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Goichidaiki-kikigaki: Sayings of Rennyo Shōnin

Translated by Elson Snow

Editorial Introduction

The following excerpts are from a collection entitled *Goichidaiki-kikigaki* (*A Record of What Was Said by Rennyo Shōnin During His Life*). Rennyo (1415-1499) was of crucial importance to Jōdō Shinshū, such that he is referred to as the second founder (*chūkō shōnin*.) At the age of fifteen he had made a vow to restore the *Honganji* to pre-eminence among the various branches of *Shinshū*. He revived the organization established by Shinran Shōnin (11173-1262), and laid the foundation for the *Honganji's* becoming a formidable religious organization.

An accomplished organizer and writer, he also oversaw the building of various temple halls, became the eighth abbot (*hosshu*) of *Honganji* in 1457, guided the *Honganji* branch through the terrible Ōnin civil war, and is closely identified with Shinran. Later Shinshū practitioners even declared that Rennyo was either a manifestation of Shinran himself or even that of Amida Buddha.

One of several collections of his teachings, the *Goichidaiki-kikigai* does not consist of memoirs per se, but is more in the nature of reminiscences (or "idealized, inspirational portraits" in the words of Minor Lee Rogers) by other writers. It includes records of what Rennyo said, stories from his life, and recollections by various disciples and family members. The purpose was to perpetuate the memory of the master after his death, and to serve as inspiration to those people remaining after him. Herein is found a wealth of information concerning the man himself, the age in which he lived, and the actual practice of Shinshū doctrine of that period.

William M. Twaddell

(1) NEMBUTSU RECITATION

Dotoku, from the village of Kanjuji, visited Rennyo on New Year's Day in the second year of Meio. "How many years have you reached, Dotoku?" Rennyo asked. "I urge you to recite the nembutsu. When it is recited in *self-power*, it is meant that the number of times it is repeated so much merit is accumulated toward deliverance by the Buddha. When it is recited in *other-power*, it is meant that at the instant moment of total reliance one is received by the Buddha. The nembutsu following this recitation is always, *namuamidabutsu, namuamidabutsu*, expressing heartfelt joy in gratitude for release by the Buddha's strength, the *other-power*. The one moment by which we rely totally on Amida continues unbroken throughout our lives and certain birth in the Pure Land is assured.

(2) "UNOBSTRUCTED LIGHT" IN THE WASANS

Rennyo based his talk during the morning service on the six wasans beginning with the *five inexplicabilities* and concluding with the following lines:

Penetrating light unobstructed
 throughout the ten quarters
 pierces the darkness of ignorance,
 and with one thought of joyousness
 attainment of nirvana is finalized

He compared the gist of the six wasans with a passage describing Amida's light penetrating darkness throughout the ten directions, and a poem of Honen Shōnin:

There is no place lacking moonlight,
 but seen by watchers at night
 wherever they may be.

The occasion was impressive for those who heard the discourse given by Rennyo on the previous evening, and again in the morning. Jitsunyo expressed deep gratitude and praise which he could not fully describe in words.

(3) A MISCALCULATION IN CHANTING

While chanting wasans during service, Rennyo completely missed his turn at the crucial point in the text. Returning to his southern residential quarters, he said, "I was so absorbed in Shinran's stanzas, that I'd forgotten to take the lead. There are so few who follow the teaching and attain birth in the Pure Land; I rejoice for those who do."

(4) THOUGHT AND VOICE ARE ONE

Someone told Rennyo that he did not understand Honen Shōnin's words, *Thought and Voice are One*. Rennyo answered, "Whatever is mental will cast an external form: If one believes that *shinjin's* essence is *namuamidabutsu*, we have an example of the singularity of thought and voice."

(5) BOOKS AND SCROLLS

Rennyo often repeated the couplet:

A tattered scroll worn by hanging,
A tattered book torn by reading.

(6) TOTAL RELIANCE

Rennyo said, "*Namu* is *kimyo*, the mind relying exclusively on Amida Buddha. *Hotsugan Eko* is 'transference' of virtues and merit from Amida Buddha at the moment of total reliance. The expressive form is *namuamidabutsu*."

(7) THE LOWER DEPTHS OF *SHINJIN*

Rennyo Shonin one day talked about *shinjin* to Gansho and Kakuzen, (*Matashiro*) from Kaga province: "*Shinjin* is assurance of rebirth. It is single-mindedness in relying entirely on Amida Buddha for favorable birth in the one-moment calling, *namuamidabutsu*. In spite of many evils they are all eradicated and dispersed by the power of *shinjin* at the very moment of absolute reliance." Rennyo cited a text and then explained, "Illusory seeds of karma accumulated from beginningless beginning through endless round of births on the six paths are obliterated by the wondrous vow-power of Amida's wisdom at the single-minded reliance in *namuamidabutsu*. This is the first flowering of the true cause of ultimate nirvana." Rennyo, after having spoken, then summarized this thought on a scroll and gave it to Gansho.

(8) AWARENESS

Rennyo Shonin was discussing matters with two visitors, Kyoken from Mikawa, and Kuken from Ise. "The meaning of *namu* is *kimyo*, an anticipation of future rebirth. *Kimyo* is awareness of the fundamental vow-power's transference of merits."

(9) UNDERSTANDING FROM A MIND OF FAITH

Someone complained to Rennyo of his inability to understand that, "we have repeated the birth and death cycle many times; and during those lengthy times there were already ways and means given to us in the practice of the vow of the other-power." Rennyo replied, "It is apparent that this response is from a man who has heard, and is knowledgeable —but, has no awakening mind of faith."

(10) FULFILLMENT OF COMPASSION

Fukudenji said he did not understand that Amida's great compassion fills the heart of foundering sentient beings. Rennyo answered, "The lotus of the buddha-mind blossoms internally in the mind and heart, and not in any other bodily organ. It is said that Amida's benevolence fills the heart and mind of sentient beings throughout the universe, which refers only to those acquiring *shinjin*." Fukudenji was grateful for the reply.

(11) WHY ARE WE RECITING WASANS?

At a late evening service in October, Rennyo told his listeners it was deplorable to think that by reciting wasans and the *shoshinge* they were actually making an offering to Amida Buddha and Shinran, "In other traditions merit transference is accomplished by this oral practice. In our school, Shinran intended to share with others the mind of faith in the other-power, and the wasans were composed to better understand this teaching of the seven patriarchs. Nembutsu is recited in recognition of gratitude for what he has done on our behalf, and an expressive outpouring of thankfulness to Amida Buddha, which we observe in the presence of Shinran Shōnin."

(12) SCHOLARLY WAYS

We may be well learned in the bulk of our religious literature, but lacking a settled peaceful mind of the other-power this study is useless. Our rebirth, determined by Amida, is the faith of one-mind lasting to the end of life and in the certainty of rebirth.

(13) A VISION DURING HO-ONKO

Kuzen tells of his experience during Ho-onko festivities: "I went to the altar of Shinran Shōnin about two o'clock in the morning, and dozed off. I was sitting in a 'gassho posture' half asleep, half awake, when I saw the appearance of Rennyo Shōnin through a cotton-like fleecy cloud

walking toward me from behind the shrine. Thinking this was peculiar, I looked inside the altar-place and saw it was empty! I almost spoke out in the conviction that Shinran had taken the form of Rennyo in order to restore Jōdō Shinshū teachings. I then recalled the praises Kyomonbo quoted from the *Ho-onko Shiki*, *the teachings of Shinran are like waiting for the effect of fire after striking stick and stone together. It is like using a file on tile and pebbles creating jewels.* Since that dream I have been convinced Rennyo is truly the manifestation of Shinran Shōnin."

(14) TEACHING AND ACQUIRING *SHINJIN*

Those who teach the way of the dharma should first acquire *shinjin*. Following this determination, when the sutras are read or explained those who listen will be certain of favorable rebirth.

(15) THE PRACTICE OF GRATITUDE

It was said by Rennyo, "One whose reliance on Amida is determined, will have a joyous mind in nembutsu practice of gratitude for the Buddha's compassion."

(16) TRANSMISSION OF *SHINJIN*

Rennyo Shōnin's message to his son, Chikamatsu, was that he first establish *shinjin* for himself, and then firmly transmit it to others.

(17) POPULARITY AND AUTHENTIC CELEBRATIONS

On a December evening before Rennyo was to leave for Kyogyoji, his residence at Tonda, a crowd of people showed up. He asked Junsei why there were so many people. "Perhaps they have come to celebrate the passing of the old year before you leave tomorrow, and they want to show appreciation for your sermons." Rennyo replied, "What a useless celebration! It would be better to observe the occasion of acquiring *shinjin*."

(18) INDOLENCE AND JOYFULNESS

"There are times when some of us are neglectful and overwhelmed by doubting a favorable rebirth. However, our trust in the Tathagata Amitabha establishing once this determination, we would have no regret concerning negligence but rejoice in its certainty. It is a joyous mind, regardless of neglect, that followers experience in the great practice of *other-power*.

(19) GRATEFULNESS FOR ASSURANCE

It was asked of Rennyo whether the *nembutsu* is gratitude for final release in the future, or does the *nembutsu* express gratitude for already having received the way of deliverance in the present? "Both are good," said Rennyo. "Those established in the assembly of assured birth are grateful for their certitude in the present. And for entering nirvana their gratefulness is expressed for their future birth and enlightenment. Either way, there is the moment of joyfulness in becoming a Buddha."

(20) *SHINJIN* FOR ONESELF AND FOR OTHERS

On the 23rd day of the first month of the fifth year of Meio, Rennyo arrived from Tonda, and sternly declared that, "this year I see no one having *shinjin*." He spoke fervently and at great lengths on *anjin*, and then sponsored a Noh performance. In the second month he returned to Tonda. On the 27th day of the third month he returned to Yamashina from Sakai. The following day he remarked, "I have traveled extensively, back and forth, urging people to acquire *shinjin* and impart it to others. Wherever I have gone, I am told of those joyfully attaining *shinjin* experience. I am pleased to hear this upon my return."

(21) DISCUSSING *ANJIN* WITH OTHERS

In a declaration to Kuzen on April 9 of this year Rennyo said, "In acquiring *anjin* one may have something to say. There is nothing to be gained about useless things. To be discussed, carefully, is the essential mind."

(22) LEAVETAKING

Rennyo left for Sakai on the 20th of the fourth month.

(23) FROM THE WASANS

Rennyo arrived in Yamashina and quoted from the wasans:

In the age of Five Corruptions,
Only by diamond-mind faith,
we escape samsaric birth-and-death,
and arrive in the Pure Land of naturalness

He then cited the next wasan, and said, "I came here explicitly to talk about these two verses. We will reach the Pure Land of naturalness! No

longer in the cycle of birth and death. How Marvelous!" repeated Rennyo several times.

(24) SHINRAN'S CALLIGRAPHIC STYLE

Rennyo wrote the phrase, *namuamidabutsu* with gold-powdered ink and hung it in his room. According to Rennyo, *namu* is written in Shinran's style. He said, "The Buddha of *Inconceivable Light* and *Buddha of Unobstructed Light* is the *nembutsu* in praises of the virtuous name. *Namuamidabutsu* is fundamental."

(25) FORM AND ONE-MIND

Innumerable Buddhas of the ten quarters
offer protection to those recognizing
failure of self-power Enlightenment

Junsei asked Rennyo for the meaning of this wasan and was told,
"The skill of all the Buddhas are directed to the refuge of Amida:

The feminine heart of the nun
to be discarded in this world,
And the cow's horn
to remain as-it-is.

This verse of Shinran refers to the insignificance of form, and the importance of one-mind. In this world the head is shaven, but the heart is not.

(26) ON THE CREMATORIA GROUNDS

When thinking of Toribeno
it is with saddened heart;
It is these grounds that
separated us from intimacy.
—a verse written by Shinran

(27) SHINRAN'S PORTRAIT

Kuzen, on the 20th of the ninth month of the 5th year of Meio, was presented the portrait of Shinran Shōnin. There are no words for me to express the profound gratitude I feel.

(28) AT OUR FOUNDER'S MEMORIAL

In the same year during Ho-onko at the original shrine, Rennyo Shōnin read the biography of Shinran. He also touched several topics. For me, the depth of gratitude is inexpressible.

(29) RELATED CONDITIONS OF THE PAST

Rennyo arrived from Yamashina on the 4th month of the sixth year of Meio. He carried with him the original portrait of Shinran, *Anjo-no-Miei*, and after unwrapping the bundle explained that the calligraphy was the writing of Shinran, himself. After homage was given to the founder, Rennyo said that without previous circumstances of related conditions presentation of this portrait would not be possible.

(30) THE THREE ACTIVITIES

Rennyo quoted the wasan:

All Buddhas of the three actions
in full equity,
cures the scourge of
mind, body, and speech.

Its significance is that there is an accord of all Buddhas with Amida Buddha for releasing all living beings.

(31) RENNYO: ON CONTINUITY OF *SHINJIN*

Continuity of faith following the *one-thought of shinjin* is nothing out of the ordinary. *Anjin*, the mind of tranquility is first awakened and singularity of thought is established and always present in grateful response, "Be mindful at all times" and "Respond to Buddha's compassion." Total reliance with this single-mindfulness is an essential requirement.

(32) SEEDS OF REBIRTH

Rennyo posed the problem: "On the question of recitation of the *nembutsu*, chanting of *Shoshin-ge*, and repetition of hymns—morning and evening—is that sufficient for favorable rebirth?" "Yes" was one answer, and "No" was another. Both answers are not satisfactory. The wasans and the gatha are expressions of one-thought reliance of sentient beings on Tathagata Amitabha for future birth. This understanding of faith is gratitude and thankfulness, and joyful acceptance in the presence of Shinran Shōnin."

(33) THE SIX SYLLABLES

Rennyo Shōnin declared that the six syllables, *namuamidabutsu*, are practiced orally in other traditions in expectation of transferring merit and great benefits to the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and heavenly beings, assuming oneself in possession of these virtues. It is not in accord with our tradition. If the six syllables belonged to us, then we would offer it to the Buddha and bodhisattvas. It is the one-thought and one-mind, towards favorable birth, in gratitude for our releasement that the name is repeated.

(34) THE SPONTANEOUS RECITATION

Lady Asai of Mikawa briefly met with Rennyo as he was preparing to leave for Tonda. Before departing he told her that just repeating the name is not sufficient, but at the moment of entrusting we are then assured by Amida Buddha. "With deep conviction we spontaneously repeat, *namuamidabutsu*. Our gratitude, *namuamidabutsu*, *namuamidabutsu*, is an expression of obligation for the Buddha's compassion."

(35) SHINJIN AND CONTRADICTION

Junsei, referring to the *gobunsho*, asked Rennyo about an apparent contradiction in his explanations: "In one of your letters it is said, *At the moment of awakening shinjin all evil is eradicated, and one enters the assembly of no-returns*. You have also said that evil will remain with us during our entire life-time. This is not consistent. "Rennyo then explained to Junsei of eradicating evil at the very moment of acquiring *shinjin*, the power of *shinjin* assures birth in the Pure Land and evil is no longer an obstacle; it is as if there were never these bad effects. While we live in this world evil is never exhausted. Junsei, are you presently enlightened having no evil whatever? The text says, *At the moment of awakening shinjin, evils disappear* . . . Rather than discussing whether evil remains, it is better to question our mind of faith, constantly—With or without evil, it is left entirely to Amida Buddha. Our important concern is only *shinjin*."

(36) THE AUTHENTIC SHINJIN

From the wasans: *Authentic shinjin of pronouncing the name is dharma transference of Amida; self-power recitation is nontransferred and unacceptable*. From Amida this is given as we respond internally with gratitude and certitude by *nembutsu* repetition. Reciting the *nembutsu* with calculation is self-power practice and to be avoided.

(37) BIRTHLESSNESS

The *life of birthlessness* is never known in the three worlds where life migrates through many existences. It is in the land of bliss that life is referred to as *birthlessness*.

(38) EKO

"Eko," says Rennyo Shonin, "is *merit transference* of Amida Buddha's deliverance of all sentient beings."

(39) CERTAINTY OF REBIRTH

The principle of rebirth determined by awakening of one- thought does not depend on whether we are evil or not. — Our releasement is up to Amitabha Tathagata; it is useless thinking about our sins. It is fundamental that sentient beings are released by total reliance.

(40) FRATERNITY

We are sitting together in equality. Shinran had declared that those possessing *shinjin* are all fraternally united. Likewise, I sit with you in the same setting, and desiring that faith is to be attained, and clarification of these issues be made whenever necessary.

(41) BONNO ACTIVITY (THE *KLESAS*)

I am drowning in the sea of lust and passion, and my illusion of ambition is greater than a mountain; I am ashamed, having no joy entering the assembly of assured birth and approaching authentic Enlightenment. Discussing this passage of Shinran, doubt was expressed concerning favorable rebirth. Overhearing these remarks from the next room, Rennyo said, "Lust is the activity of the *klesas* and the quieting of them are miscellaneous practice. Faith only, and nothing else is required."

(42) ROUGH SPEECH

"One evening there was an impromptu gathering. — Out of the way!" Kyomombo angrily shouted. Rennyo, hearing this forceful language said, "Before they leave, tell them in the same voice about the true practice of *one-thought*. This is what we are trying to do from one end of the country to the other!" Kyomombo, immediately and apologetically regretted his words. In praising Rennyo, Kyomombo tearfully related this incident to an audience overwhelmed with emotion.

(43) HO-ONKO SERVICES

In the eleventh month of the sixth year of Meio, Rennyo did not show up for *Ho-onko*. Hokyobo was dispatched to ask about arrangements for services. Rennyo composed a letter stating that only watchmen should remain at the temple from six p.m. to six a.m. in the morning. He conducted services at Tonda for three days of the week before arriving in Osaka on the 24th.

(44) RENNYO'S INDISPOSITION

Since the summer of the seventh year of Meio, Rennyo suffered a recurring ailment, and hoped to visit the enshrined Shinran Shōnin at Yamashina. He declared, "I have no inclination to see anyone lacking *shinjin*. I would invite and warmly receive any visitor who has acquired *shinjin*."

(45) WORDS OF CONTINUITY

People in the present should learn from the past, and the older generation commit to writing what has gone before. Words that are spoken are easily lost, but written ones are retained for the future.

(46) ATTENDANCE

Doshu of Akao declared that "We should never fail to use the home *obutsudan* every morning, and at least once a month attend the local temple, and every year visit the head temple." Ennyo Shōnin hearing this, voiced his approval.

(47) THE CLOGGED MIND

Do not leave things to your own mind. Exercise some control. The Buddhadharma flows freely, and whatever obstructions, acquiring *shinjin* would be beneficial to our practice.

(48) OLD AGE

Hokyobo at the age of ninety declared that he never tired of hearing the teachings, "Never have I felt of listening too much."

(49) WRONG HEADEDNESS

At Yamashina after a dharma talk, it was generally agreed that it contained memorable advice and should be remembered. However, im-

mediately departing from Rennyo a small part of the audience began a discussion and soon became aware of disagreement in reporting what was actually said. At least four of them missed the point all together, and each of the six had a different version. We often do not hear things correctly.

(50) ACQUIRING SHINJIN

When Rennyo was very popular and had a large audience, he would ask, "How many of you have acquired *shinjin*? One? Two?" This would always admonish his listeners.

(51) TO THE POINT!

Hokyo once declared, "Do not listen indiscriminately; Get the gist of the meaning!" This comment emphasizes the importance of grasping the main idea.

(52) NEMBUTSU WITH ENERGY

The recitation of mindfulness is energetic, and reciting the *nembutsu* is the energy of joyous faith.

(53) THE READING OF *THE LETTERS*

Concerning *The Letters*, "The sutras and commentaries are not always read correctly and are sometimes misunderstood. As for *The Letters*, however, they are readily understood and written out of compassion. Hearing them and not having comprehension reveals a lack of a fruitful relationship with past conditions."

(54) HABITUAL ACCEPTANCE

"I have listened, and with understanding have agreed with our tradition," said Hokyo, "but the heart has never grasped it."

(55) THE OTHER POWER

It was often said by Jitsunyo Shōnin that "we were taught to never leave the buddhadharma to the working of our own minds. It is essential, *mindfulness* is awareness of not allowing the mind to assert its control. This is the mind of the Other Power."

(56) TO HEAR

In our tradition there are those who will listen with comprehension, but few of them will actually "hear." This simply means that *faith* is seldom received.

(57) THE WORLD OF SECULARITY

Rennyo Shōnin observed, "We see there are persons engrossed in worldly discussion, when involvement in the Buddhadharma should be made their main concern. The focus of attention should be turned once again to the Buddhadharma."

(58) A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE

No one thinks of himself as evil. In effect, this opinion rejected by Shinran earns his well-deserved admonishment; everyone should make amends and change their attitudes, otherwise, lengthy containment in the Naraka regions is a certainty all due to not plumbing the depths of the buddhadharma.

(59) THE AIR OF COMPREHENSION

each and every person
in relation to authentic faith,
comprehends with a mind
doggedly in self-assurance.

Before leaving for Sakai, Chikamatsu had this *waka* posted, and left word that one should think about this verse; the point was raised by Kooji. The poem is a reference to the mind of a "know-it-all person."

(60) DIRECT MEANING OF ANJIN

Hokyobo always spoke on *anjin* and invariably cited the explanatory phrase of, "the meaning of *namu* . . ." Rennyo's comment was that he should have talked about the quotation, itself, and tersely uncover the significance of *anjin*.

(61) THE SPIRIT OF OFFERING

Zenshu admitted of feeling shamed in the way he presented things to Rennyo Shōnin as his own. When asked what was meant, he said, "All things belong to the Tathagata and Shinran, and are not my possessions in transmitting them. I always believe that these things are coming from me."

(62) *NEMBUTSU* OF CONTINUITY

Kazue, a man from Gunke in the province of Settsu, constantly recited the *nembutsu*, and every day while shaving and absorbed in recitation, he would be nicked by the razor. "A pity that it's never possible to say the *nembutsu* without moving the lips."

(63) OLD AGE AND THE DHARMA

A follower said, "One should hear the buddhadharma in his youth. When he becomes older he slows down and besets with drowsiness. It is best to be attentive when one is younger."

(64) MENTALLY, AS-IT-IS

All sentient beings, just as they are. There is no expectation of any transformation or alteration. Indiscriminately, beings are reached by the Buddha's wisdom.

(65) THE FAMILY

It is most pitiful when concerned with our own children and wives, and they cannot be reached. Without the accumulation of ripened past conditions, it cannot be done. But there is, at least, oneself to be cultivated.

(66) LIFESPAN FROM DAY TO DAY

Hokyobo said, "If one has no faith and days pass one after another, the hellish realm quickly approaches. Whether there is faith or there is not, one cannot easily discern it. We cannot determine the full span of life; then, reflect on your lifespan terminating on this very day, as said by a man of faith long ago."

(67) THE LIFE-PERMANENT VOW

The single vow once made is a vow for a life-time, at its single inception the vow is for the duration of one's life. The reason is that when the last moment of life suddenly arrives, the vow summarily includes one's entire life-span.

(68) THE DAY OF YOUR LIFE

Today, unforgetably, is the only day in your life,
Otherwise incessant strivings are endless.

—a lyric of Kakunyo

(69) THE NAMUAMIDABUTSU SCROLL

In other traditions the portrait is favored over the scroll, and the image considered before the portrait. In our lineage the portrait is favored over the image, and the scroll is of primary importance.

(70) LITERARY STYLE AND RHETORIC

At the Head Temple of the Northern District, Rennyo was telling Hokyobo, "I am conscious always of my audience, and merge many thoughts into a single notion for simplicity and clarity, although my listeners may not be aware of it. Even the *Gobunsho* in recent years is written in this concise manner. "I am easily bored of what I hear, and will misunderstand what I'm told," Rennyo said. "I emphasize what is most essential for immediate understanding."

(71) MYOGO SCROLLS

In his younger days when Ken-en resided at Futamata he was requested to supply a number of small *myogo* scrolls. "Have all of you acquired *shinjin*?" he questioned. "The *name* is the substance of *shinjin*."

(72) WEALTH AND BUDDHA ATTAINMENT

I was told by Rennyo Shonin, "The head of the Hyuga firm in Sakai was worth 300,000 kan when he died, but he is now unlikely a Buddha. Ryomyo of Yamato can hardly afford summer-wear, but she will certainly become a Buddha."

(73) QUESTIONING

Hossho of Kyuhoji asked Rennyo, "Is it correct to say that at the very moment of total reliance in Tathagata Amitabha birth is assured?" The conversation was interrupted, "Why are you asking this trite question rather than inquiring about things that are not commonly known?" Rennyo admonished him, "This is not good, seeking novelty, when our questioning should derive from our immediate and habitual concerns."

(74) AUTHENTICITY OF FAITH

"That faith is at times unacceptable for some is understandable. It is sorry to see that those in accord with *anjin* only in words and behavior, will eventually have nothing left but their deceit."

(75) ACCORDANCE

Shinran's words are not different than the Tathagata's instruction, and that's why the *Gobunsho* often introduces a topic with, "Amitabha Tathagata said . . ."

(76) THE TRUE TEACHER

Rennyo asked Hokyo, "Do you know who is teaching you this trust in the Tathagata Amitabha?" Junsei spoke up replying that he did not know, and Rennyo said, "The craftsmen will pay for instructions they receive. Now, pay me for the information!" Junsei without hesitating declared he would pay anything demanded of him. "Why, it is Amida Nyorai that is telling you of this en-trusting."

(77) THE FIERY BUDDHAS

Hokyobo said that the Myogo he was given by Rennyo was burnt and had been transformed into six Buddhas, which was incredible. Rennyo replied, "That is not so unbelievable that a Buddha becomes Buddha; it is incomprehensible that the ignorant man trusting Amida at a single moment becomes a Buddha."

(78) DEPTH OF GRATITUDE

Rennyo often said, "Day and night we live by the gifts of Amida and Shinran, and this protective source should be reflected upon."

(79) CHEWING AND SWALLOWING

It has been said that, *one may know about chewing but not swallowing*. "This means," said Rennyo, "we have wives and children, and we eat fish and fowl. Though filled with evil, this is not an excuse for our behavior."

(80) TEACHING OF NON-EGO

Rennyo had emphasized that *selflessness* is the teaching of the buddhadharma, and thought of self should not occur; there is no one believing himself to be evil. This is a dictate of Shinran Shōnin. In the other-power there is no thought of self. Rennyo's son also repeated this maxim.

(81) ACQUIRING SPIRITUALITY

Meeting a *zenchishiki* and asking about things already known by you is beneficial. How more wonderful to inquire about matters that not so well known by you.

(82) FALSE PRETENSIONS

In listening to the dharma few persons consider that it pertains to themselves, and satisfied with picking up a line or two for impressing others.

(83) KNOWN BY THE TATHAGATA

Rennyo declared that *one-mindedness* is known by the tathagata, and inwardly we should feel and react to this certainty of divine protection expressed by Amida.

(84) INHERITANCE

I was not handed down anything extraordinary from my predecessor, Rennyo Shōnin; only the principle of one-thought of Amida, and I am aware of nothing more. I can testify to this inheritance.

(85) ELABORATION ON ONE-THOUGHT

Rennyo had also said that ordinary beings are born in the Pure Land with reliance on the one-thought of the Buddha. This is verified by *namuamidabutsu* and witnessed by the Buddhas of the Ten Quarters.

(86) SPEAKING OUT

"Speak up! Whatever is on the mind, speak out! Remaining silent is terrible." Rennyo admonished his audience, "If you have faith or do not, speak out. Whatever is revealed, others would be able to make corrections. Whatever is thought should be expressed."

(87) LIMITATION IN PRACTICE

"Chanting and not knowing the rules is an accomplishment." Kyomonbo was always taken to task by Rennyo for his failure of not respecting the regulation of chanting. "If the rules are unknown, it is never a question of being wrong or committing a mistake. If the dharma is understood without flaws and delivered incorrectly according to regulation it is a wrong."

(88) A BASKET FULL OF WATER

Speaking quite frankly, a man confessed that his mind was like filling a basket with water. "I am profoundly gratified in hearing the teachings during our dharma gatherings. Afterward, however, I retain nothing of this reverence." Rennyo offered the advice, "Throw the basket of yours into the water; likewise, immerse yourself in the dharma. Not having faith is what is wrong. The *zenchishiki* will say it is bad to lack faith."

(89) THE STUDY OF OUR LITERATURE

There is no point in haphazardly studying our literary tradition. Rennyo Shōnin advised us, "Read the texts over and over. It is said that *a reading of one hundred times results in clear understanding*. If we acquire this inner principle, it would be easy to receive orally expert guidance and not rely totally on our own bad judgment."

(90) SHINJIN OF THE OTHER-POWER

If in reading our traditional literature, we take it as *faith-mind of the other-power*, we will not fall into error.

(91) SELF-ENLIGHTENMENT

To think that I, myself, have a mind of enlightenment is regrettable. For the one of faith within the fold of Buddha's compassion there is no self-awakening. In the vow of the *light of tenderness*, the mind softens. Self-enlightenment does not assure attainment of a Buddha.

(92) GRATITUDE

Even a single phrase is ego-centric. Within faith there is a sense of evilness, and one speaks from a feeling of gratitude and with thankfulness in the communication with others.

(93) TRANSMITTING FAITH

To instill faith in others and he, himself, lacks faith, is offering something that one does not really have. There is nothing to accept. This was the word of Rennyo and finally passed on to Junsei. "Faith for oneself, then faith for others." Acquisition of *shinjin*, and then teaching others as the gift coming from the Buddha. *Anjin* for oneself and imparting it to others is in accord with great compassion and its vast dissemination.

(94) THE COMPETENT READER

"There are those who read the classics but do no reading, and those that do not read but the classics are being read," declared Rennyo. "Illiterate persons that listen to words spoken on their behalf and acquiring faith are those who do not read, but the classics are being read. The classics not being read by those who read, lack principles for authentic understanding."

(95) SHINJIN AND TEACHING

Dharma transmission has never been done by being well versed in our literature. Persons in the audience of a woman of piety gratefully extolling the dharma will receive faith. By extensive power of the Buddha those listening to an unlettered woman of religious enthusiasm will acquire faith. Oral readers of our literary classics lacking the dharma in their minds cannot awaken faith in others.

(96) THE SECULAR INFLUENCE

Rennyo Shōnin said that affairs governed by worldly concerns are not emphasized in our tradition, but determined from the standpoint of the buddhadharma.

(97) THE MAN OF THE WORLD

From the worldly standpoint the astute man is respected; lacking faith he is suspect. A handicapped person of sight and limb, on the other hand, is reliable if he is a man who has acquired *shinjin*.

(98) AUTHORITY

To follow one's master, it is said, is to think of self. To obey the *zenchishiki* and acquire faith results in favorable birth.

(99) EXPEDIENCY

The Buddha who has lived for long eternal kalpas is Amida. After reaching buddhahood he provisionally established vows, resulting from the strategy of *upaya*.

(100) THE EMBRACEMENT

Rennyo said that in trusting Amida, the body is entirely enwrapped within *namuamidabutsu*, and this should warrant our gratitude for that protection.

(101) THE STUFFED TATAMI MAT

Hogen Renji of Tango, appearing before Rennyo and suitably well-dressed, was patted on the collar and told, "This is *namuamidabutsu*." Jitsunyo also responded in the same way when he patted the tatami mat and said, "In this way I'm supported by the *namuamidabutsu*." This is stated in accord with, "Embraced and enwrapped by *namuamidabutsu*."

(102) THERE IS NO TOMORROW

To be awed-stricken without the least exception is seeing all things from the viewpoint of the buddhadharma. Also, Rennyo would say, "According to the dharma there is no tomorrow . . . hurry, hurry!"

(103) TODAY

"Believe there is not this very day!" Rennyo had said that we must accomplish things at once and he deplored procrastination. He would, *in accordance with the buddhadharma*, be pleased with getting things done without putting them off for the following day.

(104) ACCEPTANCE OF THE SCROLL

"It is a fortuitous occasion for us to request and receive a portrait scroll of Shinran. Formerly, we had only the central scroll. Our lack of faith is contradictory, and its results deserve any infliction imposed upon us."

(105) OPPORTUNE TIMING

"*The time has arrived*," is a declaration following a considered matter that has finally taken place. We cannot say, "*The time has arrived*," if we have experienced no prior consideration. We can speak of having or not having past related conditions, and accordingly by listening to the dharma, *shinjin* is finally acquired.

(106) THE BAD SEED

"Do you grasp the meaning of *makitate*," Rennyo asked Hokyo. "It is seed that has been sown but never further cultivated," he replied. Rennyo agreed and pointed out that it resembles the obstinate mental attitude which, if not corrected by others, remains a fallowed mind; "there is no faith without cultivation."

(107) OPINIONATED

Always have an open mind, and be prepared in such a way that others of our following can correct your attitude. It is shameful to evade opinion of others whom we consider less worthy, and become angry at their advice. Keep a mind that is easily corrected.

(108) THE LACK OF RESPECT

"I have a determined single-thought, but lack respect for the words of a *zenchishiki*," someone complained to Rennyo. "At acquiring faith respectfulness should be shown. Nevertheless, we are still in a lowly condition and this attitude will often prevail. Whenever this persists we should toss the attitude aside as improper feelings."

(109) ONE-THOUGHT AND JOYFULNESS

In talking to Ken-en, Rennyo declared that, "Even if we are crudely clothed in tree-bark material, we should feel no sorrow but have single-minded joyfulfulness in Amida."

(110) FUTURE LIFE

Whatever our social status, whatever our age, favorable rebirth is never a certainty for we miss the way through negligence.

(111) LACKING FAITH

It was often that during moments of pain, Rennyo with closed eyes would groan, "ahhh . . ." He said, "In thinking about those lacking faith, I groan this way with the pain of torn limbs."

(112) IMPARTING THE TEACHINGS

Rennyo admitted that he talked with others in a suitable way and in accordance with the person's interest and understanding. In this way the buddhadharma could be inserted in his conversation. His approach was congenial to his listeners, and he was able to elaborate the teachings in this manner. He had several methods in explaining the dharma to others.

(113) MERITOUS ACCEPTANCE OF SHINJIN

Rennyo Shōnin said there are those who think it pleases me to hear that they hold belief in the buddhadharma. It is those people possessing shinjin, however, who enjoy benevolence of greater merit. My

sense of gratitude would arise after hearing of anyone attaining *shinjin*. It would be tolerable to listen to anything at all from those persons earnestly receiving *shinjin* for themselves.

(114) SUCCESSFUL EFFORT

If there is simply just one single person determined to acquire faith, throw yourself into the effort. Although at great risk to oneself, total commitment will not be wasting away your life.

(115) ACQUIRING FAITH

On hearing that a layman was invigorated by spiritual experience, Rennyo Shōnin declared, "It is as if the wrinkles of old age have been eradicated from me!"

(116) MENTAL REFORMATION

"Are you not pleased with the reformed mind of your religious leader?" Rennyo received the reply from the layman that he was, indeed, satisfied and happy with this attitude and difference toward the dharma principles. "I am even more pleased," said Rennyo Shōnin.

(117) TEACHING-EXPEDIENT

Rennyo provided dramatic farces between sessions of doctrinal instruction to alleviate boredom among the listeners. This method of dharma-teaching was appreciated for his concern and practical relationship with his listeners.

(118) PRACTICE OF BECOMING A BUDDHA

Rennyo observing celebrants at the Dotoe Festival at Tennoji, expressed great pity for them, "Such a great number falling into the Inferno! Followers of our tradition will unfailingly become Buddhas." These words were a comfort to us.

(119) GROUP DISCUSSION

Following a dharma talk Rennyo told his sons that an audience should break into smaller gatherings of "four or five to discuss matters they have heard. It is often that each will hear things differently according to their own understanding. Group discussion is to be encouraged."

(120) HASTY CONCLUSIONS

Although it may be untrue, it is best to accept a statement in the beginning. Confrontation would inhibit conversation. Careful consideration of what is said by others is important. An example of this would be an exchange of personal criticism, and a person denying an assertion, however, will admit that because it was "alleged, it is likely true." This rejoinder is bad, and it would be best to hold a response in abeyance.

(121) THE TEACHING FLOURISHES

The success of our tradition has nothing to do with the number of followers. A single man of faith is testament to doctrinal transmission of selective correct practice, and it is from this power of those following it that our tradition flourishes.

(122) ANTICIPATING A PLEASANT REBIRTH

There are many of those who believe assiduously in listening to religious discussions and not having faith, but desirous of favorable rebirth for anticipated pleasures to be enjoyed; they cannot become Buddhas. Reliance on Amida is the only assurance of becoming a Buddha.

(123) THE LITERARY HERITAGE

The inheritance of our literature and doctrinal texts which have been saved and handed down to succeeding generations is likely to produce an affection for the buddhadharma. Perhaps these persons have flippant appearances, yet suddenly may be transformed spiritually.

(124) *GOBUNSHO*, EXPRESSIONS OF AMIDA

"The Letters" of Rennyo should be considered words coming from the Tathāgata. The form is considered to be Hōnen Shōnin, himself, and the words are the direct speech of Amida.

(125) THE BEAUTY OF *THE LETTERS*

During an illness Rennyo asked Kyomonbo to read. "How about the *Ofumi*?" It was agreed, and three letters were selected and read twice. "Although I composed them they are delightful to hear," responded Rennyo.

(126) BACKBITING

It has been said that Junsei had given this advice, "generally speaking, persons are angered on learning that they were talked about behind their back. I don't think this way. If you can't say a nasty thing to me face to face, say it out of my presence. I will eventually hear about it and will be able to make amends."

(127) HARDSHIPS IN THE BUDDHADHARMA

"In working for the advantage of the buddhadharma, difficulties are not considerable," Rennyō declared. He was consistent and handled all affairs with energy and conscientiously.

(128) ATTENTION TO DETAILS

The dharma to be treated loosely, and secular affairs attended to in detail is objectionable. The buddhadharma should be thoroughly investigated with full awareness and in detail.

(129) THE SHADOWS OF OUR EXPERIENCE

It is said, *Far is near, Near is far*, and that *Next to the Lighthouse it is Dark*. Listening to the dharma persons enjoying proximity are self-satisfied, reaping benefits they consider commonplace and ordinary. Those at a remote distance of the capital, on the other hand, would hear the buddhadharma with greater reverence, and be more deeply motivated in listening.

(130) EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

We are accustomed to the same expressions concerning faith, but we should respond always as heard for the very first time. Usually, we are attracted by newer interpretations; but no matter how many times we have heard it, our attitude should be to listen carefully and consider everything said as if it was uttered for the first time.

(131) HEARD FOR THE FIRST TIME

Doshu said, "I have heard it often, but always with gratitude in the sense of hearing it for the first time."

(132) NEMBUTSU AUTHENTICITY

It was reported of a person saying, "It is disturbing that in reciting the *nembutsu* publically I am distracted, as it may appear to others it is

done only for acquiring a reputation of piety. This is burdensome." This response is not common.

(133) "UNSEEN" BEHAVIOR

In the eyes of our companions in we are ashamed, but undismayed by the protection of divine presence; we should care for that which is not visible to us.

(134) COMPLEXITY

One should not complicate matters even if there is an accord with doctrine, secular affairs are not to be intermingled. *Shinjin* must be our primary concern.

(135) MOTIVATION

Rennyo pointed out that "the buddhadharma instructs us that the mind which is calculated to make offerings for appeasement is not good. In the dharma our consideration is an unconditional response of gratitude in everything we do.

