

IASBS XI: Abstracts of Presenters

Abbott, Susan M. (Resident Chaplain Intern, Mills-Peninsula Hospital in Burlingame)

“Towards an Ethic of Buddhist Pastoral Presence.”

The Buddhist tradition has a variety of teachings which can give the Buddhist chaplain or pastoral caregiver “ways of being” that are quite helpful when dealing with issues of suffering, sickness, old age, and death. This talk will explore reflections from my experience working as a Buddhist hospice chaplain in multi-faith settings and draw on teachings from the *Anapanasati*, *Satipatthana*, and *Metta Suttas* and the *Dhammapada* from the Pali Cannon as well as the implications of teachings on impermanence, emptiness, and the preciousness of human life. Developing these ways of “mindfulness” and being present are important skills when it comes to “befriending” the difficult issues that pastoral caregivers are often called upon to do. This talk will also address the application of the bodhisattva ethic to this work as well as explore the importance of being grounded in our respective Buddhist traditions as sources for our own “refuge” during difficult times.

Andrade, Angela (South American District)

“A View on Limits and Transcendancy within the Other Power Way.”

The story of the frog that lives in a small pond unaware of the size of the ocean around until one day is led to know it and has his whole existence changed illustrates in a simple form the situation of confronting one's limits. The Buddhist reading of it suggests that we see the frog as a metaphor for the "self" that lives restricted to his own small world, never had any contact with what transcends it and himself, until one day he experiences what is beyond his limits. What happens then is that one's thoughts, opinions and perceptions of the world and of oneself are shattered to pieces. This experience of shattering the wall of one's ego can be lived as something dreadful or chaotic when is lived as a confrontation with Nothing in the heideggerian sense. In the Jodo Shinshu teaching however, we learn that the Emptying-process may take place in distinct ways.

Part of the insightful realization that marks the encounter with Other Power in the nembutsu way is specifically the deeper awareness of our own limits, i.e., a true recognition of our condition as bombu and of how Amida's wisdom and compassion works within our lives. This paper takes up the following questions. If we consider the Emptying-process allows us to move beyond our egocentric limits, how may it help us to develop a deeper sense of tolerance and interconnectedness to others? And, further, how this is lived in the Shin Buddhist way? How to understand the idea of transcendency as Western traditions present it in relation to Other Power?

Asuka, Kanjo (Zenkoji Temple, Toyama, Japan)

“Six Heretics and Shinran.”

In the last part of the Chapter on Shinjin in his main work, *Kyogyoshinsho*, Shinran quotes plenty of passages from the scene of the salvation of king Ajatasatru in the *Nirvana Sutra*, and discusses the salvation of those who commit the five grave offenses. In this story, there are six ministers who respectively embrace different thoughts other than Buddhism. They approach the king and attempt to comfort the king's anguish out of killing his own father. One of Shinran's characteristics on treating Buddhist Sutras and commentaries is to omit passages. In this section, Shinran also omits many passages on the six heretical thoughts from the *Nirvana Sutra*, particularly, he quotes nothing from the sixth minister who embraces Nigrantha Jñatiputra, the founder of Jainism, only quoting the minister's name and the master's. Why did Shinran omit all the passage concerning Jainism? In this presentation, I would like to examine Shinran's intent of this omission in comparison with the passages on the other five ministers and masters that Shinran omits.

Bermant, Gordon (Ekoji Buddhist Temple, Virginia, moderator)

“Growing Jodo Shinshu in America: Are There Lessons from the Christian Missionary Model?”

Many thoughtful members of the American Jodo Shinshu community believe that our national church – the BCA – faces a crucial choice. In simplest terms, the choice is this: change or perish. If we wish the church to survive, we must change some of our organizational assumptions and

practices, which lack the vitality and flexibility to meet the inescapable challenges that confront the church.

To be sure, healthy initiatives are now underway in BCA, of which the \$30 million campaign for Jodo Shinshu in America is the most visible and daring. But money will not buy our way out of the deficiencies of an organizational structure that limits opportunities for pastoral clergy and minimizes the religious roles of lay church members.

Clergy. The role of BCA minister should not be limited to the traditional temple pastor, but should be supplemented by other roles, such as chaplain, scholar/teacher, youth leader, and lecturer/preacher to religious seekers from outside the church. Increased organizational opportunities for Shin clergy will make the occupation more attractive and help to alleviate the exceedingly difficult ministerial shortage problem.

Laypeople. It is no longer true that an inadequate English Shin literature requires lay Shin Anglophones to rely only on oral transmissions from clergy. The works of Shinran are translated into English completely and well; projects to translate the entire Chinese canon are well underway; and the library of excellent interpretive literature in English is readily available.

There are many potential Shin Buddhists who can be guided into these works. They should then have opportunities for discussion with clergy and other lay members. And then they should be encouraged and helped to share their growing wisdom and compassion with others outside the church.

The Christian Mission Model. These changes follow from a re-imagining of what the church is. Our imaginations can be enriched by consulting the work of others who have struggled as we now struggle. The literature of the Christian mission provides a clear, forceful organizational vision and rhetoric of church identity that do not depend necessarily on Christian theology for their vitality and utility. When read as a model of church organization, Christian mission literature can help us meet our own challenges. Each of us, minister and layperson, becomes a witness and contributor to the religious truth of Amida Buddha. Our church becomes the vector that points to this truth and the vehicle that allows everyone to arrive at it. The distinction between *propagation*, now perceived as a clerical responsibility, and *outreach*, now perceived as an

administrative/lay function, dissolves. Every Shin Buddhist, cleric and lay, witnesses and exemplifies the truth of the Nembutsu. Each of us avows the bodhisattva's pledge to "save all life from pain and grief, and with the Dharma pave a road to Buddhahood."

Bloom, Alfred (Professor Emeritus, University of Hawai'i)

"Kiyozawa Manshi and the Path to Revitalization of Buddhism."

