense

realms, and sense entrances. The three good [destinies] consist of defiled yet good skandhas, sense realms, and sense entrances. Those of the two vehicles 二乘 consist of undefiled skandhas, sense realms, and sense entrances. The bodhisattvas consist of both defiled and undefiled skandhas, sense realms, and sense entrances. A Buddha consists of neither defiled nor undefiled skandhas, sense realms, and sense entrances. (snip) Since the types of skandhas in the ten realms are not the same, they are called the “world of the five skandhas.”⁶⁾

⑦ When examined from the perspective of a complete life, you can distinguish ten periods; how can you not see differences between sentient beings of the ten realms? Therefore, these are called the “world of sentient beings.”⁷⁾

⑧ Each of these lands is not the same; therefore they are called “various lands.” These thirty types of worlds are all created through the mind.⁸⁾

⑨ The world of sentient being is that of conventional designation and lack of [substantial] essence that can be distinguished; [it is just that] real phenomena are taken and established conventionally. So [it includes] the appearances, nature, essence, power, ... and ultimate equality of sentient beings of the evil destinies, and so forth. (snip) The world of various lands also includes the ten dharma realms, that is the appearances, nature, essence, power and so forth of the evil lands; of the good lands; of the underfiled lands; the appearances, nature, essence, power and so forth of the lands of the bodhisattvas and Buddhas.⁹⁾

⑩ [Thus] a single thought includes the ten dharma realms. A single dharma realm includes the [other] ten dharma realms, so there are one hundred dharma realms. One realm includes thirty types of worlds [that is, each of the ten dharma realms are included in each of the three types of worlds: the world of sentient beings, the world of the five skandhas, and various lands], multiplied by one hundred dharma realms. This results in the inclusion of three thousand types of worlds. These three thousand [worlds] exist in a single momentary thought.¹⁰⁾ (Under character limit, quotations were edited by the citer.)

T'ien-T'ai Chih-i explained ten objects to be observed. First of all is ‘*On-nyu-kai* 陰入界,’ the next object is ‘*Bon-nō*.’ *On-nyū-kai* is also called ‘*San-ka*, three categories 三科’ because it includes the following: ‘*Go-on*, the five aggregates, 五陰’; ‘*Jū-ni-nyū*, the twelve entrances, 十二入’ and ‘*Ju-hachi-kai*, the eighteen realms, 十八界.’ That is to say, ‘*Go-on*’ is just an individual person, ‘*Ju-ni-nyū*’ is the sensory organ coming into contact

with the object, ‘*Ju-hachi-kai*’ is the experience or the assessment that occurs due to contact between the organs of sense and objects, and therefore it is possible to say that ‘*On-nyu-kai*’ represents the human existence. However, in order to explain that human existence does not have substance, we represent it as being made up of a collection of multiple elements.

The reason why this secret world is the first object of observation is that [①] human existence is an inevitable existence in Buddhism, and it is always explained in the Buddhist scriptures. In other words, the secret world ‘*On-nyu-kai*’ and human existence are the main themes of Buddhism. Furthermore, [②] It is said that those who have a body in this world must observe the body as a burden as long as they have an insidiousness.

The next step, explains about the ten methods of observing, *Jujo-kanpō* 十乘觀法; those methods deal with all ten objects 十境. [③] *Chih-i* explained ‘*On-nyu-kai*’ using other words: ‘*On* 陰’ represents drowning a good dharma, as result of piling up sufferings of birth and death, ‘*nyu* 入’ represents an entrance making a connection with an exterior, ‘*kai* 界’ represents a different perception. In addition, he explained that the nine types of ‘*Go-on*,’ all phenomena inside and outside our world, are created by the mind - the world is ‘The three worlds 三界,’ these are three dimensions in our living world, ‘*Yoku-kai* 欲界, the world of desire,’ ‘*Shiki-kai* 色界, the world of material objects’ and ‘*Mu-Shiki-kai* 無色界, the formless world of psyche.’