(136) THIEVERY OF THE SIX SENSES

Sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and thought are man's six bandits that plunder the mind. This scheme refers to mixed practices whereas within the nembutsu there is the mind of Buddha which simultaneously overwhelms Greed, Anger, and Hatred. In the midst of *bonnō* pure desire for favorable birth is raised. Lines from the *Shoshinge* compares light and darkness, "although lying beneath heavy clouds there is sunlight and no obscurity."

(137) SUBJECTIVE HEARING

A word, or a phrase, is heard indiscriminately in a personal way. Discussion with others of the same practice is a good habit to cultivate.

(138) FAMILIARITY

Rennyo said, "In establishing close relations with the Sacred and the Buddhas we would use our feet instead of the appropriate activity of our hands. There is the firmness of familiarity with the Tathagata, Shinran, and Zenchishiki, in which stronger feelings of respect and adoration should be greatly increased."

(139) THE ROOT OF OUR ACTIONS

What is said and what is done are alike; mental reformation is no easy task, and our thoughts should be attended carefully.

(140) RESPECTING ONE'S GARMENTS

To be possessive of clothing and sloppy in dress is undesirable, for they are in Shinran's service. Rennyo would reverently raise his garments after they have carelessly fallen under foot.

(141) MORALITY

The country's laws to the brow and the dharma held deeply within, a maxim of Rennyo. The principles of humanity should be faithfully observed.

(142) HARDSHIPS OF EXPANSION

Rennyo Shōnin suffered many difficulties in spreading the teachings which he did with life-long determination. The expansion and flourishing of the dharma is attributed to his early persistent efforts.

(143) ACCOMPLISHMENT OF RESTORATION

During recuperation he made the comment about himself, "It had been my intent to reestablish the buddhadharma during my lifetime, and I was able to accomplish this difficult task and retire to a comfortable position, all accomplished through hard work and unseen influence."

(144) POVERTY

Rennyo wistfully testified that previously he had worn the common quilted robe and was seldom able to afford the white silk apparel. This contrast should remind us of the hidden forces and we should be eternally grateful for today's accommodations.

(145) BAD TIMES

I have learned that Rennyo, at one time, lacked oil, was forced to accumulate the smallest bundles of kindling, and studied in semidarkness, sometimes by the light of the moon. He would wash his feet in cold water and miss several meals in succession.

(146) MENIAL TASKS

Not having service, Rennyo had stated that he, himself, had to wash out baby diapers and clothes.

(147) EMPLOYED HELP

Rennyo enlisted help from the staff of his father, Zennyo Shōnin, who had five working members in the household. When he retired Rennyo had only five helpers, not exceeding the number employed by his father. The size of the staff is extraordinary and awesome considering the work he accomplished in his times, and the number of people working today.

(148) ECONOMIC CRISIS

There were times in the past when facing the Buddha we appeared in dress patched together with cheap cloth; now we use pure white silk, and even an extra wardrobe set aside for use. During the depression the Imperial Court was not exempted in acquiring mortgaged loans.

(149) PROSPERITY

Rennyo Shonin told of his past when he had little funds and would buy cheap cotton in Kyoto for clothes padding, and wore stitched robes. He used a silk substitute for his *one-layered shirokosode*. These difficult times are not well known, and it is generally believed that we will continue today's living standard. Our enjoyment is due to divine circumstances and we should be concerned with that presence for receiving these beneficial results.

(150) SPIRITUAL INTIMACY

Those following the same path with the *zenchishiki* ought to be intimately involved with each other. "It is an error of mixed practice," cites the *Ojoraisan*, "to stay apart from them." To mingle with bad influences will not always have an immediate effect, but sooner or later evil results are inevitable; to be with Buddhists is an advantage. There are literary references, *good and evil are acquired by association and learning*. And, there is the adage, *To know someone, know his friends*. It is also said, "one may oppose a righteous person, but do not side with the wicked."

(151) SLICING AND TESTING

There is a saying, *toughness is discovered by cutting, sublimity is known by adoration*. We find "hardness" when slicing through material, and believing in the vow we discover its greatness. As *shinjin* rises, gratitude and sacredness are felt and our joys are intensified.

(152) DIFFICULTIES OF A FAVORABLE BIRTH

It is thought that rebirth is easily achieved for those of us who are ignorant beings. Favorable birth, however, is *difficult of all difficulties*. Faith is not easily accomplished although receiving it from the Buddha's wisdom attainment is done without effort and favorable birth is assured. Jitsunyo shonin was in accord with those who regarded our future life of utmost importance.

(153) SLANDER AND CERTAINTY

The Buddha said that there would be persons who slander, and those who believe. If there were no slanderous persons, and there were all believers this word would be in doubt. There are, in fact, those who slander, and with certainty of faith rebirth is firmly established.

(154) ENJOYMENT OF FAITH

Joyousness of faith is expressed in the monto: this is seeking fame. Faith is experienced in solitariness: this is according to the dharma.

(155) FLAMES OF GREAT-THOUSAND WORLDS

Listen to the buddhadharma intently as if there were no secular affairs; it is deplorable to use your spare time to attend the dharma. There is no tomorrow. In words of the wasan: *Great-Thousand Worlds set afire! Pass through them. Hearing the Buddha's name there is no-returning.*

(156) KEPT PROMISES

Hokyo once told the story of a gathering of people engaged in small talk, when one of them suddenly stood up preparing to leave. "Why?" asked Rennyo. "I have just remembered something important," was the reply. Later when asked about this abrupt leavetaking he said that he had recalled a promise to speak on the buddhadharma and it was necessary to break away for an engagement. This thoughtful consideration is a laudable principle to apply.

(157) HOSTS AND GUESTS

There is the saying, *Buddhadharma the host, secularity the guest*. Seeing things from the dharmic point of view, worldly affairs should be taken care of as they arise.

(158) THE MASTER HAND

Ken-en brought Zonkaku's commentary to Rennyo who was staying in the south quarter of Yamashina, and questioned a doubtful passage in the work. In answering the request for clarity, Rennyo told him that a masterpiece of an accomplished person should be deeply respected by allowing the text to remain unchanged.

(159) RECREATING THE PAST

Someone asked about the circumstances involving a certain incident in Shinran's life. "I do not know," replied Rennyo, "whenever I am stumped, I simply attend those things he left us to follow."

(160) NON-SELF

Our tendency is to excel over others and it is in this way of thinking that worldly matters are handled. The buddhadharma teaches "non-self" and subordinate relations. Acquiring faith, recognizing reason, and breaking emotional ties are the accomplishment of the Buddha's compassion.

(161) ONE-MIND

As for One-Mind, reliance on Amida is actually unification of the buddha-mind of the tathagata into a single mind of man and Buddha.

(162) THE WELL OF BENEVOLENCE

It was remarked that drinking from the well is traced to the buddhadharma, a single mouthful comes from the blessings of Shinran and the tathagata.

(163) LOSS OF CONVERSION

Rennyo, during recuperation, declared that he had accomplished his aims, although realizing that things are dependent upon circumstances. He regretted that there were persons still lacking faith.

(164) RENNYO SHONIN'S ACCOMPLISHMENT

I have succeeded in everything put before me, the reestablishment of Shinran's teachings, the building of the Temple and Founder's Hall, successfully taken my turn as the head of our tradition, and after construction of the residence quarters at Osaka, I have retired. It can be said that fortunately, I am in accord with the *way of heaven*.

(165) UNMISTAKABLE SIGNS TOWARD FAITH

A bonfire in the enemy camp is unmistakable; by speaking and reading what is learned there will be no mistake in acquiring faith.

(166) INQUIRY

It was often said by Rennyo, "Ask about the Buddhadharma; ask others about various matters." The response was to seek the likely person for this direction. They were told to direct their concerns to a person immersed in the buddhadharma, without thought to their social status. "The unassuming person may have the best and perfect answers in accord with the buddhadharma."

(167) PROPERLY DRESSED

Rennyo disapproved of wearing the pretentious undesigned robes, and would not don black robes either. A priest in black approaching him would elicit the response, "Now, here is a priest in proper dress! I am not attracted to piety, Amida's vow is the only elegance!"

(168) THE BROCADED APPAREL

At the temple in Osaka Rennyo had a designed robe displayed on his personal rack.

(169) AN ACT OF GRATITUDE

At meals Rennyo sat in the posture of *gasshō*, "In gratitude to the Tathagata and Shinran, food and clothing are received."

(170) THE UPWARD SPIRAL

Always on the move upward and not knowing the pitfalls below. It is best to express humility in facing all things.

(171) PURE LAND BIRTH

Favorable rebirth is the concern of each individual alone, and no one else. In the buddhadharma faith will determine one's future life. Rennyo said that those who think this is a principle for others to follow have gained no insight into themselves.

(172) INFIRMITIES AND THE WAY OF EASE

At the Osaka temple Rennyo was told of an old man who attended the services held at dawn and expressed amazement of the effort he made. Rennyo commented that there is no wonder of the ease one feels with practicing faith, for it is activity of gratitude toward the Buddha in which infirmity is not experienced. The elder was probably Ryoshu from Togami.

(173) CERTAINTY AND SIMPLICITY

At a meeting various spiritual matters were being discussed. Rennyo interrupted, "What are you saying? Drop insignificant things. With single-mind, without doubting, rely on Amitabha, and favorable rebirth is certain. As for attainment there is *namuamidabutsu*. What else is there?" Rennyo was often quick to answer, and in a single expression eliminated doubts and negative attitudes.

(174) APATHY

Rennyo was fond of citing the verse, "*It is no use to frighten the village sparrows with sound of clappers, when they use the scarecrow for their perches.*" He sometimes complained of people becoming like a flock of sparrows whose ears no longer heed the warning sound of clappers!

(175) MIND AND FAITH

"Tending the mind will be done," Rennyo has said, "faith, however, is rarely acquired."

(176) EXPEDIENCY: UPAYA

Do not condemn the use of *Hoben*, for authenticity is gained by the use of skillful strategy and should be considered carefully. Authentic faith is reached by *hoben activity* of Amitabha, Sakyamuni, and the *zenchishiki*. This was cited by Rennyo Shōnin.

(177) A MIRROR FOR THE COMMON MAN

The Letters are a mirror for ordinary people to seek favorable birth. To believe that there are more than this for entering the dharma would be making a grave mistake.

(178) GRATITUDE DIRECTED TO THE BUDDHA

In having faith there is the uninterrupted obligation of name-recitation for the Buddha's activity. The mind that senses gratitude and practices nembutsu only by habit is in grave error and not sufficient, for the spontaneous nembutsu is Buddha's wisdom and the reaction of pronouncing the name is our proper act of gratitude.

(179) THE BUDDHA'S BLESSING

Rennyo declared that when there is faith, "the *nembutsu* is practiced for the obligation felt toward the Buddha. In other traditions the *nembutsu* is applied for the sake of our parents and other considerations. In Shinran's lineage *nembutsu* practice is reliance on Amitabha. Following that realization there is calling of the name, an obligatory response to the Buddha."

(180) THE SPONTANEOUS NEMBUTSU

There was a story of Rennyo during a stop-over at *Southern Quarters*; a resident, killing a bee, involuntarily recited *namuamidabutsu*! "Why," he was asked, "did you pronounce the *nembutsu*?" In explaining to Rennyo that it was a matter of compassion he was told that "under all circumstances of faith, the *nembutsu* is an act of gratitude in obligation to the Buddha."

(181) *NAMUAMIDABUTSU*—*NAMUAMIDABUTSU*

At the Southern Quarters, and just as he was stepping out from the raised screen, Rennyo Shonin voiced the *nembutsu*. "Ah, Hokyō! Do you know what was going on within me right now?" And he explained, "I had a sudden thought of joyful gratitude for the saving power of the Buddha."

(182) DESCRIBING *ANJIN*

Anjin was briefly described for Rennyo by a person from the western provinces, and it was verified, "If that is, indeed, what you have in mind, then you have the gist of it."

(183) TALKING ABOUT ANJIN, AUTHENTICALLY

In our times there are those whose speech is consistent with *anjin*. They are looked upon as having settled faith, and yet regretfully lack attainment for favorable birth.

(184) BLISSFUL BIRTH AND WRONGDOING

After receiving *faith* one should no longer persist in wrong-doing. Nor external influences be persuasive in one's behavior. Birth being assured in this life time with blissful result, evil activity should not continue.

(185) HOW TO BECOME A BUDDHA

The buddhadharma is to be explained in simple terms; Hokyō was told that his listeners could be unlettered and might apply other things to *anjin* and *shinjin*. Offer the explanation that ordinary mortals will become Buddhas. Trust Amida! He who hears this will acquire faith. In our tradition there is no other dharma entry. The *Anjinketsujōshō* states that the gate to the Pure Land teachings is no other than the profundity of the eighteenth vow. It is stated in *The Letters*, "Amida Nyorai has declared that he will unfailingly save those of single-hearted reliance, however deeply evil." This is from the nembutsu, the promise of assured birth by the eighteenth vow.

(186) THE ZENCHISHIKI'S ADMONISHMENT

One is bad in not attaining faith, be diligent in acquiring it. The *zenchishiki's* word is that lacking faith is bad. After admonishing a person for lacking faith, the man complained, "I have followed your word explicitly." Rennyo retorted, "You are exceedingly bad. Is it not a bad thing that faith is lacking?"

(187) A MAN WHO HAS ACQUIRED FAITH

"I'm not happy with anything I hear," complained Rennyo. "A single person possessing faith is pleasant to my ears." This innermost thought expressed by the Shōnin was often the motivation of his spiritual efforts.

(188) THE GIST OF SHINRAN'S TEACHING

Shinran's teaching contains the essential direction to take in placing wholehearted singleness of mind in *reliance*, and in our tradition

our teachers have emphasized the point. Followers, however, were at loss to know just what was needed in carrying out this dictum, and for that reason Rennyo left his *Letters* with the direction to cast aside all mixed practices and totally leave our future life to Amida. In this way the tradition of Shinran was fully restored.

(189) GOOD AND EVIL

Rennyo Shōnin has issued the warning that evil things can be brought about from good activity, and excellent things attained from bad motivations. From the dharma point of view, an act assumed to be good recognizes the presence of ego and this has harmful effects. An evil act can be mentally turned around and within the vow's activity produces an effective experience. The self-willed person, according to Rennyo, reveals the mind of negativity.

(190) BRIBERY OR GIFT?

Should there be a presentation made unexpectedly, we would naturally harbor a suspicion as this is usually a prelude for a request. We are easily flattered by this attention of an unexplained gift.

(191) A MISTAKEN STEP

Looking ahead and not watching our step will lead to a tumble, looking in the direction of others and not at oneself is a disaster!

(192) ZENCHISHIKI

Even the word of a zenchishiki, I can't believe that! This is not a good response. Even in a hopeless situation the word of a *zenchishiki* is reliable. An ordinary person filled with *kleśas* becomes a Buddha, what other is there that's impossible? Dosu said that if told by a *zenchishiki* to fill Lake Biwa, he will do it!

(193) STONE AND WATER

Hard is Stone, Soft is Water. Water will wear away stone. If one has plumbed the mind, the Enlightenment of Bodhi is certain.—An old saying. If faith is at a distance intensive listening to the buddhadharma ends in faith by compassionate activity.

(194) FIXED IN FAITH

To imitate a person whose faith is determined is a good model, but to admire this accomplished person and forswear the results for oneself

is not desirable. In the buddhadharma the self-effort is rejected and faith acquired.

(195) FAULT-FINDING AND PERSONAL REFORM

Faults of others are easily seen, our own faults are obscure. If we see them in ourselves their magnitude is obvious. We must understand this and make amends. We often overlook our own weakness.

(196) DISCUSSION OF FAITH

In meetings during which secular affairs are the topic, there are times when the buddhadharma is brought up and quiet decorum is observed—one is careful. At other times when lectures are given, or there are services, there should not be silence. Open discussion, and heedfulness whether there is accordance with faith or not, should follow.

(197) BOREDOM AND THE SACRED

Zenju from Kanegamori was asked about a life of boredom. "Not at all, in all of my eighty years has this been a problem. I have this indebted feeling of gratitude to Amida. The *wasans* and our traditional texts fill me with sacred joy. I have never become bored."

(198) URGENCY IN DHARMA TRANSMISSION

Jitsunyo cited a story of Zenju, "A visitor made a house visit, but before the footgear was removed at the entry, Zenju broke into a dharma monologue, *Why, can't you wait until I have properly entered the house before breaking into a spiritual discourse?* The host replied, *This saha world is a place where there is no gap between inhaling and exhaling. Life and death do not honor time in removing footwear.*" We should not procrastinate talking about the Buddhadharma.

(199) THE POWER OF PREDICTABILITY

Rennyo told about Zenju for telling the selected site for the temple at Nomura. On his return from the capital city the party stopped at Kanegamori and Zenju pointed in the direction of Nomura, and said, "the buddhadharma will flourish in this area." This was taken as *just talk of an old man*, but eventually the Yamashina temple was built, and the area became a lively place for expansion. It was an impressive forecast, and people referred to Zenju as a reappearance of Honen Shonin. He passed away on the 25th day of the eighth month.

(200) EXPANSIVE GROWTH OF THE TEACHING

One day Rennyo left the Higashiyama temple and his whereabouts became unknown. Zenju looked everywhere, and finally found him in a out-of-the-way place. Rennyo had a distressed appearance and not wishing to embarrass him, Zenju cried out, "Aha! Here, we will see the Buddhadharma at its peak." This is what actually happened. *Zenju is a wonder*, declared Rennyo.

(201) PRAISE AND DISCUSSION

Years ago, in the 3rd year of Daiei at the time of Rennyo's 25th memorial, Jitsunyo had a dream that the *shonin* was donning a purple *kosode* robe in the south wing of the temple and was saying, "the ultimate of our teaching consists in praising and discussion. We should be praising." Jitsunyo commented on the dream stressing its emphasis, "One enjoys the buddhadharma in solitude, and if this spirituality is individually experienced, how much more is the enjoyment when shared with others! Frequent discussion of the dharma should consistently increase among us."

(202) THE REFORMED MIND

It was asked of Rennyo about the primacy of inner reformation. *By all means*, was the reply, *tend to all those things that are bad*. Investigation of ourselves should be carefully made. Rennyo said, "Whatever you have heard of others making improvements should help in realizing that self-reformation is quite possible. The exposure of personal faults are beneficial for self-correction. Openly admit the presence of these faults otherwise there is no reformation."

(203) THE CALCULATING MIND

At buddhadharma meetings holding back in silence means faith is surely missing. It is thought that some preconceived notion must be held before speaking out. This is like seeking answers from unlikely sources. *If one is joyous it will be expressed, whatever is in the mind it will be pronounced; if it is cold, say it! if it is hot, say it!* In our dharma discussion group if there is no expression, that silence indicates faith within is lacking. Even with faith we are not always prepared, but we are more consistent through mutual practice and frequent contact with each other.

(204) NON-RETURNING

Rennyo Shōnin had said that once we have reached single-mindedness it is not acceptable to declare that we are already enlightened by Amida, as this is a statement from the standpoint of attainment. It is better to say that assurance is granted: "At the moment of faith there is no-returning; this no-returning position although non-discernable is an equivalent to nirvana."

(205) *SESSHUFUSHA*

Yuirenbo from Tokudaiji pondered on the meaning of *embrace-ment* and while directing his energies toward Amida in the temple, Ungoji, had a dream that Amida tightly grabbed his sleeves and would not let go. *Sesshu* has the meaning of "to grasp" in which there is no escaping. Here is the sense of *sesshufusha*. Rennyo delighted in relating this incident.

(206) SIGNIFICANCE OF *MYOGA*

At a time when Rennyo was confined by illness he received a visit from Ken-yo and Ken-en who asked about the term, *myoga*. They were told that to be in accord with *myoga* of powerful effects is truly entrusting oneself to Amida.

(207) JOYFUL APPRECIATION

In discussing the buddhadharma and imparting it to others resulting in a pleasant response, we should all the more feel the joyfulness of conveying *buddha-wisdom*. Our appreciation of gratitude is forcefully engendered by participating in this concern for the wisdom of the Buddha.

(208) REACTION OF GRATITUDE FOR *THE LETTERS*

Carefully reading *The Letters* to others is an act of gratitude. Each phrase and every word rendered in faith will also be received in faith. There will be a grateful response.

(209) ENERGY OF OTHER-POWER

Rennyo explained: "The illumination of Amida can be compared with drying out things that are soaking wet. It is the sun's energy absorbing the surface before the bottom layer is dried. The mind of determination arises from the other-power; hinderances and evil are finally eradicated by Amida."

(210) WISDOM OF THE BUDDHA

Whenever we see someone with *shinjin* we feel in that moment a sacredness, although it is not the person possessing spirituality that is impressive, rather we are moved by the experience of acquiring Buddha's wisdom. We have gratitude for this wisdom.

(211) OBSTACLES TO *OJO*

During a prolonged illness Rennyo admitted he had no regrets in his life other than observing lack of faith in his sons and others. "There is the adage, *we face obstacles in leaving this world*. My future life is not threatened this way. It is only deplorable that faith is not widely established."

(212) GIFTS AND GRATITUDE

On occasion Rennyo would serve sake or present gifts attracting people in the spirit of gratefulness to the buddhadharma. Presentation such as this encourages faith, and an attitude of gratitude is acquired.

(213) AUTHENTIC RELIANCE

Rennyo had stated that *If you think there's understanding, there is not; If you think there's no understanding, there is.*

To believe, spirituality, of Amida's deliverance there is understanding. We can never possess an attitude of certainty based on the assumption of "knowing." It is quoted from the *Kudensho*, "How is favorable birth acquired by ordinary beings other than total reliance on the buddha-wisdom of Amida Buddha?"

(214) SPIRIT OF RECITATION AND TEACHING

Gansho from the province of Kaga in Sugao complained, "The chanting of this priest does not match the beauty of the texts, and reveals a faith that is faulty; it is uninspired." Rennyo, hearing that it was Renchi, made arrangements for him to be personally instructed in reading as well as interpreting the traditional literature. Rennyo then addressed Gansho, "I have trained Renchi in reading and delivering talks in the buddhadharma." He was then released and returned home. Gansho, appreciating the recitation and instructions, was then gratified by what he was hearing and expressed spiritual satisfaction.

(215) YOUTH AND RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

"Read!" Rennyo declared to his youthful audience. "Over and over again, read ; without repetition there is no benefit. At an older age good recitation cannot possibly substitute significant context and meaning which is vital. It is superficial to be acquainted with our traditional literature if it is without depth and there is no presence of faith."

(216) ALERT AND RESPONSIVE

Someone complained to Hokyobo, "I accept things just as they are presented but regret that I am inattentive and neglectful." He was then admonished for the shameful admission, "*You do not accept the teaching as it is taught! It tells us to be attentive; show responsibility!*"

(217) ACQUIRING FAITH

A complaint against Hokyobo was made. "How is it that a man in the buddhadharma like yourself has a widowed mother totally lacking faith?" Hokyobo readily admitted the inconsistency, "Quite right! Yet, if one is hearing every morning and every evening the reading of the *Gobunsho* and there is no faith, how is it that my persuasion would have any lasting effect?"

(218) CORRECTING ERRORS

"I am in a sweat in fear of making serious errors whenever I deliver dharma talks in place of Rennyo," Junsei declared. "When I slip and make an error in his presence it can be corrected easily, and I am at ease. In this way I am able to impart the buddhadharma."

(219) UNCERTAINTY AND IGNORANCE

There is a difference of being uncertain and not knowing.

If one does not know it is senseless to say that he is uncertain. If we say doubtfully, "what is that?," or may ask, puzzlingly, "what could that possibly be?" uncertainty is expressed. Rennyo's clarification of being uncertain was further illustrated by his saying that people will usually pass off things as *uncertain* without really knowing anything at all about their details.

(220) OBLIGATION OF A CARETAKER

At a mealtime discussion Rennyo said, "The Hongwanji at Yamashina and temple constructions at Osaka are fashioned to reproduce Shinran Shōnin's life and times. I am constantly grateful of my

obligation as a caretaker, never forgetting this obligation even during meals."

(221) SAFEGUARDING PRECIOUS OBJECTS

Jitsunyo Shōnin said, "In the times of Zennyo Shōnin and Shakunyo Shōnin, previous predecessors of Rennyo, formalities were strictly observed. Their scroll portraits were revealing, *kasayas* and robes were yellow colored. In those days various objects inconsistent with tradition were burned whenever there was a cleansing. Rennyo marked these scrolls for destruction, but he hesitated and classified certain objects with labels on the cover marked, *good* and *bad*." After careful reflection, it is obvious different evaluations were made in Rennyo's time, and with us, too, there are wide variations—we must be quite careful in preserving tradition." In this way past decisions were remembered. "It is not sufficient to carelessly label things *good* and *bad* of the past. In Rennyo's times people close to him were sometimes out of line. Regarding the buddhadharma, its importance should gravely remind us to consider things seriously and seek details from others." This was related by Jitsunyo.

(222) THE ERRONEOUS MIND

Whenever we see a person who has an affinity with the buddhadharma make serious errors, it appears to us that even a man like that can go astray. This is a reminder of our own shortcomings. In comparison our mistakes must even be larger. The undisciplined mind that strays in this way is certainly regrettable.

(223) MINDFULNESS OF OUR OBLIGATION

Rennyo said we should be mindful of our obligation to the Buddha; in the vernacular, "to keep things in mind," is not the same as *mindfulness*. A life of faith is joyful and spiritual gratitude interspersed with indolence, but we return to the Buddha-wisdom in remembrance of our backsliding attitude and accept the gift of the nembutsu. This "keeping in mind" is what is meant by *mindfulness*.

(224) PERPETUITY OF THE BUDDHAHARMA

When hearing is inexhaustible, the buddhadharma is inexpressible, so it has been said. Jitsunyo gave the example from our everyday experience, "We always want to expand that which is firmly planted in the mind, always seeking more detail to that which we have lovingly

acquired. Neither is it tiring to hear more of the Buddhadharma. We must not fail to make inquiries concerning the teachings."

(225) OFFERINGS TO THE BUDDHA

Taking things of the Buddha and then turn them over to worldly concerns, is a terrible waste. Using expenditures for the buddhadharma is another matter, which we willingly use as an offering arising out of the sense of full gratitude.

(226) GREATEST MERIT

Our greatest achievement in the world is total reliance on Amida, and ourselves become buddhas—there is nothing that can go beyond this.

(227) HUMAN PRIORITY

To be engaged whole heartedly in secular and spiritual affairs should not be thought of as one's own doing, thereby forgetting our sacred obligation. The priority given oneself will lose protection of the Buddha in the world of dharma and men, and evil will prevail. This matter is of utmost importance.

(228) REQUESTING A FAVOR

While at Sakai Rennyo's son, Ken-en, asked his father for a "Letter" for him, especially. "This is not good," answered Rennyo. "I am an old man. If, however, having acquired faith in the buddhadharma I'll fulfill any request you make."

(229) THE GIFT OF MYOGO

At the Sakai temple Rennyo was working late at night preparing a *nembutsu* scroll, "I am old and feeble with failing eyesight, but my informant tells me that tomorrow they will be on their way to Echigo, so I forget my present difficulties in producing this *myogo*." He always served his followers in this manner. Rennyo would say, "Without complications, I hope all will acquire faith."

(230) RARE TIDBITS

Gourmet food may be prepared and served, but if there is no one to taste it the endeavor is wasted. The buddhadharma may be extolled and praised, but if there is no one with *shinjin* it is like throwing out gourmet food.

(231) A FIREPROOF TREASURE

One may become bored and weary of many things, but it is not so with the buddhadharma. Enjoying the results of Amida's activity—gratitude never wears out. The rare treasure that is set aflame but is never consumed is *namuamidabutsu*. Amida's beneficial results are supreme. A man of *shinjin* is spiritually impressive: this is the work of compassion.

(232) WEIGHING THE BUDDHADHARMA

Established in faith, a man's relation to the buddhadharma is seriously considered: an expressive gratitude is always given.

(233) SEEDS OF THE PAST

Rennyo has said that feeling of gratitude for the past should not be based on our good conditions previously established, rather, we are taught to be grateful for whatever conditions prevailed that are now benefitting us in this life-time.

(234) SHUKUZEN AND SHINJIN

In other traditions *conditional relations* were attributed to favorable contact in this life-time with the dharma. In our tradition *good conditions of the past* result in faith. For us *shinjin* is essential. The teaching of Amida excludes no one, and is characterized as "Expansive Instruction."

(235) THE GIST OF SHINSHU

By entering the dharma gate of our tradition we first encounter its primary principle: *shinjin*.

(236) SHINJIN GENERATED BY DHARMIC-ENERGY

Rennyo have said, "A man of the buddhadharma is the result of great dharmic-power; without it there is no potential. The buddhadharma is not imparted by scholarly means, rather an illiterate man of *faith* can convey the experience by his means of wisdom-strength from the Buddha. Pride in self-study of the texts has never made faith possible. A man who has acquired *shinjin* will speak out from Amida's teaching and contribute a greater dimension of faith to others.

(237) TOTAL RELIANCE

Relying on Amida one becomes, *namuamidabutsu*: this means one has acquired *shinjin*. Also, Rennyo has said, "*namuamidabutsu* is the treasury of our tradition. This singularity of thought is *shinjin*."

(238) SLANDERING THE DHARMA

Within our own tradition there is slander. As far as other schools are concerned we have nothing to say for their insults, as we also have our share of revilers; and fortunately, we have among us those having faith in the dharma, and for this effective realization we should be grateful for our accumulative past conditions.

(239) CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Rennyo had always shown concern for all kind of men. He was saddened by capital offenses and the punishment ordered by the authorities. "I believe," he said, "should these men be spared, reform would be a far easier solution." Rennyo was quick to issue a pardon whenever there were obvious signs of repentance for bad behavior.

(240) RENSHU'S APOLOGY

Renshu of Aki province was involved in the upheaval in his region. For his participation, he was severed from the *monto*. When seeking forgiveness from Rennyo, who was recovering from an illness, the attendants ignored his request for visitation. Rennyo was saying, "I'd like to see Renshu return to the fold." This was resisted by his aides and sons who protested, "What will happen to the *buddhadharma* ridiculed in this manner, if behavior like this is condoned?" "That's the point," replied Rennyo, "nothing could be worse; however, when it is regretted and there is an attitude change, a man should not be set aside." Renshu was given a pardon and tearfully reunited with the *monto*. He passed away at the same temple, during the same days that Rennyo, himself, was mourned.

(241) ERRONEOUS DOCTRINE

It was brought to Rennyo's attention that Joyu from Oshu was teaching erroneous doctrine and in agitation was confronted by Shonin, "How despicable! To disgrace Shinran's tradition in this deplorable manner—*To be sliced in thousand of pieces for such a deed!* It is deplorable that the *buddhadharma* should be corrupted in this way!"

(242) FIVE KALPAS OF MEDITATION

The highest principle is the vow arising from Amida's meditation for five kalpas. One is a Buddha after being in accord with this meditative process. To be in accord is dharmic unity with this mind and body.

(243) LIFE-TIME OCCUPATION

"I have," declared Rennyo, "spent a lifetime in imparting the *buddhadharma* to others as expedient ways and means for acquiring faith."

(244) GOLDEN WORDS

When Rennyo was indisposed he declared that his present words were to be heard as *words of gold*: "Concerning my 31 syllable *waka*, they are actually talks on the *buddhadharma*, and not just an anthology of poetry.

(245) A WISE MAN

Three fools are worth one sage, Rennyo told his successor. Whatever is said and done this is a good maxim to follow and should be adopted in our deliberations as a "golden word" by those absorbed in the *buddhadharma*.

(246) BROTHERS

Rennyo Shonin told Junsei, "Hokyo and I are brothers!" This statement was protested by Hokyo by saying that it was not reasonable to make that claim. Rennyo replied, "In acquiring faith it is a matter of receiving it earlier or later, *an older or younger brother*. Sharing the experience of *shinjin* and its universal accomplishment serves everyone in a fraternity."

(247) A JOYFUL BIRTH

In the scenic Southern Quarter Rennyo made the observation that we often exceed our fondest hopes, "Birth in the *Land of Bliss* is an example; although we may believe we are well off in this world, our favorable birth is joyfully beyond any comparison we know of bliss in this life-time."

(248) MENDACITY

"A good number of people refrain from falsehood, but there are few who do not harbor deceit. If there is no disposition for doing worth-

while things, there should at least be an inclination for acceptable social behavior and a concern for the *buddhadharma*."

(249) NUGGETS OF GOLD

"I have read the *Anjinketsujoshō* for over forty years and was never bored; from the text gold nuggets can be mined."

(250) THE ANJINKETSUJOSHŌ

At the temple in Osaka, Rennyo was telling his listeners, "The other day I merely touched upon the *Anjinketsujoshō*. The essentials of our tradition are expounded in this text."

(251) THE SANCTITY OF GRATITUDE

Hokyo said, "The saintly person is one who feels sanctity, and not a person who resembles saintliness." Rennyo replied, "How interesting! There is nothing sacred in *looking saintly*, nor is there saintliness without the feeling of total gratitude—you have expressed it nicely."

(252) EVERYDAY ADVICE TO STUDY

Ken-en reported a dream he had of Rennyo on the 15th of the first month of the 3rd year of Bunki: Following a series of questions Rennyo emphatically declared, "What a waste of time! You should get together every day for reading our literature." Ken-en's comment was that the shōnin decried the consuming of time in useless pursuits.

(253) THE OFUMI COLLECTION

On the twenty-eight of the twelfth month Rennyo, garbed in his *okesa* and robes, opened the *shoji* in a dream of Ken-en who thought he was going to hear a Dharma Talk. He was reading lines on the sliding partition and Rennyo asked, "What is that?" He replied, "It is one of your letters." Rennyo declared that it was very important to hear and treat the *ofumi* faithfully.

(254) A STRONG HOUSE

In another dream it is recorded that Rennyo said, "Build a firm structure, establish yourself in *shinjin*, and recite the *nembutsu*!"

(255) MIXED PRACTICES

In a more recent dream Rennyo appeared and randomly talked about miscellaneous affairs of the *buddhadharma*. He then spoke about the mixed and sundry practices throughout the countryside: "It should be emphatically declared, *these various disciplines must be given up!*"

(256) THE TIME IS NOW!

In another dream Rennyo Shōnin was saying, "The time is now ripe! It is of utmost importance to act now." I readily agreed with the Shōnin but he retorted, "It is not enough to nod agreement and confess understanding; greatest concern must be given to this principle." In a dream the following night Rensei appeared and said, "At Yoshisaki Rennyo imparted the essential teachings, and I was told that there is an extensive literature used in interpreting and distorting our tradition. The gist of our teachings, however, are preserved." Concerning precious words in dreams, the maxims pronounced by Rennyo is his true word which I have recorded. It is the case that dreams are, at times, illusory, but there are dreams of transformation like these that are authentic visions.

(257) GRATITUDE OWED TO AMIDA

The expression, *with sanctified gratitude to Amida* has the ring of little sincerity. That's pompous. It is better, according to Rennyo, to say, *it is our obligation to Amida that we are grateful*. It is also a curt response to cite *The Letters* as "it says," when it is far better to refer to them with respect of gratitude during their recitation. There can never be an excessive veneration for literature of the *buddhadharma*.

(258) SHOWING RESPECT

In our congregation when the dharma is praised it is rude to refer to members of the assembly as "followers," they should be respectfully addressed as fellow-members.

(259) SUFFICIENCY AND DHARMA ENTHUSIASM

In building a house construct it any way you like, as long as it keeps your head dry. This maxim expressed Rennyo's attitude toward ostentatious behavior. He disliked excessive possession, and even frowned on the meticulous hoarding of clothes, "appreciation, rather, should not be spared for the *buddhadharma* and its unseen related circumstances."

(260) TRANSMISSION OF THE BUDDHADHARMA

Although one has entered the home where the buddhadharma is practiced and only recently arrived from another tradition—no matter what has previously transpired—he is now engaged. Even business affairs transacted here are looked upon as serving the dharma.

(261) COMPASSIONATE REGARD FOR OTHERS

Rennyo was fond of saying, *if the weather is excessively hot, or wet, the dharma services should be cut short*. This was said out of deep concern and thoughtfulness towards others. He often declared that his talks on the buddhadharma always accomodated his particular audience; he was saddened whenever there was discord according to a stated principle.

(262) THE KAGA UPRISING

The shōgunate, Yoshihisa, issued an edict that any of our followers in the Kaga province who participated in the recent uprising must be officially disavowed. Rennyo's sons and others in the area were recalled to Kyoto. This was distressful and particularly sad in contemplating the plight of our women members. "The disassembly of our congregation is a hardship, and a personal blow and painful experience for me." For the *Zenchishiki*, the proscription was unbearable.

(263) SHARING THE HARVEST

"It is not wise for members of the *monto* to give the first harvesting away without consideration of the offering for themselves before sharing it with others," according to Rennyo who knew very well the significance of matters like these; and in the buddhadharma we ought to realize its importance and our noble obligations toward it—a most amazing insight!

(264) A PREDICTION

Hokyobo visited Rennyo at the Osaka temple, and was told that his life span "will be an extra ten years after I have gone." During the conversation the *shonin* repeated the assertion, and a year after after his *ojo* an acquaintance of Hokyobo reminded him of the prediction: "This one-year grace was granted to you by the *shonin*, himself!" In *gasshō* the verbal response was, "Quite true!" He did live for another ten years under the powerful protection of unrecognized past, as fulfilled by Rennyo's amazing prophecy.

(265) THE HIDDEN PROTECTION

"To engage in useless things is to ignore the powerful protection of past relation," was a precept often cited by Rennyo.

(266) OBLIGATORY REMEMBRANCE

Rennyo always thought of Shinran and the Tathagata at meal-times, "a remembrance at every morsel!"

(267) AT MEALTIMES

Whatever was served, Rennyo would first spiritually reflect on gratitude, and would say that whatever food is offered should be accepted gracefully.

(268) SOUR PLUMS

Ken-en had a dream of Rennyo in the second year of Kyoraku, in which he was given an *ofumi* written especially for him. There, the Shōnin had written a proverb, "sight of the *umeboshi* will pucker the lips, likewise, one taste of *anjin* will elicit the *nembutsu*." There is no separate pathway for those with this mindfulness.

(269) DISTASTE FOR THE BUDDHADHARMA

Kuzen complained, "I have no liking or care for the buddhadharma." Rennyo replied, *Is this not the same as hating it?*

(270) THE CONTAGIOUS DHARMA

Outwardly, the buddhadharma is perceived as a sickness, "fidgeting during services for its *tediousness* is a sure symptom of illness."

(271) RENNYO BECKONS JITSUNYO

On the 24th of the first month, Jitsunyo was bedridden and had suddenly exclaimed, "Rennyo has just summoned me—How grateful! How grateful!" He then intoned the *nembutsu*. Those with him thought that his incessant murmuring was a delirious outpouring, however he quickly explained that he had dozed off and that the *shonin* had signaled him in this marvelous dream thereby relieving his attendants.

(272) DETERMINING ACTIVITY OF *TARIKI-SHINJIN*

On the 25th of the first month Jitsunyo was telling Kenyo and Ken-en of incidents concerning Rennyo during his retirement, talked

about his own experience of *anjin*, and cited the *shonin*. "Favorable birth is spontaneously determined by my steadfastness of the one-thought of Amida—it is due to Rennyo that up to this very day I have had no thought of self." This was pleasant to hear. *Shinjin of the other-power*, indeed, is the determined action of utmost importance in our lives.