Kiyozawa Manshi (1863–1903) was a leading Shin scholar and reformist during the Meiji era (1868–1912). Though his life was short, he set the direction for the entry of Shin Buddhism into the modern age. His spiritual and intellectual leadership not only affected Shin Buddhism but also influenced teachers in other denominations. His approach to Buddhism still has significance as Buddhism gains in intellectual and spiritual influence in our contemporary world.

This paper assumes that religious faith must embrace the whole person, involving the affective, intellectual and physical dimensions of life. In the light of this perspective we will explore his religious experience, as well as his intellectual perspective, taking note particularly of those aspects that have particular relevance for revitalizing Buddhism today.

Corless, Roger (Duke University [retired])

"What Accounts for the Success of Soka Gakkai?"

David, Mary L. (The Institute of Buddhist Studies)

"Ajatasatru's Grief: Developing a Shin Buddhist Approach to Grief Counseling."

This paper looks at the theme of grief, loss, death, and bereavement from a Shin Buddhist understanding in the context of the story of Ajatasatru from the Nirvana Sutra, which Shinran analyzed in the *Kyogyoshinsho*. It offers an exegetical interpretation of the sutra from the perspective of Ajatasatru's experience of bereavement. It suggests that, although grief and loss are not the customary themes that scholars have explored in the Nirvana Sutra, the sutra addresses this theme, and the Buddha works with Ajatasatru to help him resolve these feelings.

The paradigm of death and bereavement that modern Swiss psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross developed is used as an analytical model for interpretation. Further, the Buddha in these passages of the sutra directly addresses Ajatasatru's grief and models excellent counseling skills, using interventions that can be characterized as modern psychological interventions. The work of modern Shin Buddhist writers such as Nabeshima Naoki and Itsuki Hiroyuki are also referenced to provide doctrinal support for developing grief-counseling skills within the tradition. It proposes that often the most skillful and effective intervention for working with both the dying and the bereaved is active listening. The counseling minister or chaplain can offer support by simply offering his or her presence and emotional support, allowing the person that he/she is working with to take the lead in discussing his or her loss. Although this intervention may seem like the most simple, it is often the most difficult.

Gibbs, Jundo Gregory (Oregon Buddhist Temple)

"Enduring Themes in Contemporary Pure Land Thought."

In this paper I will be responding to several of the theorists whose papers are included in *Toward a Contemporary Understanding of Pure Land Buddhism*, edited by Dennis Hirota, State University of New York Press, 2000 [hereafter, Hirota 2000]. I will be looking at their ideas in terms of three categories that I believe will represent enduring types of 21st century approaches to Pure Land Buddhist religiosity. One type of approach tries to place the Pure Land stream of Buddhist tradition, and especially the Jodo Shinshu school thereof, in comparison and contrast to the Christian tradition. This stance can be seen in the work of John Cobb and John Yokota. Another posture that we will continue to see throughout this century tries to understand Shinshu in comparison to other schools of Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism. This perspective usually results in minimizing the uniqueness of those Buddhist approaches which derive from Shinran Shonin's thought and can be seen in the papers by Musashi Tachikawa in the aforementioned volume [Hirota 2000, pgs. 101–124 and pgs. 223–240]. The third type of viewpoint which I expect to be enduring is one which stresses the experiential nature of Shinshu religiosity and its inseparability from the actual practice of the Nembutsu, the saying aloud or reflecting silently upon Amida Buddha's name. This stance can be seen in the work of Dennis Hirota. I will also refer to some of my own writings which have appeared elsewhere and share a perspective on Jodo Shinshu which finds it to be concerned with transformative experience which takes place in

the process of saying or thinking upon Amida's name.

My categorization of these approaches differs considerably from that given by Dennis Hirota himself [see Hirota 2000, pages 241–247]. Hirota would highlight modes of understanding and the linguistic dimension of Nembutsu practice in assessing his own work. In this place I am more concerned to see him as part of a larger movement within contemporary Jodo Shinshu thought that is guiding the practitioner back to practice, the practice of saying the Buddha's name, and the spirituality transformative experience which comes with that practice. It will be obvious that this is the approach to Pure Land Buddhism, which I consider most fruitful. Although this is my own preferred pathway to understanding Shinran Shonin and his followers, the other two approaches also have their virtues and will, I believe, endure.

Hamilton, Doreen (Toronto Buddhist Church, Kai-Kyoshi ho)
“Spiritual Health: A Comparison of Shinran's ‘Person of Shinjin’ with
Abraham Maslow's ‘Self-actualizing’ Person.”

Summary of paper:

1. Buddhism is a religion, but it also uses and recommends the scientific method of inquiry.
2. There are different levels of suffering: physical, emotional, social and spiritual.
3. Compare these levels to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs".
4. Compare characteristics of "shinjin" mind and "non-retrogression" to Maslow's characteristics of "self-actualizing" people. e.g. spontaneous, autonomous, liking solitude, having fresh appreciation, feelings of kinship with others, humble and respectful, etc..
5. Buddhism as offering tools for developing spiritual health.
6. Joining the "Health & Fitness" movement, as an outreach strategy.

Hanada-Lee, Julie (North American District)
“Dynamics of Nembutsu in a Pastoral Encounter”

The purpose of the paper will be to discuss:

1. What is the pastoral encounter?
2. Why in the hospital?
3. What is the importance of spiritual care providers in the healthcare of patients, their families and staff?
 - a. Pain: Spiritual Pain
4. What is the role and responsibilities of the chaplain?
5. Listening to the patient is the practice of *Mompo*, listening to the Dharma.
 - a. Listening to the patient is the practice of being aware of one's *Hakarai*.
6. The dynamics of Nembutsu in the pastoral encounter.
 - a. Experience of the patient.
 - b. Realization of self as limited being
 - c. Awareness of Amida Buddha
 - d. Experience of Namoamidabutsu

Ichimura, Shohei (North American Institute of Zen and Buddhist Studies)
“Amida's Vow and Mahayana Insight Sunyata.”