[④] In conclusion, there are only ‘*Go-on*’ in this world, because the mind is the cause of ambivalence, and therefore it is necessary to research ‘*Shiki-on* 識陰, consciousness’ in ‘*Go-on*’ at first.

[⑤] The first object that can be observed is ‘*Kan-fushigi-kyo* 觀不思議境, Contemplating objects as inconceivable.’ *Chih-i* explained that it was difficult to describe a mind because the object was ‘*Fuka-shigi* 不可思議, inconceivable, and so he defined the cause and effect of ‘*Jik-kai* 十界, the ten dharma realms’ as a conceivable object.

[⑥-⑧] Then *Chih-i* made a specific mention of ‘*Go-on*’ in each the ten dharma realms. What are the ten dharma realms? There are three meanings: at first ‘ten’ includes both depending and dependent realms, the former is ‘*Shu-jō* 衆生, all sentient beings,’ the latter is ‘*Butsu* 仏,’ secondly cause and effect is different in each of the ten dharma realms, thirdly the realms are just ‘*Hō-kai* 法界, the realm of truth.’ In other words, there are ten different ‘*Go-on*’ in line with the ten dharma realms, that is to say, the river of the three

crossings are ‘*Ji-goku* 地獄, *Ga-ki* 餓鬼 and *Chiku-syō* 畜生,’ the three goods are ‘*Syu-ra* 修羅, *Nin* 人 and *Ten* 天,’ ‘*Ni-jo* 二乘,’ ‘*Bosatsu* 菩薩,’ and ‘*Butsu* 仏.’ The amassment of each ‘*Go-on*’ is ‘*Go-on-seken* 五陰世間, the world of the five skandhas.’ ‘*Shu-jō*’ as a whole ‘*Go-on*’ has ten variations, so it is called ‘*Shu-jō-seken* 衆生世間, the world of sentient beings.’ And the land in which sentient beings live has ten variations, so it is called ‘*Koku-do-seken* 国土世間, various land.’ Those thirty various worlds are related in a mind.

[⑨] He concretely denoted the difference of ‘*Jū-nyo-ze*’¹¹⁾ in *Jik-kai*. Namely, there are the wrong ten factors in the river of the three crossings and in the wrong world.

[⑩] After that, he explained ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*,’ the aspect of a mind. He said: these three thousand worlds exist in a single momentary thought. If there is no thought, that is the end of the matter. If there is even an ephemeral thought, this includes three thousand realms. And all existences are neither born from a mind nor included in it. Specifically, a mind is all existences, all existences are a mind.

It is in these words that *Chih-i* explained our mind as an inconceivable object in “*Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan*.” In this world, no place is not our mind, we can understand a mind if we recognize phenomena in the world. In other words, though our mind may exist, it is not concrete, so it exists as the world. But we cannot hypostatize this world, which looks like images that a mind represents. In other words, we may say that a mind is another’s, others are our mind.

2. *Ichinen-sanzen* and psychoanalysis Human beings think and understand with words and recognize along with images. The detailed description of mind in “*Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan*” is the image that a disciplinant looked back from the stage of getting away the language to one of using it for getting across to a mind. *Chih-i* merely brought an inconceivable thing to the realm of the conceivable. In psychoanalysis language, he might bring unconsciousness to consciousness. We can think that both explanations are the same. When we verbalize our inconceivable mind and unconsciousness, we may be able to get to a reality of mind. Then we will try to examine ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*’ through the theory of psychoanalysis.

The subject of psychoanalysis is ‘the afflicted,’ in other words, a man who is called ‘analysant’ in French, who makes an analysis of himself. If we go into detail, it is said that psychoanalysis does not cure a sickness or remedy a kinky personality but is an

independent-minded action for the afflicted to resolve his problems. Thus, we can accept that it is the same idea as Buddhism. The subject who is explained in Buddhism has ‘*Bodaishin* 菩提心, an aspiration to enlightenment’ and aspires to become a Buddha, so he enters a right practice, then contemplates ‘*On-nyu-kai*’ as inconceivable and as a consequence reaches the ground of ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*,’ so he will take steps towards enlightenment.