(273) DISRESPECTFUL REFERENCES

Referring to Shinran Shōnin as given in the *Tandoku Mon* is crude and should be understood as *the Founder, Shōnin*. The reference of *Originating Shōnin (Kaisan Shōnin)* is also to be avoided.

(274) HONORIFIC TITLE

Referring to Shinran as *the Shōnin* is disrespectful, and perhaps "Kaisan Shōnin" is a more acceptable abbreviation, *as one who founded our tradition*.

(275) MOTTE GUZEI NI TAKUSU

The text of *Tandoku Mon* reads, "It is with the vow. . ." We must not omit the "with" in this line.

(276) READING OF THE LETTERS

During Rennyo Shōnin's stay at Sakai, Ken-yo paid him a visit and was surprised to see an open copy of the *Gobunsho* prominently placed in the chapel. It was read to any number of persons drifting in during the day. That evening during a conversation Rennyo explained, "I've just recently had a good idea. If a *letter* was read to temple visitors, whether singly or in a small group, a person among them having good related-circumstances in the past would acquire faith. An interesting and worthwhile idea, I thought." In this way Rennyo became more and more convinced of the importance of the *Collection of Letters*.

(277) AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD AND THE DHARMA

There was a statement made that, "interest in the buddhadharma should have the same intensity as shown in secular affairs." Rennyo reacted to this comparison by saying that, "It is better to dwell on the supreme happiness of pursuing the buddhadharma." Another person made the point that "the Buddhadharma should be appreciated day by day, otherwise a devotional lifespan would be a bothersome ordeal." Rennyo thought otherwise by saying that it does not matter "how long life lasts, feelings toward the buddhadharma should be constant and consistent."

(278) TEACHER-PRIESTS

"Terrible! Our priests seeking to transform others without themselves making a change."

(279) LOSING SHINJIN?

Doshu requested one of *The Letters* from Rennyō who told him, "That can be lost easily, but faith embedded in the mind is secured and you never lose it." The following year a letter for him was written by Rennyō.

(280) DHARMA-TALK

Hokyo declared that he was at ease and felt strong in front of a Buddhist-minded audience.

(281) A SWORD CUTS BOTH WAYS

Without faith our great body of literature is a sword in the hands of a young boy—useful but dangerous for the child; for the skilled it is a treasure.

(282) ULTIMATE DECISION OF FAITH

Upon request there'd be no hesitation in a death-decision; but no response to a command for acquiring faith!

(283) THE SECRET DOCTRINE

Speaking at the Osaka Temple Rennyō said, "Is it the secret transmission of the ignorant, that it is with *one-thought* that favorable birth is acquired?"

(284) INCONCEIVABILITY

Following the fund raising and during early construction, Hokyo exclaimed, "How miraculous, the building and grounds!" Rennyō responded that the inexplicability of "common people becoming Buddhas is even more impressive."

(285) THE *KAKEMONO*, "PUT AWAY"

Rennyō Shōnin prepared a script for Zenju, "And, what have you done with the *writing*," he was later asked by the Shōnin. He was told by Zenju that it had been mounted and put away for safe-keeping. "It is

senseless," Rennyo declared. "We should display it as intended, and be kept in accord with it."

(286) HEARING AND BECOMING BUDDHAS

"Those in attendance will never become Buddhas by defective listening," Rennyo commented.

(287) THE DENIAL

"The priests are the worst!" There was loud objection to this assertion by Rennyo. "It is for the depth of evil that we bear that Tathagata Amitabha releases us," he responded.

(288) THE GOLDEN RESERVOIR

By careful attention to the words of gold from *The Letters* every day, we draw treasures.

(289) WELL-MEANING COUNSEL

Once Shinran Shōnin was visited by Kenchi, head of the Senju Temple, and he was told that his journey almost met total disaster because of a violent storm at sea. "In that case take no more ships," Shinran replied. He never again travelled by sea. One day his appointment with Shinran was late, "I was ill, after a meal of mushrooms," Kenchi complained. Advised to give them up, he never touched them again. Rennyo Shōnin commented that Kenchi set a good example by relying good-naturedly on advice and benefitted from it.

(290) WELL AT EASE

When it is warm and comfortable we become drowsy; we should avoid comfort that keeps us from being alert to religious and secular affairs. It is important we do not become lax and indolent.

(291) SOFTNESS IN MENTAL ATTITUDE

On acquiring faith harsh words toward others on the same path are not to be used; calmness should follow: according to the 33rd vow, "...within my light, mind and body will become soft and tranquil." Lacking faith there is ego-centricity, there is no harmony—and there is no tranquility. A situation to reflect upon.

(292) AN UNWARRANTED SCOLDING

Rennyo inquired about one of the *monto* members from the north whom he had not seen for sometime. He was told by an aide that this member was strongly chastized for some infraction. This irritated Rennyo, "A severe admonishment, in my estimation, should never be permitted to take place among followers of Shinran Shōnin. Relay the order at once, that I want to see that man whose indiscriminate behavior is not acceptable!"

(293) THE FRIENDLY CIRCLE

There should never be an occasion for tongue-lashing another *monto* member. Shinran Shōnin always addressed the followers as "companion" or "fellow-wayfarer." It is not justified to put anyone down.

(294) GUESTS OF SHINRAN

For Shinran Shōnin his greatest visitors were those of the *monto*.

(295) ACCOMMODATING TEMPLE VISITORS

On cold days Rennyo would be sure that warm sake was provided. On warm days it was chilled sake. Whenever anyone was kept waiting to see him, Rennyo would complain loudly, "This delay is unreasonable. We should not procrastinate in greeting our visitors to the temple." Rennyo did not like to keep late appointments.

(296) ACQUIRING GOOD & ABANDONING EVIL

As for our acquiring the inclination to do good we are obligated to Amida, and also gratified for having renounced all evil activity. For acquiring good and abandoning evil, we should be grateful to the Buddha.

(297) IN GRATITUDE FOR RECEIVING

Rennyo would always be in a *gasshō*-position whenever presented with a donation from *monto* members. He considered articles of clothing coming from the Buddha, and whenever anything trailed on the ground he would reverently lift it to his brow. We have been told that Rennyo looked upon all things passed on to him as coming directly from the hands of Shinran Shōnin.

(298) THE JOY OF INFINITY

As we are committed in the buddhadharma myriad of things assail us, and we do not make smooth progress— and yet there is this joyfulness for future life granted by the Buddha.

(299) LIGHTHEARTEDNESS

There is no loss in coming in contact with fellow buddhists. An entertaining word or two, playfully passed on is from the mind-depths of the buddhadharma, itself; and there is much to be gained!

(300) THE LEGACY

We have already reported our belief that Rennyo Shōnin, according to various examples, was indeed an actual manifestation. He left us this *waka*,

“This six-character
name is what I am
leaving behind me.”

Obviously, a sign of the transformed body of Amitabha.

(301) THE WEARY-WAYWORN TRAVELER

Rennyo would often show his sons the scarred feet chewed up by his thongs from journeying on foot in the capital environs and throughout the provinces—all for spreading the buddhadharma.

(302) EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOR

Follow not the evil-doer; the man of *shinjin* should ideally be the model.

(303) TRANSMISSION OF ANJIN

Following recuperation at Osaka, Rennyo was making his way back to the capital on the 18th of the second month of the eighth year of Meo when he met Jitsunyo in the Kawachi district. He told him, “I have written the *Essentials* of our tradition in *The Letters*, and I assume there will be no confusion. Take note and pass on this vital information.” It is said that this is one of the final acts of the Shōnin, and that Jitsunyo, himself, followed this bequest of *anjin* as given in the *Gobunsho*, and for the benefit of those throughout the provinces affixed his seal attesting to this transmission.

(304) DIFFICULTIES IN COMPREHENSION

Zonkaku, the son of Kakunyo, has the reputation of an emanation from the bodhisattva, *Daiseishi*, yet in the *Rokuyosho* he states that he had difficulty in following various passages, particularly on the doctrine of *Three Minds*, and that Shinran's work merits our respect. This is a revelation of the spiritual intent and harmony of abandoning self-power and accepting other-power, a worthy task.

(305) ZONKAKU'S COMMENTARY

This work was not composed from conceited motives, but to praise and express reverence for the original composition.

(306) A TESTIMONIAL POEM

Zonkaku's final poem,

a single night,
a dream—
no more
passageways!

Rennyo's comment on this poem was that Zonkaku was surely "an emanation of the Śākyamuni: a mind that comes and goes from this world and the next. From our point of view, we have traversed the six realms repeatedly without awareness until arriving on the threshold of this life."

(307) THE SUNNY SIDE OF LIFE

There is *brightness*—and there is the *shadowy*. Flowers quickly ripen in the sunshine, in the shade blooms appear later. In our own many excursions there is early attainment, and later awakening; struck with light rays of Amitabha there is immediate birth, and there is the delayed birth. Acquired faith or not, one should be attentive to the buddhadharma. Rennyo spoke this way on the passage of time, "Some persons yesterday, and some people today."

(308) ODDS AND ENDS

Passing through a corridor Rennyo suddenly stopped, picked up a scrap of paper from the floor, and made a reverent gesture with folded palms and bowed head. "This is wasting the Buddha's gift." Common objects were always seen in this way. Rennyo was never careless in thought or deed.

(309) REMEMBERING THE MAXIMS

"During my recent illness, those were *words of gold* I related for you to think about."

(310) A PREMONITION

During his recovery from sickness, Rennyo told Kyomon-bo, "Although still not feeling well, I'm anxious to tell you of an indescribable feeling, I have."

(311) SPEAK OUT!

Rennyo said, "In secular affairs or in the dharma even-mindedness is preferred. It is never good to remain silent." He did not like anyone to be inhibited, nor could he easily tolerate whispering in front of others.

(312) PINES AND THE BUDDHADHARMA

Care is taken in the ways of the world, Care is taken in the ways of the dharma—A couplet cited by Rennyo. He also said, *Cultivate the buddhadharma, tend to the culture of the garden trees.*

(313) GIFTS OF THE TATHAGATA

While Rennyo was staying in Sakai, Ken-en bought some blue striped material, "We already have that material—what waste!" In spite of the protest that it was paid out of Ken-en's own pocket, Rennyo admonished him, "Yours? All things are the possession of the Tathagata, and all things come from the Buddha and Shinran Shonin."

(314) A GIFT FOR KEN-EN

Ken-en once refused a gift from Rennyo, "Take it! Just as faith is given. If there is no faith can it be that a thing of the Buddha is not to be taken? Is it believed that it is mine to give? There is nothing for me to give; all comes from the Buddha without any exception whatever."

RENNYO SHŌNIN

LIFE-TIME OCCUPATION

"I have," declared Rennyo, "spent a lifetime in imparting the *buddhadharma* to others as expedient ways and means for acquiring faith."

Honganji in the Muromachi-Sengoku Period: Taking Up the Sword and its Consequences

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INTRODUCTION—THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This essay sets forth a short account of the Honganji's involvement in the warfare that engulfed Japan during the Muromachi-Sengoku period and suggests the historical consequences of that involvement.

When Shinran, then named Matsuwakamaru, ascended Mt. Hiei to enter the priesthood in 1181, the Gempei war between the Minamoto (Genji) and Taira (Heike) (1180-85) had already begun. That war ended when the Minamoto annihilated the Taira and established the Kamakura *bakufu* (military government). The Kamakura *bakufu* headed by Minamoto Yoritomo, and subsequently by Yoritomo's successors and their Hojo regents, lasted from about 1185 to 1336.

In 1336, Ashikaga Takauji overthrew the Hojo regency and moved the *bakufu* to the Muromachi area of Kyoto. The period 1336 to 1573 is thus called the Muromachi period. However, the period from 1467 (the first year of the Onin era), when the Onin War began, to 1573, when Oda Nobunaga drove the last Ashikaga Shogun (Yoshiaki) out of Kyoto, is also referred to as the Sengoku period, the period of the nation at war. It was also shortly before the start of the Onin War that Rennyo Shonin (the eighth Abbot of the Honganji) was driven out of Kyoto by the *sōhei* (warrior-monks) of Mt. Hiei.

Following the overthrow of the Ashikaga shogunate¹, Japan was brought under centralized control through the military campaigns of Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu. The Tokugawa shogunate was established in Edo (now Tokyo) in 1603 and lasted until the Meiji Restoration in 1868.

During Nobunaga's drive for power, the Honganji branch of Jōdo Shinshū joined the forces opposing Nobunaga. In so doing, the Honganji risked the same fate that befell the Enryakuji in 1571—total destruction—but managed to survive, at a cost. It is the thesis of this paper that although the Honganji did survive as an institution, domination, control and manipulation of all religious institutions by the government for the next three hundred years resulted in the stifling of genuine religious thought and the stagnation of the hermeneutical development of Jōdo Shinshū from the seventeenth century on.

"IKKŌ IKKI"

The Honganji's war against Oda Nobunaga (*Ishiyama Honganji Gassen*—Ishiyama Honganji War) is often referred to as the "Ikkō Ikki." However, the terms *Ikkō* and *ikki* have various meanings. Moreover, some Jōdo Shinshū followers participated in other "*ikki*" before the Honganji-Nobunaga war. Thus, we need to place the terms *Ikkō* and *ikki* in context in order that the terms themselves do not mislead us as to the import of the Honganji-Nobunaga war.

Ikkō-shū was a name used by outsiders in referring to Jōdo Shinshū. However, there was another Jōdoshū sect founded by Ikkō Shunjō (1239-87), a disciple of Ryōchin of the Jōdoshū's Chinzei branch, which was also called the *Ikkōshū*². Because of the similarity of this sect to Ippen's Jishū, the Ikkōshū became identified as a branch of the Jishū.

From early in its history, Jōdo Shinshū was frequently mistaken for the *Ikkōshū*. In the fourteenth century, Kakunyo and his uncle Yuizen petitioned civil and religious authorities not to suppress Jōdo Shinshū followers alongside members of the *Ikkōshū*. In the fifteenth century, Rennyo also tried to divest the Jōdo Shinshū of its mistaken identity.³ Nevertheless, from the fifteenth century on, Jōdo Shinshū and its followers came to be called *Ikkō*.

Sansom explains the origin of the term *ikki* in the formation of leagues by small landowners known as *ji-samurai* or *kokujin* during the thirteenth century. These landholders formed *ikki* to protect their interests, both economic and social, against newcomers appointed to the provinces as overseers by the Ashikaga government.⁴ Thus, the word *ikki* meant an association of persons for joint action, a league. By extension it came to describe the activity of a league, usually by way of revolt.⁵ Today, *ikki* connotes actions such as riots, uprisings, insurrections and revolts. Thus, when the term *Ikkō ikki* is used to refer to the war between the Honganji and the forces of Nobunaga, there is an inference that it concerns a struggle between an oppressed Jōdo Shinshū

following and the forces of Nobunaga. However, it will be seen that it would be erroneous to consider the Honganji's war with the Nobunaga forces to have been a revolt or an insurrection, much less a riot or an uprising. Moreover, it would appear that, in that context, *Ikkō* should be considered to refer to the Ishiyama Honganji, rather than to all Jōdo Shinshū, since all Shinshū followers were not necessarily on the side of the Honganji in the Honganji-Nobunaga conflict.

In any event, the Honganji's direct involvement and participation in warfare ended with the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate in the seventeenth century—probably because of the effectiveness of the policies adopted by the shogunate to prevent not only the Honganji, but all religious orders, from ever again gaining military power sufficient to challenge the central government.

THE JAPANESE BUDDHIST ORDERS' LEGACY OF VIOLENCE

The Ishiyama Honganji under the abbacy of Kennyo Shonin (1543-1592) was, according to some accounts, Oda Nobunaga's most troublesome military opponent during Nobunaga's drive for supremacy over all of Japan. However, the role of the Honganji in warfare in medieval Japan should be viewed within the context of a long history of involvement in warfare by Japan's Buddhist orders even before Shinran's time. Accordingly, this section, which is based largely on Turnbull,⁶ describes briefly the involvement of the Nara and Kyoto temples in Japan's many internal wars and conflicts.

Ever since the move of Japan's capital from Nara to Kyoto in 794 there was rivalry between the older temples of Nara and the new Enryakuji and Miidera temples on Mt. Hiei near Kyoto. The wealth of the temples also became an inviting lure to warrior leaders not deterred by religious conscience, while government tax-collectors eyed the land holdings of the temples as potential revenue sources. Consequently the temples of Mt. Hiei began to maintain private forces to preserve their rights and privileges and to withstand threats from others.

To enlarge their armies, temples recruited men to the priesthood solely to train them in warfare. These recruits were often peasants who had abandoned their farms or were petty criminals. The *sōhei* (warrior-monks or soldier priests) were formidable and their military skills were like those of the samurai. The priesthood had traditionally been a gentleman's profession, although many upper class *gakushō* (scholar priests) readily joined in battle if the need arose. In Kyoto, most of the trouble was caused by *sōhei* from Mt. Hiei, who were referred to as *yamabushi* (mountain warriors). The use of this appellation was unfortunate since the term *yamabushi* also referred to itinerant priests who

toured the country preaching and doing good works, and the phonetic similarity of terms led to much confusion. Regarding the depredations of the *sōhei*, it is said that the ex-Emperor Shirakawa once commented sadly while looking out of his palace during one of the incursions, "Though I am ruler of Japan, there are three things which are beyond my control; the rapids on the Kamo River, the fall of the dice at gambling, and the monks of the mountain!"⁷

The most furious disputes were between the temples. The arguments were usually over land or prestige, not over religious or doctrinal matters. Issues were frequently settled by burning down the opposing temple. Alliances were formed, and easily broken. In 989 and 1006 the Enryakuji fought the Kōfukuji. In 1036 Enryakuji fought Miidera. In 1081 Enryakuji united with Miidera against the Kōfukuji. Later in the same year Enryakuji burned Miidera over a succession dispute. In 1113 Enryakuji burned the Kiyomizu temple during a dispute over the election of an abbot. In 1140 Enryakuji attacked Miidera again, and in 1142 Miidera attacked the Enryakuji. So the list of encounters continued until the inter-temple disputes were overtaken by the great Gempei war. In 1180, during the first phase of the Gempei War, the Enryakuji and Miidera of Mt. Hiei and the Kōfukuji and Tōdaiji of Nara sided with the Minamoto. The Minamoto lost this phase of the war. As a consequence, the Kōfukuji and the Tōdaiji, whose *sōhei* had fought aggressively against the Taira forces, were burnt to the ground on order of Taira no Kiyomori.⁸

Although this description of the role of the Nara and Kyoto temples in warfare is sparse, it places the later military role of the Honganji in a context which makes the events of the sixteenth century easier to understand.

THE NATURE OF IKKI BEFORE KENNYO'S CONFRONTATION WITH NOBUNAGA

The frequent risings by *ji-samurai* or *kokujin* which occurred as a protest against the government of the Ashikaga shoguns were described by such terms as Shirahata-ikki ("White Flag Uprising") and Mikazuki-ikki ("Crescent Uprising") in which the name referred to the emblems used by the protesting factions. And when the constables and their deputies (*shugo* and *shugo-dai*) appointed by Ashikaga shoguns tried to impose their control over a whole province (*kuni*) and the local landowners rose up in opposition, the resulting conflict was called a *Kuni-Ikki*.⁹

There are also records of armed peasants taking part in some of these movements as well as in true agrarian risings. However, these latter *ikki* were sporadic and poorly organized. These risings, known as

tsuchi-ikki or *do-ikki*, became better organized and effective toward the end of the fifteenth century. Some were plain revolts against the injustice of landlords and others were simply attacks against moneylenders. Although there were some protests during the fourteenth century, the first large-scale peasant uprising occurred in 1428 in Ōmi Province. This uprising was led by peasant cultivators in forcible protest against certain financial edicts. This rising started as a rising of teamsters (*bashaku*) that soon spread to the capital, and thence to Nara, Ise, Kawachi, Izumi, and other provinces. The mob broke into the premises of moneylenders¹⁰ (chiefly the sake-brewers and pawnbrokers) and even into monastery buildings, destroying evidence of debt and seizing pledges.

In 1441 the farmers rose against the landlords in country districts not far from the capital—in districts such as Miidera, Toba, Fushimi, Saga, Ninnaji, and Kamo.¹¹ These were attacks in force against persons and places and were joined by farmers from various locations in the environs of Kyoto. They seized and occupied houses in the western part of the city (Nishi-Hachijo). In one instance a force of from two to three thousand men occupied important temples at Kitano and Uzumasa.

Such risings continued at intervals of two or three years until the end of the fifteenth century, chiefly in Yamashiro province (Kyoto environs) and in the Nara district. Some were put down by force and the leaders executed. In other instances, the *bakufu* issued debt cancellation edicts (*tokusei*) to pacify the rioters. When debt cancellation began to hurt the *bakufu*'s revenues (which derived in part from taxes on the moneylenders), partial debt cancellations were issued, whereby the debts were cancelled on payment of a percentage directly to the *bakufu*. But on the whole the *bakufu* failed to stem the movement. It should be noted, however, that scholars are not in agreement on certain points, such as with respect to the constitution of the *ikki* and the status of the members. Thus, it cannot be stated definitively that *ikki* were all this or that. In some ways they seem to resemble what today are called "protest groups," some more militant and violent than others. Thus, the foregoing is intended to only suggest the nature of *ikki* and how the term came to be used.

THE POLITICIZATION OF THE HONGANJI

Rennyo Shōnin (1415-1499), the Eighth Abbot of the Honganji, is often called the second founder of Jōdo Shinshū. Clearly, it was because of his efforts that the Honganji was to become the dominant branch of Jōdo Shinshū as well as the force to be reckoned with by the warlords who eventually took control of Japan in the last third of the sixteenth century.

Rennyo was born into the then extremely poor Honganji at Ōtani. However, Rennyo's father, Zonnyo (1396-1457), had begun the enlargement of the temple in Kyoto and an increase in the number of affiliated temples in Kaga, Echizen, and Ōmi provinces. More importantly, Zonnyo gave Rennyo valuable lessons in religious leadership.¹²

Rennyo assumed the abbacy in 1457 following the death of Zonnyo and the settlement of an intra-family succession dispute. He then embarked on his proselyting efforts in Ōmi to the east of Kyoto where he had strong support. But, because of Rennyo's success in the provinces near Kyoto, *sōhei* swept down from Mt. Hiei in 1465 and destroyed the Honganji's temple complex. Rennyo escaped with the revered image of Shinran and carried it with him from place to place for the next four years, primarily in Ōmi province. Eventually, the image was placed in the care of Miidera, archrival of Enryakuji, where it was kept until 1480 when the new Honganji was built in Yamashina. In the meanwhile, the Ōnin War began in 1467 and threw the capital into turmoil.

Because of the constant threat from Mt. Hiei, Rennyo moved from place to place until 1471 when he moved to Yoshizaki in Echizen Province beyond the reach of the *sōhei* of Mt. Hiei. Before this move, Rennyo had continued to win converts not only in Ōmi province, but also in Mikawa and in areas south of Kyoto such as in Settsu and Yoshino.

Yoshizaki had been a desolate area but became a thriving religious center by 1473. Pilgrims by the thousands flocked there from nearby Kaga, Etchū, Noto, and Echigo provinces, as well as from the far-flung provinces of Shinano, Dewa, and Mutsu to hear Rennyo. What drew these pilgrims to Yoshizaki was Rennyo himself. Rennyo's success in the Hokuriku region came initially from his preaching tours. The Honganji had a network of congregations there dating back to the founding of the Zuisenji temple in 1390 by Rennyo's great-grandfather Shakunyo. Also, the Sanmonto branch maintained a long-standing influence in the area, and Shin'e of the Senjuji branch had been proselyting in Echizen, Echigo and other provinces some ten years earlier. Thus Rennyo could draw on the sympathy for Jōdo Shinshū which had already been created. And, when Rennyo returned to Kyoto in 1475 he commanded such widespread support in the provinces that Mt. Hiei could not pose a threat to the Honganji again.¹³

Dobbins gives us a good indication of Rennyo's proselyting methods which led to the enlarging and strengthening of the Honganji's following, and also set Honganji on a path which took it to the brink of total destruction. He writes that although Rennyo's foremost concern during his Hokuriku sojourn was to spread Shinran's teaching, he was not oblivious to the social and political events occurring around him. On the contrary, he perceived the formation of autonomous villages in

the region as a boon for religious recruitment if they could be penetrated. Rennyo's strategy was to convert village leaders first and through them win over the remaining village members. "Village leaders" refers to the local priest who may be of another school or sect, the elder to the head of each family in the village, and the headman to the most powerful cultivator of the community. All three were typically upper-class (*myōshu*) who dominated village affairs. Rennyo considered them crucial to the spread of Jōdo Shinshū, and he linked the success of Jōdo Shinshū to the emerging village organization. During Rennyo's years in the Hokuriku the *kō* or local congregation became the grass-roots unit of the Honganji's religious organization.

Rennyo's method, while apparently effective for the purposes of proselytization, also led Honganji's religious organization into becoming enmeshed in the politics of the period, initially on a local scale, eventually on a national scale. Even while Rennyo was at Yoshizaki, he and his following became involved in a power struggle between Togashi Masachika and Togashi Kōchiyo for the position of *shugo* (constable or governor) of neighboring Kaga province when pressure was placed on Rennyo to support one side or the other.

Rennyo's following in the Hokuriku region were primarily peasants, but gradually low-level samurai also attached themselves to the movement. Although samurai had political concerns different from that of the village peasants, common religious belief (of equality of all in Amida's embrace) made it possible for them to join together with peasants to form *ikki*. In 1473 the *ikki* of Jōdo Shinshū followers sided with Togashi Masachika.¹⁴ However, the alliance did not last long. In 1488 the Shinshū supporters fell into conflict with Masachika, surrounded his castle, and cut him off from outside reinforcements. Defeated, Masachika took his own life. And for the next ninety-three years administrative power rested in the hands of a political coalition of Jōdo Shinshū adherents.¹⁵

Rennyo's attitude toward the military ventures of his followers was always circumspect. He did his best to restrain their excesses and did not encourage them in their exploits. During Masachika's defeat in 1488, Shogun Ashikaga Yoshihisa ordered Rennyo to expel Shinshū participants of Kaga from his religious organization. Rennyo could not bring himself about to do so and eventually appeased the Shogun by sending reprimands to the temples that had mobilized members for battle, rebuking and admonishing them against further violence. This was the tack that Rennyo took throughout his career.¹⁶

The events of Rennyo's Yoshizaki period caused him to institute *okite*, or rules of conduct, to govern his movement. The rules present guidelines for behavior which all Shinshū followers were expected to

follow. However, such rules did not prevent the Honganji and Rennyo's successors from becoming drawn into the political-military conflicts of the Sengoku period after Rennyo's death.

Rennyo departed the Hokuriku in 1475 when the situation there became volatile. Rennyo based himself at Deguchi temporarily until he chose Yamashina in the eastern outskirts of Kyoto as the site of the new Honganji in 1478. All the while he continued his propagational work. And as before, he was successful in winning converts from the other Shinshū branches as well as from the Jishū, Ikkōshū and other schools of Buddhism. Because of the constant influx of new adherents, Rennyo's campaign against provocative behavior and heretical teachings was an ongoing endeavor. This increase in adherents also coincided with a proliferation of Shinshū *ikki* in various provinces. The involvement of Rennyo's followers in these uprisings confirmed the worst suspicions of his opponents, despite his efforts to improve the reputation of the school. The sheer number of adherents and their broad geographical distribution, however, gave adversaries pause before attacking the Shinshū.

By the time the new Honganji was completed at Yamashina in 1483, Rennyo's consolidation of his new following was nearing completion. In 1481, the bulk of the Bukkōji members shifted affiliation to the Honganji. Most Kinshokuji members followed suit in 1493. Combined with converts from other branches and schools, Honganji became one of the powerful religious institutions in Japan.

Beyond the increased strength in numbers, Rennyo strengthened the Honganji organizationally. He oversaw the development of an extensive network of temples and congregations under the Honganji. Generally this network took the form of a pyramid with the Honganji on top, intermediary temples in the middle, and local congregations, or *kō*, at the bottom. From these groups the Honganji received material support. Contributions, which gradually evolved into annual pledges came from congregations at all levels. This system of annual contributions provided sustained economic support for the Honganji at a time when the older Nara and Kyoto temples were declining because they lost control of the estates on which they depended.

Rennyo also developed a network of authority that stretched throughout the expanding religious organization. In addition to the regular hierarchy of head temple, intermediary temple, and local congregation, Rennyo established a family council called the *ikkeshu*, consisting of himself, his sons, and their sons. Rennyo strategically placed his children at major temples in regions where the Shinshū enjoyed greatest strength. Placing family members in regional temples had been a common practice among earlier Honganji leaders, but none used it to the

degree that Rennyo did. His twenty-seven offspring provided ample candidates to fill these positions, thereby making possible a family network extending throughout the Shinshū. The family council then became the de facto ruling body of the Honganji beginning with Rennyo's retirement in 1489, and it continued to serve in that capacity for at least two generations. During the decades following Rennyo's death the council built up extraordinary powers, wielding excommunication (*hamon*) and in times of warfare even the threat of execution (*shōgai*) as a means of enforcing its will. Despite the abuses that occurred, the influence of the Honganji and the number of followers joining its ranks continued to grow under the council's direction throughout the sixteenth century.¹⁷

Rennyo's tenure as head of the Honganji formally ended in 1489 when he yielded his position to his son Jitsunyo. At first he took up residence within the Honganji compound, but in 1496 he built himself a hermitage at what later became the Ishiyama Honganji in present day Osaka.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SECULAR POWER

When Jitsunyo succeeded Rennyo, he as a general rule cautioned the Honganji followers to obey the law and to avoid confrontations with the warlords. However, in 1506 he acquiesced to pressure from Hosokawa Masamoto, the Deputy Shogun, to lend him support in his campaigns against the Hatakeyama by ordering some Shinshū *ikki* to fight for the Hosokawa.¹⁸

Following Jitsunyo's death in 1525, he was succeeded by his grandson Shōnyo. According to Hayashiya Tatsusaburo, Honganji forces led by Shōnyo attacked Kenponji, one of the major Hokke-shu (Nichiren-shu) centers in the port city of Sakai in 1532. Then, following their successful siege of Kenponji, the Honganji forces turned on Nara, burnt Kōfukuji, and ransacked the Kasuga shrine. The news of the Honganji attacks caused apprehension in Kyoto where it was rumored that the Honganji forces would turn on the capital next. Thus, the Hokke *ikki* was formed to defend Kyoto against the Honganji forces. After initial setbacks, the Hokke partisans took the offensive at the end of 1532 continuing into 1533 when they joined forces with Hosokawa Harumoto.¹⁹ McMullin notes, however, that the Yamashina Honganji was burnt down in 1532 by the Hosokawa and the Rokkaku and their Nichirensu allies.²⁰ And, McMullin adds that Shōnyo then moved to the Osaka area and built the Ishiyama Honganji, presumably on the site of the hermitage built by Rennyo. (Hayashiya writes that Hokke and Hosokawa forces attacked the Ishiyama Honganji in 1532, which did not as yet exist according to other sources.)

In any event, the Yamashina Honganji was burnt down, and the Ishiyama Honganji stronghold was built in what is now Osaka by Shōnyō. When Shōnyō died in 1554 he was succeeded by his eleven year old son, Kennyo. Although Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu are universally recognized as the triumvirate who brought an end to the Sengoku period and pacified all of Japan, it may be argued (as does McMullin) that Kennyo is the one individual who could have blocked Nobunaga's efforts and himself gained the supreme power had he aggressively sought it. However, such arguments would be merely speculative since some key events that helped Nobunaga, such as the sudden death of Takeda Shingen (whose wife was reportedly Kennyo's sister-in-law) on his drive towards the capital ahead of Nobunaga and the early death of Uyesugi Kenshin, could not have been foretold. In any event, Kennyo's Honganji forces and allies fought Nobunaga and held off the capture of the Ishiyama Honganji from 1570 to 1580.

I am unable to describe in detail the circumstances leading to each of the engagements of the Honganji forces with Nobunaga's forces and allies. Therefore, only brief mention will be made of some of the significant engagements without elaboration of the circumstances or explanation of the roles of the various sides involved.

In 1570, while Nobunaga fought Miyoshi Chokei near Osaka, Honganji forces including three thousand armed with arquebuses reinforced Miyoshi and caused Nobunaga's withdrawal. During this engagement, the Asai and Asakura brought an army down through Ōmi to attack Nobunaga. Then during that winter of 1570-71 while Nobunaga was driving back the Asai and Asakura forces, the *sōhei* of Enryakuji attacked Nobunaga's flank and caused his withdrawal back to Kyoto.

In September 1571, Nobunaga eliminated the threat from Mt. Hiei by attacking and completely annihilating the occupants of Enryakuji, burning down all structures and killing everyone encountered—man, woman and child. This action left the Honganji as the only clerical force capable of standing in Nobunaga's way.

In 1572 during Shingen's drive toward Kyoto, the Honganji forces were allied with Shingen along with the Asai and Asakura forces against Nobunaga's ally, Tokugawa Ieyasu, in the battle at Mikata-ga-Hara. Shingen died suddenly in April 1573, allowing Nobunaga to drive Shogun Yoshiaki out of Kyoto and to attack and defeat once and for all Asakura and Asai. During 1574, Nobunaga engaged Honganji forces and allies in Echizen, Owari, Ise, Kawachi and Settsu (and in other areas) and instituted a blockade of the Ishiyama Honganji. In 1575 Mori Terumoto, the powerful lord of Aki in the west, allied his forces with the Honganji at the instigation of the deposed Shogun Yoshiaki. Because of the sup-

port of Mori, who had a relatively large naval force, the blockade of the Ishiyama Honganji was ineffectual because the blockade could be breached by boats.

In 1575, in order to suppress the Echizen *monto*, Nobunaga sought the assistance of the Nichirensbū *monto* as well as the Shinshū Sanmonto, which had been at odds with the Honganji. The Takada branch may also have aided in Nobunaga's campaign against the Echizen *monto*. In any event, the Honganji supporters in Echizen and Kaga were defeated in September with, according to one source, 30,000 to 40,000 *monto* killed during the Echizen campaign. And in November 1575, a Nobunaga-Honganji peace pact was arranged. However, this peace was shattered in April 1576. Nobunaga's forces began to march against Mori, who had committed himself to assist the Honganji and to sponsor deposed Shogun Yoshiaki's cause. In response, Kennyo Shōnin sent out a call to his followers to rise up against Nobunaga once again. Kennyo's call was answered by the *monto* in Settsu and Echizen. In early June Nobunaga's vassal daimyo Harada Naomasa led 10,000 troops in an assault on the Honganji, but were repulsed by the Honganji's force of 15,000 and Harada himself was killed. In retaliation Nobunaga personally led an attack to the gates of the Honganji which resulted in the taking of 3,000 *monto* heads.

The war between Kennyo Shōnin and his allies and Oda Nobunaga raged on, back and forth, until 1580. Then in March 1580, Nobunaga petitioned the court to reopen peace negotiations that had been abruptly terminated by Nobunaga in 1578. The court granted Nobunaga's request and sent three imperial envoys to Kennyo with the injunction to Kennyo that he enter into peace negotiations with Nobunaga. Kennyo's position at the Ishiyama Honganji was by that time hopeless. However, Kennyo hesitated accepting the terms of the peace pact since it would have meant vacating the Honganji. Nevertheless, Kennyo finally agreed to the terms on April 1, 1580. But Kennyo had difficulty having his followers in the provinces as well as some within the Honganji, including his son Kyōnyo, accept the terms of the peace pact. In fact, Kyōnyo and his supporters initially refused to vacate the Honganji as required. When Kennyo vacated the Honganji in May 1580, Kyōnyo and his faction remained, until he was finally induced by Nobunaga to abandon the Honganji in August 1580.

Kyōnyo's actions in this situation led to Kennyo's reversal of his earlier decision to name Kyōnyo as his successor and instead naming Kyōnyo's younger brother, Junnyo, as Kennyo's successor.

THE HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES

The events as they unfolded after the fall of the Ishiyama Honganji might suggest that the Honganji didn't fare too badly after all. With the defeat of the Honganji, Nobunaga was now free to continue his westward advance against the Mori and beyond. But in June 1582, Nobunaga was assassinated by one of his generals, Akechi Mitsuhide. Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who had been leading Nobunaga's advance to the west, returned quickly, attacked, and defeated Akechi and his forces. By this lightning stroke, Hideyoshi was enabled to take control of the Nobunaga coalition and gain supremacy over the land.

In March 1585, Hideyoshi engaged two Buddhist communities in battle, the Shingon monks of Negoro and Jōdo Shinshū *monto* of Saiga on the Kii peninsula. These were the only military incidents involving Hideyoshi and religious organizations following the death of Nobunaga. Negoro was a leading arms producer and had supplied the Ishiyama Honganji during that war against Nobunaga. Saiga was a Jōdo Shinshū bastion that had survived Nobunaga's attack in 1577. With their surrender, the last enclave of Honganji resistance was eliminated.²¹

Notwithstanding that Hideyoshi, like Nobunaga, was no friend of militant religious communities, he extended to the religious community a policy of reconciliation. He issued permission to the priests of Mt. Hiei to rebuild their sanctuary and then contributed fifteen hundred *koku* to the effort. He awarded the Honganji land for a new temple in Osaka to compensate for the loss of the Ishiyama Honganji, and even attended the consecration ceremonies for the completed enclave. In the meanwhile, Hideyoshi began the construction of his magnificent Osaka castle on the former site of Ishiyama Honganji in 1583. This castle was completed in 1590. Then in 1591, he invited Kennyo to select a Kyoto site for the Honganji. Kennyo settled upon a property of three square blocks that cut substantially into the compound of Hokokuji, the chief Nichiren temple of the capital.²² The Nishi Honganji now stands on this site. Although Hideyoshi was munificent in his treatment of the other temples, he gave the most expensive treatment to the Honganji.

Hideyoshi had risen in power, while holding off all opposing elements, including Tokugawa Ieyasu, until he reached the top in 1586. When Hideyoshi died in 1598, a Council of Regency was established under Ieyasu. Then following the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 which he won, Ieyasu was appointed Shogun in 1603. Thus was established the Tokugawa Shogunate that lasted until 1868.

Hideyoshi had recognized Junnyo as the successor to Kennyo Shonin as the head of the Honganji. However, in 1602 Ieyasu recognized Kyōnyo's claim to be a legitimate successor to Kennyo and granted

him land in Kyoto on which to build a temple that would be looked upon by his followers as the head temple of the Honganji branch of Jōdo Shinshū. That temple was built on the site of what is now the Higashi Honganji (Eastern Honganji), and the temple built by Junnyo and his followers came to be called the Nishi Honganji (Western Honganji.) Thus, Ieyasu, exploiting the rift between Kennyo and his son Kyōnyo, effectively split the Honganji branch of Jōdo Shinshū into two parts—as a means of weakening it.²³

In the first few decades of the Tokugawa period, the *bakufu* initiated a number of practices to keep the Buddhist temples within the shogunate's control. Some of these measures were:

Issuance in 1615 of "Regulations for the Court and Nobles," some of which governed the promotion, punishment, dismissal, and even the attire of court nobles and priests.

Reestablishment in 1632 of the "main temple - branch temple" (*honji* or *honzan* - *matsuji*) system of temple organization. Thereafter, there could be no independent, nonaligned temples. By establishing this requirement, the *bakufu* created a hierarchical structure within the Buddhist schools, absorbed them into the Tokugawa political system and facilitated the control of the temples by the *bakufu*.