From its earliest stage of history, the cult of A-mi-t'o (Amida) in China was based on the Mahayana doctrine of Sunyata and harmonious with all Mahayana schools of Buddhism. One of the remarkable historical evidence was the establishment of an Amid cult enclosure on Mt. Rozan (Lu-shan) by Hui-yüan, (?-416), founder of the White-Lotus Society. On the one hand his

group of devotees were engaged in the practice of Nien-fo by laying their supreme hope in the belief that they would be reborn in the blissful land of Amitabha Buddha after their death. On the other hand, Hui-yüan was a disciple of Tao-an (315–385) who promoted the study of Prajñāparamita scriptures in the region of Ch'ang-an. Hui-yüan studied on the doctrine of Sunyata by communicating with Kumarajva (344–413) as well as with the Madhyamika student Sêng-Chao (374–414), Chih-chê Ta-shih (538–597), known as forefather of Chinese T'ien-t'ai school, incorporated the belief in and practice of N'ien-fo as part of his teaching. In Chinese Buddhist tradition, the practice of N'ien-fo is still exercised together with that of Zen practice even today.

The belief and practice of Pure Land Tradition have been well accepted among some of the Western societies today, just as we have an international association of scholars who are interested in the subject of the Shin-Buddhist tradition. Admitting that the Pure Land belief and practice are one of the established features of Mahayana Buddhism in the West, we have been facing some difficulty in ways of distinguishing this tradition as Buddhism from the monotheistic belief in the redemptive power of the supreme being and the effectuality of prayer for salvation that are essential to Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Under the on-going global cultural and religious confrontations, I am inclined to think that Shin Buddhism ought to be distinguished of their spirituality from the types of monotheistic religions. Surely, it seems to be imperative to emphasize the power of Amida's Vow and the effectuality of Nembutsu, should the tradition grow as a way of spiritual transformation in the West.

In 1999 at the 10th IASBS conference convened in Honolulu, I posed a similar question as "Why shouldn't Shin-Buddhism use the scripture of Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra? Why shouldn't its tradition in the West emphasize its underlying insight of Śūnyatā as central to the fundamental distinction of its spirituality from that of the monotheistic religions?" The purpose of this paper is concerned with the question: "How and why should we emphasize the insight of Śūnyatā as the underlying power of Amida's Vow?"

Inoue, Takami (Otani University, Eastern Buddhist Society, Japan)

"Passion and the Vow: Shinran's Dream-samadhi and Gautama's Temptation"

Ishida, Hoyu (University of Shiga Prefecture, Japan)
“Where can Pure Land be in the Contemporary World?”

There can be three interpretations regarding the location of Pure Land. The most popular or traditional interpretation is that Pure Land is many millions of miles away in the west, from where the Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life, named Amida Buddha, is constantly sharing wisdom of enlightenment with all sentient beings, especially those who are suffering. Amida Buddha is thus working on us by transforming into the Name, the formula of *Namu Amida Butsu*. By becoming aware of Amida's universal compassion and by totally releasing ourselves to Amida, we will be born in the Pure Land. Since this whole process is made to come about, in an ultimate sense, through Amida, the *Nembutsu* serves as an expression of our gratitude to Amida, and birth in the Pure Land is to come after our departure from this world.

The second interpretation of Pure Land is highly philosophical. According to some interpreters, there is no such thing or substance called Pure Land, since everything is *sunya* (empty) in its essential nature. The Pure Land that we conceptualize does not exist and is only a symbol, or *upaya* (skill in means), that leads to profound realization of *sunyata* (emptiness). This interpretation, however, does not deny the concept of Pure Land.

The third interpretation is that Pure Land exists anywhere and everywhere. We have only to realize it. Pure Land is not a place to go, but comes into being instantaneously when we become aware of it. Amida is not presiding over an ethereal realm, but the Pure Land is this dirty earth itself. Pure Land is in the world—but not of the world.

The location of Pure Land is, after all, a means or metaphor. Those who really see it in the west are actually seeing and experiencing it here and now. And those who see it here also see it around them. What matters is whether we are awakened or not. Even though we suffer as a result of attachments to what is impermanent, Amida's universal compassion is constantly working upon us. Thus, by trying to improve and better our daily lives with the realization of our limited and self-centered mode of being, we permit the seed of enlightenment to blossom, which finally comes about through the spontaneous working of Amida. It is like a lotus flower beautifully growing up through the mud.

This paper deals with what Pure Land can be to the followers of Pure Land Buddhism and tries to elaborate what Pure Land can mean to those who live in this contemporary world of highly developed technology and science.

Iwohara, John (Venice Hongwanji, Los Angeles)

“Reification of the Pure Land: Mythological Truth and Mythological Reality”

The Pure Land tradition of Buddhism, as the term implies, is founded upon the central theme of a Buddha Realm or Pure Land. In organizing Buddhist principles around this central theme, Pure Land Buddhism has been a vibrant and meaningful expression of Enlightened activity over the centuries and across cultures. Jodo Shinshu, which is a part of this tradition, has continued to delve ever deeply into the significance and implications of the Pure Land as it has also crossed the Pacific and into Western Hemisphere. In crossing the Pacific and helping to introduce Buddhism to the West as a living tradition, notably in the Americas, Australia and Europe, new challenges have confronted this path of Buddhism as it has become more accessible to the major culture.

One of the pressures that has been placed upon the tradition, heightened especially recently by the growing assimilation of the tradition’s historical membership base, is the tendency of the West to “de-mythologize” its traditions and to emphasize “rationality.” Weaknesses in this approach towards “de-mythologizing” and relying upon “rationalism” to understand the nature of humanity, one of the goals of religion, is growing and there is a heightened acceptance and understanding of the role, function, and meaning of myth.