So, what role does the “other” in psychoanalysis play? Though we generally use ‘self,’ ‘ego,’ and ‘subject’ as words that conflict with others, others are deeply involved in the whole concept of self. The theory of an ego-strength has been considered eight years ago.¹²⁾ To quote the psychoanalyst, Mukai Masaaki’s exposition:¹³⁾ the fact is, human beings have nothing corresponding to an inside ego, there is only an image of a shredded body for it. That image in an outside mirror shows the self-body as a general united whole, and children incorporate it as the origin of the self’s ego. (snip) In their psychological future, the inside ego recognizes a self’s image outside, and the outside image assumes the self as ‘I,’ Jacques Lacan said.

The self’s image of ‘ego’ is a fictional one created through relationships with others, which is not our being. In Buddhism, the ego is usually recognized as an independent existence, emphasizing ‘*Mu-ga* 無我, non-ego’ that overcomes the attachment to this ego. However, in the theory of psychoanalysis ‘ego’ is already insubstantial in a sense. It can be said that is similar to Buddhist non-ego.

Though it is necessary to explain ‘ego’ of psychoanalysis a little more, we should understand that it is absolutely taken as an image, coming to regulate our mind as social common sense. And ‘subject’ is another problem. Mukai explains ‘ego’ and ‘subject’ as follows: While on the other hand,¹⁴⁾ the psychoanalysis denies the faculty of a consciousness, tries to think of a subject that has no hypostasis and undergoes division. Psychological analysis, for example, divides the subject into consciousness and unconsciousness by thinking that consciousness is not an autonomous subject, but unconsciousness lurks behind it, and consciousness is only the tip of an unconscious iceberg.¹⁵⁾

According to this explanation, the conscious subject does not exist, it appears in the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness. In “*Mo-Ho Chih-Kuan*,” this subject appears through the practice of observing a mind. That is to say, the subject is the

unconscious subject and is similar to ‘*Ichinen*’ including ‘*Sanzen*,’ which does not eternally exist but flashes up for a fraction of a second.

Conclusion In psychoanalysis, the subject is not the ego. If we use ‘self’ as a collective term, it follows that ‘self’ has two dimensions. It is safe to say that ‘*On-nyu-kai*’ as an observable object is ‘ego’ (an image of a shredded body) that is formed by others, and ‘*Ichinen-sanzen*’ is ‘the unconscious subject.’ It is thought that the “unconscious subject,” the subject that arises in the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness, is the mind of *Ichinen Sanzen*, while the subject that becomes conscious makes the shift to the process that constricts and that in due course desires enter into existence. Desire in psychoanalysis does not necessarily correspond to ‘Bon-no’ of Buddhism, and this is a topic requiring further consideration.

Notes

- 1) T.46, p. 49b. We will also denote a page of the book translated by Paul L. Swanson (abbreviating as PS), p. 755. 2) Ibid. 3) Ibid., p. 51. PS, pp. 786–789. 4) Ibid., p. 52a–b. PS, p. 791. 5) Ibid., p. 52b–c. PS, pp. 795–800. 6) Ibid., PS, pp. 800–801. 7) Ibid., pp. 52c–53a. PS, pp. 802–803. 8) Ibid., p. 53a. PS, p. 809. 9) Ibid., pp. 53c–54a. PS, pp. 814–815. 10) Ibid., p. 54a. PS, p. 815. 11) That is to say, form 相, nature 性, substance 体, power 力, activities 作, primary causes 因, environmental causes 縁, effects 果, rewards and retributions 報, the equal existence the above nine factors 本末究竟等. 12) See Miwa 2012. 13) Mukai 2016, 23–24. 14) Ibid., p. 45. This explanation is against psychological ‘ego’: (psychological ‘ego’) becomes independent, has a hypostasis, is a conscious subject, thinks a dominator of its own, and is the central organization that aggregates the psychological capability. Simply speaking, ‘ego’ is a dwarf that lives in the brain and manipulates the body. 15) Ibid.

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(Professor, Rissho University)