Appointing, beginning in 1635, "temple and shrine administrators" (*jisha bugyō*) in every *han* (domain) who were charged with overseeing temple affairs and assuring that the temples observed the "temple ordinances" (*Jiin no hatto*) that were issued by the *bakufu*. Additionally, the *bakufu* also appointed *firegashira*, temples that were designated to receive instructions from the *jisha bugyō* and with transmitting those instructions to the branch temples.

Requiring each household to be registered at and to support a particular temple that would thenceforth be that household's "temple of registry" (*dannadera*). This system was called the "household temple system" (*danka seido*). From the year 1640 every household was required to be registered at some temple or other. At first the *bakufu* did not require all the members of a particular household to be registered at the same temple, but gradually this came to be required, and by 1788 the "one household - one temple" (*ikka-issshu*) rule was firmly established. The purpose of the "one household - one temple" system was to give the *bakufu* further control over the population and to put the burden of temple support on the shoulders of the population and not on the *bakufu*. The temples benefitted from this system because it assured that every temple would have a

paying membership. (At the same time, it may be seen that this system, along with a prohibition of proselytization, effectively dampened and prevented the emergence of the kind of propagational and evangelical fervor that had been demonstrated earlier by Rennyo Shonin.)

Establishing in 1640 the "Office of the Inquisitor" (*shamon aratame-yaku*), which was charged with making sure that every member of society was duly registered at an officially recognized temple.

Deciding when and where temples could be built.

Prohibiting "religious debates" in order to prevent conflicts among the various Buddhist schools that might result in violent disorders. Religious debates did occur from time to time, but the participants were severely punished. (Thus, it may be seen that such policy resulted in governmental control of religious thought and discourse and constrained religious inquiry and thought.)

Finally, toward the end of the Tokugawa period during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the *bakufu* did away with the privileges that had been enjoyed by the temples. Most of the landholdings of the temples were confiscated. Court ranks and titles for priests and temples were abolished. The custom of celebrating Buddhist ceremonies at the court was discontinued. And the practice of hereditary access to high priestly office was replaced by a government nomination system.²⁴

THE LASTING EFFECT OF TOKUGAWA POLICIES

The Honganji (now Nishi Honganji and Higashi Honganji) became the most powerful and influential religious organization in Japan during the Muromachi period largely because of the organizational and propagational skills of the Eighth Abbot, Rennyo Shōnin. Rennyo tried to keep his following from becoming involved in the political intrigues and turmoil of the time, but was clearly not successful. That the Honganji became involved in warfare during the Sengoku period was probably inevitable given the precedents set by the older Buddhist orders as well as the vicissitudes of the time. However, Honganji's success in gaining power also succeeded in further convincing the secular powers of the imperative to be wary of the threat posed to political control of the country by the religious orders such as the Enryakuji and Honganji.

Nobunaga was ruthless, but effective, in his dealings with the temples. And by Hideyoshi's time, the military threat from the temples had been eliminated by Nobunaga with only a minor cleaning-up remaining. With the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate, there

was no longer a need for further military action to bring the temples under government control. Rather, the issue was how to keep the temples under the control of the *bakufu*. The effect of the Tokugawa policies on the temples and Japanese society are clearly evident even today, a century and a quarter after the last Tokugawa Shogun. Tokugawa policies and control left in place self-perpetuating religious structures, but the motivation and stimulus for renewing and strengthening the faith in the context of changing times and place has been effectively removed or deadened. Socio-political changes forced on the Japanese by their defeat in World War II has not, and probably cannot, erase the historical consequences of the *dannadera*—*dankaseido* system that was enforced by the Tokugawa shogunate.

In the August 1986 issue of *PHP Intersect Magazine* of Tokyo, Japan, editor Robert J. J. Wargo wrote: "Most of the introductions to Japan, even those written by seasoned observers, talk about the casual attitude of the Japanese toward religion. The Japanese themselves seem to validate such an assessment when they go abroad and maintain that they 'have no particular religion' or they 'don't have much interest in such matters.'" And in the cover story in that issue, Norman Havens observed that "It is not easy being a student of Japanese religions when you are told that the subject of your study doesn't exist. For, when introducing myself and my field of interest to a new Japanese acquaintance, I am frequently met by an incredulous look and a cry of, 'But we Japanese aren't religious!'"

These anecdotal observations seem to be confirmed by Japanese government data reported by Hojo Ohye:

According to a 1983 government survey on religion, 80% of Japanese young people replied that they did not have any religion, but yet out of a total population of 119,438,000, the number of adherents belonging to various religious organizations totalled 220,783,000. This shows that, virtually every Japanese, from infant to the elderly, has two faiths....²⁵

At a time (the seventeenth century) when, according to Jeffrey Hopper,²⁶ the findings of science were setting the problems for philosophy which in turn was beginning to define new rules for theology and thus opening up religious dialogue and debate in the West, religion in Japan was placed under autocratic state control and religious dialogue and debate was stifled. The actions of the Tokugawa *bakufu* are understandable from a military-political standpoint. The government could not allow any institution to be a potential source of disruption of the public order. Although not mentioned above, Christianity was proscribed,

and the system of registration with temples was originally instituted as a means of rooting out "hidden Christians."

In terms of the lasting effect of the Tokugawa policies on religion (Buddhism) in Japan today, two of the policies have probably had the most devastating effect—that of the system of temple registration and the prohibition of religious debate.

The temple registration system and its related feature of requiring members to support their respective temples resulted in individuals belonging to churches, not because of religious faith, but because the government required that they belong. At the same time, a prohibition against proselytizing removed the need for the priesthood to concern themselves with religious messages other than those which would conform with governmental edict and would not incur governmental displeasure. Moreover, there was no need to deal forthrightly with questions on faith because faith *per se* was not relevant with regard to whether temples continued to exist or would be supported. Thus, there is little or no pastoral work or tradition, such as are found in Western churches, evidenced by Japanese Buddhist orders. And even though it has been over a hundred years since the end of the Tokugawa shogunate, the habits developed during the Tokugawa period seem to remain. Thus, many Japanese admit that they "belong" (i.e. have some tie with) to a particular temple or some temple, but don't know much, if anything, about that temple's religious or spiritual tradition other than perhaps some of its ritualistic customs and practices. Many Japanese appear to believe that they need to know what temple they belong to so that they will have a temple to go to arrange for family funerals. Of course there are the exceptions, probably many exceptions, wherein religious faith is the true reason that individuals do participate in and support their respective traditions. If it were not for such individuals, the respective traditions could not survive and only empty institutional structures devoted only to ritual and form would remain.

The prohibition against religious debate has also had its mark. While that policy has not been in effect for over a hundred years, the conservatism in discussion of doctrinal matters that developed during the Tokugawa period has had lasting effect. To avoid government intervention in ecclesiastical matters, religious institutions such as the Honganji exercised extreme care to avoid the surfacing of any kind of controversy. Failure to conform to governmental policy exposed one to charges of heresy and possibly excommunication. Again such habits are difficult to remove, particularly in a culture in which the conventional wisdom is that "the nail that sticks out is struck." Essentially, the emphasis continues to be on the perpetuation of doctrine—a doctrine set in concrete since the Tokugawa period.

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NOTES

- ¹ The terms "*bakufu*," "shogunate" and "government" are used interchangeably throughout this essay without any significant distinction.
- ² James C. Dobbins, *Jōdo Shinshū*, pp. 110-11.
- ³ See also M. Rogers and A. Rogers, *Rennyo*, p. 167 and fn85.
- ⁴ George Sansom, *A History of Japan 1334-1615*, p. 207
- ⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 207 and 427.
- ⁶ Stephen R. Turnbull, *The Samurai*, pp. 25-26.
- ⁷ *Ibid*, p. 33.
- ⁸ *Ibid*, p. 49.
- ⁹ Sansom, p. 207.
- ¹⁰ Since the early thirteenth century, the sake-brewers were also the principal moneylenders and came to be called *sakaya-dosō*. Likewise, the Gozan (Zen) monasteries also engaged in the moneylending business. See K. Grossberg, pp. 37 & 85.
- ¹¹ The 1441 "Kakitsu affair." See Hall and Toyoda, *passim*; H. Paul Varley, *The Ōnin War*, *passim*.
- ¹² Dobbins, p. 131.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, p. 137.
- ¹⁴ For a more detailed account of the background and details of the Kaga incident and the parties involved, see Rogers and Rogers, pp. 72-77. See also Stanley Weinstein, *Rennyo and the Shinshū Revival*, in Hall and Toyoda, pp. 354-56.
- ¹⁵ Dobbins, p. 140.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 141.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 152-53.
- ¹⁸ Neil McMullin, *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan*, p.45.
- ¹⁹ Hayashiya Tatsusaburo, *Kyoto in the Muromachi Age*, in Hall and Toyoda, pp. 32-33.
- ²⁰ McMullin, p. 46.
- ²¹ Mary E. Berry, *Hideyoshi*, pp. 85-86.
- ²² *Ibid*, p. 202.
- ²³ McMullin, p. 243. See also A. L. Sadler, *The Maker of Modern Japan*, (p. 359) in which Sadler claims that Kyōnyo sought out Ieyasu before the Battle of Sekigahara and offered to stir up the *monto* of Muro [sic] and Ōmi to make a diversion on his side. Ieyasu declined, but later on

he obtained an Imperial Edict appointing Kyōnyo Monzeki (Imperial Abbot), and then had a temple built for him to the east of the main Honganji.

²⁴ McMullin, pp. 243-47.

²⁵ Hojo Ohye, "The Religious Sentiment of the Japanese" in *The Pure Land*, New Series No. 7 (Dec. 1990), p. 92.

²⁶ Jeffrey Hopper, *Understanding Modern Theology I—Cultural Revolutions and the New Worlds*, Fortress Press: Philadelphia (1987).

²⁷ Langdon Gilkey, *Message and Existence: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, p. 17.

Sōtō Zen and the Inari Cult: Symbiotic and Exorcistic Trends in Buddhist and Folk Religious Amalgamations

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We revere the Dharma, whether manifested in a round pillar, a garden lantern, a buddha, a fox, a demon or a deity, a man or a woman.

Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō* "Raihaitokuzui"¹

FOLK RELIGIOUS AND BUDDHIST INARI IMAGES

This paper investigates the historical and ideological roots of the syncretism between Sōtō Zen and the cult of Inari, which venerates the god of the rice harvest and fertility often represented by its chief messenger and avatar, the fox (*kitsune*). This example of Buddhist-folk religious syncretism is most evident in a small network of branch temples of Sōtō which, although affiliated with one of the sect's two main temples at Eihei-ji, has its own main temple in Toyokawa city in Aichi prefecture southeast of Nagoya and several subsidiary temples, including one in Tokyo Akasaka. This institution is referred to simultaneously, or at times interchangeably, as Myōgon-ji temple (the Buddhist name) and Tokoyawa Inari, and it enshrines at least three forms of the fox/rice deity which are considered mutually supportive as protector deities for the temple-shrine complex and its followers: the Buddhist deity Dakini-shinten depicted as a female bodhisattva astride a flying white fox enshrined in the dharma-hall; the indigenous Inari fertility deity known here as Toyokawa Inari in a shrine hall; and a variety of small fox icons which are guardians of these images.

Although Dakini-shinten is labeled Buddhist, the formation of its imagery and iconography has little precedent in Indian or Chinese models and seems to reflect a prior syncretism with the native god. The rites, festivals, and chants for the worship of this deity are performed by Sōtō clergy, many of whom are trained at Eiheiiji, for which Myōgonji serves as a regional teaching temple. This occurs despite the fact that medieval folklore records contain tales in which Sōtō monks, as well as numerous other Buddhist practitioners, are known for their ability to exorcise demonic trickster foxes. The distinctive combination of elements in which an indigenous deity is more highly venerated by a Sōtō temple dedicated in part to the practice of zazen than Buddhist gods, and yet still is recognized as having a malevolent potential, becomes a focal point for rethinking the function of syncretism in Japanese religion. It also calls for a reevaluation of the two-tiered, "trickle-down" assimilative model of *honji-suijaku* theology (Buddhist gods as the original ground and indigenous spirits as their manifestation), in order to account for the interaction of multiple symbols of the Inari gods.

THE INARI CULT

The cult of Inari is surely one of the oldest and largest folk religious movements in Japan.² According to legend, the origin of the cult is traced back to 711 A.D. when a bird's flight auspiciously sited the first shrine on a mountain top at Fushimi in the southern outskirts of Kyoto, and the cult was also patronized in its early years by Kūkai (774-835), who declared Inari the protector deity of Tōji temple which was built with wood from Fushimi mountain. Fushimi Inari began receiving imperial patronage during the Heian period when the first large shrine building was erected in 823 in gratitude for successful prayers for rain. A century later three shrines were built on separate hills that established a connection between Inari, based initially on local, seasonal rice-growing gods of the paddy fields (*ta no kami*) who regularly return to the mountains (*yama no kami*) for winter hibernation, and the classical Shinto mythology of *Kojiki/Nihongi* fertility gods. Inari, which according to traditional etymology means "rice plant (*ine*) growth (*naruru*)," was linked especially to Ukemochi, a female deity who, it is said, was disembodied by an angry father and gave rise to vegetation which sprang from her interred body parts.³ Although the legends of pre-Heian Inari activities are unreliable, it is plausible that some of the rituals for rice planting/transplanting/harvest that were incorporated into the cult actually stemmed from local fertility rites and field dances originating from much earlier, pre-Buddhist times.

Claiming over 30,000 shrines, which may actually be an underestimate given the profusion of small, single unit shrines, *torii*, and fox

icons contained within the compound of large Shinto shrine and Buddhist temple compounds as well as located in otherwise secular spaces, the Inari cult is remarkably widespread and diffused into nearly all regions and population sectors. Although the cult originated out of a belief in the efficacy of rituals for the growing and reaping of rice, it has come at least since the Tokugawa era to be associated with notions of productivity, especially economic prosperity, in a much broader sense than agrarianism. In other words, as forms of economic production and lifestyle shifted in the early modern and modern eras from predominantly agricultural to commercial and industrial models, an important transition also occurred in Inari worship. Now, Inari is patronized not just by farmers but by people involved in any sort of commercial venture who seek success and prosperity, from large corporations to merchants, shopkeepers, and even *geisha* and *yakuza*. Inari shrines are often decorated with emblems and talismans donated as votive offerings by businesses and shops which inscribe their names on banners, *torii*, lanterns, and red bibs draped around the necks of fox statues who are imagined to be eating their favorite foods, fried sweet tofu (*aburage* or *kitsune-dofu*) or noodles (*kitsune-udon*). While quite a few of the shrines are located in secluded or rural spots allowing for a communion with nature that recalls the agrarian origins, including the cult center at Fushimi which has numerous mountain paths and lakes, many others stand within the heart of an urban area, such as the entranceway of department stores. At the same time, even the Fushimi shrine has many signs of commercialism within its compound, such as teahouses, shops selling votive candles and other items, as well as vending machines. In the Inari cult, commerce is not repudiated or suspended but rather sacralized, protected, and promoted by ritual activities. The benefits of Inari extend to the realm of fertility and childbirth as evidenced by the fact that the Fushimi shrine is patronized by barren women or women who have had miscarriages. In some interpretations Inari is a force of general providence watching over and responding to all human yearnings and aspirations.

It is impossible to determine exactly how and why the fox became the main icon of Inari because there are no historical records or systematic theological discussions that explain or justify the connection. Perhaps in prehistoric times foxes were seen, often at twilight or night, prowling around outlying areas such as rice paddies nearby but just out of the reach of the mainstream of human activity, and their presence was considered a good omen for the prosperity of the crop. The images in fox iconography use numerous symbols of fertility — long phallic tails, offspring lovingly cared for by maternal foxes, and elaborate ceremonial wedding processions. Foxes are also infernal animals

who often dwell in openings burrowed in graveyard areas, thus giving them an association with death that has several important implications for the Inari cult. First, the foxes are related to the inevitability of dissolution and decay in the seasonal cycle of planting and harvest, that is, their presence and absence reflects the way growth and flourishing is accompanied by periods of decline and fallowness. Also, the link to the site of graves makes the fox appear threatening and a harbinger of divine retribution, such as an unyielding crop or famine, which requires participation in rituals and festivals as a purification.

It is probably the case that foxes were connected with Inari first as its messenger linking the human world subject to physical limitations with the divine realm populated by gods and buddhas (*kami* and *hotoke*). However, Inari did not have another single representation distinct in form or gender; for example, human images of Inari are portrayed with different ages and features ranging from an old man with a white beard to a beautiful young woman with long flowing hair, though both carry sheaves of rice and are transported by a white fox. Thus, the fox became equated or identical with Inari, and eventually it came to be the *kami* itself, superseding though not excluding all other symbols. Fox imagery in the Inari cult also draws on rich associations with widespread folklore beliefs in the power of *bakemono* (shapeshifting animals) to transfigure into human form, or to metamorphose freely between animal, human, and divine incarnations. The fox is by no means the only *bakemono* to be enshrined and worshipped. The other prime example is the snake, associated with the god Benzaiten whose imagery is imported from the Hindu goddess of learning, Sarasvati, and additional examples include the dog, cat, and wolf as well as various ghosts, goblins, spirits, and apparitions, such as *tengu*.⁴ However, the stories of fox spirits are particularly pervasive throughout the history of Japanese literature and art, including, to cite a few examples, tales in medieval morality literature (*setsuwa bungaku*), Noh and Kabuki theater, *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, as well as the contemporary fiction of Enchi Fumiko and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, the films of Kurosawa Akira and Mizoguchi Kenji, and the paintings of Masami Teraoka. In these cultural expressions, the fox is alternately seductive/deceptive and protective/self-sacrificing. As a *bakemono*, the fox represents a doorway into a liminal realm, a veil between worlds where conventional distinctions between the natural and supernatural, demonic and beneficent, human and divine are confounded and reconstructed. As the Inari deity, the fox symbolizes threatening forces which demand pacification and purification (*o-harai*) while also offering the power to carry out an exorcism which pacifies and purifies. Like other *kami* classified as *onryō*, or *goryō*, or vengeful, malevolent spirits inflicting calamities, the power of

the fox can be both transformed and transformative, the latter often symbolized by a white fox (*byakko*) image.

In many of the examples of literature and art mentioned above, malevolent foxes intrude on the spirits of vulnerable people and transfigure into human form as a means of deception or as punishment, but their true vulpine shape remains unseen and invisible until an exorcism releases the purified person from the cause of possession. A prominent theme in the fox (and snake) *bakemono* myths is the opposition set up between universal Buddhist symbols which have the capacity to perform an exorcism and the localized non-Buddhist cult that utilizes the spirit's ability of transfiguration, often into the form of an irregular Buddhist priest or a beautiful, seductive woman, in order to bewitch and betray its victims. Buddhist exorcism is based on ritual gesture or the utterance of sacred language, such as a *nembutsu*, *dharani*, *sūtra* passage, or bestowing of the precepts as performed by a variety of cult figures. These include Amida and Kannon devotees, Vinaya masters, and Nichiren priests, in addition to Zen masters, who have often been in competition with non-Buddhist practitioners such as yin/yang wizards, *yamabushi* ascetics, or in modern times with New Religion movements such as the *okiyome* rite in Mahikari.⁵ Therefore, while Inari portrays the fox as a benevolent protector, a feature common to numerous cultural expressions places Buddhist exorcism in contrast to bewitching vixens.

A prime example from *setsuwa* literature (*Konjaku monogatari* 16.17), is the tale of Yoshifuji who is led astray by a beautiful vixen and sires a child. Yoshifuji feels that he has not a care in the world, but his worried brothers recite the *nembutsu* and chant *sūtras*, calling on Kannon to help them find him. Suddenly a man with a stick, a messenger of the Buddhist deity, arrives at his new home, scares everyone in the household away, and Yoshifuji crawls out from the storehouse under his old home. He starts to show off his new son to his older boy, declaring the young boy to be his true heir, but there is in reality no one with him, and a servant finds lots of foxes under the storehouse. It turns out that Yoshifuji had been tricked into marrying a fox. A yin-yang diviner — in this case of equal value as Buddhist ritualism — is called upon to perform an exorcism and eventually he comes to his senses. He realizes that "(t)he thirteen days he had spent under the storehouse had seemed to him like thirteen years, and the few inches of clearance between the ground and the floor of the building had looked to him like a stately home. The foxes had done all this."⁶

Yet, this kind of exorcistic contrast between Buddhism and folk religiosity is not entirely clear-cut as Buddhism also evokes the image of the fox in a positive way. For example, according to a story used in

several texts citing early Chinese sources, the *Sanbōe* and *Shōbōgenzō*,⁷ a fox living innumerable kalpas ago was chased by a lion and fell into a well from which there was no escape. The fox recites a verse expressing the impermanence of all things without any regret about dying. Suddenly Indra appears and, on hearing the fox invoking names of buddhas, assumes it is a bodhisattva. Indra lowers his heavenly robe to help the fox climb out of the well, and then prostrates before the *bakemono* he acknowledges as his master. On the other hand, even within the positive structure of theriomorphic deification there is still a considerable degree of bivalency and polarization. For example, in the Inari cult the beneficent fox is often pitted against and exorcises the demonic fox linked to the Izumo region where people are said to practice fox sorcery.⁸ This framework for a Fushimi-Izumo polarity recalls the Yamato (central Japan)-Izumo (eastern Japan) conflict played out in classical mythology in which the sun goddess Amaterasu from Yamato competes with and usually defeats her brother, the storm/moon god from Izumo, Susano. Also, the Buddhist deity Dakini-shinten, portrayed riding on a white fox while carrying rice and enshrined in the Toyokawa Inari shrine as well as at Fushimi Inari and Iizuna shrine in Shinano province has long been associated with sorcery and uncanny witchcraft. Thus, both folk religions and Buddhism identify with and at the same time seek to eliminate the fox, either in tandem or in opposition with each other.

FUSHIMI INARI AND TOYOKAWA INARI

Despite its size, endurance, and pervasive cultural resonances, Inari/fox worship is generally classified as an example of *shinkō*, or a cult based on folk beliefs and practices, as opposed to a *shūkyō*, or a sect officially affiliated with one of the major traditions, Shinto or Buddhism. Whereas a *shūkyō* has a main temple or shrine that oversees numerous branch institutions, while often allowing for tremendous regional diversity and flexibility of interpretation or application of doctrine, *shinkō* refers to a loose-knit, diffused network of associations and amalgamations without a clear, official center of authority. Although it played such a key role early on, the Fushimi shrine has probably never functioned as a central authority and most other Inari shrines have remained independent. Since the period of Heian imperial patronage, the prominence of Fushimi has declined, and it was not recognized as part of "sect Shinto" in the Meiji era. However, it is necessary to qualify the distinction between *shinkō* and *shūkyō* for several reasons. First, the complete history of Fushimi Inari is difficult to determine because a fire during the Onin War in 1468 destroyed all the existing records. Also, the government-sponsored Meiji era campaign for the separation

of Buddhism and Shinto (*shinbutsu bunri*) caused the elimination, re-writing, or distortion of many of the records and remainders of Inari worship and its connections with Buddhism, including the Shingon temple once at the foot of Fushimi, Aizenji. Furthermore, Inari worship is different than other kinds of *shinkō* which are entirely localized and limited to a particular location, such as a sacred mountain or shrine site, or to a single, specific deity. Inari shrines are incorporated into hundreds of Buddhist temples throughout the country.

But the main qualification involves the intimate, syncretistic relation between the Inari cult and the Sōtō Zen sect. One of the most important factions of Inari *shinkō* has formed vital symbiotic links with a branch of Sōtō Zen, whose primary site is the Toyokawa Inari shrine which is right in the midst of the Sōtō Myōgonji temple in Aichi prefecture, a main temple of the sub-sect which has branches in Tokyo Akasaka, Osaka, Yokosuka, Fukuoka, and Sapporo. In addition to these branch temples there are also numerous locations referred to as "divided spirit sites" (*bunreisho*) in which the spiritual power has been transmitted from a parent to daughter shrine through an icon, in this case *kitsune*, which is ritually animated and empowered. Toyokawa Inari is second only to Fushimi in importance for the overall cult of Inari, and in some senses, especially but not only in its impact on Buddhism, its role surpasses the other shrine. Here, the Inari/fox pantheon is constructively syncretized and assimilated with Buddhist and Zen deities and shrines, primarily in the form of Dakini-shinten, almost to the point of an indistinguishability between folk religion and Buddhism contributing to the *shinbutsu shugō* tradition.⁹ This is a prime example of what Allan Grapard calls the "combinative" character of Japanese religion, such that "the words Shinto, Buddhism, sect, and religion are inadequate because they compartmentalize a reality that is not cut up in the manner implied by those words..."¹⁰ Although Toyokawa Inari is the most significant example, dozens of other Buddhist temples, including Rinzai Zen, Nichiren, and Pure Land, include a fox shrine (in addition to those which include an icon of some other local animistic deity) representing an indigenous manifestation (*gongen*) or guardian spirit (*chinja*) of the universal Buddha-nature enshrined in a main Buddhist object of worship (*honzon*) at which monks routinely pray for the protection and prosperity of their institution.

This connection with Inari occurs despite the fact that the most famous of all legends of fox exorcism performed by Buddhists involves a Sōtō monk, Gennō Shinshō (1329-1400), a disciple of Gasan Jōseki (1276-1366), the main descendant of Keizan (1264-1325) and abbot of Sōjiji temple whose followers are credited with the tremendous regional expansion of medieval Sōtō by subduing and converting local spirits. Ac-

cording to legends recorded in Sōtō texts and popular literature, in 1389 Gennō exorcised one of the most demonic of foxes, the infamous, malevolent "nine-tailed fox" that took possession of a "killing stone" (*sesshō seki*) from which it was murdering people and other living things. According to one version of the origin of this anti-shrine, the fox spirit dwelling in the stone located in a moor near Mt. Nasu north of Nikko was originally expelled from India and took the guise of a lady who married an emperor in Japan. When he recognized her vulpine status, the fox spirit turned itself into this noxious stone. The stone is actually volcanic rock emitting poisonous gases. Bashō, traveling in this area on the way to see Saigyō's weeping willow at Ashino, as recorded in *Oku no hosomichi*, reported that the "stone's poisonous vapors were as yet unspent, and bees and moths lay dead all around in such heaps that one could not see the color of the sand beneath."¹¹ Legends record that yin-yang master Abe no Yasunari, featured in numerous *setsuwa* tales, had already expelled the demon from the capital and into the provinces where it was subdued by Genno's use of a purification stick and his chant based on one of the best-known phrases of Dōgen (1200-53), "*genjōkōan* is the great matter."¹²

The Sōtō-folk religion syncretism is surprising on another level because of the apparent sharp contrast between the exclusive emphasis on the attainment of "worldly benefits" (*genze riyaku*) in Inari *shinkō* and the focus on *zazen*-only in Sōtō Zen. A visit to Fushimi Inari on a festival day finds the believers climbing the mountain through a tunnel of *torii* among throngs who are making offerings, watching *kagura* dances or listening to the chanting of priests, seeing the construction of new shrines or icons in the compound, and stopping at a cafe or vending machine for refreshments. A Zen monastic temple, on the other hand, creates an atmosphere of calmness amid nature and detachment from worldly striving or activity. The pursuit of *genze riyaku*, which could be considered an ignoble use of Buddhist discipline based on desire for personal gain rather than self-mastery, has long been criticized in Buddhist texts such as the *Digha Nikāya*, and this type of criticism has been forcefully asserted in the recent Critical Buddhist (*hihan bukkyō*) methodology of Sōtō scholastics such as Hakamaya Noriaki.¹³

Yet, it is well-known that Sōtō Zen for lay persons since at least the fourteenth century has been quite different than Sōtō training designed for monks or nuns in terms of incorporating popular practices such as divination, pilgrimage, posthumous ordinations, and the veneration of indigenous deities.¹⁴ In the context of popularization, monastics who attained spiritual awakening in part through visions and dreams traditionally made displays of their meditative powers (*zenjōriki*) for proselytizing, often at the behest of or in competition with native gods

(as a matter of symbiosis or of exorcism). The fact that a great number of the approximately 14,000 Sōtō institutions are prayer temples (*kitō jiin*) reflects a significant degree of syncretism with indigenous deities based on the pursuit of *genze riyaku*. Azuma Ryūshin lists over two dozen local gods or spirits which are typically enshrined as buddha-images (*butsuzō*) along with traditional Buddhist deities (buddhas and bodhisattvas) such as Shakuzon (Śākyamuni), Amida (Amitābha), Monju (Mañjuśrī), Miroku (Maitreya), Fugen (Samantabhadra), and Kannon (Avalokiteśvara).¹⁵ Some of the most important examples of indigenous gods enshrined in Sōtō temples include Dōryōzon, a *tengu* derived from a historical monk, venerated at Saijōji temple in Shinagawa, and Hakusan Myōjin Daigongen, the god of Mt. Hakusan which is a *yamabushi* center near Eihei-ji, venerated in several temples in Fukui and Ishikawa prefectures. Nor is it unusual to find shrines for the Sixteen Rakan and the deities of good fortune, Benzaiten and Daikokuten, who are sometimes included in the Shichifukujin pantheon (Seven Gods of Good Luck). Furthermore, although the Zen scholastic tradition of philosophical commentaries composed in the Sung Chinese and Kamakura Japanese periods often refutes and makes a mockery of supernaturalism and syncretism, these texts are frequently ambivalent rather than one-sidedly critical. For example, Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* "Raihaitokuzui" fascicle endorses fox worship, in asserting that "we revere the Dharma, whether manifested in a round pillar, a garden lantern, a buddha, a fox, a demon or a deity, a man or a woman," although it is not clear that this refers specifically to Inari *shinkō*. Other *Shōbōgenzō* passages are more skeptical or negative in regard to folk beliefs.

Even within the context of wide-ranging Sōtō syncretism, Toyokawa Inari is distinctive in the extent to which a folk deity supersedes the conventional Buddhist images also found in the shrine. To some extent, the Dakini-shinten enshrinement follows a Japanese assimilative model, perhaps borrowed from Tibetan and Chinese esotericism, of reconstructing Hindu deities as Buddhist gods, such as Benzaiten (Sarasvatī), Bonten (Brahma), and Bishamonten (Vaiśravaṇa), which are considered more powerful than and become the original ground (*honji*) for the native kami. Yet, Dakini-shinten, labeled Buddhist, is only barely recognizable as having a precedent or model in South Asian, Central Asian, or Chinese beliefs — other than, literally, in name only from quasi-Tibetan sources — and probably reflects the influence of Inari worship. Usually, the history of Sōtō amalgamations is attributed to Keizan, or to the Keizan-Gasan lineage, and the ideological foundations for syncretism are explained in terms of the assimilative philosophy of *honji-suijaku* (original source-manifestation) which reflects the Mahāyāna

doctrine of two truths. While there is no question about the role of Keizan and the doctrine of assimilation in understanding Toyokawa Inari, it is also important to recognize and examine other factors and materials which may amplify and complement as well as correct and overcome some of the assumptions underlying an emphasis on these two factors. From a historical perspective, it is necessary to see the role played by Kūkai legends and Tendai thought as well as early Zen monastic codes and commentaries, including Dōgen's, which helped set the stage for Sōtō syncretism. In addition, it is helpful to use a theological model that is more flexible than *honji-suijaku*, which presumes two levels of gods, in order to understand the role of at least three levels, including the *honzon*, *gongen*, and *chinjū* deities, in addition to the function of the rhetoric of anti-supernaturalism and the ritual of exorcism, which are operative at Toyokawa Inari and other temples that enshrine the fox.

I will preface a discussion of historical and ideological influences with a description of the Toyokawa Inari shrine-temple and its role in the Sōtō sect.

THE TOYOKAWA INARI/MYŌGONJI TEMPLE NETWORK

Myōgonji temple, or Empukuzan Myōgonji, is a Sōtō Zen institution, yet to most people, including many of its patrons as well as casual visitors or tourists, it is known as Toyokawa Inari, and this in large part reflects a deliberate strategy by Sōtō to promote the site as a prayer temple. In other words, the Inari name has a higher recognition factor and makes clear the *genze riyaku* orientation of the temple despite the fact that the Inari rites are performed by Sōtō clergy. Although the emphasis on praying for worldly benefits is not unusual, it is especially interesting given the role of Myōgonji in the overall structure of the sect. The original temple of the Sōtō sect is Eiheiji temple in Fukui prefecture, founded by Dōgen, which underwent a prolonged period of declining influence beginning with the struggles over the third-generation abbacy in the late thirteenth century, and the movement to Daijōji temple of the original third abbot, Tettsū Gikai (1219-1309) who first came to Dōgen when he was at Kōshōji temple outside Kyoto in 1241 as a follower of the Darumashū sect. Meanwhile, much of the prominence shifted to Sojiji temple in the Noto peninsula in Ishikawa prefecture, founded by the sect's fourth patriarch, Keizan, who began at Daijōji and also founded Yōkōji temple. Sojiji's role as the center for the rapid expansion of the sect increased significantly after Keizan's death, primarily through the efforts of Gasan and two other figures: Gasan's second-generation follower, Ryōan Emyō (1337-1411), and his third gen-

eration follower in a different sub-lineage, Jochū Tengin (1365-1440). Ryōan and Jochū created numerous local temples through the assimilation of indigenous gods which were affiliated with or were converted into branch temples of Sōjiji.

In the early sixteenth century Eiheiiji, undergoing a revival, was declared the main temple (*honzan*) by the government, but a century later the Tokugawa government decreed that Sōtō would have two *honzan*, Eiheiiji and Sōjiji, which was moved during the Meiji era to Yokohama, a situation which continues today. Because of the impact of the Keizan-Gasan lineage, and primarily due to Ryōan and Jochū, well over ninety percent, and perhaps as many as ninety five percent, of Sōtō temples are historically affiliated with Sōjiji, although Eiheiiji's prestigious role as the temple of the founder commands great respect so that in terms of policy decisions the loyalties are probably closer to fifty percent for each *honzan*. However, Myōgonji is one of the five percent of the temples which are directly aligned with Eiheiiji, and it is also a local teaching temple, which means that many of the monks trained there are sent to Eiheiiji and vice-versa. That is, monks performing Inari rites at Myōgonji, which involve special vestments, chants, and drums, either arrive already trained or are on their way to Eiheiiji for further instruction in a strict Dōgen-style approach to zazen meditation, and the rites are viewed as an expression of the spiritual empowerment of zazen. Furthermore, Myōgonji is considered a *honzan* of its own small network of temples, with the Tokyo Akasaka temple the most prominent branch or subsidiary temple (*betsuin*) primarily because of its proximity to the sect's main educational facility, Komazawa University.

The Myōgonji foundation legend (*engi*) is only available though an unreliable historical source which is reported in the temple's publicity literature and pamphlets (some of the details of which apparently have been changed over the years)¹⁶ and cited in the dictionary, *Zengaku daijiten*.¹⁷ This states that Kangan Zenji (1217-1300), the third son of Emperor Jōtoku and a Sōtō disciple of Dōgen, had a spiritual experience (*reiken*) in which he envisioned the deity Dakini-shinten carrying a rice plant on her back and riding a white fox as a benevolent kami (*zenshin*) and a protector deity (*chinju*) of the Buddhist Dharma. Based on his vision Kangan had a statue constructed of Dakini-shinten, and in 1441 (the era of rapid Sōtō expansion) a sixth generation follower of Kangan enshrined this icon along with a thousand-armed Kannon at Myōgonji (the current compound dates from 1536 and gained a sizable *danka* or parish in the Edo period). The statue was later brought to the residence of Ōoka Echizen no kami (Akasaka Hitotsugi in Tokyo), once a disciple of an Aichi Myōgonji priest, where it remained until it was enshrined in 1887 in its present location at the Tokyo Toyokawa Inari temple in Akasaka.

The temple's *engi* apparently refers to a legend about the origin of Dakini-shinten, which was originally a Hindu deity, though its name seems to be based on a Tibetan Buddhist term, that came to be enshrined and worshipped in Japan and assigned the role of the *honzon* of Inari *gongen*, and which is usually depicted as a female bodhisattva astride a flying white fox.¹⁸ This legend is to be distinguished from another element of folklore recorded in *setsuwa* texts and in a famous floating world print by Kuniyoshi, also known for other fox paintings, depicting a *musha-e* (a picture representing a fight and struggle) of a wicked white nine-tailed fox fleeing from the palace of King Pan-Tsu of India. According to this cycle, the nine-tailed fox stayed with the Indian king for years as his mistress before revealing its true nature and then fleeing to China and finally to Japan in the twelfth century where it continued to work its evil magic.¹⁹ In many legends, Buddhist sorcerers use the power of this image of Dakini for personal gain, ulterior motives, or even by hire for demonic aims. But it is likely that in the popular imagination these legends are mixed and conflated, so the Buddhist Dakini-shinten carries demonic connotations.

It is not clear how Dakini-shinten or Myōgonji temple became associated with Inari the rice god, but it is possible that the connection was made after Kangan's statue was built simply because the fox iconography is common to both beliefs. It is also plausible that Myōgonji was first an Inari shrine subsequently converted to Buddhism, or that both Inari and Dakini-shinten were enshrined there at the same time. The whole question of the relation between the white fox in its various manifestations and legends and the typical Fushimi Inari fox, which in some representations is also white though not necessarily so, is obscure. There is also no systematic theological discussion of gender symbolism in the connection of Dakini-shinten with the female portrayals of Inari or with folklore conceptions of the vixen. In any case, according to the current beliefs, which may be shaded by the legacy of *shinbutsu bunri*, Dakini-shinten is the *honzon* and Inari the *gongen*. Yet, it is important to point out two things: first, as indicated above, Dakini-shinten cannot be considered a Buddhist deity which assimilates Inari for it itself is a result of intensive indigenization and syncretism probably influenced by preexisting Inari beliefs; and second, several Sōtō temples which enshrine the fox, though not necessarily those in the Myōgonji network, consider Inari the *honzon*.

The Myōgonji compound in Aichi has two centers, a dharma-hall (*hattō*) where Dakini-shinten is enshrined, and a main shrine-hall (*daihonden*) for the enshrinement of Toyokawa Inari. The former is assigned the role of the original source of the latter, though both are por-

trayed riding white foxes. The *hattō* and *daihonden* are adjacent to each other separated only by a *torii*. Also, Inari fox statues often decorated with red bibs stand protectively outside the *hattō*. In the Tokyo Akasaka branch temple, there is only one center referred to as a *honden*, generally a term for non-Buddhist sites, where Dakini-shinten is enshrined with foxes outside the hall, and there is also a grove (*reikozuka*) with several dozen small fox-spirit statues. This temple primarily services Inari rites rather than *zazen*. The Myōgonji temples offer a potpourri of other forms of worship. The temple in Aichi enshrines a thousand-armed Kannon and the Sixteen Rakan, and also has numerous statues and portraits (*chinso*) of Kangan. Tokyo Akasaka, which is dedicated to Yakushi and Śakyamuni and adorned with red lanterns lit up every night against the background of downtown Tokyo, enshrines Kannon, Jizō, and Benzaiten. It also has a Sanshinen (Hall of Three Gods: Taro Inari, Tokushichiro Inari, and Ugajin), and in the inner area of this shrine, the Shichifukujin pantheon (Seven Gods of Good Luck: Ebisu, Daikokuten, Hotei, Benzaiten, Jurojin, Fukurokuju, Bishamon) is enshrined. Both Myōgonji temples have festivals based on the cycle of the seasons and Buddhist repentance days (*uposatha*); for example, the observance of the *hatsu-uma sai* rite celebrated shortly after the lunar new year in February when, as a holdover from agrarian times, the local mountain god is supposed to return to the paddy field (*ta no kami*). Toyokawa Inari in Aichi is particularly known for *mikoshi*-carrying festivals with adults and children wearing costumes or traditional garb and some believers donning oversized fox masks. The temples also offer worship for protection in the secular realm. For instance, Tokyo Akasaka has an annual festival to pray for traffic or travel safety (*kōtsū anzen*) that is held every twenty-second day of June.

HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES

The amalgamations between Sōtō Zen and folk religion are generally attributable to Keizan and the various Gasan lineages, especially those of Ryōan and Jochū. It seems that prior to this many of the rural temples in the regions northeast and northwest of Kyoto where Sōtō was spreading were eclectic centers, formerly with a Tendai or Shingon affiliation, for the performance of rituals based on the needs of the local population or the values of itinerant and irregular priests often learned in mountain ascetic practices. Apparently Keizan's approach was to attract as many powerful spiritual protectors as possible, and to convert them all through supernatural encounters. Keizan incorporated various esoteric rites syncretized with indigenous beliefs into Sōtō Zen, including geomancy, astrology, magic, visions, dreams, shamanism, and

yamabushi, accompanied by the worship of Buddhist deities Bishamon and Rakan, native gods Inari and Hachiman, and numerous tutelary and local spirits. Yet, he never abandoned zazen, and his religious philosophy is a "fusion of vigorous Zen practice with articulated faith in the efficacy of unseen Japanese spirits and Buddhist divinities."²⁰ As Heinrich Dumoulin reports, "Keizan's heart's desire was to effect a harmonious unity of Buddhist popular piety and its esoteric rituals with the serious practice of Zen meditation. This could not be accomplished, however, without compromise."²¹ Whether or not such an evaluation is appropriate, at least part of the fusion involved Inari. According to traditional hagiography, Keizan founded Yōkōji temple based on a prophetic dream of a white fox,²² and his records in *Tōkokuki* note that he considered Inari the guardian spirit of Yōkōji and called the area of wild plants in the compound "Inari Peak."²³

CHINESE INFLUENCES

Yet, the weight of evidence suggests that the Toyokawa Inari temple developed independently from the Keizan-Gasan lineages, drawing from other sources for its brand of syncretism, some located in Chinese sources appropriated by Japanese Sōtō and others in the indigenization of Buddhism in Japan. There are several pertinent elements of folk religious practices evident in Sung era Zen texts, including monastic codes, recorded sayings, and kōan collections. First, the main Zen monastic code, the *Zen'en shingi* (C. *Ch'an-yüan ch'ing-kuei*) first published in 1103 refers to the ritualization of venerating the gods of the land and field enshrined in the land deity hall (*dojidō*) as well as local spirits (*ryūten*), who function as guardians and protectors of the monastery and collectively are often referred to as the monastery gods (*garanjin*).²⁴ It appears that Zen monasteries assumed the need to make peace rather than to try to eradicate the local deities so as to receive the benefit of their protection for the site of the institution. Perhaps this view of the local gods was the result of a long process of subduing and converting indigenous spirits that Keizan and many others undertook in a parallel way in Japan. T'ang legends record the way Zen masters used their supranormal powers (*jinzū*, Skt. *abhijñā*) to overcome spirits and apparitions. In one legend, for example, a huge snake confronted Shen-hsiu, who remained seated without fear, and the next day found a treasure hidden at the foot of a tree which enabled him to build a temple. "The snake appears in this story as a potentially harmful, yet ultimately beneficent messenger of the invisible world. The spiritual power acquired through meditation allows Shen-hsiu to vanquish fear and obtain the tribute of the local god."²⁵

Sung kōan texts make it clear that the native gods remain inferior to the spiritual power attained through meditation of realized Zen masters. According to the commentary in the *Shōyōroku* kōan collection on case no. 10, which follows a passage that cites ironic, quasi-apocryphal comments by Chuang Tzu and Confucius about the powers of divination of a spirit-turtle:

Demons and ghosts become spirits through the power of bewitchment; spells and medicines become spirits through the power of causing [effects]; heavenly beings and dragons become spirits through the power of retribution; the wise and sagely become spirits through supranormal powers (*jinzā*); buddhas and patriarchs become spirits through the power of the Way.²⁶

All of these categories possess spiritual power, but the indigenous gods, which surpass the category of ghosts and demons based on their ability to affect rewards and punishments for humans, remain on the third of five levels and cannot be compared to the power of buddhas and patriarchs who are enlightened by virtue of a realization of the Tao.

Another folk religious element treated in several kōan commentaries, which often evoke land deities, pilgrimages to sacred sites, supernatural events, and the magical efficacy of Buddhist symbols, is the sacrality of mountain cultic centers in China which were considered the abode of bodhisattvas and became the pilgrimage spot of seekers of visions and oracles.²⁷ Mt. Wu-t'ai, dwelling place of Monju, was one of the main destinations of Zen pilgrims. Although rejected by the *Rinzai roku* as mere superstition,²⁸ this mountain is mentioned in a kōan cited in several collections, including *Mumonkan* no. 31 and *Shōyōroku* no. 10, discussed above.²⁹ The kōan's brief, elusive narrative involves an encounter between Jōshū, the focus of several dozen kōans, and an elderly woman, who may or may not be intended as a symbol of local, indigenous religious practice, and who has been outsmarting young monks on their way up the mountain. In a related commentary in *Hekiganroku* no. 35 dealing with Mt. Wu-t'ai practices, Monju engages in a dialogue in which he answers a question with a tautological non sequitur typical of a Zen master.³⁰ In other words, the commentary makes an ironical interpretation of the deity's role, supporting it only insofar as it reflects Zen wisdom, but not necessarily refuting its supernatural status. Yet, Monju, whether or not he is of equal stature as the enlightened Zen practitioner, is a traditional Buddhist deity, whereas the elevation to *honzon* status of Dakini-shinten or Toyokawa Inari, reflects a greater degree of veneration of what is in all likelihood a folk (or autochthonous) deity. That is, although Sung Zen records contain folk elements

which reveal a degree of deference to local gods, they do not provide a clear precedent for the theology of assimilation in the Sōtō sect in Japan.

The various roles of fox spirits as they appear in Sung records, for example, all derive from a basic image of the "wild fox" (*yako*) as a symbol of counterfeit enlightenment or of a rogue element in practitioners who deceive themselves and others into believing they have a genuine realization. The primary example is *Mumonkan* case no. 2 (also *Shōyōroku* no. 8),³¹ in which an old monk reveals that he has been suffering five hundred incarnations as a wild fox for having misunderstood — long ago, in a lifetime prior to the era of Śakyamuni — the meaning of karmic causality, and the man/fox is released by the "turning word" of master Hyakujō which expresses the inviolability of karma. Other texts that use the term "wild fox" in the same fashion include the *Hekiganroku* case nos. 1, 73, 93, and several passages in the *Rinzai roku*. That is, the Sung records transmute the folkloristic elements based on supernatural images of bewitching, seductive vixens into a demythologized rhetorical device indicating false enlightenment. It appears that part of the background for this view is the portrayal of the fox in Chinese folktales recorded in texts such as the T'ang era *Taiheikōki* (C. *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*) as malevolent, conniving tricksters, and there is little suggestion of the positive, self-sacrificing image of foxes as found in some Japanese folktales that serves as a model for veneration and worship in the Inari cult.

JAPANESE INFLUENCES

Some of the same folk elements concerning the veneration of indigenous spirits and sacred mountains are evident in the thought of Dōgen, whose writings suggest an ambivalent attitude to animism and supernaturalism. On the one hand, as indicated in the "Raihaitokuzui" passage cited above, Dōgen appears to endorse the worship of foxes and other spirits. Also, one of his Japanese *waka* poems treats the topic of shrine worship on behalf of rice production (*inasaku*): "Transplanting rice seedlings/At the beginning of spring — /For that prayer/We celebrate the festival/At Hirose and Tatta shrines."³² In addition, Dōgen cites the story of Indra's prostration before a bodhisattva in the form of a fox in *Shōbōgenzō* "Kie-buppōsōbō." Yet, in the same fascicle he repudiates an assortment of local folk religions and supernatural beliefs all too frequently assimilated by East Asian Buddhist sects, including Zen. Dōgen's critique recalls the refutation of Vedic ritualism and magic from the standpoint of causal logic as expressed in the *Tevijja Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya*:

We should not act like those who, awe-struck, vainly take refuge in mountain deities and spirits or worship at non-Buddhist shrines, for it is impossible to gain release from suffering in this way. There are those who, following other non-Buddhist religions, think they can gain release from suffering and gain merit by imitating the actions of a cow, deer, demon, hungry ghost, deaf and dumb person, dog, chicken, or pheasant...Such actions are completely false and without benefit. The wise person does not engage in such practices, for they only increase suffering and obstruct beneficial rewards. You must not take refuge in erroneous ways but clearly repudiate them.³³

Furthermore, Dōgen presents two seemingly opposite interpretations of the "wild fox kōan" in the early, seventy-five fascicle text "Daishugyō" fascicle, which supports an equalization of causality and the transcendence of causality, and in the later, twelve fascicle text "Jinshin inga" fascicle, which insists on the priority of causality and a refutation of the notion of equalization Dōgen endorsed ten years earlier.³⁴ But both fascicles tend to dismiss the supernatural elements in the kōan's narrative of theriomorphic transfiguration by the punished old monk.

Therefore, it is not clear where Dōgen stands on fox worship; perhaps he was unconsciously ambivalent, or perhaps he changed positions from the time of the early "Raihaitokuzui" to the later "Kie-buppōsōbō" fascicle. It is also plausible that he deliberately crafted a posture of straddling the fence in response to the variant levels of understanding of his disciples. However, after his death several elements of Inari *shinkō* were brought into Dōgen's religious world by the Sōtō sect. First, a small Inari shrine was built at Eihei-ji,³⁵ presumably as part of the rebuilding of the temple after it was destroyed in 1473 during the Onin War. Also, the *Kenzeiki*, the main biography of the founder written in 1472 (the earliest extant manuscripts are from the mid-sixteenth century), records that on his return from China Dōgen fell ill and was healed by the Inari deity.³⁶ It seems likely that the shrine and the biographical anecdote reflect developments not during Dōgen's time but from hagiological treatments of his life and thought two centuries after his death. The reason for this suggestion is that at the same time — fifteenth and sixteenth centuries — parallel processes involving similar folk religious elements were also emerging in the Sōtō sect and retrospectively applied to Dōgen. The prime example was the increasing influence of Hakusan *shinkō*, that is, beliefs in the sacrality of Mt. Hakusan located near Eihei-ji. Of course, it was Dōgen himself who chose to move from the Kyoto area to Eihei-ji, but his writings do not explicitly discuss the reasons for this. It is possible that the move was influenced by Gikai, who was from the Hakusan region and who, more significantly,

was influenced by Tendai and esoteric ritualism. Hakusan had long been a Tendai center connected with Mt. Hiei, and it was also an active *yamabushi* site. Once Sōtō was established in the Hakusan area, Keizan continued to develop temples along the northwest geomantic lines leading from Hakusan to Mt. Sekidozan.³⁷ During this time, Dōgen's biographies began to include, in addition to the reference to Inari's healing power, a mention of the idea that Dōgen copied the manuscript of the *Hekiganroku* in a single night before he left China (*ichiya Hekiganroku*) with divine guidance. The first reference to this is from a 1459 text, and in a 1538 edition of the *Kenzeiki* the guide was said to be another folk deity, Daigon Daishūri bosatsu. A century later, the biographies began referring to Hakusan as the guiding force behind the *ichiya Hekiganroku*.³⁸

These folklore elements involving Dōgen seem to reflect the influence of Keizan's esotericism on the Sōtō sect. As opposed to Dōgen's seeming ambivalence about supernaturalism, Keizan's approach supports a paradigm of bivalency which embraces yet holds in polarity the opposites of beneficence and demonism, as well as of Buddhist and popular religiosity. But the primary model for this paradigm of bivalency in the institutionalization of Inari is a pair of legends about Kūkai, and it seems that these legends from early esoteric Japanese Buddhism provided an effective precedent for the syncretism of Sōtō Zen's Toyokawa Inari. Kūkai is said to have supported the origin of the main Fushimi Inari shrine in Kyoto and is also reported to have expelled all foxes from his home territory on Shikoku island because a fox once interfered with his prayers.³⁹ Also, according to the cult's hagiography, Kūkai and Inari were fellow auditors of an unspecified sermon preached by the Buddha on Vulture Peak and decided to become the protector deities of the secret teachings. They met again in 816 at an inn in Japan and rejoiced at their reunion. In addition, Kūkai brought back from China an image of Fudō possessing supernatural powers, which appeared in a dream and said it wished to be located in an eastern province to help civilize and convert people there. A Shingon temple was built for it in Narita, where the god is still enshrined together with its famous sword which is said to be effective in curing insanity and other disorders that result from fox possession.⁴⁰

IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERPRETING SYNCRETISM IN JAPAN

The picture that emerges from an examination of Toyokawa Inari and related forms of fox worship involves multiple images of fox iconography that are at once intertwined and conflicting, or overlapping and competing, including Buddhist and folk religious orientations, icons that

are enshrined in a *hattō* or a *honden* and are more or less valued than traditional buddhas, and images positive and negative of the fox as protective and inspiring worship or demonic and requiring exorcism. A major study in a volume edited by folklorist Gorai Shigeru of the relation between Zen and Inari *shinkō* in over five dozen temples examines a variety of categories, including temples founded as Zen institutions and others converted in the medieval or early modern periods, and temples which primarily venerate either Fushimi Inari or Toyokawa Inari as a *honzon*, in addition to temples whose fox image has roots in different folklore beliefs.⁴¹ Many of the temples which favor Toyokawa Inari or Dakini-shinten also enshrine Fushimi Inari as either its *gongen* or *chinjū*, sometimes based on the founder's having received a dream-oracle (*mu-koku*) or on local village or clan ancestor rites.

Although the fox deity may well have existed before him, one Inari tradition maintains that Kūkai on his deathbed named the original Buddhist form (*honji*), Mandarajin, made up of Benzaiten, Shōten, and Dakini-shinten, of Inari/fox as the manifestation (*suijaku*). Yet, there are many reversals of this pattern in which Inari takes precedence over the Buddhist gods, including Kannon or Śakyamuni, or in which Dakini-shinten alone is elevated to the most venerated status or stands as the *gongen* as at the Fushimi and Iizuna shrines. Where is Zen conceptually located in such cases of syncretism, and do they reflect, as Dumoulin suggests, a compromise of Buddhist values for the sake of accommodation with indigenous beliefs? In an article examining Sôtō amalgamations with various forms of *shinkō* including Hakusan and Inari beliefs,⁴² Ishikawa Rikizan notes that Indian Buddhism was syncretized with Hindu deities which were transformed into buddhas, and that Chinese Buddhism, especially Zen, was syncretized with Confucian notions of the *chün-tzu* leading to a veneration of patriarchy. Japanese Buddhism, which absorbed many of these earlier examples of syncretism, was further syncretized with the indigenous kami resulting in a variety of gods conceived as avatars (*gongen* or *myōjin*) of buddhas or protectors (*chinjū* or *garonjin*) which, on a lesser level of divinity, guard the monastery.

Therefore, the reversals of theological hierarchy and the continuing role of exorcism in Buddhist-folk religious amalgamations suggest that syncretism in Japan is considerably more complex than the usual treatment of *honji-suijaku* as a two-tiered, trickle-down assimilative model. One of the limitations in the two-tiered view is the assumption that popular religion is a lesser version of the intellectual elite tradition. According to Whalen Lai, the roots of this assumption are based on developments in Western intellectual history: "There is a tendency to regard philosophy as elite reflection while relegating magic to the

base level of folk superstitions, conveniently dividing thereby the intellectual few from the vulgar many. However, this two-tiered model of society first employed by David Hume in his essay *Natural History of Religion* and followed by many modern scholars of religion, more often distorts reality than clarifies it. It is not uncommon that we find both aspects together in one text, revered by social elites and common folk alike.⁴³ Lai's critique of Humean thought needs to be balanced by the fact that the two-tiered model preceded Hume with early medieval Christian refutations of "vulgar" or "rustic" (i.e., pagan) religiosity. More significantly, the two-tiered view is not merely a Western invention imposed on China and Japan, for it has deep roots in East Asian thought, for example, in Hsün Tzu's critique of the supernaturalism of the common folk: "Hence the gentleman regards ceremonies as ornaments (*bunsoku* in Japanese), but the common people regard them as supernatural (*jinsoku*). He who considers them ornaments is fortunate; he who considers them supernatural is unfortunate."⁴⁴ Buddhism similarly distinguishes between the pursuit of the true dharma (*shōbō*) and superstition (*meishin*), as well as the legitimate use of supranormal powers and miscellaneous, irregular "wild fox" practices (*zatsu shinkō*), as seen in the passages from *Shōyōroku* no. 10 and Dōgen's "Kie-buppōshō" cited above.

Thus, it is important to recognize how Zen discourse ranges from rejection to veneration to exorcism, and that the haughty disdain and rejection of supernaturalism in some Zen records coexists with full-scale syncretism in Toyokawa Inari as well as the exorcistic rites in folklore texts. This range in the discourses of syncretism in Japan offers many striking contrasts with the non-assimilative, intolerant model in the encounter between Christianity and medieval European paganism. Like Buddhism, Christianity underwent an encounter with a variety of healers, diviners, soothsayers, and prophets whose teachings were based on visions, spells, remedies, and magic deriving from a belief in the power of nature spirits, including trees, animals, waters, crossroads, etc. A prime example is the cult of the dog saint or the "holy greyhound," St. Guinefort, which was popular in countryside chapels throughout medieval France. According to legend, St. Guinefort was martyred while saving a child from being eaten by a snake. The official church policy, as expressed by Stephen of Bourbon who learned of the existence of the cult while taking confession from women, was to dismiss and destroy it as the work of the devil:

Offensive to God are those [superstitions] which honour demons or other creatures as if they were divine; it is what idolatry does, and it is what the wretched women who cast lots do, who seek salvation

by worshipping elder trees or making offerings to them; scorning churches and holy relics, they take their children to these elder trees, or to anthills, or other things in order that a cure may be effected.⁴⁵

From the standpoint of the church, "With superstition, then, God, is the victim and the devil the beneficiary...its only purpose being to seduce (*seductio*) and to mislead (*ludificatio*)."⁴⁶ Yet the situation is more complex than this, because while the dog cult and other examples of paganism were attacked as superstition and eliminated through exorcism on one level, some of the elements of folk religiosity including sacred symbols and sites were at the same time preserved through conversion into Christian rites. Thus "pre-Christian magical practices did not vanish. However, they existed now in an entirely new mental context. Their practitioners and participants had to become aware of the limits of magic and had to develop a critical attitude towards it."⁴⁷ To some extent, then, both Christianity and Buddhism refute and exorcise yet preserve and convert indigenous spirits. The difference is that, whereas Christianity one-sidedly rejects the power of the native gods and does not allow them to stand as such, the strategy of Japanese Buddhism has been to transform and elevate even the most demonic of spirits which, when converted, became protectors of the dharma: "Thus evil and pollution are not only defeated by ritual, but are 'saved' in a Buddhist sense...[which] involves the conversion of pollution, not merely its defeat or neutralization."⁴⁸

There seem to be four levels of discourse coexisting in Japanese syncretism: First, the *rhetoric of anti-supernaturalism*, in which Sung/Kamakura kōan records disavow and mock the claims of supernatural beliefs from a transcendental perspective; second, the *practice of amalgamation*, by which indigenous gods are integrated into mainstream religious and ritual structure, and enshrined in temple compounds, though they are not always acknowledged or accepted for what they are and may function beneath the surface of the official institutional policy; third, the *theology of deference* or empowerment and elevation of native animistic spirits, which are not only accepted and absorbed but granted superior status, at least in certain contexts; and fourth, the *legacy of exorcism*, in which sacred images are seen as having a demonic, malevolent potential which, when improperly unleashed, requires an exorcism that transforms its power into a Buddhist framework, through ritual that is either homeopathic (using one image of the fox to defeat another fox image) or non-homeopathic (using symbols antithetical to indigenous fox worship, such as traditional Buddhist divinities or chants).

The question of compromise raised above in a Dumoulin passage on the role of Keizan seems to be resolved by the coexistence of the

second and third levels of discourse in which there is positive syncretism with the intellectually derisive and ritually exorcistic qualities of the first and fourth levels that condemn or refute the positive attitudes. Thus, empowerment and elevation of the indigenous gods is accompanied by a legacy of criticism. The tradition contains no clear, systematic explanation of the relation between these levels. One way to interpret this relation is to highlight the verb *bakasu* (also pronounced *ke* or *ka*), which can mean "seduce or bewitch" but can also imply any change or metamorphosis, including the compassionate manifestation of a buddha or bodhisattva (*keshin*). This term functions as a neutral category including possessions which are invited, as in the case of oracles (*kamigakari*) sought by shamans, diviners, and healers through dreams and visions, and those which are uninvited, as when someone's spirit is invaded by a demonic force (*tsukimono*) that requires purification. The category of *bakasu* encompasses top down and bottom up, as well as beneficial/protective and demonic/intrusive theological perspectives. It helps explain the twofold, bivalent function of the *bakemono* such as the snake and fox, which has been characterized as the "snake of salvation" (manifested as a deity who offers Buddhist redemption) interacting at every turn with the "salvation of the snake" (appearing as a demon in need of being redeemed by a Buddhist saint or divinity).⁴⁹

Yet there is another discursive level, an ironic, self-critical side-stepping of the issue of supernaturalism versus anti-supernaturalism, as in a *kōan* cited in Dōgen's "RaihaiTokuzui" fascicle, which asserts the equality of male and female practitioners.⁵⁰ According to the case record, the monk Shikan is sent by his master, Rinzai, to study with a nun, Masan. On their first meeting she asks where he comes from, a typical encounter-dialogue query about the student's background and identity designed to test whether it can elicit a spiritual and not merely factual response demonstrating convincingly one's true identity. Shikan answers, "Roko," which literally means the "mouth-of-the-road" village. Masan retorts, "Then why didn't you close [your mouth] when you came here?" On being outsmarted by the philosophical pun of the woman cleric, another example of an elderly, seemingly unsophisticated lay woman reminiscent of similar *kōan* episodes involving Tokusan and Jōshū (the latter case was cited above),⁵¹ Shikan prostrates and becomes her disciple. Later, he asks, "What is the summit of the mountain?" (the literal meaning of the name Masan), and she replies, "The summit of the mountain cannot be seen." "Then who is the person in the mountain?" he continues, demanding to know her essential spiritual identity. "I am neither a male nor female form," she responds, recalling a debate found in the *Vimalakirti Sutra* and the *Lotus Sutra* about whether enlightenment must be realized in a male form or can be con-

sidered to transcend gender differences. "Then why not transfigure into a some other form (*nan-fu-hen-bō*, or *nanji nanzo henzezarū*)?" he asks, and she concludes the dialogue with an ironic reference to supernaturalism, "Since I am not a fox spirit, I cannot transfigure." Once again Shikan bows, decides to serve as supervisor of Masan's temple garden for three years, and proclaims her teaching the equal of Rinzai's.

The interesting aspect of this passage is that it acknowledges the reality of fox metamorphosis precisely through denying its relevance for the Zen doctrine of the non-duality of male and female, human and animal, natural and supernatural realms. It leaves the door open, while also implicitly dismissing the need, for the multi-tiered, multi-directional Buddhist-folk religious syncretism that coexists with its own level of ironic, skeptical discourse.

NOTES

- ¹ Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō*, 2 vols., eds. Terada Tōru and Mizuno Yaoko (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970 and 1972), II:317-18.
- ² I am avoiding using the term "Shinto" to categorize Inari because, as explained below, the cult is not officially recognized as such and exists in a more diffused network of associations than "sect Shinto." Or, as Thomas Kasulis writes, "Shinto generally functions as a folk religion: each locality has its special *kami*, distinctive festivals, and sacred objects. Shinto is more a set of somatically enacted feelings about purification, renewal, regionality, and communal spirit than it is any kind of philosophical or doctrinal system." In "Researching the Strata of the Japanese Self," *Self as Person in Asian Theory and Practice*, eds. Roger T. Ames, Wimal Dissanayake, and Thomas P. Kasulis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), p. 99.
- ³ Alan L. Miller, "Religions of Japan," *Religions of the World* (New York: St. Martins, 1983), pp. 336-38. The Ukemochi myth seems to conform to the pattern of the Pacific island Hainuwele mythic cycle.
- ⁴ Stephen Addiss, *Japanese Ghosts and Demons: Art of the Supernatural* (New York: George Braziller, 1985).
- ⁵ Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1975), pp. 51-68; and Winston Davis, *Dojo: Magic and Exorcism in Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), pp. 115-60; Ishizuka Takatoshi, *Nihon no tsukimono* (Miraisha, 1972), pp. 39-45, 171-72; Naoe Hiroji, ed., *Inari shinkō* (Yūzankaku shuppan, 1983), pp. 287-93; and Kondō Yoshihiro, *Inari shinkō* (Hanawa shobō, 1978), pp. 176-78.
- ⁶ Royall Tyler, trans., *Japanese Tales* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), p. 118; *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, ed. Yamada Yoshio, et. al. (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1961-63) 24:58.

- ⁷ This is based on an Abhidharma story in *Mizōu innengyō* (Taishō 17:577c) and included in *Maka shikan* (Taishō 46:45b). See Edward Kamens, trans., *The Three Jewels: A Study and Translation of Minamoto Tamenori's Sanbōe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1988), p. 285; and Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō*, 11:427-29.
- ⁸ Ishizuka, *Nihon no tsukimono*.
- ⁹ On the remarkable number of syncretistic temples and deities see Gorai Shigeru, ed., *Inari shinkō no kenkyū* (Sanin shimbunsha, 1985), pp. 75-170 (on Buddhist sects generally) and pp. 541-638 (on Zen, especially Sōtō temples). Sōtō Zen temples also have extensive syncretisms with a variety of indigenous deities as well as deities imported from India, both Buddhist and Hindu; for a full list see Azuma Ryoshin, *Sōtōshū: waga ie no shūkyō* (Tokyo: Daihōrinkan, 1993), pp. 82-88.
- ¹⁰ Allan Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 11.
- ¹¹ Dorothy Britton, trans., *A Haiku Journey: Bashō's Narrow Road to a Far Province* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1980), p. 39; Koizuka Minoru, *Kitsune monogatari* (Tokyo: Sanichi shobō, 1982), pp. 102-115.
- ¹² See Anne-Marie Bouchy, "Le Renard, element de la conception du monde dans la tradition japonaise," in Marie-Lise Befa and Roberte Hamayon, eds., *Le Renard, tours, détours et retours*, Special issue of *Etudes mongoles...et sibériennes* 15 (1984): 9-70; William M. Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), p. 173; Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 281. There are many such accounts in vols. 16 and 17 (*Shiden* 1 and 2) of *Sōtōshū zensho*, 18 vols. (*Sōtōshū shūmuchō*, 1970-73), esp. 17:278a as discussed in Hirose Ryōko, "Sōtō zensō ni okeru shinjin kado-akurei chin'atsu," *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 21.2 (1983): 233-36.
- ¹³ Kyoko Motomichi Nakamura, trans., *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon ryōiki of the Monk Kyōkai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 78 n.121; Hakamaya Noriaki, *Hihan Bukkyō* (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1990), pp. 275-304.
- ¹⁴ Ian Reader, "Zazenless Zen? The Position of Zazen in Institutional Zen Buddhism," *Japanese Religions* 14.3 (1986): 7-27; Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*.
- ¹⁵ Azuma Ryōshin, *Sōtōshū: waga ie no shūkyō*, pp. 82-88; see Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, p. 282 fn.46. For a partial list of Sōtō temples, see Ishikawa Rikizan, "Chūsei Zenshū to shinbutsu shūgō,"

- Nihon Bukkyō* 60-61 (1984): 44-45.
- ¹⁶ Karen Smyers, "The Jewel and the Fox: A Study of Shared and Private Meanings in *Inari* Worship," Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1993, pp. 160-62.
 - ¹⁷ *Zengaku daijiten* (Tokyo: Taishukan shoten, 1985), p. 1190. A rich source of information is a 1993 NHK documentary entitled "Toyokawa Inari: Myōgonji ni tsutaerareta shinkō."
 - ¹⁸ For an example of a folktale about the demonic Dakini, see Tyler, *Japanese Tales*, pp. 63-66; *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 84:214-219.
 - ¹⁹ Kiyoshi Nozaki, *Kitsune: Japan's Fox of Mystery, Romance and Humor* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1961), p. 204.
 - ²⁰ Bodiford, *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan*, p. 88.
 - ²¹ Heinrich Dumoulin, *Zen: A History*, vol. 2 (Japan) (New York: Macmillan, 1990), p. 213.
 - ²² Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 166 n.27.
 - ²³ Ōtani Teppu, ed., "Daijōji hihon "Tōkokuki," *Shūgaku kenkyū* 16 (1974): 233.
 - ²⁴ Kagamishima Genryū, Satō Tatsugen, Kosaka Kiyū, trans., *Yakuchū Zen-en shingi* (Tokyo: Sōtōshū shūmuchō, 1972), pp. 76-77, 256; T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," in *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, eds. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), pp. 177-78.
 - ²⁵ Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights*, p. 158; *Baso goroku*, ed. Iriya Yoshitaka (Kyoto: Zen bunka kenkyūjō), pp. 120-29 (Pin-yin changed to Wade-Giles).
 - ²⁶ *Shōyōroku* no. 10 (Taishō 48:233a-c).
 - ²⁷ Abe Chōichi, *Zenshū shakai to shinkō: zoku Chūgoku Zenshūshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kindai bungeisha, 1993); Chün-fang Yü, "P'u-t'o Shan: Pilgrimage and the Creation of the Chinese Potalaka," *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, eds. Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 190-245. The four main mountain sites and their bodhisattvas are Mt. Wu-t'ai (C. Wen-shu, J. Monju), Mt. Omei (P'u-hsien, Fugen), Mt. P'u-t'o (Kuan-yin, Kannon), Mt. Chiu-hua (Ti-tsang, Jizō).
 - ²⁸ *Rinzai roku*, ed. Iriya Yoshitaka (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1991), p. 65; Robert Gimello, "Chang Shang-ying on Wu-t'ai Shan," in *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, eds. Naquin and Yü, pp. 119-24.
 - ²⁹ *Mumonkan* no. 31 (Taishō 48:297a) and *Shōyōroku* no. 10 (Taishō 48:233c). In the kōan Jōshū promises to "check out" or investigate an old woman at the foot of the mountain who has been giving directions

to inquiring Zen monks, "Go straight ahead," and then remarking sardonically "Watch him go off," when they follow her. Jōshū gets the same treatment, but when he returns to the monastery he declares, "I checked her out."

³⁰ *Hekiganroku* no. 35 (Taisho 48:173b-174b). Monju responds to questions about the size of the congregation on Mt. Wu-t'ai, "In front three by three, in back three by three."

³¹ *Mumonkan* no.2, *Taishō* 48:293a-b; and *Shōyōroku* no. 8, *Taishō* 48:231c-232b.

³² Steven Heine, trans., *A Blade of Grass: Japanese Poetry and Aesthetics in Dōgen Zen* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), p. 109; the shrines mentioned are located in Nara prefecture.

³³ Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō* II:518.

³⁴ Heine, "Critical Buddhism (*Hihan Bukkyō*) and the Controversy Concerning the 75-Fascicle and 12-Fascicle *Shōbōgenzō* Texts," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 21.1 (1994): 37-72.

³⁵ Gorai, ed., *Inari shinkō no kenkyū*, p. 546.

³⁶ Kawamura Kōdō, ed., *Eihei kaizan Dōgen zenji gyōjō — Kenzeiki* (Tokyo: Taishukan shoten, 1975), p. 30; Gorai, ed., *Inari shinkō no kenkyū*, p. 599.

³⁷ Satō Shunkō, "Hakusan shinkō to Sōtōshū kyōdan shi," 20-part series in *Sanshō*, issues 556 (1990) 575 (1991), map appears in 8:29.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:23.

³⁹ The first anecdote appears in Smyers, "Of Foxes, Buddhas, and Shinto Kami: The Syncretic Nature of Inari Beliefs," *Japanese Religions* 16.3 (1991): 62-64. The story of Kūkai and Shikoku is reported in Juliet Piggott, *Japanese Mythology* (New York: Peter Bedrick, 1982), p. 48.

⁴⁰ Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* (New York: Penguin, 1964), p. 114.

⁴¹ Gorai, ed., *Inari shinkō no kenkyū*, pp. 541-638.

⁴² Ishikawa Rikizan, "Chūsei Zenshū to shinbutsu shūgō," p. 51.

⁴³ Whalen Lai, "The *Chan-ch'a ching*: Religion and Magic in Medieval China," in *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, ed. Robert Buswell (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), p. 175, which mentions criticism of Hume by Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 12-22.

⁴⁴ Hsün Tzu, *Basic Writings of Mo-tzu, Hsun-Tzu, Han Fei-tzu*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia, 1967), p. 85, slightly modified.

⁴⁵ Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, healer of children since the thirteenth century*, trans. Martin Thom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

- ⁴⁷ Aron Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 97.
- ⁴⁸ Janet R. Goodwin, *Alms and Vagabonds: Buddhist Temples and Popular Patronage in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), p. 126.
- ⁴⁹ Michael Kelsey, "Salvation of the Snake, the Snake of Salvation: Buddhist-Shinto Conflict and Resolution," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 8.1-2 (1981): 110. Tyler points out how Kannon can take any form to save people, including a voracious snake, in *Japanese Tales*, p. xli.
- ⁵⁰ Dōgen, *Shōbōgenzō* I:318.
- ⁵¹ The Zen masters are one-upped spiritually by women in *Hekiganroku* no. 4 (Taishō 48:143b-144c), and *Mumonkan* no. 31 (Taishō 48:297a).

The Esoteric Meaning of 'Amida' by Kakuban

An annotated translation with introduction
by Hisao Inagaki

[Introduction]

1

Kakuban, popularly known as Mitsugon Sonja (Venerable Mystic Glorification), was born in Fujitsu-no-shō, Hizen Province (near the present Kagoshima City), on the 17th of the 6th month, 1095. His father Isa-no-Heiji Kanemoto was a high officer in charge of a manor belonging to the Ninna-ji temple, and his mother came from the Tachibana family. Born as the third of four sons, he was called Yachitosemaro.

According to the *Genkō-shakusho*, one day when Kakuban was eight years old, a messenger of the provincial governor came to see his father to press him for payment of taxes. The messenger's attitude was rude, and his father was hiding behind the screen. The boy was shocked and asked the monk who was staying at his house, "Who was that messenger?" and "Who is the highest authority in Japan?" After learning that the emperor was the highest person, he further asked the monk if there was someone superior to the emperor. The monk replied that the Buddha was the supreme authority. This incident prompted him to decide to become a Buddhist; whereupon he himself burned incense as an offering to the Buddha.

His father died when Kakuban was ten, and in 1107, at the age of thirteen, he went to Kyoto and became a disciple of Kanjo, the founder of the Jōju-in Hall and a well-known esoteric adept. In the following year, he went to Nara to study the Kusha and Hossō teachings under Keigyō at the Kōfuku-ji. In 1110 he returned to the Jōju-in and received the ordination of a novice from Kanjo and was given the name Shōgaku-bō Kakuban—"Enlightened VAM" (VAM is the mystic syllable of

Mahāvairocana in the Vajra-realm Mandala). After the ordination, Kanjo sent him to Nara again—this time to the Tōdai-ji to learn the Sanron and Kegon teachings. While studying in Nara, Kakuban had a dream in which a Shinto god urged him to go up to Mt. Kōya (source: *Ryōji-ichimi sōjō*). So he once again returned to Ninna-ji and began the preparatory practice for becoming an ācārya.

In 1114, at the age of twenty, Kakuban received the full ordination of a monk at the Tōdai-ji, Nara, and then went up Mt. Kōya, where he was greeted by a Nembutsu sage, Shōren of the Ōjō-in. Being a devout aspirant to Amida's Pure Land (source: *Shōnin-engi*), Shōren undoubtedly had a great influence on Kakuban. Kakuban learned many ritual practices under Meijaku, who was also known as an aspirant to the Pure Land through the Shingon Nembutsu. Under Meijaku's guidance, Kakuban particularly practiced the ritual called "*Kokuzō gumonjihō*," dedicated to Kokuzō (Ākaśagarbha) Bodhisattva. During his stay on Mt. Kōya, until he was twenty-seven of age, he also received the Dharma-transmission abhiśeka (Denbō kanjō) as many as eight times.

In 1121 Kakuban received from Kanjo of the Ninna-ji the abhiśeka of the two Mandalas, the Realm of the Matrix-store and the Realm of Vajra. Later he tried again and again to master the *Kokuzō gumonjihō* ritual, until at the ninth attempt in 1123 he attained the transcendent state, and thus spiritual awakening dawned in his mind.

In 1125 Kakuban is said to have written the *Kōyōshū*, three fascicles, explaining the way of birth in Amida's Land, and sent it to his mother. In the following year, he wished to build a hall on Mt. Kōya to revive the lecture-meeting of transmission of the Dharma, called "Denbō-e", which was originated by Kūkai for the promotion of studies in esoteric Buddhism. Coincidentally, a large estate in Wakayama was donated to him, so he invoked Shinto gods and built there a shrine to guard the Denbō-in which was to be built on Mt. Kōya. Later the Negoro-ji was built on this site. In 1130 Kakuban received the patronage of the Ex-emperor Toba and his sanction to build the Denbō-in on Mt. Kōya. Since that temple proved to be too small, in 1131 he built the Daidenbō-in temple (Great Denbō-in). Thus he succeeded in establishing a center for the study and practice of Shingon.

Kakuban's next effort was to revive the Shingon rituals. At that time, there were two traditions of rituals in the Tōmitsu (the esoteric Buddhism of Shingon as opposed to that of Tendai): the Ono and Hirosawa schools, each divided into subschools. Besides those, on Mt. Kōya another school, called "Chūin", was founded by Meizan (1021-1106). Kakuban sought to unify them all by establishing the Denbō-in school.

In 1134, an imperial decree was issued to designate the Daidenbō-in and the Mitsugon-in, the latter constructed as Kakuban's residence,

as temples for offering up prayers for the emperor, and Kakuban was nominated as the first *zasu* of the Daidenbō-in. Monks of the Kongōbu-ji, the head temple of Mt. Kōya, became angry and tried to expel Kakuban, but an Ex-emperor's decree ruled that these monks be punished. Later that year, Kakuban was additionally appointed *zasu* of the Kongōbu-ji. Until that time, the *zasu* of the Tōji in Kyoto had also been the *zasu* of the Kongōbu-ji, and so Mt. Kōya had been effectively under the jurisdiction of Tōji. For fear of arousing further the wrath of those monks who had already sought his expulsion, Kakuban finally resigned as *zasu* of both temples and retired to Mitsugon-in.

Nevertheless, the antipathy of the Kongōbu-ji monks against Kakuban was aggravated. They even took to arms and attempted to kill him. Kakuban, however, remained in Mitsugon-in and began a discipline of silence for a thousand days. In 1139, the armed monks destroyed the Denbō-in and its sub-temples, numbering more than eighty. Kakuban fled to Negoro in Wakayama, never to return to Mt. Kōya again. He spent the rest of his life there teaching students and writing books. In 1143 when he was forty-nine years of age, he became ill, and later that year he passed away while sitting in the lotus posture, making the appropriate mudrā, and facing towards Mahāvairocana's Pure Land. He was given the posthumous title Kōgyō Daishi (the Master who Revived the Teaching) by Emperor Higashiyama in 1690.