With this paper I hope to argue for a need to “re-mythologize” or reify the Pure Land, and from there begin to explore the potential that a reified and re-mythologized Pure Land can have even in a culture that values rationalism above all else.

**Jedrzejewska, Myoshu Agnes (Korinji Nishi Honganji Temple of Yokohama &
Jodo Shinshu Sangha–Mission Center in Poland)**

**“The Female Disciples of Buddha: An Understanding of
Shinran’s Teachings for Our Present Times.”**

So profound is Amida's great compassion
That, manifesting inconceivable Buddha-wisdom,
The Buddha established the Vow of transformation into men,
Thereby vowing to enable women to attain Buddhahood.

Note: This is the meaning of the Thirty-fifth Vow.

If women did not entrust themselves to Amida's Name and Vow,
They would never become free of the five obstructions,
Even though they passed through myriads of kalpas;
How, then, would their existence as women be transformed?

(CWS. p.341, 376)

These, two wasans of Shinran, are, today, practically the only aspect of his teachings, which attract criticism from both Japanese men and women, as well as from the Westerners.

Amida’s all embracing Energy of Absolute Wisdom and Compassion (Tariki) is the perfect ideal for our contemporary world in trying to understand the Universe through our human senses. However, the Message of the Buddha has always been adapted to the culture of the times, in which it has been delivered. It is perfectly understandable that any message must reflect the customs and images with which people are familiar. In other words, it must conform to the given social framework of a particular époque.

The entire Buddhadharma has been expressed almost exclusively from the perspective of Oriental cultures, which have all displayed extremely strong discrimination against women.

Almost all students of the Buddhadharma are familiar with some of the great direct male disciples of Sakyamuni. However, knowledge of the comparably prominent female followers of the Buddha has almost been forgotten. For a focused researcher, it may be possible to discover that Sakyamuni was well-balanced in his spiritually equal treatment and appreciation of both sexes, though it was a very unusual achievement for his time. The Buddha's idea of protecting women's orders through the auspices of his best monks certainly proved its effectiveness.

The aim of the paper is to refresh the legacy of some prominent female disciples of the Buddha, and to reflect upon the real cause of the marginalization of women's spiritual abilities in the field of the Dharma.

Kandahjaya, Hodaya (Graduate Theological Union)

"Did Javanese of Borobudur know *Sukhavati*?"

The concealment of the initial foot of Borobudur has long puzzled scholars of Borobudur. To date there has been no satisfying answer as to why the builders made such drastic change. Some have suggested that the expansion in the lower level was needed to strengthen the foundation of Borobudur. By doing so, the builders wished to prevent the monument from collapsing. But this argument is certainly comical. It does not seriously take into account the fact that the hidden foot contains some reliefs which were deliberately obliterated. Thus the modification must have been caused by factors arising from beyond the civil engineering realm.

In 1929 Sylvain Levi assured us that the reliefs in the hidden foot depict a series of teachings taken from the *Mahakarmavibhanga Sutra*. However, the same as its closure, the reason for selecting this particular text remains a mystery. Nevertheless, the depiction of the law of cause and effect in a *mandala* is not unique to Borobudur. The *Muryojukyo Maanala*, which represents the *Larger Sukhavativyuha Sutra* also includes drawings from the law of karma. Despite incongruous background and different compositional details, the parallel occurrence likely does not happen merely by coincidence. Instead, there is a reason to believe that the correlation discloses a pattern by which the initial composition and selection of texts at Borobudur perhaps follows a framework akin to the *Larger Sukhavativyuha Sutra*.

Mied, Joanne B. (North American District)

“Pastoral Counseling of the Sick and Injured: Shin Buddhist Approaches.”

This paper explores a Shin Buddhist approach to counseling of the sick and injured. The writings of Shinran and Rennyo are reviewed for doctrinal guidelines that may be used by Shin Buddhist ministers. The paper also reviews articles and sermons by American Shin ministers to understand approaches that are currently in use. Then articles and testimonies of lay Shin Buddhists are reviewed to highlight specific instances when counseling at the time of illness and injury has yielded a deepening of faith. Thus the reader will be informed of possible doctrinal approaches to the pastoral counseling of the sick and injured. In addition, the reader will be aware of approaches that have been used and have been effective.

Mitchell, Scott A. (Graduate Theological Union)

“Shin Dharma Net as Virtual Dojo.”

Throughout its history in the West, Jodo Shinshu has often participated in American cultural norms which have altered its pedagogic and doctrinal appearance such as the composition of Western style hymns, English services, Sunday Dharma School, and the establishment of Young Men’s and Women’s Buddhist Associations. And as it has participated in these decidedly Western activities, today it also utilizes a new medium of mass communication: the internet and the World Wide Web. Both the Honpa Hongwanji Mission in Hawai’I and the Buddhist Churches of America on the mainland maintain web sites which act as guides for members and advertisements for potential converts. The purpose of the present study is to examine use of the internet by American Shin Buddhists in more depth and within the context of one particular site. Rather than exploring the whole gamut of Jodo Shinshu online, which could ultimately prove too complex for such a narrow study, I will focus on the work of legendary Shin scholar Dr. Alfred Bloom and his web site, Shin Dharma Net. This site aptly illustrates the most productive use of the internet by Shin Buddhists in the West to date. Rich in content while being accessible to both the specialists and non-specialists, Dr. Bloom’s site creates a virtual *dojo* for Shinshu practice and study worthy of more in-depth analysis. Through such content analysis, I will pull out three distinctive aspects of his site which have implications for the propagation of Jodo Shinshu

teachings and the formation of Shin communities. It is my belief that this site successfully acts as a mirror of off-line Shin Buddhist in that it provides a place for practitioners to further explore both the doctrinal and practical aspects of their faith. And yet, at the same time, this site falls short in creating genuine community, a fault clearly of the medium rather than the site itself or its producers and members. Nevertheless, Dr. Bloom's efforts to create a forum for the further propagation and sharing of the *dharma* is admirable and a model for other Shin communities in the West and beyond.