Reconciliation and conflict ensued between the Kongōbu-ji and the Negoro-ji, lasting for more than a hundred years. The great master Raiyu (1226-1304) finally moved the Daidenbō-in and the Mitsugon-in to Negoro in 1288, and declared the independence of the new school, called Shingi Shingon.

2

Kakuban's life-work can be summarized under the following four headings:

- (1) Reviving the *denbō-e* lecture meetings to promote the study of the Shingon teachings;
- (2) Founding the Denbō-in school to unify various traditions of Shingon ritualism;
- (3) Independence of the Kongōbu-ji from the jurisdiction of the Tōji;
- (4) Founding a new school of thought and practice uniting Shingon esotericism and the Nembutsu, called 'Shingon Nembutsu' or 'Himitsu Nembutsu'.

Kakuban's literary works, amounting to more than 150, show the depth and scope of his scholarship grounded in his dedication to and his

mystic experience of Shingon esotericism. Above all, he made a great contribution to the transmission of Kūkai's teachings by elaborating his theories of "attaining Buddhahood with one's present body" (*sokushin jōbutsu*), "the Dharmakāya's exposition of the Dharma" (*hosshin seppō*), "the ten spiritual stages" (*jūjūshin*), and so on. Based on his practice and personal experience, Kakuban also wrote a number of manuals of ritual performance, especially on the rite for increasing memory, dedicated to Ākāśagarbha (*Kokūzō gumonjihō*), contemplation of the Sanskrit syllable "A" (*ajikan*), and contemplation of the moon-disk (*gachirinkan*). His devotion for the rite of Ākāśagarbha is worthy of our special notice, for through the successful performance of this practice, he is said to have attained a spiritual awakening similar to the realization of Buddhahood with one's present body.

Kakuban is generally credited with having started the tradition of the esoteric Nembutsu, but there were some predecessors. From the middle of the Heian period, especially after Genshin (942-1017) published his famous *Ōjōyōshū*, Amida worship became very popular on Mt. Hiei and elsewhere. In Shingon, too, the contemplative and oral practice of the Nembutsu became popular. Saisen (1025-1115) of the Ninna-ji wrote some works on Pure Land Buddhism. Jitsuhan (1089-1144) of Konponjōshin-in, Nakagawa, Nara, who founded the Nakagawa ritual school of Shingon, practiced the Nembutsu of the Pure Land school in his later years and recommended it to his followers; he wrote among other works the *Jōdo-ōjōron*.

From about the end of the tenth century, *kanjin-hijiri*, who urged devotees to make donations for building temples and for other purposes, began to settle on Mt. Kōya. A little later, Nembutsu practitioners called *hijiri-gata* or *kōya-hijiri* (Kōya sages) began to appear. They were originally *jōji* (also *shōji*; one who performs miscellaneous duties at a temple while remaining a layman and sometimes married). Those *hijiri* who held the Pure Land faith and were devoted to the Nembutsu, were also in charge of the crematorium and mortuary chapel. A number of groups of *hijiri* lived on Mt. Kōya from the middle of the eleventh century. They practiced both Shingon esotericism and the Nembutsu, and their influence on the spiritual life of the general public was great.

3

Kakuban's theory of esoteric Nembutsu appears in the following works:

(1) *Gorin kuji hishaku* (*The Esoteric Meanings of the Five Elements and the Nine Syllables*; *Kōgyō Daishi senjutsushū* (henceforth abbreviated to KDS.) Vol. 1, 149-152);

(2) *Ichigo taiyō himitsushaka* (*The Esoteric Exposition of the Most Important Matter in Life*, KDS. Vol. 1, 157-176);

(3) *Amida hishaku* (*The Esoteric Meaning of 'Amida'* KDS. Vol. I, 149-152).

It is believed that the *Gorin kuji hishaku* was written during the last few years of the author's life. This work is also called *Tongo ōjō hikan* (*The Esoteric Contemplation for Quick Attainment of Birth in the Pure Land*). The five elements are: earth (indicated by 'A'), water ('VA'), fire ('RA'), wind ('HA'), and space ('KHA'); they symbolize the five Buddhas, five wisdoms, and so forth. The nine syllables of the Amida Mantra are: OM, Ā, MR, TA, TE, JE, HA, RA, and HŪM (*Oṃ amṛta teje hara hūṃ*). Kakuban explains that the five elements and the nine syllables are essentially the same and that through contemplation of them, one can attain birth in the Pure Land. In this work, Kakuban asserts that the practitioner of the Shingon Nembutsu attains birth in the highest grade of the highest class (cf. note 11) like Nāgārjuna, who had already in this life attained the Stage of Joy. As for the specific cause of birth in the Pure Land, he says (KDS. Vol. I, 212): "The three refuges and the five precepts are the karmic cause for birth in the Pure Land. The six contemplations, four dhyāna, ten good actions, meditation on voidness, and so forth, can also be the causes of birth there."

The *Ishigo taiyō himitsushaku* teaches nine specific points to remember for Pure Land aspirants. These include "repenting of one's karmic transgressions" (5), "contemplation of the Pure Land" (7), and "decisive assurance of birth" (8). Kakuban emphatically states: "Amida is the manifestation of Mahāvairocana's wisdom; Mahāvairocana is the essential nature of Amida." (KDS. 1, 172) He thus clarifies the essential identity of Amida and Mahāvairocana and that of Amida's Pure Land of Utmost Bliss (*Gokuraku*) and Mahāvairocana's Land of Mystic Glorification (*Mitsugon*). The eighth instruction is "the most important matter to be taken care of," as the author notes under that heading (KDS. 1, 172). Here he elaborates on the terminal care to be taken of a dying person in order to safeguard his attainment of birth in the Pure Land: Five Dharma friends should be in the room of the dying person and see that the deathbed rite is properly performed. The rite consists mainly of repeating the Nembutsu. They should recite the Nembutsu in time with the breath of that person for one to seven days, until he dies. The five friends should also envision that as they pronounce "NA MO A MI TA BUḤ", these syllables enter the mouth of the dying person as he inhales, and that those syllables turn into the sun, which shines forth from his six sense-organs and breaks the darkness of his karmic transgressions. This contemplation enables him to attain the sun-meditation, as taught in the *Kanmuryōjukyō*, and thus gain birth in the Pure Land.

The *Amida-hishaku* is a short work covering only one page in the Taishō Tripitaka edition, but it presents the essential teaching of the esoteric Nembutsu. Kakuban first explains that Amida is the manifestation of the wisdom of the Dharmakāya Mahāvairocana and corresponds to the wisdom of wonderful discernment (*myōkanzatchi; pratyavekṣaṇā-jñāna*). When one realizes the ultimate One Mind which contains all the Buddhas, divinities, their wisdoms, and other realms of beings, one attains unity with Amida. Next, the author explains thirteen different names of Amida related to his manifestations of Light, each as one of the functions of the Dharmakāya's wisdom of discernment. Lastly, he presents the esoteric meanings of AMITA.

The presentation in this work is reminiscent of a short sūtra translated by Amoghavajra, entitled *Kuhon ōjō Amida sanmaji shūdarānikyō* (*The Sūtra Presenting the Dhāraṇī of the Amida Samādhi which Ensures Birth in the Nine Ranks of Enlightenment*) (TT. 19, 79b-80a). This sūtra first states that the Land of the Buddha of Infinite Life is manifest in the sāmādhi of pure consciousness glorified with the nine ranks of enlightenment, which it then explains. Contrary to our expectation, those nine ranks are not the same as the nine grades presented in the *Kanmuryōjukyō* (*The Sūtra on Contemplation of Amitāyus*), but are the nine stages of enlightenment (see note 11). They seem to indicate nine different virtues contained in the Pure Consciousness of True Suchness. Within this consciousness appear twelve Mahāmaṇḍala figures originating from the Great Round Mirror-Wisdom. The twelve figures are the twelve Buddhas, who, according to the *Muryōjukyō* (*The Larger Sūtra on Amitāyus*), are different names of Amida and the same as the last twelve of the thirteen names given in the *Amida-hishaku*. The sūtra continues to explain that one who contemplates those Buddhas and praises their names can escape from Samsara and reside in True Suchness. It further states that one who wishes to enter this Samādhi and purify his mind and body should concentrate on the following mantra:

OM A MR TA TE JE HA RA HŪM

By holding fast to this mantra, which is popularly known as the *Amida shōju* (the Small Amida Mantra), one can dwell in the realization of the principle of ultimate reality. The sūtra ends with the usual praise of the merit of copying and reciting it and the benefit of its leading the practitioner to the Pure Land.

Kakuban must have read this sūtra and used its essentials in the *Amida-hishaku*. He re-interprets '*kuhon jōshiki*' (nine pure

consciousnesses) as the nine consciousnesses adorned with nine grades or ranks of enlightenment which are contained in the One Mind. One noticeable divergence from the sūtra is Kakuban's use of A MI TA. Instead of following the more usual esoteric formula of the nine syllables of the Amida mantra, he teaches that one who recites AMITA (or AMIDA) can extinguish his grave karmic offenses and attain boundless wisdom and merit. He then gives esoteric meanings of A MI TA.

In summing up the above observations, we can see that Kakuban uses three kinds of Amida mantra in the three texts above:

(1) nine syllable mantra, i.e., OM (or M) A MR TA TE JE HA RA HŪM, in the *Gorin kuji hishaku*;

(2) six syllable mantra, i.e., NA MO A MI TA BUH, in the *Ichigo taiyō himitsushaku*;

(3) three syllable mantra, i.e., A MI TA, in the *Amida-hishaku*.

A comparative study of these three texts reveals that the *Amida-hishaku* is an ontological and metaphysical exposition of the Shingon Nembutsu and that the *Gorin kuji hishaku* is the most elaborate exposition of the authentic esoteric Amida mantra along the lines of Pure Land thought. Of the three texts, the *Ichigo taiyō himitsushaku* shows the closest affinity to the popular Nembutsu formula of the Pure Land school.

Throughout these works the central Shingon idea of 'sokushin jōbutsu' is evident, and the Pure Land concept of 'ōjō' is interpreted from this viewpoint. We also note that in the *Gorin kuji hishaku* Kakuban warns the practitioner of the nine syllable mantra not to despise the six syllable mantra or the three syllable mantra (KDS. I, 219). Hence we know that there is no basic difference between the three mantras. For Kakuban, Amida and other Buddhas are manifestations of Mahāvairocana, and the Pure Lands of Amida and other Buddhas are his transformed lands (KDS. I, 177).

[Translation]

THE ESOTERIC MEANING OF 'AMIDA' BY KAKUBAN

[1] General discussion

[TT. 79, 48a]

Amida Buddha is the embodiment of the wisdom of discerning and recognizing the Dharmakāya in one's own nature and is also the common ground from which all sentient beings attain enlightenment.

If you contemplate and perceive the One Mind¹, you will also recognize the reality of all the dharmas; if you know the reality of all the dharmas, you will also know the mental activities of all sentient beings. Thus the One Mind contains in itself all aspects of the twofold truth²

without distinction. Every form and mind of beings in the nine realms equally possesses the Five Wisdoms⁵ in full array. It follows then that the sages in the Four Maṇḍalas⁶ originally reside in one's body, which is a temporary conglomeration of the five aggregates⁷, and continue to do so everlastingly. The Holy Ones who are responsive to the practitioner in his Three Mystic Acts⁷ eternally and pervasively dwell in his delusory mind of nine consciousnesses⁸.

Since the One Mind is identical with all dharmas, the realm of Buddhas and that of sentient beings are at once non-dual and dual. Since all dharmas are identical with the One Mind, the realm of Buddhas and that of sentient beings are at once dual and non-dual. Further, one's mind and the Buddha are, from the beginning, one. Do not attempt to make this mind become a Buddha. When delusion subsides, wisdom appears and then you become a Buddha with the present body⁹.

When it is taught (in other sects) that there is a Buddha beyond one's self and a pure land beyond this defiled land, it is for the purpose of guiding ordinary ignorant persons of deep attachment and benefiting sentient beings who have committed the gravest offenses. Expositions of the Dharma accommodated to the capacities of people present shallow and simplified teachings while keeping the principle of truth hidden. The exposition of truth by the Dharmakāya Buddha¹⁰ opens up the true wisdom and destroys attachments.

If you clearly recognize the deep fountainhead of the One Mind, the Mind-Lotus of the nine ranks¹¹ will bloom in the Pure Mind with nine consciousnesses¹²; if you attain enlightenment through the Three Mystic Acts, you will perceive the forms of the Five Buddhas¹³ manifested in your body through the five sense-organs¹⁴. Who still aspires to the glorious land of treasures in the beyond? Who still wishes to see the exquisite forms there?

The difference between delusion and enlightenment rests with your mind, and so, there is no Buddha apart from your three modes of action¹⁵. Since the true and the delusory are one, you can perceive the Land of Utmost Bliss in the five states of samsaric existence¹⁶. The moment you understand this truth, this very mind of yours is called 'Avalokiteśvara,' for you clearly know the principle of universal presence of the One Mind in all conditioned and unconditioned dharmas. If you acquire the thorough knowledge of this mind, you are called 'Amida Tathāgata,' for you truly recognize the One Mind, which is your innate virtue, free from all discriminations and attachments.

The above is the outline.

[2] Explanation of the Name

Next, I will explain the name. In India it was called '*Amita*'; in China it was translated as '*wu-liang-shou*' (Infinite Life), '*wu-liang-kuang*' (Infinite Light), and so forth. There are in all thirteen translations, which are used only in the exoteric teachings. According to the esoteric interpretation, all names are, without exception, mystic names of the Tathāgata (Mahāvairocana). Nevertheless, I will explain the true meanings of these thirteen names¹⁷.

(1) Muryōju (Infinite Life): The Dharmakāya Tathāgata dwells in the Dharma-realm Palace¹⁸ without arising or perishing; for this reason, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called [48b] 'the Buddha of Infinite Life.'

(2) Muryōkō (Infinite Light): The light of the Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment and observation¹⁹ illumines innumerable sentient beings and countless worlds, benefiting them continually forever; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of Boundless Light.'

(3) Muhenkō (Boundless Light): The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment and observation is limitless and without bounds; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of Boundless Light.'

(4) Mugekō (Unhindered Light): The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment and observation realizes, all at the same time, the absence of obstruction among conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, absolute and relative truth, aspects and essence of reality, mental functions of all sentient beings, down to grass, trees, mountains and rivers; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of Unhindered Light.'

(5) Mutaikō (Incomparable Light): The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment and observation cannot be explained in relative terms, because from the beginning delusion does not exist. The true enlightenment which cannot be explained in relative terms transcends the wisdom of distinguishing the true and the false; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of Incomparable Light.'

(6) The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment and observation brilliantly illumines the darkness of ignorance in the consciousness of sentient beings and burns the defilements of their blind passions like a blazing fire; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of the Light of the Flaming King.'

(7) The light of the Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wonderful wisdom destroys the darkness of ignorance of sentient beings, reveals the Pal-

ace of Enlightenment in the Mind²⁰, and enables one to attain, for the first time, the bliss of original non-production²¹; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of the Light of Joy.'

(8) The light of the Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wonderful wisdom clearly discerns the real significance of the absolute and relative truth and illumines conditioned and unconditioned dharmas; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of the Light of Wisdom.'

(9) The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment allows him to dwell in the enjoyment of his own Dharma everlastingly without change and cessation; hence, Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is also called 'the Buddha of Unceasing Light.'

(10) The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment is inconceivable even to the Bodhisattvas of Equal Enlightenment²² and of the Tenth Stage; hence, he is also called 'the Buddha of Inconceivable Light.'

(11) The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment is beyond the reach of the wisdom of ordinary beings and that of wise men and sages and cannot be adequately praised by them; hence, he is also called 'the Buddha of the Light Beyond Praise.'

(12) The Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wisdom of wonderful discernment is originally not defiled by the objects of the six sense-perceptions²³; hence, he is also called 'the Buddha of the Light of Purity.'

(13) The light of the Dharmakāya Tathāgata's wonderful wisdom is originally forever present and illumines everywhere at all times, day and night, regardless of time and space; because it excels the sun and the moon of this world, he is also called 'the Buddha of the Light Outshining the Sun and the Moon.'

Thus the names of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three periods throughout the ten directions are different names of the great Dharmakāya. Again, all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three periods throughout the ten directions are manifestations of the discerning wisdoms of Mahāvairocana Tathāgata. Further, words and utterances of all sentient beings are, [48c] without exception, his mystic names. Those who are deluded about this are called sentient beings; that which realizes it is called the Buddha's wisdom. For this reason, one who pronounces the three syllables, A, MI, and DA, will have his grave karmic offenses from the beginningless past extinguished; one who is mindful of one Buddha, Amida, will accomplish endless merits and wisdom. Just as a single gem in Indra's net at once reflects images of innumerable gems, the single Buddha, Amida, instantly endows him with boundless intrinsic merits.

[3] Explanation of the Sanskrit Syllables

Next, I will explain the significance of the Sanskrit syllables.

(1) *A* signifies the principle of non-differentiation and original non-production²⁴ of the One Mind; *MI*²⁵ signifies the principle of non-differentiation, egolessness, and universal self of the One Mind; *TA*²⁶ signifies the principle of suchness and tranquillity of all dharmas pervaded by the One Mind.

(2) *A* also signifies the Buddha family²⁷, because it symbolizes the oneness of the principle of reality and the transcendental wisdom, and represents the essential nature of the Dharma-realm pervaded by the One Mind. *MI* signifies the Lotus family²⁸, because the ultimate reality revealed by the wisdom of wonderful discernment and observation, i.e., the voidness of sentient beings and dharmas is, like a lotus-flower, originally undefiled by objects of the six sense-perceptions. *TA* signifies the Vajra family²⁹, because the wonderful wisdom of the Tathāgata is in itself indestructible and destroys as enemies all the delusions.

(3) *A* also³⁰ signifies the principle of voidness; the essential nature of the One Mind is, from the beginning, free from delusory appearances. *MI* signifies the principle of temporariness; all dharmas pervaded by the undifferentiated One Mind are temporary existences like illusions. *TA* signifies the principle of the middle; all dharmas pervaded by the undifferentiated One Mind are free from the two extreme views and so, cannot be conceived as having fixed forms.

(4) *A* also signifies the principle of existence; the essential nature of the One Mind is originally existent, unproduced, and without extinction. *MI* signifies the principle of voidness; all dharmas pervaded by the One Mind are in themselves ungraspable. *TA* signifies Buddha; the undifferentiated One Mind expresses the principle of reality of suchness and the transcendental wisdom, which are among the qualities of Buddhahood.

The above analysis is the explanation of the Sanskrit syllables. These syllables have no fixed forms in their mutual relations, just as (images reflected in) the gems attached to Indra's net cannot be taken up or discarded, for the undifferentiated One Mind is ungraspable. The above gives the meanings (of the syllable). There is no syllable apart from its meaning; no meaning apart from the syllable. It is a delusory view of the discrimination to accept one and discard the other, or vice versa.

To hate this Saha world and seek birth in the Land of Utmost Bliss, or to dislike this defiled body and revere the Buddha-body, is termed ignorance and also delusion. Even in the world of defilement, during the period of decline, if one continues to meditate on the undifferentiated Dharma-realm, how can one not attain the Buddhist Way?

NOTES

- ¹ The One Mind is the all-inclusive absolute mind, from which all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and sages appear and to which all dharmas and sentient beings return. It is the same as the Buddha-nature. The merits and virtues contained in the One Mind are symbolically represented as Mahāvairocana.
- ² The twofold truth or reality is: absolute reality (*paramārtha-satya*) and conventional or relative reality (*samvṛtti-satya*).
- ³ The nine realms are: hell, the realms of hungry spirits, animals, asuras, humans, devas, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas, that is all realms other than that of the Buddha, the tenth.
- ⁴ The five wisdoms are: (1) the wisdom of realizing the essence of the Dharma-realm (*dharmadhātu-svabhāva-jñāna*), (2) the great round mirror-wisdom (*adarśa-jñāna*), (3) the wisdom of non-distinction (*amatā-jñāna*), (4) the wisdom of wonderful discernment (*pratyavekṣaṇā-jñāna*), and (5) wisdom of manifesting transformed bodies (*krtyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna*).
- ⁵ The four maṇḍalas are: (1) great maṇḍala (*mahā-maṇḍala*); a Buddha or Bodhisattva or a painting of his figure; (2) maṇḍala of sacred attributes (*samaya-maṇḍala*); symbols held in the hands of a divinity such as an ensign, sword, wheel, jewel, or lotus flower; also a painting of such an object; (3) maṇḍala of sacred letters (*dharmamaṇḍala*); seed-syllables, words, and the meanings of all sūtras; and (4) maṇḍala of iconic figures (*karma-maṇḍala*); sculptures showing the posture and gestures of a divinity.
- ⁶ The five aggregates (*pañca-skandhāḥ*) are: (1) matter or form (*rūpa*); (2) perception (*vedanā*); (3) conception (*saṃjñā*); (4) volition (*saṃskāra*); and (5) consciousness (*viññāna*).
- ⁷ The three mystic acts are: (1) bodily mystical act; forming the manual sign (*mudrā*) of a specific divinity; (2) verbal mystical act; reciting the mantra of a specific divinity; and (3) mental mystical act; meditating on a specific divinity.
- ⁸ The nine consciousnesses are: (1) visual consciousness, (2) auditory consciousness, (3) olfactory consciousness, (4) gustatory consciousness, (5) tactile consciousness, (6) mental consciousness, (7) ego-consciousness (*manas*), (8) *ālaya*-consciousness, and (9) *amala*-consciousness. The theory of nine consciousnesses is attributed to the Shōron (Shelun) school, which flourished in China for about a hundred years from the later half of the sixth century. In the present context, however, the ninth consciousness, which is usually considered undefiled, is treated from our viewpoint as being obscured by delusion.
- ⁹ Cf. H. Inagaki, "Kūkai's *Sokushin-jōbutsu-gi*," *Asin Major*, Vol. 17, Part 2, 1972; reprint published by Ryukoku Translation Center, 1975,

under the title, "Kūkai's Principle of Attaining Buddhahood with the Present Body."

¹⁰ Refers to Mahāvairocana.

¹¹ "The nine ranks" (*kuhon*), as used in the *Kanmuryōjukyō*, refers to the nine grades of aspirants who attain nine different levels of birth in Amida's Pure Land. Here the term seems to refer to the following nine ranks mentioned in the *Kuhon ōjō Amida sanmaji shū-daranikyō* (TT. 19, 79c; hereafter, abbreviated to *Daranikyō*): (1) the upper grade of the upper class, *shinjikiji* (stage of true form), (2) the middle grade of the upper class, *mukuji* (stage of non-defilement), (3) the lower grade of the upper class, *rikuji* (stage of separation from defilement); (4) the upper grade of the middle class, *zengakuji* (stage of excellent enlightenment); (5) the middle grade of the middle class, *myōrikiji* (stage of absence of impurities); (7) the upper grade of the lower class, *shinkakuji* (stage of enlightenment of truth); (8) the middle grade of the lower class, *gengakuji* (stage of enlightenment of wisdom); and (9) the lower grade of the lower class, *rakumonji* (stage of the gate of happiness). In this sūtra these ten ranks represent the nine pure consciousnesses of True Suchness. In the *Gorin kuji hishaku* (KDS. I, 212) Kakuban seems to use the term *kuhon* in the same sense as in the *Kanmuryōjukyō*, but his usage of this term in the *Shingonshū sokushin jōbutsugishō* (KDS. I, 32) is also different from that in the *Kanmuryōjukyō*.

¹² The Pure Mind with nine consciousnesses refers to the purified states of the nine consciousnesses mentioned above; Kakuban's phraseology is reminiscent of 'kuhon jōshiki sanmaji' (Samādhi of Pure Consciousness with nine ranks) mentioned in the *Daranikyō* (TT. 19, 79c).

¹³ For the five Buddhas, see H. Inagaki, *Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms*, 3rd and 4th editions, 1988 and 1992, under *gobutsu*.

¹⁴ The five sense-organs are eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and the tactile body.

¹⁵ Refers to Amida's Pure Land.

¹⁶ Bodily act, speech, and thought.

¹⁷ The five states of samsaric existence are: hell and the realms of hungry spirits, animals, humans, and devas.

¹⁸ Of the thirteen names, the first is the name of Amida Buddha specifically used in *Muryōjukyō*. The next twelve names are his appellations describing different functions and characteristics of his light; cf. TT. 12. 270a-b. The *Daranikyō* also mentions those twelve appellations related to his light, stating that they represent twelve Mahāmaṇḍalas (i.e., figures of Buddhas and sages) which are reflected in the great round mirror-wisdom.

¹⁹ The Dharma-dhātu Palace of Mahāvairocana in the Realm of the Matrix-store Maṇḍala is located in the Maheśvara Heaven

- (Daijizaiten); its full name is *Kōdai kongō hokkaigū* (the Great Palace of the Diamond-like Dharma-realm).
- ²⁰ Myōkanzatchi corresponds to the sixth consciousness and is represented by Amida. Here it is interpreted as belonging to Mahāvairocana.
- ²¹ 'Palace' is a symbolic expression of Enlightenment realized in the ultimate nature of one's mind.
- ²² 'Original non-production', Skt. *anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*, is the insight of realizing the voidness of all dharmas.
- ²³ 'Equal Enlightenment' is the highest stage of a Bodhisattva which corresponds to the fifty-first stage of the fifty-two-stage career.
- ²⁴ 'The objects of the six sense-perceptions' are form, sound, odor, taste, tangible objects, and objects of the mind.
- ²⁵ The Sanskrit syllable 'A' is here construed as 'ādy-anutpāda' (original non-production).
- ²⁶ 'MI' seems to be construed here as 'mahātman' (great self).
- ²⁷ 'TA' represents 'tathatā' (true suchness).
- ²⁸ The three families, Buddha, Lotus, and Vajra, are the three divisions of Buddhas and divinities in the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*. The lotus symbolizes the ultimate principle (*ri*) contained in the pure Bodhi-mind and free from defilement by blind passions; the indestructible wisdom (*chi*) of realizing the ultimate principle is compared to the Vajra; the two perfect virtues of Enlightenment belong to the Buddha family. Three syllables used for them are respectively A, SA, and VA.
- ²⁹ The Lotus family is also known as Kannon-bu (Avalokiteśvara family) and Hō-bu (Dharma family). In the Realm of the Matrix-store Maṇḍala, the thirty six sages, headed by Avalokiteśvara, belong to this family.
- ³⁰ The Vajra family corresponds to Kongōshu-in (Vajrapāṇi section) of the Realm of the Matrix-store Maṇḍala which contains thirty three sages, headed by Kongōsatta (Vajrasattva).
- ³¹ The theory that A, MI and TA represent the triple truth of the void, the temporary, and the middle was propounded in the *Kanjin ryakuyōshō* (*Eshin Sozu zenshū* I, 277), ascribed to Genshin (942-1017). Kakuban also says in the *Gorin kuji hishaku* (KDS. I, 212): "The practitioner of the Single Path of the Unconditioned (i. e., one who follows the Tendai teaching) contemplates the void, the temporary, and the middle through the contemplation of A, MI, and TA."

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Daiunzan Ryōanji Sekitei - The Stone Garden of the Mountain Dragon's Resting Temple: Soteriology and the Bodhimāṇḍala

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Serene and still, the stone garden of Kyoto's Ryōanji Temple is considered by many to be the consummate Zen garden. The stark simplicity, the virtual barrenness of the enclosed dry landscape (*karesansui*) with its fifteen stones rising from a sea of raked gravel epitomizes a well-known Zen adage, "What is *not* said is more important than what is said." Constructed on the south side of the Hōjō or Abbot's quarters of the temple, the time of the garden's manufacture is disputed as is its authorship. Dates for the placing of the stones range from the late fifteenth century to as late as the eighteenth century. The deceptive simplicity of the garden's few components belie a master's touch. The ancient records conflict as to whom the artist/designer was: the painter Soami and the Zen priest Musō Soseki have been named, probably as a matter of prestige; also two craftsmen, Kotarō and Hikojiro, have been associated with the garden by inscription.¹

This article, however, is not concerned with when, by whom or even how Ryōanji's garden was constructed², but rather with the questions of why the garden was made and what was its function. Writers of this century claim that the garden is a setting ideal for meditation and make reference to its few components and empty space as reifying the Void, Buddhist *śūnyatā* or Zen *mu*. Until recently, no one questioned that silent reverberations of Zen teachings were inherent considerations in designing appropriate settings for Zen aspirants or, in fact, that the garden was even used for meditation at all. In his historical study of Japanese gardens, Wybe Kuitert challenged these notions; his scathing criticisms of D.T. Suzuki, Shinichi Hisamatsu and Loraine Kuck charge that their interpretations of the garden are deviant.³ While there is

some reason to commend Kuitert's historical documentation of various sites, his contention that those writers who attached Zen interpretations to gardens fell prey to nationalist movements of the 1930s that sought a Japanese identity, one that ultimately resulted in the Pacific War, is erroneous.⁴ If his claim that stone gardens merely enhanced the "cultural ambiance" of Zen temples has any merit, however, it is its glaring juxtaposition to scholarly interpretations of this century. His position also is ill informed on Buddhist/Zen art and praxis. Contrarily, Zen gardens are neither mere exotic, hybrid exercises in artistry nor scenes to set a mood. Rather, they exhibit the didactic and doctrinal authority of the sect.

Using Ryōanji as a model, it can be demonstrated that such gardens were regarded as a path, a mandala in fact, to the realm of Bodhimaṇḍala.⁶ The concept of Bodhimaṇḍala was an inherent part of Zen instruction; centuries before Zen came to Japan, the Chinese master Huang Po explained that Bodhimaṇḍala is the sanctuary where every Buddha achieves enlightenment.⁷ Ryōanji's garden also is a visible example of *upāya* (expedient or skillful means) for moving beyond the human condition to reach enlightenment. Before developing these themes, however, it is useful to consider certain aspects of the Ryōanji's history.

Of Rinzai affiliation, Ryōanji is a subtemple of Myōshinji, a temple known for its frugal and severe regime.⁸ Like Daitokuji, Myōshinji remained separate from the powerful Gozan line. Initially patronized by the imperial court and later by wealthy townsmen and lower-ranking provincial warriors,⁹ Myōshinji and Ryōanji attempted to stay aloof from the politics of mainstream Gozan temples. Despite the self-imposed political autonomy, Myōshinji, nonetheless, would have been aligned, at least doctrinally, with Rinzai circles. Early on the liberal character of Rinzai Zen was such that it subscribed to the syncretic doctrine of the Unity of the Three Creeds (Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism):¹⁰ Such liberalism throughout Rinzai history led to eclectic interpretations and practices; eclecticism and openness contributed to the Myōshinji's rapid growth during the sixteenth century. The expansion was achieved, however, only by "drastic dilution of Zen with popular beliefs, prayers for secular intentions, and funeral ceremonies."¹¹ Martin Collcutt notes that even discussions (*mondō*) between master and disciple degenerated into secret verbal transmissions.¹²

It is apparent that Zen institutions did not live up to the purist ideals commonly associated with the sect. In an iconoclastic study, Bernard Faure has undertaken the task of debunking the modern mythology of the "Protestantism" of Zen. He urges moving away from such romantic views of Zen and paying "due attention to the 'sacramental'

tradition that developed side by side the spiritual or 'intellectual' understanding of Ch'an.¹³ The Ch'an/Zen avowal of sudden enlightenment was a theoretical argument attractive to an intellectual elite; in actuality, Zen teachers "repackaged their metaphysical teachings in the form of symbolic rites" (*upāya*).¹⁴ His astute assessment points out that the distinction between the theory and practice of meditation is theoretical and adds that "any theory of 'practice' is bound to fail, inasmuch as it remains theoretical, and is irrevocably removed from the practice it purports to describe."¹⁵

Critical to understanding the contemplative function of gardens, one must get to the core of Zen meditation praxis itself. Although many Zen texts survive, they are either vague or silent on the actual process of *dhyāna* meditation. While all expound on the importance of cultivating mindfulness and the necessity of obliterating the self or ego as well as all vain distinctions by emptying the mind, there is little written information as to *how* the seeker goes about the process of ridding the mind of discursive thought and vain distinctions to realize the Oneness of all things. The word *dhyāna* means more than the act of sitting or mere contemplation of nothing; Monier-Williams explains that *dhyāna* also means a mental representation of the personal attributes of a deity; in other words, *dhyāna* is a process involving the formation of mental pictures through concentration. The lack of textual specificity on the method of Zen meditation can only lead to the assumption that, at least some, guidance was given orally as part of the tradition of direct transmission of knowledge from master to pupil.

Textual ambiguity on the process of *dhyāna* meditation dates at least to the founding of the Rinzai School; Lin-chi's clearest written directions to followers are what have come to be called the Four Procedures, a series of steps in the process of Ch'an training for transcending distinctions of subject (person) and object (environment). "At times one takes away the person but does not take away the environment. At times one takes away the environment but does not take away the person. At times one takes away both the person and the environment. At times one takes away neither the person nor the environment." Thus, one proceeds from the world of distinctions to the plane where neither exists and, as a final step, a return to the ordinary world.¹⁶

Centuries before Ch'an/Zen took root in East Asia, however, Buddhaghosa in his classic text, *Visuddhimagga*, carefully plotted the two methods of meditation. The *jhāna* exercises are exemplified by the Earth Kasina. This practice entails making a circle of clay which is used for focusing concentration, mental absorption of the object and then a process of mind subtraction.¹⁷ Buddhaghosa's second type of exercises, *vipassanā*, were designed to develop insight, defined as "the intuitive

light flashing forth and exposing the truth of the impermanency, misery and impersonality of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence."¹⁸ Although the goals of the two kinds of exercises are different, the two processes "as processes are quite similar."¹⁹ In other words, both entail a sequence of concentration, mental absorption and mind subtraction. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that *jhāna* is the Pali word for *dhyāna*. Jhanic meditative exercises required, at least initially, a subject for mind focus (an object, vehicle); the object was mentally absorbed and mentally dematerialized to reach the state of the Void. The Japanese word *zenjō* is the equivalent to *jhāna/dhyāna*; inherent to the meaning of *zenjō* is a process of spiritual advancement in stages. A full understanding of the term, therefore, includes the initial use of a visual vehicle in the meditation process.

The objects recommended for concentration varied according to different Buddhist authorities and sects. Certainly in Zen, aspirants attempted to emulate the practices of their patriarchal role models, the Buddha and Bodhidharma. Śākyamuni sat amidst nature, beneath a tree at Gayā, when he attained enlightenment. Thereafter, his followers lived in sacred groves and caves in emulation and in pious remembrance of his attainment. In fact, at least one traditional Buddhist meditation began the process of emptying the mind with elements of nature. The *Cūḷasunnata Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* gives a list of states in which more and more is experienced as empty (*suñña*). The sequence is as follows: 1) He fixes his mind on the exclusive ideation of forest; 2) He fixes his mind on the exclusive ideation of earth; 3) He fixes his mind on the exclusive ideation of the Stage of Infinity of Space; 4) He fixes his mind on the exclusive ideation of the Stage of Infinity of Perception; 5) He fixes his mind on the exclusive ideation of the Stage of Nothingness; 6) He fixes his mind on the exclusive ideation of the State of Neither Ideation nor Non-Ideation; 7) He fixes his mind on the exclusive mental concentration beyond any ideation of characteristics or mental images²⁰

In keeping with the tradition established by the historical Buddha, Bodhidharma is said to have meditated in a cave, eyes open staring at rocks, for nine years after reaching the Shao-lin Monastery in China.²¹ Thereafter, Ch'an monasteries in China kept at least one stone composition, expressive of an austerity in keeping with monastic discipline; such gardens were reserved for the purposes of meditation and not found outside the precincts of the monasteries.²² Sadly, the Chinese stone compositions today no longer remain, at least in their original state.

The origin of dry or rock gardens may have been the border of the Western Desert of China where lack of water prevented monks from planting lush green gardens.²³ Whatever the source, a tradition was

established in China linking Ch'an monasticism, rocky scapes and meditative practices. Chinese masters encouraged development of the senses in order to extinguish them. "If you desire the fruit of Buddhahood, then...investigate your sense organs, penetrate their substance!"²⁴ On the subject of meditation, Master Shen-hsiu instructed: "If you wish to cultivate contemplation, you must proceed first from the contemplation of the external subjects...to gradual progression to internal concentration to nonsubstantiality of the object of concentration in order to transcend the subject/object dualism."²⁵ Ch'an and later Zen practitioners sought out objects suitable for fulfilling precisely that mandate. Suitable objects were those that had symbolic content and any other qualities that might expedite the process. It was the need for suitable objects for ritualized focus that ultimately gave birth to Ch'an/Zen art, particularly paintings and gardens. Ch'an/Zen arts are experiential in two ways, i.e. through "apprehending the work properly" and through making the art.²⁶

From its inception in Japan, Zen exhibited a concern for natural settings. At first, a flat stone under a moonlit tree was considered a fitting place for meditation; later, Japanese Zen monasteries cultivated "scenes" for contemplation and, eventually, the scenes were transformed into refined spaces.²⁷ Even before the advent of Zen, however, the landscape was deemed a suitable subject for meditation. It is Ienaga Saburo's view that nature played a "saving role in Japanese religious history" and, from the Heian period on, took on the "character of the Absolute."²⁸ The Buddhist monk/poet Saigyō laid the groundwork, so to speak, for the Zen sympathy toward nature as a metaphor for the Void, as an appropriate theme for meditation and as the very means by which one merged with the Void. Saigyō forged the "closest possible link between nature and Buddhist teaching."²⁹ Saigyō, it seems, was the first Japanese to regard the "natural world as the ultimate Buddhist absolute."³⁰ By extension, immersion in nature was viewed as a soteriological technique for realization. The pivotal significance of nature in the Zen world was heralded a few decades later in the words of the Sōtō Zen master Dōgen who declared:

Mountains and waters right now are the actualization of the ancient Buddha way. Each, abiding in its phenomenal expression, realizes completeness. Because mountains and waters have been active since before the Empty Eon, they are alive at this moment. Because they have been the self since before form arose they are emancipation-realization.

The monk Musō Soseki (1275-1351), perhaps inspired by his own satori in the wilderness³¹ began converting the relatively natural set-

tings adjacent to Zen temples into specific garden compositions designed for meditation. From that time on, Zen gardens were no mere backdrop forming an appropriate contemplative ambiance; rather, they came to have specific didactic and doctrinal intent. That such was the case is verified in the once secret texts for designing gardens, the *Sakuteiki* and the *Illustrations for Designing Mountain, Water and Hillside Field Landscapes* in which rock compositions were given Buddhist and Taoist names.³²

Zen gardens eventually had myriad mythological and cosmological meanings attached to them. Stewart's detailed study of Ryōanji reveals the garden's polysemantic implications; the various explanations establish that the garden space is an ideal locus in which something momentous takes place. At some point, however, the seeker looks beyond the visual rhetoric of the symbolism to find in the garden the actual momentous experience. Richard Pilgrim correctly asserts in referring to Zen art, "While we can still discuss these arts as 'representative' of Buddhist meaning and/or 'presentational' of Buddhist sacrality, the transformational (or 'vehicular') role is less obvious."³³ Obvious or not, all three criteria still are present. In the case of Zen gardens, they have manifold symbolism (Buddhist meaning), they reify the Bodhimāṇḍala (Buddhist sacrality) in that they serve as the locus of the splintering awareness beyond time and space and they also are the focus, the means (*upāya*) by which to arrive at the enlightenment realm.