Nakai, Patti [Honda] (Non-residence Minister at Buddhist Temple of Chicago)

"Access of Evil: Understanding the *Tannisho* through the Writings of Shuichi Maida."

One stumbling block in reading the English translations of the *Tannisho* is the use of the word "evil." In North American society, the label "evil" is primarily affixed to dangerous criminals and particularly in our post-9/11 world, to foreign terrorists (e.g. Chicago Tribune's 9/11 anniversary CD-rom was titled "When Evil Struck America"). In order to understand Shinran's use of the word in the *Tannisho*, we must overcome that concept of evil as something residing in those "other" people who destroy lives and property. One book which directly addresses that obstacle in reading the *Tannisho* is *The Evil Person: Essay in Shin Buddhism* by Shuichi Maida (translated by Nobuo Haneda, published in 1989 by Higashi Hongwanji North American Translation Center, Los Angeles, California).

The focus of *The Evil Person* is the central Jodo Shin teaching of *akunin shoki*: the true awakening to the reality of one's own evil self (*ki no jinshin*) is the manifestation of one's liberation by the Dharma (*ho no jinshin*). Through his penetrating insight into the events of modern life, Shuichi Maida (1906–1967, a lay disciple of Rev. Haya Akegarasu of Jodo Shinshu Otani-ha) gives us a contemporary perspective for our reading of the *Tannisho*.

In this paper, I would like to present how the specific articles in Maida's book were read in conjunction with the key sections of the *Tannisho* (chapters 1-10, chapter 13 and the postscript) at the study group which meets weekly at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago. This group is composed mostly of newer and younger (under 50 years old) temple members. Although some had read several books on Buddhism before joining the temple, this class was their first in-depth encounter

with Jodo Shin teachings.

My hope is that other temples in North American might find our syllabus useful in their study groups as they reach out to the newer and potential members who were not raised in ethnic Japanese and/or Buddhist families. Also I hope this paper will aid ministers and lay leaders in fostering and appreciation of the *Tannisho* among even their temples' long-time members.

Nomura, Nobuo (Kyoto Women's University)

"Words and Characters for Shinran"

This paper is on the relationship between the name of the Buddha Amida and its written forms. It is well known that Shinran used the name of the Buddha in the three forms; the six, the ten, and the nine Chinese characters: 南无阿弥陀仏, 歸命尽十方無碍光如来, and 南無不可思議光如来. We, then, pose a couple of questions on the name in clarifying the significance of the name. Is it possible to use other forms of the name than these forms? Is it possible to think of the name written in other characters and letters than Chinese characters?

We will answer these questions on the basis of the following stance. The modern linguistics regards letters as "shadow" of languages, but in Japanese, archaic or modern, Chinese characters play the important role of conveying the meanings of words. In this sense, characters in Japanese are not at all the shadow of the language and, therefore, without characters we Japanese cannot know meanings of spoken words.

In answering the questions, we will also take the following into consideration as the fruit of the modern linguistics. The name of Amida Buddha has the two aspects of common noun and proper noun. The former, on the one hand, conveys its meaning and, therefore, it stands on the position of receivers or hearers. This is because common nouns make a system of words and a word can hardly be replaced with a new one. In the aspect of proper noun, on the other hand, the name does not have any meaning, because proper names have lost their meanings they once had and, each of them being independent, they do not have any influence to a whole bunch of words. It, then, stands on the position of speakers.

Paraskevopoulos, John (Oceania and East Asian District)

“Amida’s Dharma in the Modern World.”

This paper will endeavour to address a number of issues pertaining to the relevance of Shin Buddhism in the current age. Particular consideration will be given to Shinran’s message and its relationship to certain contemporary concerns in the area of ethics, spiritual practice and personal morality. The discussion of these matters will be aimed at eliciting a particular perspective which may serve to illuminate certain problems and opportunities rather than seeking to provide a comprehensive analysis of all possible dimensions to these complex issues.

The paper seeks to argue that Shin Buddhism is uniquely placed to offer serious seekers in our time, a profound and liberating path to human fulfilment despite the myriad of conflicting spiritual (and secular) alternatives that are prevalent today. While attempting to show that Shinran’s teaching is capable of cutting through much of the confusion and dross that plague contemporary discourse on religion and contemporary values, the paper will also suggest that its true value has less to do with forging an alliance with the forces of modernity than it has with transcending such forces altogether.

This will lead to a brief discussion of ‘engaged’ Pure Land Buddhism and a consideration of some of its implications. Finally, the paper will seek to suggest ways of establishing a more robust foundation for grounding Shin Buddhism in the context of the manifold perplexities and anxieties faced by many individuals in the modern world.

Pinto, Shogyo Gustavo (South American District)

“Back to the Roots: Jodo Shinshu in the West.”

This paper intends to discuss some aspects of the challenge of Jodo Shinshu’s assimilation in the West. Situated in a cultural scenario where Shinshu is one of the various Buddhist denominations to which westerners are exposed and considering that a large percentage of this public is still to define its Buddhist option, Shinshu frequently faces the question of what does it mean to be a Shinshu follower. Taking Shinjin as the core of the answer to this question, the paper will discuss

how it relates to the original experience in which all Buddhist denominations are rooted. Only through this common ground can the word Buddhism maintain a meaning and different denominations recognize a unity among them. This common ground must necessarily be found in an experience, instead of an intellectual construction, or Buddhism would be reduced to a mere speculative philosophy and could no longer be considered a Religion. The paper will also discuss the question of cultural influences in both doctrinal interpretation and institutional organization in the process of Jodo Shinshu's assimilation in the Western environment.