With Musō Soseki, undoubtedly in response to evolving Zen demands in the fourteenth century, there began a refining process in Japanese garden art in which specific aesthetic properties were more and more distilled. While the term aesthetic implies cultivation of the beautiful, the beauty and charm of Zen gardens are incidental to their use. The carefully prepared garden spaces were calculated for maximum effect in sending the meditator on a spiritual journey. Most of all, Ryōanji's dry garden suggests readiness and movement; the long verandah is the point of departure. By cultivating mindfulness, following the way of proper meditation, *zenjō*, one attains the right mind of *mushin* (no-mind).

Zen gardens, and Ryōanji Sekitei in particular, have been designed to invoke the peaceful state of mind needed for mental progression. Sensory stimuli are kept to a minimum. Such scapes are inculcated with the quality of *yūgen* (subtlety, depth, profundity). The aesthetic quality of *yūgen* invites notice, invites participation; it involves the "human gaze focused upon the phenomenal world."³⁴ *Yūgen* is meant to be experienced in a state of "an *ekstasis*, a playful 'stepping out'" on the part of the experiencer.³⁵ Eliot Deustch states that, in order for this to occur, one must be equal to the work; initiated, "one must become as the art-

work itself is—in truth of being.⁸⁶ Norris Johnson specifies that Zen gardens dialectically mediated between “the thesis/antithesis polar opposition of human being and environment.”⁸⁷ He cuts to the very core of the problematic question of the use of Zen gardens when he writes, “The sacred is invariably spatial, and the sacred is often embodied in the ritual interrelationship of human beings and the natural environment.”⁸⁸

Thus far, no Japanese, or for that matter Chinese, texts or temple records have revealed a precise method of meditating in a landscape or garden. Perhaps such practices were so commonly understood that they did not warrant textual specificity. There is one description, however, of a Tibetan meditation exercise that explains, as Johnson calls it, the environment’s role in the ritual process of mediation. The Tibetan explorer, Alexandra David-Neel, left a compelling narrative that is worth citing in its entirety:

One variety of exercises in concentration consists in choosing some kind of a landscape, a garden for instance, as a subject of meditation. First, the student examines the garden, observing every detail. The flowers, their different species, the way in which they are grouped, the trees, their respective height, the shape of their branches, their different leaves and so on, noting all particulars that he can detect. When he has formed a subjective image of the garden, that is to say when he sees it as distinctly when shutting his eyes as when looking at it, the disciple begins to eliminate one by one the various details which together constitute the garden. Gradually, the flowers lose their colours and their forms, they crumble into tiny pieces which fall to dust and finally vanish. The trees, also, lose their leaves, their branches shorten, and seem to be withdrawn into the trunk. The latter grows thin, becomes a mere line, more and more flimsy till it ceases to be visible. Now, the bare ground alone remains and from it the novice must subtract the stone and the earth. The ground in its turn vanishes...

It is said that by the means of such exercises one succeeds in expelling from the mind all idea of form and matter and thus gradually reaches the various states of consciousness such as that of the ‘pure, boundless space,’ and that of the ‘boundless consciousness.’ Finally one attains to the sphere of ‘void,’ and then to the sphere where ‘neither consciousness nor unconsciousness’ is present.⁸⁹

David-Neel further elaborates, “One attains, by means of these strange drills, psychic states entirely different from those habitual to us. They cause us to pass beyond the fictitious limits which we assign to

the *self*. The result being that we grow to realize that the *self* is compound, impermanent; and that the self, *as self*, does not exist.⁴⁰

Eugen Herrigel describes a similar meditative practice common to Zen monastic life:

Once the pupil has reached a certain point, the real instruction — which may with reservation be called 'spiritual' — begins. The specifically spiritual training starts with *purification of the power of vision*. First one is required to perceive everything that is present, in all its sensuous fullness, including everything that is displeasing or repellent, and to hold it permanently in the mind. Again and again you have to immerse yourself in the contents of perception, until you know them by heart and can, at will, call them to mind in such a way that they present themselves without loss of clarity.

When you can do this, you must learn to rise above it, to apprehend what you are looking at as if from the inside, to look through it and grasp its essence...when that has been mastered, an intensification can be aimed at holding the landscape, the fields, with trees, flowers, cattle and people, so intently in your gaze that in spite of the woods you still see the trees, and then thinning out the reality of the detail until you can grasp the unchanging character of the whole and retain it in its most concentrated form. Finally, even this vision of pure essence must be transcended: you must be able to picture the world itself, the cosmos, and — ultimately — infinite space, thereby expanding the power of vision still further. It is possible that everything will drift off into vagueness at this point...Only when this stage has been reached does the real work of meditation begin.⁴¹

Such meditations have their origin in *jhāna/dhyāna* meditations such as those described by Buddhaghosa. It is important to realize that the attention is not the final point or destination of the meditation; rather, attention leads to absorption, absorption leads to disillusionment and then the Void. The process is identical to the one employed in using a mandala, a sacred diagram of the universe. Mandalas are concentrated upon, entered mentally; once entry has been effected, mental subtraction from the image progresses until nothing exists, neither the components of the mandala nor the self. The relationship between the mandala and a natural setting is that both are perceived as three dimensional. About mandalas, Giuseppe Tucci explains, "As may be seen, the universe is imagined as a mandala, unfolding...extending and irradiating, with its partitions, over all the chief and intermediate points of space."⁴²

This was the universal Buddhist process by which the seeker experienced spiritual transformation. LaFleur has commented on Saigyō's poetry as having the qualities of "a mandala in nature or, more precisely, nature as a mandala."⁴³ The progression of Saigyō's visualization and concentration moves spirally and toward the center of the scene. Saigyō's pivotal role in relating the mandala to nature was a critical step toward the formation of Zen meditation gardens. In truth, Ch'an/Zen was familiar with using mandalas; they had been part of the didactic paraphernalia for many centuries, if not from the time of Ch'an's inception. Whalen Lai has determined that, from at least as early as the ninth century, mandalic diagrams were part of the Ch'an tradition. While the designs of the Ch'an mandalas, normally consisting of five circles, were based on refashioned hexagrams of the *I Ching*, Lai sees the practice of distilling esoteric messages into simple diagrams ultimately as the result of influence from the Indian Tantric tradition.⁴⁴ The Ch'an mandalas were used to lead the way through the process of interiorization and liberation and were part of a secret teaching transmitted from mind to mind through the Ch'an patriarchs.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Lai argues convincingly that these mandalas had as their inspiration Lin-chi's Four Procedures.⁴⁶

Understanding of the process of meditation as an exegesis, a process of concentration, construction and de-construction helps to clarify the reason why a focal device was necessary. Ch'an/Zen had rejected some of the rituals and trappings of other Buddhist sects; some they transformed. In Japan, the two dimensionally rendered, tightly organized and rigidly symmetrical mandalas filled with the deities of the Shingon and Tendai sects had little meaning for the iconoclastic Zen monks. The colorful ostentation and association with supernatural forces caused Zen seekers to turn away from that sort of traditional representation; however, the need for mind focus in Zen training found ideological, although not isomorphic, parallel in landscapes. In other words, nature itself was converted into a mandala. The particular Japanese sensitivity to nature and perhaps the neutrality of nature (i.e., lacking sectarian bias) were obvious reasons for substituting scenes of nature as the preferred focal subjects of meditation. An equally important reason may have been that nature is three dimensional; it is spatial.

The search for natural and neutral foci in Zen circles of the fourteenth century found expression in Musō Soseki's garden complex at Zuisen-ji in Kamakura which included as part of the schema a cave-like meditation cell carved in the base of a mountain as well as an arbor for meditation and shelter on top of the mountain.⁴⁷ That Musō's space was used for meditation is decidedly clear; the assumption that the nature meditations performed therein were formulated on the mandalic pro-

cess, although not textually verified, seems logical given our data. The genius Musō, however, lived long before the construction of Ryōanji's dry garden. Let us move forward to apply the arguments for meditation gardens as well as the performance of the mandalic meditations to Kyoto's Rinzaï temples of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The unconventional Ikkyū, famous fifteenth-century Abbot of Daitokuji, was instrumental in encouraging "worldly varieties of Zen practice."⁴⁸ Ikkyū, particularly in his later years, instituted the use of *hōben* (*upāya*) or skillful means in meditation and introduced several *hōben* to his disciples.⁴⁹ He was equally important in fostering the aesthetic values that are so distinctively Zen: "Above all, Ikkyū cultivated a life of sparseness and poverty that resulted in the highly valued Japanese *wabi* ideal of stark simplicity, which characterizes that country's aesthetic even today."⁵⁰ Best known for his evocative, sometimes, sensuous poetry, Ikkyū also was instrumental in formulating garden aesthetics: "the idea arose of designing a garden to fit in with the poverty aesthetics, a garden of 'frozen music' made with granules of decomposed granite. This garden would be on its surface 'No-Thing or Void,' without flowers trees, or a bubbling stream."⁵¹ It was Ikkyū's student Murata Shukō who designed a garden at Shuon-an under his master's direction that first embodied the poverty aesthetics and reified "Nothing." Shukō later supervised two more gardens for Ikkyū's memorial temple at Daitokuji around 1490.⁵² Shukō's Spartan garden formulations stood at the midpoint between Saigyō's mandalic apprehensions of nature along with Musō's meditation gardens and Ryōanji.

Ikkyū and Shukō were pioneers in creating a "religio-aesthetic" space by incorporating *ma* and *kū* as crucial components of the garden. *Ma* suggests intervals or gaps in time and space, the in-between, the empty spaces. Pilgrim states, "...*ma* suggests a mode of apprehending the world that places primary value on immediately experiencing...a 'spiritual' rather than a material presence that appears in between all space/time distinctions and transforms by fleetingly filling that in-between with sacred power."⁵³ The critical role of *ma* is that it creates expectation in the perceiver, an expectation of Bodhimaṇḍala. The austerity of Zen gardens not only symbolized but also visibly embodied the Buddhist notion of *kū* (emptiness); in other words, the garden *was* the *mu* or the *śūnyatā*. Arid gardens in particular were an emptiness-realization "closely associated with a religio-aesthetic apprehension of the world in which both aesthetic experience as unitive, immediate, intuitive experience, and aesthetic experience as sensitivity to the beauty and wonder of things, was a primary means for being in touch with the deeper dimensions of Reality."⁵⁴ The minimalist treatment of space and the monochromatic color scheme worked together to help subdue the senses which was the beginning of the exegesis.

Recall that Daitokuji and Myōshinji along with its subtemple Ryōanji stood apart from the Gozan. Not only did these temples and their clergy maintain a separatist identity, they shared doctrinal allegiances. Also the temples were located in physical proximity, within walking distance, in the northwest sector of Kyoto. The preference of Shukō and Ikkyū for meditation in an appropriate religio-aesthetic space that embodied the Void was so culturally potent that it had direct and immediate influence on its neighbors. Unfortunately the gardens fashioned by Shukō no longer exist in their original form, but some of the rugged, rustic sparseness is evident still. The cultural impact of their gardens reverberated immediately and on through subsequent centuries and one of the first temples to be influenced was Ryōanji.

The Daiunzan Ryōanji Sekitei is, in every way, a rarefied distillation of the Absolute; it is symbolic of the Bodhimāṇḍala. The garden also combines harmoniously blended, pristine examples of Japanese aesthetic values — simplicity, smallness, humility, rusticity, asymmetry, astringency, roughness, subtlety, *wabi*, *sabi*, *shibui* and *yūgen*. Working together these aesthetic properties give form (and non-form) to the Bodhimāṇḍala and accelerate the cognitive process of deobjectifying and merging.

A number of features point to the space as being used primarily for meditation. That such was the case is evinced by the conspicuous presence of the verandah. The garden was not meant to be walked through; viewing or apprehension of the space is restricted to the long verandah. One-sided viewing of the garden space was so important, in fact, that the verandah was brought from the neighboring Seigen-in temple and installed on the south side of the building in the late fifteenth century.⁵⁵ The meditation platform suggests, among other things, receptivity; it was the point of departure to the True Reality; the balcony was the brink of the beyond. The barren field (*ma*) created the expectation of moving through and beyond by means of meditation.

Both the formal arrangement of the stones and gravel and the symbolic content of the garden work toward the advancement of the novice "by calling into question the operation of his mind."⁵⁶ Ryōanji Sekitei is the ultimate *upāya* or *hōben*. It embraces distinct visual dualities — stillness and motion, macrocosm and microcosm, fullness and voidness, thematic and non-thematic — that play with the mind. The dualities are resolved in the landscape-mindscape paradigm that had been an established part of Buddhism, particularly Japanese Buddhism for centuries. Proper apprehension of the garden did not mean that the viewer had "to fill in much of the landscape."⁵⁷ Rather, proper refers to the utilization of the mandalic process of subduing or subtracting that leads to the Seer and the Seen becoming an indistinct entity.

The verandah's orientation requiring viewers to face the southern direction may have more significance than traditional East Asian geomancy (*feng shui*) in which the south is considered the auspicious direction; the orientation necessitates meditators to face the sunlight directly. The eyes during Zen meditation, although downcast, remain open. Light may aid the meditator by subduing or dissolving visual forms.

The garden has undergone some mutations or renovations through the centuries; for example, off to the side in the northwest corner of the garden are the remains of a cherry tree (called Hideyoshi's Cherry Tree);⁵⁸ perhaps the tree once served as a reminder of the Buddha's enlightenment. Did the tree die or did the astringent tastes of practitioners of a later time regard the tree as showy and call for its removal? Alas, there is no record.

The garden, like Zen, is a mystery, but not an indecipherable one. The garden gives mute testament to centuries of use for meditation. The venerable Matsukura, Abbot of Ryōanji, supplied an enigmatic clue about the use of the garden as a meditative device when he said, "the garden might better be called 'The Garden of Nothingness' (Mu-tei) or the 'Garden of Emptiness' (Ku-tei) than the 'The Garden of Stones' (Seki-tei)."⁵⁹ The Garden of Nothingness was meant to be not just symbolic of the Bodhimandala, it was the Bodhimandala, the empty realm of realization.

NOTES

¹ Harold Stewart, *By the Old Walls of Kyoto* (New York: Weatherhill, 1981), p. 160.

² There are several excellent sources on Ryōanji: Thomas Hoover, *Zen Culture* (New York: Random House, 1988), pp. 103-111; David A. Slawson, *Japanese Gardens: Design Principles, Aesthetic Values* (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1987), pp.90-101; Loraine Kuck, *The World of the Japanese Garden: From Chinese to Modern Landscape Art* (New York: Weatherhill, 1989r), pp. 163-171. By far the most poetic and comprehensive study was by Harold Stewart (cited above). Stewart's excellent study includes physical, existential, ethical (Confucian), cosmological (Taoist and Buddhist), mythological and metaphysical interpretations.

³ Wybe Kuitert, *Themes, Scenes, and Taste In The History Of Japanese Garden Art* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, Publisher, 1988) p.150.

⁴ Ibid., p. 152.

⁵ Ibid., p. 154.

⁶ Bodhimandala is a circle, holy site or place of enlightenment. It is the place where the Buddha or a master attains *bodhi*, a place for realiz-

ing the Buddha truth, a place for teaching or learning the Dharma, a place where Bodhisattvas appear and where devotees have glimpses of them. A monastery where a monk awakens to the Dharma is also a Bodhimāṇḍala. For further elaboration see: Charles Luk, trans. and ed., *The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), pp. 140-141.

⁷ John Blofeld, trans., *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po on the Transmission of the Mind* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1958), p. 128.

⁸ Tom Wright and Mizuno Katsuhiko, *Zen Gardens: Kyoto's Nature Enclosed* (Kyoto: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin Co., Ltd., 1990), p. 63.

⁹ Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institutions in Medieval Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 30.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 286.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁶ Burton Watson, trans., *The Zen Teachings of Master Lin-Chi* (Boston: Shambhala, 1993), pp. 21-22.

¹⁷ Bhikkhu Nyanamoli, *The Path of Purification: Bhaddantacariya Buddhaghosa*, 2 vols. (Boulder: Shambhala, 1976r), pp. 122-199.

¹⁸ Winston L. King, *Theravāda Meditation: the Buddhist Transformation of Yoga* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), p. 90.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

²⁰ Johannes Bronkhorst, *The Two Traditions of Meditation in Ancient India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1993), p. 82.

²¹ Hoover, p. 42.

²² Pierre and Susanne Rambach, *Gardens of Longevity In China and Japan: the Art of the Stone Raisers* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1987), p. 178.

²³ Stewart, p. 157.

²⁴ John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986), p. 194.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

²⁶ Much has been written on the topic of the doing or practicing of arts as a form of meditation, i.e. a way of leading to spiritual enlightenment (*do* or *michi*). The practice and perfection of the martial arts, tea ceremony, flower arranging, calligraphy and painting are viewed

as pathways in which one eventually traverses beyond the techniques of the discipline to a deep state of creativity to find oneness. See: Richard B. Pilgrim, "Foundations for a Religio-Aesthetic Tradition in Japan," *Art, Creativity and the Sacred*, Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1986), pp. 151-52; and Richard B. Pilgrim, *Buddhism and the Arts of Japan* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1993r), pp. 55-70. It is important to understand that there also can be a *dō* or *michi* of apprehending Zen art, particularly paintings and gardens. Their didactic intent was as praxeological as it was symbolic; praxis can refer to a ritual doing and a ritual apprehending in proper meditative fashion. Paintings had more significance than the mere practice of the art; the worth of gardens involved more than a calming, mood-setting ambiance. Inherent to these art forms are their aesthetically suggestive presentations that serve as focal points for meditation; the suggestiveness increases an awareness of insubstantiality.

²⁷ Colcutt, p. 183.

²⁸ As cited in William R. LaFleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature, Part II," *History of Religions*, 13, 3 (February, 1974), pp.228-29.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

³¹ Mircea Eliade, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1978), 10:29.

³² Slawson, pp. 51, 125-131.

³³ Richard B. Pilgrim, *Buddhism and the Arts of Japan* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1993), p. 40.

³⁴ Toshihiko and Toyo Izutsu, *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1981), p. 27.

³⁵ Eliot Deutsch, *Studies in Comparative Aesthetics*. Monograph no. 2 of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1975), p. 31.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁷ Norris Brock Johnson, "Geomancy, Sacred Geometry, and the Idea of a Garden: Tenryū-ji Temple, Kyoto Japan," *Journal of Garden History*, 9, 1 (January/March, 1989), p. 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁹ Alexandra David-Neel, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971r), pp. 274-75.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

⁴¹ Eugen Herrigel, *The Method of Zen* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), pp. 35-36.

- ⁴² Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scroll* (Rome: La Libreria Tucci Dello Stato, 1949), p. 217.
- ⁴³ LaFleur, p. 238.
- ⁴⁴ Whalen W. Lai, "Sinitic Mandalas: The Wu-Wei-t'u of Ts'ao-shan," *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), p. 229-30.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 232.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 251.
- ⁴⁷ Noris Brock Johnson, "The Garden in Zuisen Temple, Kamakura Japan: Design, Form and Phylogenetic Meaning," *Journal of Garden History*, 10, 4 (October/December 1990), p. 215.
- ⁴⁸ Perle Besserman and Manfred Steger, *Crazy Clouds: Zen Radicals, Rebels and Reformers* (Boston: Shambhala, 1991), p. 72.
- ⁴⁹ Jon Carter Covell, *Unraveling Zen's Red Thread: Ikkyū's Controversial Way* (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym International Corp., 1980), p. 194.
- ⁵⁰ Besserman and Steger, p. 73.
- ⁵¹ Covell, p. 200.
- ⁵² Ibid., p. 144.
- ⁵³ Pilgrim, *Foundations*, p. 140.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 144.
- ⁵⁵ Hoover, p. 107.
- ⁵⁶ Ramback, p. 181.
- ⁵⁷ Marc Treib and Ron Herman, *A Guide to the Gardens of Kyoto* (Tokyo: Shufunotomo Company, Ltd., 1983r), p. 94.
- ⁵⁸ Masao Hayakawa, *The Garden Art of Japan* (New York: Weatherhill/Heibonsha, 1984r), p. 91.
- ⁵⁹ Mark Holborn, *The Ocean in the Sand* (Boulder: Shambhala, 1978), p. 61.

Historiographical Issues in the Studies of Japanese Religion: Buddhism and Shintō in Premodern Japan

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The area in which our investigation will take place makes nonsense of that conventional distinction hitherto observed by most western writers on Japanese religion, the separation of Shintō from Buddhism. Shintō, with its liturgies, rituals and myths, has been usually treated in isolated purity, unadulterated by Buddhist elements. The Buddhist sects have likewise been described according to doctrines respectably based on scriptures with their proper place in the Buddhist canon. The large area of religious practice common to the two, in which the worshipper is scarcely aware whether the deity he is addressing is a Shintō *kami* or a bodhisattva, has been either ignored or relegated to various snail patches with pejorative labels such as superstition, syncretism or magic.

Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow* (1975)

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the so-called "new history" has gained remarkable popularity among historians worldwide. The new history, which has grown out of the French *Annales* school, aims at doing history of the whole range of human activity. As a perspective proposing a variety of new fields of exploration and approaches, the new history challenges on several fronts the traditional paradigm of historical writing.¹

Peter Burke, an influential proponent of the new history, compares the new history to the traditional paradigm in the following six aspects:

1. The new history is concerned with virtually every human activity, while traditional history is essentially concerned with politics.
2. The new history is more concerned with the analysis of structures, while traditional historians think of history (historical writing) as essentially a narrative of event.
3. Many of the new historians are concerned with "history from below" while traditional history offers a view from above.
4. The new history is concerned with great variety of types of evidence such as visual, oral, and statistical evidence other than official records, while traditional history focuses on "the documents."
5. The new history is concerned with collective movements as well as individual actions, with trends as well as events, while the traditional model of history is primarily concerned with individuals and events.
6. The new history considers the traditional claim of the objectivity of history to be unrealistic. Standing on cultural relativism, the new history values "varied and opposing voices" rather than the ideal of the "Voice of History."²

The new historians' interests in the whole range of human activity have inspired the incorporation of other disciplinary approaches into historical writing. Social and economic interpretations of history have been promoted from early stages in the development of the new history. Today historians are encouraged to learn also from a variety of other disciplines, including anthropology, psychology, and literary theory. In particular, anthropology has begun to exert a remarkable influence on the newly arising cultural history.³

It must be noted that the new history attempts to understand society as a total and integrated organism, and it emphasizes serial, functional, and structural approaches.⁴ Results of different approaches are not left unconnected to each other, merely being juxtaposed side by side. Rather, new historians see history as interaction between different categories within a certain social structure, according to a principle of cohesion. The new history thus aims at constructing a general history of a society in a certain space-temporal area.

The new history has fostered a number of fields of exploration, including history from below, women's history, micro-history, oral history, history of reading, and history of images. In reaction to the traditional paradigm, which focuses on an historical account of great figures, the new history has promoted much exploration into the ordinary experience of popular social life and culture. Although the "history from below" still involves many problems,⁵ it has succeeded in exploring the historical experience of people whose existence has been so often ignored in the traditional model of historical writing.

Challenges to the conventional paradigm in historical writing have also emerged in recent works on premodern (ancient and medieval) Japanese religions. Many historians today find it very insufficient to write a Japanese religious history in the conventional manner by focusing on the thought and actions of great religious masters. Instead, those historians propose perspectives with which to explore Japanese religious history in terms of not only doctrine but also of society and culture. Their perspectives would lead to a general religious history dealing with the whole range of historical experience, including ordinary life experience.

One significant example of such challenges to the conventional paradigm is some new historians' opposition to the idea that Shintō and Buddhism can be studied separately — a long-standing assumption which most modern scholars have taken for granted.⁶ Scholars opposing this idea argue that such an idea is due not to a study of history but to a twofold historiographical problem: the overemphasis on doctrine to define a religion and the motives on the part of scholars for the strict separation of Shintō and Buddhism under the influence of Meiji ideology.⁷ The new historians' challenge to the idea that Shintō and Buddhism can be studied separately reveals their dissatisfaction with the conventional approach to Japanese religious history, which is responsible for that problematic idea about the relationship between Shintō and Buddhism.

Constructed from new perspectives, as new historians claim, a history would demonstrate the opposite of the conventional assumption about the relation between Shintō and Buddhism: Shintō and Buddhism did not exist as discrete religions in premodern times. What existed instead was a highly combinative religious world integrating various elements, which we recognize only today under the separate categories of Shintō and Buddhism.

Despite the growing popularity of the new perspective in premodern Japanese religious history, only a few historians have seriously attempted to review their approaches in any structured manner. In the following pages, I wish to clarify some of the important issues of the new perspectives which have been rapidly emerging in many historical writings on premodern Shintō and Buddhism.

The task of any new historical perspective is twofold. One is to propose a new paradigm, which is always associated with critique of the conventional perspective, while the other is to justify the new perspective with historical evidence. Therefore, my discussion below deals not only with perspectives, but also with evidence which supports the perspectives, highlighting important aspects of premodern Shintō-Buddhism relations.

I will discuss the new paradigms focusing on those regarding thought and institutions in premodern Shintō and Buddhism. Accordingly, historical evidence will be classified into these categories. I will also discuss the issue of the "history from below" approach in the study of premodern Shintō and Buddhism. Study of ordinary religious experience in premodern Japan has been attempted by a few Japanese historians, but it has remained mostly ignored in western scholarship.

I. NEW PERSPECTIVE: ON THOUGHT

In my discussion of a new perspective pertaining to the theological aspect of premodern Shintō-Buddhism relations, I will focus on the thesis proposed by Kuroda Toshio, perhaps the most influential proponent of the recent new perspective movements in the study of premodern Japanese religion. My discussion on Kuroda is followed by an examination of the *honji suijaku* "the original nature, trace manifestation" theory, which developed in the medieval period. The *honji suijaku* theory was the fundamental rationale which combined Buddhist and Shintō divinities.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL THESIS OF KURODA TOSHIO

In addition to the fact that his thesis offers a new theological perspective to the premodern Shintō-Buddhist relations, there is a good reason to begin this historiographical study with Kuroda Toshio. Kuroda, perhaps for the first time in the western scholarship, highlighted a historiographical issue in the study of Shintō and Buddhism, and he opposed the conventional perspective by presenting his thesis as well as by addressing the problems involved in the conventional perspective.

Since his article "Shintō in the History of Japanese Religion" first appeared in English in 1981,⁸ Kuroda's insight has encouraged many western scholars to approach premodern Shintō and Buddhism from new viewpoints. Those historians took Kuroda's position by opposing in one way or another the conventional assumption.

In his article, Kuroda specifically argues against the scholars' manner of discussing Shintō as if Shintō has been a single body of ideas, practices, and institutions throughout Japanese history. He challenges the conventional view of Shintō by re-examining the meaning of the word "Shintō" in the premodern period.

Kuroda explains that scholars have understood Shintō in one of the following two ways. First, they believed that, despite the dissemination of Buddhism and Confucianism, the religion called Shintō has existed without interruption throughout Japanese history. According

to Kuroda, this interpretation is particularly strong among Shintō scholars and priests. Second, aside from whether it existed under the name Shintō, there have always been Shintō-like beliefs and customs throughout history. This interpretation is popular in studies of Japanese culture or intellectual history.⁹

The above two ways of understanding of Shintō commonly presuppose that Shintō is a unique religion which has independently existed throughout history. Kuroda contends, however, that this view is not only an incorrect perception of the facts but also a one-sided interpretation of Japanese history and culture.¹⁰

Kuroda's thesis is based on his analysis of the historical development of the meaning of the word "Shintō" in ancient and medieval times. He examines the original meaning of Shintō as appearing in *Nihonshoki*, the Chronicles of Japan, compiled in 720 C.E.¹¹ Kuroda claims that there are three possible interpretations of Shintō: (1) popular beliefs in general (not necessarily Japanese but could also be Chinese and Korean); (2) the conduct or action of *kami*; (3) and Taoism.¹² Consequently, he argues, in no example is Shintō used to refer to an independent religion, nor does it indicate something that is uniquely Japanese.¹³

Kuroda, then, observes that during eighth to eleventh centuries, veneration of *kami* was absorbed into Buddhism through a variety of doctrinal innovations and new religious forms (*shinbutsu shūgō*). In this period, people became more cognizant of *kami* in relation to the Buddhas. According to Kuroda, however, this heightened awareness of *kami* never implied that Shintō was an independent entity. "On the contrary," he writes, "there was more of a sense that Shintō occupied a subordinate position and role within the broader scheme of Buddhism."¹⁴

As to the meaning of the word Shintō in medieval times (twelfth through sixteenth centuries), Kuroda believes that it meant the state of being a *kami* or attributes of a *kami*. As such, for Kuroda, Shintō in the medieval period was a segment of a Buddhist system called the esoteric-exoteric (*kenmitsu*) system," which constituted the fundamental religious system of medieval Japan. He writes:

This entire order constituted the fundamental religious system of medieval Japan. Shintō was drawn into this Buddhist system as one segment of it, and its religious content was replaced with Buddhist doctrine, particularly *mikkyō* and Tendai philosophy.¹⁵

Far from being an independent religious entity, Shintō existed only within the Buddhist system and was interpreted through Buddhist doctrine, in particular, through the *honji suijaku* theory:

In *kenmitsu* Buddhism, the most widespread interpretation of the religious content of Shintō was the *honji suijaku* theory, based on Tendai doctrine. According to this theory, the *kami* are simply another form of the Buddha, and their form, condition, authority, and activity are nothing but the form and the acts by which the Buddha teaches, guides, and saves human beings. Shintō, therefore, was independent neither in existence nor in system of thought. It was merely one means among many by which the Buddha guides and converts sentient beings.¹⁶

Kuroda's thesis is most immediately concerned with the issue of the perspective which has been imposed on historical studies of premodern Shintō and Buddhism—the perspective which eventually limited our understanding of their historical reality. Although historians commonly discuss the syncretism of medieval Shintō and Buddhism, this very concept is, according to Kuroda, based on a perspective which arbitrarily divides Shintō and Buddhism into pure categories in all periods of Japanese history.¹⁷ From such a viewpoint, the medieval Shintō-Buddhism amalgamation has been treated as an exceptional, which is, as Allan Grapard describes it, a “phenomenon as odd and fleeting.”¹⁸

Kuroda's argument is essentially historiographical in that his critique is not of the historical reality of the phenomena which today we call Shintō but of the historian's assumption that Shintō was an independent religion throughout history. To be sure, the whole matter has to do with the manner of explaining the Shintō tradition, not the history of the tradition itself.

His insight—which equates Shintō with *kami* in premodern times—negates the understanding of Shintō as an autonomous doctrinal, ritual, and institutional system, but conversely it affirms that there were at least beliefs and practices pertaining to *kami*. In other words, although Kuroda denies Shintō as what modern scholars classify based on the notion of “religion,” he affirms Shintō as a form of belief system directed to *kami*, which was different from any form of Buddhist faith, no matter how deeply integrated in the Buddhist *kenmitsu* system. What concerns us here is not a historical problem but conceptual one, the problem of how to look at Shintō, in what terms to define Shintō.

Kuroda also addressed the possible “causes” for the conventional assumption. In the same article and elsewhere,¹⁹ he argues that the modern approach to Shintō and Buddhism is due to the development of the notion that Shintō was Japan's indigenous religion. Promoted by the movements of the National Learning (*kokugaku*) and the Restoration Shintō (*fukko shintō*) in the Tokugawa period, this notion was finally completed during the Meiji period when the separation between

Shintō and Buddhism was nationally executed (*shinbutsu bunri*).²⁰ This being the case, Kuroda even thinks that historians who presuppose the separation between Shintō and Buddhism in premodern and during the Tokugawa period are still under the influence of Meiji ideology.

THE HONJI SUIJAKU THEORY

If, as Kuroda claims, premodern Shintō was a part of the Buddhist *kenmitsu* system, and if the separation between Shintō and Buddhism was due to a historiographical distortion, we must observe the *honji suijaku* theory with much greater attention. The theory should no longer be understood as a part of the premodern "phenomenon as odd and fleeting" on the border of the history of two separate religions.²¹ On the contrary, the *honji suijaku* theory must be understood to represent a general tendency of religious thought in premodern times, and it fully defines the theological relation between the premodern Shintō and Buddhism.

The *honji suijaku* (original nature, trace manifestation) theory developed from the Tendai school's interpretation of the *Lotus Sūtra* in which the first half of the sūtra is understood as "*jakumon*," things pertaining to the manifested (historical) Buddha, and the second half as "*honmon*," things pertaining to the Original (Eternal) Buddha.²² The origin of this interpretation has become associated with the Chinese T'ien T'ai school Master Chih-i (538-94). In his commentaries on the sūtra, Chih-i applied the division of the manifested Buddha and the Original Buddha to the sūtra's structure, first and second halves, and he termed them *chi-men* and *pen-men*, respectively.²³

When exactly did the "original nature, trace manifestation" schema begin to be applied to the relationship between Buddha/bodhisattva and *kami*? The answer depends upon how strictly we define the meaning of the *honji suijaku* theory. If we define the theory broadly, as referring to any assimilative thought (*shūgō shiso*) to explain *kami* in terms of Buddhist concepts, then the *honji suijaku* theory must have begun by the mid-eighth century.

The theory then developed through four stages until it finally became formulated as the theory which particularly defines *kami* as phenomenal manifestations of the Buddhas or bodhisattvas.²⁴ Probably by the twelfth century, the *honji suijaku* theory was applied to almost all *kami* enshrined at major shrines, such as Ise, Kasuga, Usa, and Hie, by way of identifying the *kami*'s *honji*.²⁵

The *honji suijaku* theory permeated into all levels of Japanese religious life with shrine priests and monks as agents of propaganda.²⁶ In accordance with the theory, it also became customary to enshrine stat-

ues of Buddhist divinities in Shintō shrines.²⁷ *Kami* statues were made in the guise of Buddhist statues, and figures of *kami* and amalgamative mandarins were painted.²⁸ The *honji suijaku* theory provided intellectual justification for the general Shintō-Buddhist associations (*shinbutsu shūgō*) which were seen ritually and institutionally as well.

The *honji suijaku* theory became an integrated part of much of medieval Buddhist thought.²⁹ In particular, Tendai and Shingon schools developed the theories which formed the Buddhist Shintō thought systems called "Sanno Shintō" and "Ryōbu Shintō," respectively.

To focus on the Tendai case, Tendai's Sanno Shintō was born out of the *honji suijaku* theory combined with the Tendai doctrine of *hongaku* (original enlightenment). Hirai Naofusa explains, "In Tendai's philosophy of ultimate reality, primordial Buddha nature as represented by Śākyamuni Buddha was held to be the reality behind all phenomena, including the *kami*. The main deity of the Hie Shrine [Sanno], the tutelary deity of Enryakuji, was considered an incarnation of Śākyamuni."³⁰ Thus, within the *honji suijaku* theory's general framework of correspondences between *kami* and Buddhist divinities, Sanno Shintō developed a particular theory of correspondence based on Tendai teaching.³¹

Learned Shintō priest families who opposed *kami*'s subordinate position against Buddhist divinities fostered their Shintō thought (*shintō ron*) outside Buddhist schools. Although they attempted to reassert Shintō's distinctiveness and superiority,³² their theories were more or less syncretic, integrating Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist elements. Most of all, Shintō thought was under the influence of the *honji suijaku* theory, because it was generally structured by the logic of the "true nature, trace manifestation."

To take one example, the Yoshida family's Shintō thought, called "Yui'itsu Shintō," developed a theory in which Shintō is the "root-foundation," while Buddhism is the "flower-fruit," and Confucianism the "branch-leaf."³³ By making the Shintō *kami* Taigen Sonjin the fundamental deity from whom all things originate,³⁴ Yui'itsu Shintō reversed the former interpretation of the *honji suijaku* theory.

The *honji suijaku* theory represented the combinative character of both medieval Shintō and Buddhist thought. In Shintō, although the positions of Buddhist deities and *kami* were reversed, the theory remained as the primary theoretical framework (origin-manifestation), and it provided Shintō with two basic elements of thought, *kami* and Buddhist divinities. On the other hand, the theory existed as an integrated part in the Buddhist philosophical system. As long as the *honji suijaku* theory originated from Buddhist philosophy, the Shintō thought based on the same theory must be understood as a part of the Buddhist doctrinal system. In this sense, as Kuroda argues, there was no independent Shintō thought.³⁵

II. NEW PERSPECTIVES: ON INSTITUTIONS

Kuroda's opposition to the conventional assumption which deals with Shintō and Buddhism separately has been echoed by many Western students of the history of Japanese religions. They began to direct their attention to the premodern Shintō and Buddhist relationship. In so doing, historians started to apply new approaches to the study of Japan's premodern religions in contrast to the conventional view which overemphasizes theoretical issues and great figures. Thus, fields which the history of Japanese religions had long overlooked began to be explored.

It is perhaps in the field of studying religious institutions that the history from new perspectives has most advanced, in terms of its theoretical formulation and exploration of historical evidence. Sociological studies show that in premodern times, most major Shintō shrines and Buddhist temples did not exist independently. Rather, they were closely connected with each other to form integrated wholes.

In this section, I will discuss a sociological perspective in the study of premodern Japanese religions and its consequence for the historical relation between Shintō and Buddhism. First, I will briefly examine a tendency of new sociological perspectives and the primacy of institutional consideration, through the works of Neil McMullin.

My discussion will be, then, focused on the Shintō-Buddhist institutional relationship. I will also examine the "combinative" principle, a paradigm proposed by Allan Grapard for the historical study of Japanese religious institutions and, in extension, of Japanese religions in general. I will concentrate my historical discussion on the development of shrine-temple complex, the core institutional system in premodern Shintō and Buddhism.

SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The commonest critique of the conventional paradigm of doing history of Japanese religions is the paradigm's lack of sociological perspective. Neil McMullin lists some vital aspects that have been missed in the study of premodern Japanese religions: (1) the relation between the development of religious institutions, rituals and doctrines, and developments in the society-at-large of the time, (2) the comparative importance of religious institutions, rituals, and doctrines, and (3) the relation between religion and politics.³⁶

First, McMullin argues that religious structures (institution, ritual, and doctrine) developed almost invariably in response to other sectors of the society of the time.³⁷ Therefore, religion must be understood not

in isolation but in the broad context of the societies in which those institutions and rituals arose and functioned.³⁸ McMullin argues that this perspective is important if the reasons for a religion's "development, the nuances of its meaning, and its full significance are to be understood and appreciated."³⁹

Second, McMullin contends that it is improper to overlook institution and ritual in favor of doctrine. The importance of religions in Japanese history was due primarily to the religious institutions. In this respect, Allan Grapard also reminds us that the emergence, formation, and development of cultic centers are a fundamental aspect of Japanese religions and culture.⁴⁰ McMullin's arguments for the institutional study are indeed the heart of his historiographical argument. Within the framework of a sociologically-based interpretation of religion, he believes that religious institutions deserve primary attention, because they made great impact on a number of aspects of society, such as art, economy, education, literature, politics, and others.⁴¹

McMullin also argues that we must emphasize the study of ritual in order to understand premodern Japanese religions. According to McMullin, the primary activity of most Buddhist clerics, for example, was not so much the study of doctrine as it was learning, practicing, and performing rites.⁴² He further maintains that the development of Buddhist traditions are best understood as the appearance of new kinds of rituals.⁴³

Third, McMullin's concern for the institutional study of religion leads him to a further specific topic, that is, the relation between religious institutions and politics.⁴⁴ He argues that it is incorrect to assume that religion and politics had different spheres of operation. In ideological terms they were mutually dependent, and religious institutions had strong political power.⁴⁵ He writes:

If religion is understood in a broader sense, whereby it refers to a body of institutionalized expressions of beliefs, rituals, observances, and social practices found in a given cultural context, then religion and politics greatly overlap insofar as the latter has to do with the regulation and control of people living in society.⁴⁶

If McMullin's view represents a tendency toward sociological perspectives, the social study of premodern Japanese religions does two new things. First, as noted already, it socially *contextualizes* the deeds and thoughts of famous figures. Modern studies of the history of Japanese religions have tended to focus on doctrines and on the thought and biographies of the major figures. In so doing, scholars have treated them as if they had been ahistorical independent phenomena isolated from

surrounding conditions.⁴⁷ A sociological perspective interprets major religious figures by putting them into a larger social structure. By relating their development to that of other parts of society, it offers new explanations of those figures. The sociological approach explains *why* a religious event took place by finding its determining mechanism in the surrounding society.