The fact that Buddhism came to be known in the West mainly through academic studies brings about the risk of an excessive emphasis in the theoretical aspects of the Dharma precluding the living experience that, in the case of Jodo Shinshu (in the Shinjin given by Amida), is the condition for salvation. The paper will also discuss the risk of sectarianism that frequently menaces traditions that have a long History of well defined sect structures and consequently the importance of the common experience as the integrating factor for different Buddhist traditions.

Sasaki, LaVerne Senyo (BCA Minister, Emeritus)

“Inter-racial and Inter-faith Marriage and Ceremony.”

I. The American and global community is rapidly becoming more diverse, complex and challenging. Therefore, there is a need to research and understand this social issue as Buddhists and non-Buddhists.

A. The San Francisco–Bay Area non-anglo “minority population” may soon become the “majority population.”

B. The job world and consequent social contacts of the young people are totally different from the pre-World War II period of the older first generation (Issei) and second generation (Nisei) Japanese American generations. Young and older people are now in the mainstream community. Inter-racial friendship and dating, is now the norm for the younger Japanese-American population.

II. These social changes oftentimes lead to inter-racial dating and marriages among younger and older people.

III. Why is it important to have an inter-faith wedding? It is to recognize the importance of religion in the marriage and to respect the different religious traditions of the individuals. Without this type of wedding, a groom or bride is obligated to a religious ceremony unfamiliar to his or her personal or family religious background.

IV. A couple's choice of a site for the wedding ceremony often-times becomes "church or religion shopping." Couples inquire and select the type of ceremony based on cost, facilities, language and services offered by the church and/or clergy person.

V. Such being the case in this contemporary world, it is particularly important for the non-Christian faith traditions to become more viable, visible and credible in this pre-dominantly Christian/Jewish country.

VI. Inter-faith wedding ceremonies depend upon the willingness and attitude of the clergy person or by the policy established by the religious institution.

Examples of an inter-faith wedding ceremony formats:

Buddhist and Protestant Christian

Buddhist and Catholic Christian

Buddhist and Jewish

VII. What will be the future of the couple's selection of religion or church? It is totally determined by the couple based upon their discussion, dialogue and selection (or non-selection).

Sato, Taira (Three Wheels, London)
“Asahara Saichi and His Experience of Emptiness”

The Shin Buddhist poet, Asahara Saichi was born in 1850 and passed away in 1932. For his last eighteen years he composed more than 10,000 poems. All those poems are the lively free expressions that came about directly from what he experienced in daily life. Amongst those immediate expressions of his innermost faith there are a number of poems that are connected with his experience of Emptiness. Saichi must have realized Emptiness through his experience of becoming Namu-Amida-Butsu. This essay will give light on those interesting poems that seem to have to have weeled up from his inner experience of Emptiness.

Schepers, Gerhard (International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan)
“Shinran’s Way in the Context of Globalization.”

There are two aspects of globalization which seem to be of particular importance when considering the relevance of Shinran’s Way in the contemporary world.

1. Globalization – especially in the form of greater mobility and intensified communication worldwide – has led to increased contacts and closer relations between religions. In many countries, religious pluralism and, accordingly, the possibility of personally experiencing various forms of religion and making one’s personal choices, has become a common feature of modern society. This has created a new situation in the so-called Western countries where the dominance of one religion had been the rule for almost 2000 years. Accordingly, Christian theologians used to speak – and some still do - of a “challenge” when referring to other world religions, and even the emphasis on the necessity of a “dialogue” between religions can hardly cover up the fact that this “dialogue,” amounted, in many cases, to little more than a monologue. How has this situation changed under the impact of a fast spreading religious pluralism in many countries around the world, and what does this mean in regard to the role of religion in the contemporary world? I will try to show that Shinran’s personal experience, and the Way he found based on his deep trust in Amida, can be particularly relevant in the global situation described here.

2. Globalization has increased the need and the desire for worldwide cooperation and for a new spirit of community and responsibility beyond differences of nationality, ethnicity, culture, and religion. In this situation, where many possible conflicts (“clash of civilizations”) are looming, a convergence of the religions of the world would seem to be desirable, but is it possible and meaningful? How can religions share - and to what extent should they - their various experiences, their insights, rituals, prayers? I will try to discuss these questions in the context of the Way that Shinran has shown, a Way which lives on in the tradition of Shin Buddhism.

Shimazu, Esho (Ryukoku University, Research Institute for Social Science, Japan)

“Reappreciation of Shin Buddhism in the Tokugawa Period.”

Ever since Dr. Zennosuke Tsuji (1877-1955) categorically described that Buddhism in the Tokugawa period (1600-1868) had been totally under the control of the Tokugawa Shogunate and had been used as a tool for the oppressive government, many researchers have simply assumed that Shin Buddhism in this period was no exception. It is on this excessively generalized assumption that some scholars have been bitterly criticizing the scholarly works of the Shin Buddhism in this feudalistic period. This paper is to demonstrate how prolific Shin Buddhism in the Edo period was and to propose reappreciation of the traditional Shin Buddhist scholarly works nurtured in this period.

It might be true that Buddhist temples enjoyed economically stable conditions in the Edo period because of the temple guarantee (*terauke*) system in which everybody had to prove that he/she was not a then prohibited Christian by being a registered member of a particular Buddhist temple. This does not mean, however, that Buddhist clergies enjoyed the stableness regardless of their activities because the congregations could fire them. For example, Daiei and Souei, the two most eminent Shin Buddhist scholars of this period, were both scouted as resident ministers and eventually forced out their residing temples by the lay members because of their negligence of daily tasks as resident ministers caused by their scholarly activities.

The Edo period gave birth to quite a few eminent scholars like Daiei and Soei in Shin Buddhism. Many of them were prolific writers and one of the outstanding collections of their work is the massive 75 volume *Shinshu Zensho* in which we could find almost any kinds of important arguments as well as scholarly commentaries on various Shin Buddhist classics. It is no exaggeration to say that most of necessary scholarly analyses on Shin Buddhism were completed in this period. Unfortunately, not many scholars are seriously researching on the Shin Buddhism of this period now.

Why the Edo Shin Buddhism was now almost forgotten or even negated by some scholars was because of the war experiences and the influence of Marxist interpretation of religion. Now more than half a century has passed since the World War II and Marxist influences have dramatically weakened after the collapse of the Berlin Wall. It is time to reappraise the Shin Buddhism in the Edo Period.

Tanaka, Kenneth (Misashino University, Japan)

**“The Role of Ethnicity in American Shin Temples:
 An Obstacle or an Asset in Propagation?”**

The tension between Buddhism and ethnicity has characterized the nature of BCA and its temples from the beginning of its history and continues to be so today. Any discussion about propagation must address this issue, or otherwise the discussion would be meaningless.

We need to begin with the historical environment of Meiji Japan to fully understand the backdrop of the first missionaries, Dr. Shuye Sonoda and Rev. Kakuryo Nishijima, sent to BCA in 1899. They and others who followed them have been referred to as *kaikyo-shi* (emissaries who open the teachings). However, in the history of Japanese Buddhist overseas activities of Meiji Period, in which saw its efforts to Korea, China and other parts of Asia, another term was used, that of *tsuikyo* (following the teaching in an existing Buddhist communities).

In the case of the BCA, the first missionaries were the result of the Hongwanji following up on an active request from the existing community in San Francisco, whose members were already committed to being Jodo-Shinshu and all Japanese! In this light, then, it would be more correct to

see the BCA missionaries as *tsuikyo-shi* (emmissaries who followed the teaching in an existing Buddhist community) rather than *kaikyo-shi*.

This difference is important to keep in mind as we attempt to understand the nature of BCA temples, for it has consequences for the way a minister relates to the communities beyond the temple to which he is assigned. When a temple minister attempts actively to “open the teachings” beyond the existing membership, he/she often encounters resistance, some subtle and others overt, among some of members. And this resistance is rooted in those who see the temple as a center of an ethnic community.

Given the historical legacy of racial discrimination and the needs of cultural centering in contemporary America, there are indeed a real and legitimate reasons for an ethnic center. It is often said that churches have served as bastion and oasis for the waves of immigrant groups to America. Many Christian churches also continue to be divided along racial and ethnic lines, and those who support and defend an ethnically centered temple often point out this fact. At the same time, it should also be pointed out that there are many other churches and temples that are much more ethnically integrated.

Hence, it is an ongoing tension, which can be either an asset or an obstacle depending on how this is dealt with within the context of BCA propagation.

In my presentation, I wish to address a number of issues:

- 1) The historical environment for overseas activities in the late 19th century Japan as it pertains to the BCA.
- 2) Examples of the strongly ethnic character of BCA throughout its history.
- 3) A more nuanced understanding of ethnicity, between “ethnicity as race” and “ethnicity as culture.” The former is exclusive and thus an obstacle to propagation, while the latter can be inclusive and an asset as well.
- 4) A survey of racial attitude in Asian American Buddhist temples.
- 5) Some thoughts on propagation within the BCA context.

Tanaka, Kenneth (Musashino University, Tokyo, Japan)
**“Won-hyo's Commentary on the Larger *Sukhavativyuha Sutra*:
 Implications for Korean Influence on Japanese Pure Land Buddhism.”**

Wonhyo (Gangyo元曉, 618-686) is a towering figure in the history of Korean Buddhism, whose 111 known writings attributed to him cover an extremely wide range of Buddhist topics. They include 11 on Pure Land Buddhism, of which four are extant, and one of the four is the Commentary on the Larger Sukhavativyuha Sutra (無量壽經宗要二卷) (Taisho 1747), which constitutes the object of this study.

Among the number of interesting perspectives he brings to the understanding of this Pure Land Sutra is his views on “faith” (信). It turns out that Wonhyo holds faith in quite high regard, particularly in comparison to the practice of “ten contemplation” (十念).

Though Wonhyo never realized his intentions to go to China for his studies, it is conjectured that his understanding of Pure Land teachings came by way of Chajang (慈藏), who studied in China from around 638 to 645. There is a strong likelihood that Chajang received instructions in Pure Land teachings from Tao-ch’o (道綽), the fourth among the seven masters in the Jodo-Shinshu tradition.

In his own life, Wonhyo shows evidence of having been not only a scholar but a fervent practitioner as well, particularly after he left the monkhood on account of his involvement with a woman and having fathered a child. In his new life, in which he described himself as a “lay Buddhist of small stature,” he actively taught Pure Land visualization practice and led many among the populace to chant the name of Amitabha.

In Wonhyo’s commentary to the practice of the lowest grade of beings to be born in the Pure Land, he recognizes two groups: Those of Unsettled Nature (不定性人) and those of Bodhisattva Nature (菩薩種性人). For both groups, he stresses the importance of generating bodhicitta, and then prescribes for the first group the practice of ten contemplation. However, for the second group, he, instead, advocates the importance of deep faith (深信). In so doing, Wonhyo

specifically states that those of the Nature of Bodhisattva need not practice ten contemplation on the basis that they possess faith. This constitutes one of the earliest explanations in East Asian Pure Land literature of the relationship between faith and ten contemplation, wherein faith has an equal, if not more, value than ten contemplation.

In seeking the possible reasons for Wonhyo's high evaluation of the role of faith, we are led to his doctrinal outlook that was centered on Tathagatagarbha thought as seen in his commentary on *The Awakening of Faith*. In that work also, faith plays an important role.

This tendency is probably influenced by the important role that faith plays in Tathagatagarbha sutras and commentaries, such as Tathagatagarbha-sutra, Ratnagotravibhaga-sastra, and Nirvana-sutra. In these works, we find two types of faith, one that is more devotional with qualities that call for the surrendering of all effort (仰信), and the other that includes an element of understanding (信解). These are the same two types of faith as found in Wonhyo's commentary, suggesting again of the influence of his strong Tathagatagarbha leanings.

While our examination of the Tathagatagarbha literature provides the probable basis for Wonhyo's high evaluation of faith, in recent studies there is evidence suggesting much greater Korean influence on the role of faith in Japanese Pure Land Buddhism during the Heian period. For example, Yoshinaga Ishida argues that the Korean writings of Ui-chuk (Gijaku義寂) and Kyong-hung (Kyogo憬興) contributed to the emphasis of faith and once-calling (一念) among Japanese Pure Land proponents. And during this period, a text attributed to Wonhyo, the *Path of the Mind Traversing in the Pure Land* (遊心安樂道) also circulated widely in Japan. Thus, when Wonhyo's view on faith and once-calling as expounded in this commentary on the Larger Sutra is seen in this historical framework, Wonhyo's role in the development of Japanese Pure Land thought and practice, including those of Shinran, needs to be further reevaluated and investigated.

Unno, Taitetsu

"The Evil Person in English: Issues in Translation from Japanese."

Yasutomi, Shin'ya (Otani University)
 "The Idea of 'Publicness' in Jodo Shinshu"

The concept of 'publicness' seems to be one of the popular topics of discussion in Japan nowadays. Several books have been written on this subject. In these books, it is sometimes stated that the Japanese lack public awareness. This statement is not necessarily wrong. The Japanese word "Oyake," which is usually translated as 'public' in English, originally meant 'a big house (yake), the Imperial Palace, court and therefore the Emperor'. Nakamura Hajime points out correctly that "there is no counter-concept to (the western sense of) 'public' or 'offentlich' in Japan. To the Japanese, 'publicness' only exists in the relationship to the Imperial family." (*Toyoin no Shii Hoho* 3, Shunjusha). When we refer to the term "Oyake" in the *Vocabulario da Lingoa de Iapam* [A Japanese-Portuguese Dictionary, published in 1603](Iwanami Shoten), we find that it means 'a lord—a king, a noble or a household'. However, at the same time, we notice that 'kuji' means a lawsuit, 'kugai' a public place, 'kugaigoto' an official matter or public affairs. These usages are good examples, showing that the idea of 'publicness' existed in Japan in those days.

In spite of these examples, however, the main meaning of "Oyake" is 'the higher one' (okami or the government, a man of power). In the pre-war era, the Confucian ethics of 'Messhi Hoko' (the extinguishment of self and the service to the higher one), which emphasizes the order of human relationships, played a major role in maintaining 'publicness'. However, in the post-war era, with the coming of high economic growth, many cases of environmental pollution have created serious social problems, which have to do with the weakening of the ethics of 'publicness' along with the expansion of the idea of 'private'.

Although it cannot be denied that such feudal ethics as 'Messhi Hoko' contributed to the formation of the traditional Japanese consciousness of 'publicness', the role played by Buddhism in that process is also significant. Therefore, in this presentation, I would like to discuss the Buddhist concept of 'publicness' in a Jodo Shinshu context by referring to the thought and deeds of Rennyo and Kiyozawa Manshi.

Yokoyama, Wayne S. (Researcher, Hanazono University, Japan)

“D. T. Suzuki's Involvement with the Nishi Hongwanji in the United States: Early Years”

The present paper attempts to examine three points in the life of the Japanese Buddhist ideologist Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro (DT Suzuki) 1870-1966: (1) his involvement with the Nishi Hongwanji in America, (2) his evaluation of Jodoshinshu as seen in his letters and different writings, and (3) his contribution to Jodoshinshu understanding as a scholar and as a person. Introduction: Very little is known about DT Suzuki's activities during certain phases of his life, in particular, (a) his early years in America 1898-1909 for which little or no correspondence exists, (b) his first years as a professor at the Higashi Honganji's Otani University in Kyoto, this again for the present lack of documentation, and (c) his early years on the West coast prior to his tenure as a visiting scholar at Columbia University in the postwar era the entire duration of which lasted roughly from 1950 to 1960. Interestingly, on both his journeys to the West his activities are closely tied to the Nishi Hongwanji. This is remarkable since he does virtually nothing with the Nishi Hongwanji in Japan.

Suzuki's first involvement with the Nishi Hongwanji in the United States is linked with the Light of Dharma, a Buddhist journal in English published by the Nishi Hongwanji's Buddhist Mission in San Francisco. His involvement with the journal virtually from its inception and throughout its seven-year course is noteworthy. He also authors numerous articles in the 1903 to 1906 Beikoku Bukkyo, a Japanese language Buddhist journal published by the same Buddhist Mission from 1902-1918. The August 30 1903 SF Chronicle carried an announcement of a lecture by "Prof. T. Zuzuki of the Imperial University" on Personal Immortality before the Theosophical Society, later the subject of a Light of Dharma article as well as a Beikoku Bukkyo one the same year. While a flurry of letters documents his teacher Shaku Soen's visit to the United States in 1905-1906, the details of Suzuki's life in California remain in the background.

What exactly is the nature of Suzuki's involvement with the Nishi Hongwanji at this time, and how is it related, if at all, to his postwar course half a century later when he tours the Bay area and SoCal giving lectures on Pure Land Buddhism at different Nishi Hongwanji temples, this the subject of another talk. The present findings are based in part on research done at the D. T. Suzuki archives in Kamakura. It is possible that historical materials in the Nishi Hongwanji archives in

the Japanese-American National Museum, Los Angeles, will also shed further light on this phase of Suzuki's life.