Parenthetically, such a social contextualization requires historians to maintain a subtle balance so as to avoid the possible pitfall of "sociological reduction." In the practice of social contextualization, there is a tendency to focus more on the search for social causes than on the understanding of religious developments themselves. McMullin's own work on the relation between Buddhism and the state in the sixteenth century Japan ironically demonstrates this pitfall. His overemphasis on the state policy leaves many aspects of the internal developments of Buddhism ignored, developments which must have occurred as a result of the interaction of Buddhism with the state.⁴⁸

The second contribution of the sociological perspective is that it shifts analytical focus from doctrines to institutions so a religious history can include communal forms and ritual practices as well. Institutional study therefore makes it possible to create, as it were, a "three-dimensional" historical vision of a religious tradition.

If an institutional study is socially contextualized, let alone explored within each dimension, the religion's history may become more enhanced and structured within itself, and it appears as a significant segment of the larger Japanese premodern history. Thus, sociological exploration has the potential to construct a broader history by using institution as the basic context of analysis.

It is Allan Grapard, an historian of Japanese religions, who brought this potential to the level of a theoretical framework. Grapard's insight is significant to this study, because his claim for institutional study is based on his opposition to the scholars' manner of explaining Shintō and Buddhism separately.⁴⁹ Grapard's historiographical claim for institutional study and his historical claim of the combination of the two traditions on an institutional level are two sides of the coin. Institutional study reveals the combinative nature of Shintō and Buddhism. Conversely, historical evidence of that combination supports the institutional study as a proper perspective.

The following set of proposals by Grapard shows the nature and the scope of his study:

1. Japanese religiosity is grounded in specific sites at which beliefs and practices were combined.
2. Japanese religiosity is neither Shintō nor Buddhist nor sectarian but is essentially combinative.

3. Those combinative systems which evolved in specific sites are related to institutions of power and, therefore, to political, social, and economic order, all of which are interrelated and embodied in rituals and institutions marking those sites.⁵⁰

Grapard asserts that Japanese religious systems (belief and ritual systems) were grounded in specific sites. He observes that until the Meiji period, types of Japanese religious systems were differentiated according not to the division based on the doctrines or founders but to specific places, such as Nanto (Nara Buddhist school), Tō-Eizan (Tendai school), Nangaku (Shingon school), Ise (the Shintō of Ise), and Miwa (the Shintō of Miwa).⁵¹ He maintains that religion or religiosity in Japan is primarily attached to some kind of space referent.⁵² For Grapard, the emergence, formation, and development of cultic centers are the fundamental aspect of Japanese religions.

He observes that religious systems at these locale-specific units demonstrate the association between particular *kami* and particular Buddhas/bodhisattvas as the common characteristic. At each site, temples were associated with shrines. Grapard believes that the association between Shintō and Buddhist divinities that occurred in cultic centers is a vital part of their being.⁵³

Grapard argues that the combinative character found in cultic centers proves to be the rule of Japanese religiosity. He further proposes to call the combinative structure (its complex elements as well as the ways in which they interacted) the Japanese "cultural system," because, related to institutions as well as to political, economic, and social orders, the belief system embodies Japanese cultural patterns.⁵⁴ He writes,

These combinations form the real structure of the mindscapes through which the cultural systems of Japan found expression. The Japanese tradition before Meiji was always combinatory. In that tradition, reality was neither Shintō nor Buddhist but exhibited an interrelational structure....⁵⁵

His intention is to use the consequence of the institutional understanding as the model of explanation for the history of Japanese culture in general. The model is to disclose the "principle of cohesion" of the units in a social structure at a given time. Grapard's fundamental hypothesis in his study of premodern institutions is, therefore, "that sites of cult are the best symbolic representatives of the cultural systems that determined in great part the evolution of Japanese history: they are nexus in which the forces responsible for that history are clear."⁵⁶

Grapard's ambitious proposal concerning the centrality of cultic centers has yet to be validated though various data from both religious

and non religious contexts. His perspective clearly demonstrates, however, that the conventional paradigm in historical writing of premodern Japanese religion must be re-examined. It follows that serious discussion on the scholar's assumption that the historical study of Shintō and Buddhism can be carried out separately is in order.

SHRINE-TEMPLE MULTIPLEX

In contrast to the usual assumption among scholars, Shintō and Buddhist institutions were closely associated with each other during premodern periods. In short, "all so-called Buddhist institutions were at least partly Shintō, and all so-called Shintō institutions were at least partly Buddhist."⁵⁷ The realm of premodern shrines cannot be explained apart from the realm of temples, and vice-versa. A few examples explain how these institutional associations between the two traditions began and developed.

During the Nara period (710-794), Buddhist temples began to be built on the grounds of major Shintō shrines. These temples, generally referred to as *jinguji* (shrine-temples),⁵⁸ housed the Buddhas and bodhisattvas that were believed to protect and guide the enshrined *kami* to liberation.⁵⁹ Most of the early *jinguji* were built by the efforts of Buddhist mountain ascetics, called *shami*, *ubasoku* or *zenshi*, for tutelary shrines belonging to powerful local clans.⁶⁰

It is, therefore, understandable that in early periods a *jinguji* was constructed to enhance the power of local *kami* so that the *kami* would bring more well-being to the local society, especially in the form of good crops. Perhaps this empowerment of the *kami* was believed to be possible in part by the supernatural power of the ascetics as well as the grace of the Buddhist divinities in the temples.

Later, as the *honji suijaku* theory developed, the association between shrines and temples came to be given more universal meanings according to Buddhist assimilative cosmology. Even then, however, it is more likely that the appearance of temples in shrine precincts was not just a matter of Buddhist cosmology, but it was also more secular a matter faced by Buddhists who did not have territorial grounding at the time and needed to establish communication with the communities they wanted to convert.⁶¹

By the Heian period (794-1185), it was almost a universal phenomenon for a major Shintō shrine to have some affiliated Buddhist temples, and the *jinguji* represented this trend. For instance, all the twenty-two imperially-sponsored Shintō shrines in Kinai area had their affiliated Buddhist temples, with the eleven of them being *jinguji*.⁶² Even Ise Shrine was no exception.⁶³

Conversely, many of major Buddhist temples had affiliated Shintō shrines, and this tendency was represented by temple-shrines called *chinju* built on the grounds of the temples. *Kami* were enshrined in *chinju* to protect the Buddhist deities in the temples. The most famous example of the *chinju* was Hachimangu, which enshrined the *kami* Hachiman. In 752, the first Hachimangu was built in the compound of the Todaiji Temple to protect the Lochana Buddha. Thereafter Hachimangu were built to protect other major Buddhist temples, including Daianji (807) and Yakushiji (896).⁶⁴ The temple-shrine complexes combined Buddhist and Shintō elements into integrated wholes.

Powerful complexes consisting of major shrines and major temples, such as the Hie-Enryakuji and Kasuga-Kofukuji complexes, created what Grapard calls "Shintō-Temple multiplexes" which incorporated all of their branch shrines and temples into one organic whole. To take the example of the Kasuga-Kofukuji multiplex, it had at least forty-five branch shrines and 142 branch temples integrated in its system by 1441.⁶⁵ The Kasuga-Kofukuji multiplex was one huge institution of religious, political, and economic control.⁶⁶

Religiously, for instance, the ritual performed at the Kasuga shrine included nine annual Buddhist ceremonies which Kofukuji monks organized and dedicated to the Kasuga *kami*.⁶⁷ Also, as the *honji suijaku* theory was completed, the *honji* Buddhist divinities of Kasuga's five *kami* were placed both in the shrine and in the Kofukuji temple. Kasuga's *honji* statues were also seen in branch temples of the Kofukuji.⁶⁸

III. NEW PERSPECTIVES: HISTORY FROM BELOW

So far in their historical writings, scholars have focused too much on famous and powerful elites and scriptural traditions to the detriment of the history of popular traditions. The history of Japanese Buddhism, for example, has been largely the history of thought and acts of great Buddhist masters, including such founders of Buddhist schools in Japan as Saicho, Kukai, Shinran, Honen, Dogen, Eisai, Nichiren, and Ippen. Likewise, premodern Shintō history has been, except for accounts of ancient local worship in tutelary *kami*, focused on intellectual history of Shintō schools of thought, such as Ise, Sanno, Ryobu, Miwa, and Yui'itsu, which were mostly developed by the learned priest families.

The emphasis on great masters and intellectual elites has been greatly responsible for creating the historical image of sectarian divisions within premodern Shintō and Buddhist traditions and, ultimately, of the separation between Shintō and Buddhism. Critiques of this "history from above" approach have begun to be issued by a growing number of scholars, often from the standpoints of social and cultural approaches to history.⁶⁹

In this final historiographical discussion, I will first examine James Foard's critique of the emphasis on sectarian founders in the conventional religious history. Though Foard's discussion pertains to the specific topic of Kamakura Buddhism, his insight represents a general critique from a "history from below" perspective against the conventional historiography. Subsequently, I will discuss the issue of Shintō and Buddhist relations in premodern Japanese folk tradition. Examined on the lower level of Japanese society, Shintō and Buddhism did not appear as discrete traditions in premodern times. In this section, I will not have an independent discussion of specific cases to demonstrate the close association between Shintō and Buddhism in Japanese folk tradition. Several examples will be incorporated into my historiographical examination of the "history from below" perspective.

JAMES FOARD'S MODEL

James Foard questions the traditional paradigm in history of Kamakura Buddhism which has taken the sectarian divisions for granted. This paradigm is "belief in what constituted Kamakura Buddhism—a set of five discrete sects initiated by five extraordinary figures, within whose remaining writings we will find Kamakura Buddhism."⁷⁰

Foard's specific concern is the problems in which the traditional model is inevitably involved when explaining the reformative significance and power of Kamakura Buddhism. He insists that the traditional insight fails in two ways. First, it is self-contradictory because it chooses extraordinary figures as exemplary for an age. Second, it cannot explain the institutional failure of "breakthrough" of reformation.⁷¹

Foard finds the traditional reformative model to be "an historiographic fallacy that can never serve historical explanation."⁷² Besides, it is an enduring sectarian historiography which exclusively concentrates on the sectarian founders.⁷³ Consequently, the traditional model results in separating the similar as well as leaving kindred movements unattended. He proposes a new model with which he can explain the significance of the change Kamakura Buddhism realized. This new model is more inclusive.

Only when the reformation model is abandoned can we approach an accurate understanding that includes far more than the famous sects. In particular, we must see such sectarian founders as Shinran only in the context of a more inclusive complex of interrelated changes in Buddhist doctrine, practice, leadership, social organization, and proselytizing techniques.⁷⁴

According to Foard, the major change in Kamakura Buddhism was the emergence of new affirmation that any individual, regardless of his or her social or ecclesiastic status, could gain access to the transcendent power and receive Buddhist salvation through some form of devotion to a particular Buddha, bodhisattva or sūtra. Prior to the Kamakura period, Buddhist salvation had been open only to the clergy. With this new affirmation, however, the barrier was broken through, and Buddhism had its first universal appeal to Japanese regardless of their class, learning, or particular local cults. In this sense, Foard argues that Kamakura Buddhism was popular Buddhism open to anyone, contrasting sharply with the closed monastic Buddhism as well as local folk religion.⁷⁵

His concept of popular Buddhism has two advantages for overcoming the historiographical limitation of the conventional interpretation of Kamakura Buddhism. One is the vertical expansion of the field of exploration. By defining Kamakura Buddhism as the rise of popular Buddhist devotionism, Foard expands the focus of attention from the upper elites to include the lower populace.

Another advantage of Foard's model is a horizontal expansion. Popular devotionism was not just a movement of the five new schools. It occurred in Buddhism on the whole, including such older Buddhist institutions as the Shingon and Tendai schools. Methodologically, Foard's new insight is supported by his sociological morphology, a study of a variety of types of new cults, orders, and sects. Foard maintains that the rise of popular Buddhist devotionism was manifested in a great variety of new movements, which are categorically grouped into these three forms.⁷⁶

"HISTORY FROM BELOW" AND SHINTŌ-BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

As for the relation between premodern Shintō and Buddhism, the new perspectives which I discussed in preceding sections have already suggested that the scholar's conventional categorization of Shintō and Buddhism does not help to fully explain the traditions' historical reality. In all, the "history from below" perspective agrees with this suggestion.

Folklorists agree that when Buddhism was introduced to Japan in mid-sixth century, the majority of premodern populace did not differentiate indigenous *kami* and imported Buddhist divinities.⁷⁷ They received Buddhism into the Japanese cultural and religious contexts. Buddhist divinities were regarded as one among many *kami*, called *daitōshin* (great *kami* of China) or a *dashikuni no kami* (*kami* from other lands).⁷⁸

People in those days received Buddhism not internally (doctrines and thoughts) but externally (ritual and temple constructions). Worshipping *kami* and worshipping the Buddhas therefore were not essentially different things.⁷⁹

It was probably in the context of mountain beliefs (*sangaku shinkō*) that the earliest form of the association between *kami* and Buddhist divinities took place and influenced Japanese folk religiosity. Mountains had been the object of worship in early Japan. Ancient Japanese felt the power of mountains either as the place of descent or dwelling place of *kami* (*yama no kami*) or as *kami* itself.⁸⁰ Not only worshipping mountains, however, people were involved in mountain beliefs more broadly:

All the roles of the mountain as an integral factor in the religious life of the people are involved. In other words, it is related with all the aspects of the relations between one phase of natural environment and man's religious activities.⁸¹

Shugendō, which began to appear in the eighth century, is the best known religious tradition which blended elements from mountain beliefs and from Buddhist (and Taoist) traditions. "Buddhist notions and techniques of religious realization interacted with the indigenous Japanese phenomena of sacred mountains to create the peculiar blend of traditions."⁸² Shugendō was a "popular religion" in Foard's sense, and its influence on the religiosity on the folk level is most remarkable. Shugendō practitioners (referred to as *shugenja* or other names) performed various magico-religious rituals in response to "the mundane needs of the common people."⁸³ Shugendō was also one of the main channels for disseminating religious teachings to the common people.⁸⁴

Historiographically speaking, a "history from below" perspective may participate in the discussion of premodern Shintō-Buddhism association by providing an insight into popular modes of association. This insight may be different from that attained through conventional analyses focusing on patterns realized on the upper level. At present, however, for all the efforts by several folklorists and historians of religions to describe historical development of Japanese folk religion, their works are usually unsatisfactory. Although they apparently recognize the syncretic nature of folk religion, scholars still tend to approach the study according to the rigid categories of Shintō and Buddhism.

Consequently, they emphasize either Shintō or Buddhist elements found therein and attempt to explain the complex structure of folk religion under such themes as "folk Shintō" or "popularization of Buddhism."⁸⁵ It should not be denied that the various Shintō and Buddhist

elements within folk religion still preserve their "formal meaning" within the respective traditions. It is important to see, however, how these elements were interrelated and functioned together within the new context of folk beliefs and practices.

CONCLUSION

I have discussed issues of perspectives in historical study of premodern Japanese religions in the context of the relationship between Shintō and Buddhism. Conventional study of the history of Japanese religions has focused on doctrines and great figures. As a result, it has created an assumption that Shintō and Buddhism have existed separately and therefore, they can be studied separately. Exploration from different perspectives, however, demonstrates that such an assumption is seriously misleading, because in many ways, Shintō and Buddhism were closely associated.

The relation between a perspective in writing history and historical evidence is circular. Each depends on the other to prove itself. Yet, as Kuroda and others point out, it is also the case that certain external factors like the ideology of a time or influence of other scholarship seriously affect the historian's perspective. Once a perspective is settled, historical areas for exploration are determined accordingly. In the case of the history of premodern Japanese religions, the idea of the discrete existence of Shintō and Buddhism was due to two mixed reasons, the Meiji state policy of separating the two traditions and the influence of the western scholarship of the study of religions, including the notion of religion itself. The fields they have explored the most were those concerned with the deeds and writings of the upper elite of religious society.

What sort of ideology and scholarly influence is, then, behind today's new perspectives in the study of premodern Japanese religions? At the outset of this paper, I suggested the influence of the "new history." Yet, it alone does not seem to fully explain the situation. This crucial issue of historiography is, however, beyond the scope of this study.

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NOTES

- ¹ The "traditional paradigm," when used as the counterpart of the new history, refers to the "common-sense view of history" which has been assumed to be the way of doing history. In the West, it is specifically "Rankean history" which follows the perspective of the great German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886). (Peter Burke, "Overture: the New History," Peter Burke ed. *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* [University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991], 3.) Though convenient in discussing Western history, the label "the traditional paradigm" is confusing when used in the context of Japanese religious history. The western sense of traditional historiography is referred to as "modern," or western, perspective of doing history, as opposed to the traditional Japanese way prior to the Meiji period. To avoid confusion, I will use "conventional" instead of "traditional" whenever I mean the "common sense view of history" in the context of Japanese religious history.
- ² Peter Burke, "Overture: the New History," Peter Burke ed. *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), 3-6.
- ³ Lynn Hunt, "Introduction: History, Culture, and Text," Lynn Hunt ed. *The New Cultural History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 6-11.
- ⁴ Hunt, "Introduction: History, Culture, and Text," 2.
- ⁵ For example: how exactly is "below" defined: socially, economically, or educationally?; what sources can we use: diaries, memoirs, or inquisitorial records (as Ginzburg did to reconstruct the spiritual world of Menocchio in *Cheese and Worms*)?
- ⁶ See for example, Allan G. Grapard, "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution: The Separation of Shintō and Buddhist Divinities in Meiji (*shimbutsu bunri*) and a Case Study: Tōnomine" *History of Religions*, 23 (1984): 240-265; "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology: The Twenty-Two Shrine-Temple Multiplexes of Heian Japan," *History of Religions*, 27 (1988): 246-269; *The Protocol of the Gods. A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State: 1868-1988*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). Kuroda Toshio "Shintō in the History of Japanese Religion" trans. James C. Dobbins and Suzanne Gay, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 7 (1981): 1-21. Neil McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues in the Study of Pre-Modern Japanese Religions," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 16 (1989): 3-40; "The Encyclopedia of Religion: A Critique from the Perspective of the History of the Japanese Religious Traditions," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, 1 (1989): 80-96.

- ⁷ Susan Tyler, "Honji Suijaku Faith," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 16 (1989), 227.
- ⁸ Kuroda Toshio, "Shintō in the History of Japanese Religion" trans. James C. Dobbins and Suzanne Gay, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 7 (1981): 1-21.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 1-2.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.
- ¹¹ The word "Shintō" appears in the following three parts in the *Nihonshoki*:
 - 1) The emperor believed in the teachings of the Buddha (*Buppo* or *hotoke no minori*) and revered Shintō (or *kami no michi*). [Prologue on Emperor Yomei]
 - 2) The emperor revered the teachings of the Buddha but scorned Shintō. He cut down the trees at Ikukunitama Shrine. [Prologue on Emperor Kotoku]
 - 3) The expression "as a *kami* would" (*kamunagara*) means to conform to Shintō. It also means in essence to possess one's self of Shintō. [Entry for Taika 3/4/26] (Kuroda, "Shintō in the History of Japanese Religion," 4. For a full translation of *Nihonshoki*, see W.G. Aston, *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* [London, 1896].)
- ¹² Kuroda, "Shintō in the History of Japanese Religion," 5.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10-12.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Kuroda, *Nihon chusei no shakai to shukyo*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990), 4-5.
- ¹⁸ Allan G. Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods. A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 3.
- ¹⁹ See for instance his *Nihon chusei no shakai to shukyo*, 1-14.
- ²⁰ Kuroda, "Shintō in the History of Japanese Religion," 19; *Nihon chusei no shakai to shukyo*, 3-5. The National Learning and the Restoration Shintō claimed "renewal" and "purification" of Shintō tradition by returning to the thought and consciousness of the ancient original Japanese. It became the foundation of the religious ideology of Meiji government, which attempted to execute the idea by establishing the "department of kami of Heaven and Earth (*jingi kan*)," and by issuing orders to separate Shintō and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri rei*) (both in 1868). For Meiji's state policy of religion, see, for example, Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State: 1868-1988*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), especially 16-18 and 21-36.

- ²¹ So scarce attention has been given to the *honji suijaku* theory, especially in western scholarship. The only book-length study in English is Alicia Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1969).
- ²² This way of interpretation of the Lotus Sūtra is referred to as "*honjaku nimon*" or, as Alicia Matsunaga puts it, the "*honjaku* interpretation" (Alicia Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, [Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1969], 212.)
- ²³ Alicia Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, 115-116. Matsunaga explains that the relation between the historical Buddha and the Original Buddha is analogous to some other dichotomies in Buddhist philosophy, including: (1) the relation between the absolute truth (*paramārtha satya*) and the relative truth (*saṃ vṛti satya*); and (2) the relation between wisdom (*prajñā*) and skilful means (*upāya*) (Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, 113-116).
- ²⁴ The four stages in the development of the *honji suijaku* theory are: 1) *kami* accepting and protecting the Dharma; 2) *kami* as suffering sentient beings; 3) *kami* as enlightened beings; and 4) *kami* as manifestations (Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, 218-227). Matsunaga presents these four developmental stages, according to an image of the elevation of *kami*'s status vis-a-vis Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
- ²⁵ Murayama Shuichi, *Honji suijaku*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1974), 170. For some examples of identification between original Buddhist deities (*honji*) and *kami* (*suijaku*) see Matsunaga, 231-233; Murayama, 171-173; Tsuji Hidenori, *Shinbutsu shūgō*, (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1986), 99-102.
- ²⁶ Their chief method of propagation was telling mystical narratives about the origin of *kami* (*engi-mono* or *honji-mono*) in which Buddhist divinities are illustrated as historical origin of *kami*.
- ²⁷ Byron Earhart, *Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity* 3rd. ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1982), 108. For example, Kasuga Shrine enshrined statues of Shaka, Yakushi, Jizo, Kannon, and Monju as *honji* of the five *kami* of the shrine. (Tsuji, *Shinbutsu shūgō*, 103-104.)
- ²⁸ Murayama, *Honji suijaku*, 251-302.
- ²⁹ Murayama recognizes the *honji suijaku* theory's incorporation into the following schools' teachings: Jōdo, Jōdo Shin, Jishū, Nichiren, and Sōtō. See Murayama, *Honji suijaku*, 169-211.
- ³⁰ "Shintō," M. Eliade et al. *Encyclopedia of Religion* Vol. 13 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 284. See also Murayama, *Honji suijaku*, 303-321.
- ³¹ Earhart, *Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity*, 110.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 111.
- ³³ *Kon-yō-kajitsu ron* (root-leaf-fruit theory). This is the central thesis in *Yui'itsu Shintō myōhoyōshu*, the school's theoretical formulation

written by Yoshida Kanetomo. (Murayama Shuichi, *Honji suijaku*, 354.)

³⁴ "Shintō," *Encyclopedia of Religion* Vol. 13, 284.

³⁵ This conclusion may make the theological aspect of premodern Shintō-Buddhist relations too simple, ignoring many of their differences. Indeed, we should still be warned against an overemphasis of the combinative characters in both Shintō and Buddhist thoughts. They were amalgamated, but not completely. Among Kamakura schools, in Zen schools particularly, their doctrines had little affinity to the *honji suijaku* theory. Nonetheless, a study of the *honji suijaku* theory demonstrates that premodern *kami* faith and Buddhism were not separate in thought. Rather, they shared much in common known under the term of the *honji suijaku*.

³⁶ Neil McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues in the Study of Pre-Modern Japanese Religions," 3-40.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Allan Grapard, "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution: The Separation of Shintō and Buddhist Divinities in Meiji (*shimbutsu bunri*) and a Case Study: Tonomine," *History of Religions*, 23 (1984): 244.

⁴¹ McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues," 10-11.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 11.

⁴³ For instance, the Kamakura reform schools might be interpreted as "movements that propagated new forms of ritual rather than as new doctrinal traditions." (McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues," 12.)

⁴⁴ He wrote a book-length work on this subject: Neil McMullin, *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth Century Japan*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). In this work, McMullin discusses political, economic, and military powers of Buddhist institutions. He illustrates how Buddhist institutions developed in relation to the state politics and highlights the changes that took place to the institutions during the late sixteenth-century Japan under the rule of Oda Nobunaga. The book examines the Buddhist institutions from an "external" perspective, in particular, through the lens of Oda Nobunaga.

⁴⁵ By "politics" McMullin means "simply, the way people organize their social life together, and the power relation which this involves." By "ideology" he means, by quoting Terry Eagleton, "the ways in which what we say and believe connects with the power-structure and power relations of the society we live in, and, more particularly, those modes of feeling, valuing, perceiving and believing which have some kind of relation to the maintenance and reproduction of social power, to the

assumptions by which certain social groups exercise and maintain power over others." (Neil McMullin, "The Encyclopedia of Religion: A Critique from the Perspective of the History of the Japanese Religious Traditions," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, 1 (1989): 80-96.

⁴⁶ McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues," 32.

⁴⁷ Undoubtedly, the Western model of interpretation of religion, which began to be introduced to the country in the Meiji period, has a great influence on the historical study of Japanese religions. As Helen Hardacre points out, Christian heritage in western scholarship has entailed a predisposition to give the most emphasis to doctrine to the extent that "doctrine is commonly assumed to constitute the universal essence of religion. By comparison, rites and communal observances seem to be gratuitous appendages to the core of religious life." (Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State: 1868-1988* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989], 10.)

⁴⁸ His work is essentially a study of Oda Nobunaga's policy toward the Buddhist temples. In his study, Buddhist-state relationship is located within a large agenda of Nobunaga's unification policy. Nobunaga's policy toward temples was among those toward many other groups, and it is sometimes difficult to identify which policy refers to the relationship between Buddhism and the state. It is important, as McMullin himself argues, to see how religious traditions reflected and generated social conditions, but when discussion is made with an excessive emphasis on social conditions, it obscures the essential point of discussion.

Except some ideological debates on *obo-buppo* relation, he almost exclusively deals with the "institutional aspect" of Buddhism in pre-modern Japan. McMullin's study gives us impression that despite the radical socio-political change outside, religions in Nobunaga's age were static inside. He left many important issues undiscussed, including what changes did Nobunaga's policy bring to Buddhist temples in terms of doctrine and ritual; and how was Nobunaga's attack on temples religiously understood by Buddhists, both on the levels of leaders and lower class members.

⁴⁹ Grapard, "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution," 243.

⁵⁰ Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History*, 4, 13.

⁵¹ Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods*, 4-5.

⁵² Grapard, "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution," 243.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 245.

⁵⁴ Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods*, 13.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 257.
- ⁵⁷ McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues," 8.
- ⁵⁸ Those temples usually had the name of the shrine to which the word "jinguji" was attached, such as "Usahachiman jinguji (725)," "Ise Dai-jinguji (766)," "Isonokami jinguji (866)." The first part of these names were shrine names.
- ⁵⁹ Historically speaking, the appearance of the *jinoji* marks the earliest form of the association between Buddhist tradition and Shintō traditions. It corresponds to the first phase of the development of the *honji suijaku* theory (see note 24 above).
- ⁶⁰ Tsuji Hidenori, *Shinbutsu shugō*, 51-53.
- ⁶¹ Grapard, "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology: The Twenty-two Shrine-temple Multiplexes of Heian Japan," *History of Religions*, 27 (1984): 253-254.
- ⁶² Grapard, "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology," 246-269.
- ⁶³ Ise Dai-jinguji, constructed 766, was later removed (772) from the precinct of the Ise Shrine, as a part of the shrine's efforts for recovering its autonomy. (Miyata Noboru et al. *Kami to hotoke: Minzoku shukyo no shoso* [Tokyo: Shogakukan], 1983), 267-268.
- ⁶⁴ Tsuji, *Shinbutsu shugō*, 89-91.
- ⁶⁵ Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods*, 131.
- ⁶⁶ Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods*, 148.
- ⁶⁷ Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods*, 109-110.
- ⁶⁸ Tsuji, *Shinbutsu shugō*, 103-106. For example, in Murooji temple in Yamato province all of the five *honji* of Kasuga were placed.
- ⁶⁹ For a discussion which combines "history from below" and "social history," see especially James Foard, "In Search of a Lost Reformation: A Reconsideration of Kamakura Buddhism," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 7 (1980): 261-291. which I discuss below; and Edmund T. Gilday, "Dancing with Spirit(s): Another View of the Other World in Japan" *History of Religions* 32 (1993): 273-300.
- ⁷⁰ James Foard, "In Search of a Lost Reformation: A Reconsideration of Kamakura Buddhism," 264. These five sects (schools) and founders are: the Jōdo Shū by Honen (1133-1212); the Rizai Shū by Eisai (1141-1215); the Jōdo Shin Shū by Shinran (1173-1263); the Sōtō Shū by Dōgen (1200-1253); the Nichiren or Hokke Shū by Nichiren (1222-1282).
- ⁷¹ Ibid., 265.
- ⁷² Ibid., 285.
- ⁷³ Ibid.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid., 265.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid., 266-269.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid., 274.

- ⁷⁷ Wakamori Taro, *Kami to hotoke no aida*, 77.
- ⁷⁸ Miyata Noboru et al. *Kami to hotoke: Minzoku shukyo no shoso*, 10.
- ⁷⁹ Tsuji, *Shinbutsu shugō*, 30-31.
- ⁸⁰ See Byron Earhart, *A Religious Study of The Mount Haguro Sect of Shugendo: An Example of Japanese Mountain Religion*, (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970), 7-16.
- ⁸¹ Kishimoto Hideo, "The Role of Mountains in the Religious Life of the Japanese People," *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress for the History of Religions*, 1958, 545-549 (Cited by Byron Earhart, *A Religious Study of The Mount Haguro Sect of Shugendo*, 7).
- ⁸² "Shugendo," M. Eliade, et al. *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 13, 303. For a concise description of Shugendo in English, see the above article (vol. 13, 302-305); for discussions on several aspects on the tradition see *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 16/2-3 (1989), the whole issue. A comprehensive study of Shugendo in English is Byron Earhart, *A Religious Study of The Mount Haguro Sect of Shugendo: An Example of Japanese Mountain Religion*.
- ⁸³ Miyake Hitoshi, "Religious Rituals in Shugendo—A Summary" *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 16 (1989), 101.
- ⁸⁴ "Shugendo," 302.
- ⁸⁵ See for example Miyata, *Kami to hotoke*.

A Critical Review of Joseph Kitagawa's Methodology for the History of Religions in Japanese Religious Studies

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INTRODUCTION

Joseph Kitagawa (1915-1992), a historian of religions and a specialist in Japanese religion, is considered one of the founders of the western study of Japanese religious traditions.¹ Towards the end of his academic career, Kitagawa proposed a unified interpretation of Japanese religious traditions. Kitagawa understands Japanese religion to be an independent subject for study within the discipline of the history of religions. Further Kitagawa maintains that there is an enduring tradition that may be referred to as "Japanese religion"² and asserts that this tradition has evolved from the "synthesis" of non-Japanese elements and the perennial native "Japanese religion."³

Kitagawa points out that the Ritsuryō (imperial rescript) system, promulgated during the seventh and eighth centuries, created a classic paradigm of "immanent theocracy."⁴ The three principles of the Ritsuryō synthesis of Japanese religion are *ōbō-buppō* (the mutual dependence of the sovereign's law and the Buddha's law), *shin-butsu-shūgō* (the institutional syncretism of Shinto and Buddhist ecclesiastical systems), and *honji-suijaku* (the belief that the original nature of Japanese *kami* were Buddhas and Bodhisattvas).⁵ Although the Ritsuryō system has been significantly modified, Kitagawa maintains its ideal has survived throughout pre-modern Japanese history.⁶

Recently, however, the cogency of Kitagawa's methodology and his understanding of Japanese religious history has come under critical scrutiny. Kitagawa's critics point out that his synthetic view of the transformation of Japanese religious traditions poses two major problems

for modern Western scholars in the field. First, Kitagawa's synthetic interpretation of "Japanese religion" uncritically presupposes the existence of a unique primordial tradition. Kitagawa often loosely dubbed it "native Shinto." As a result, Kitagawa's synthetic interpretation tends to minimize the actual political and ideological struggles in the history of the Japanese people in order to create a seamless view of "Japanese religion." Second, although Kitagawa produced a unified vision of "Japanese religion," he never provided an analytical theory to understand how and why such a synthetic vision emerged and operated in Japanese religious history.

This paper is a critical review of Joseph Kitagawa's methodology for the study of "Japanese religion." Such a critical review is important because Kitagawa was deeply committed to the development of the methodology for the academic study of religion in general and of the religious history of the Japanese people in particular. In this paper, first, I will briefly review Kitagawa's writings on the methods for studying "Japanese religion." I will then examine how Kitagawa applies this method for understanding "Japanese religion." Second, I will consider critiques of Kitagawa's unified vision of "Japanese religion" by two modern Western scholars, Neil McMullin and Alan Grapard. Third, I will inspect Kitagawa's thesis of "Ritsuryō synthesis" by referring to a few cases recorded in the ancient Japanese chronicles, *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters)⁷ and *Nihonshoki* (Chronicles of Japan).⁸ Contrary to Kitagawa's claim, these accounts in the chronicles clearly show the existence of plural traditions. I will also examine Kitagawa's thesis of "Ritsuryō synthesis" from historiographical perspectives. While the major elements of "Ritsuryō synthesis" in his argument are the ideas of *ōbō-buppō*, *shin-butsu-shūgō*, and *honji-suijaku*, these ideas, historiographically, did not exist during the seventh and eighth centuries. Therefore, Kitagawa's thesis is highly controversial. I conclude that Kitagawa's studies of "Japanese religion," which one-sidedly emphasize singularity and indigenism, fall short of the current academic substantiation in the field of Japanese religious studies.

1. A VISION OF UNITY—JOSEPH KITAGAWA'S APPROACH TO THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS AND JAPANESE RELIGION

Over the four decades of his academic career, Joseph Kitagawa has been a constant critic of the study of the history of religions, which employed modern Western nomenclature, such as philosophy, aesthetics, and ethics.⁹ Kitagawa objected to these categories, because he defined "religion" as the realm of reality in human experience. He calls this experience a "religious/cultural/social/political synthesis."¹⁰

Kitagawa called for the integration and balanced vision of "religion" through two simpler perspectives, "biographical (outsider's)" and "autobiographical (insider's)," to understand this holistic experience. As an application of this dual perspective, he articulates a unified vision of "Japanese religion."

In this section, I will focus on *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (1987), a collection of Kitagawa's eighteen articles on Japanese religion published between 1960–1984, and two recent articles, "A Historian of Religions Reflects Upon His Perspectives" (1989), an autobiographical reflection of his own academic career and methodology, and "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe" (1991), a comprehensive review article of ten recent publications on East Asian religious traditions. In these articles, he outlines his general method for the study of the history of religions and his vision of "Japanese religion."¹¹

A. KITAGAWA'S VISION OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

In "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives,"¹² Joseph Kitagawa argues for an integration of a two-perspective-three-fold-approach to the academic study of religions. The two perspectives are the biographical (or outsider's description of a religious system) and the autobiographical (or insider's statement of a religious belief).¹³ The three-fold approach includes (1) general inquiries into diverse religions, (2) more specialized studies of specific religions, and (3) explorations into the general nature of "religion."¹⁴

In the first approach, general inquiries into religion, Kitagawa, as a rule, tries to make observations from the "outside," or "biographical" perspective. The "biographical," or outsider's, perspective and the "autobiographical," or insider's, perspective, here, means a general normative attitude of inquiry into the nature of diverse religions. Kitagawa says,

I am inclined to be rather skeptical of any approach to the study of religion(s)—philosophical, religious, or modern Western "social scientific"—which claims to be objective and neutral. Instead, I have attempted to undertake a general inquiry into diverse religions by stressing a "biographical"—in contradistinction to an "autobiographical"—approach; such an approach perceives all religions, including Japanese religion, from the *outside*, as it were.¹⁵

Kitagawa does not negate the importance of objectiveness or neutrality in the general study of religions as an academic pursuit. Rather,

by introducing these simpler perspectives, he tries to avoid biases existing within the modern Western academic nomenclature in the study of religions.¹⁶

In the second approach, the study of the specific religious tradition, Kitagawa pays serious attention to the "autobiographical" statements of the insiders of a particular tradition.

In my second agenda—that is, "more specialized studies of specific religions"—I have attempted not only to study a limited (and thus more manageable) number of religions with some depth, but also to pay serious attention to the "autobiographical" understanding and interpretation of the insiders. I have chosen Japanese religion as a particular focus of my research, along with Buddhism, Christianity, and Chinese religion.¹⁷

"Autobiographical" perception is the "mental prism" by which an insider within a particular religious tradition "sorts out significant items from a mass of data and relates historical realities to the realm of fantasy and imagination."¹⁸

Kitagawa notes that the "autobiographical" perspective, the insiders' vision, "often entails uncritical acceptance of the self-authenticating circularity of the respective tradition."¹⁹ This perception, obviously, is not unbiased, objective, or neutral. Kitagawa, however, emphasizes that the significance of the "autobiographical" statement of insiders lies not only in its being a part of the scholarly assessment of a religion, but also in its mirroring the "principles of 'selectivity' and of discrimination peculiar to the researcher's own mental prism."²⁰

In the third approach, the exploration of the general nature of "religion," Kitagawa carefully sides with neither the "biographical" nor the "autobiographical" perspectives.

In my third agenda, I have attempted to explore the general nature of 'religion' (singular). In this effort, I have tried not to superimpose any arbitrary concepts—philosophical, social scientific, and especially provincial Eastern or Western notions—on this elusive human phenomena [sic]. Rather, I have tried to *let the explanation define itself as a tentative generalized understanding of religion*, based on careful objectification and emphatic, multi-dimensional studies of various religions (my 'general inquiries' and 'specific studies').²¹

Kitagawa maintains that it is impossible to define univocally the general nature of "religion" so long as human experience is analyzed ac-

cording to Western conventions of inquiry.²³ Therefore Kitagawa proposes that "religion" should be defined through the vision of the "biographical" and "autobiographical" perspectives.

B. KITAGAWA'S VISION OF "JAPANESE RELIGION"

During the late eighties, Kitagawa proposed a unified interpretation of Japanese religious history.²³ Kitagawa also proposed that Japanese religion should be an independent subject of study.²⁴ Kitagawa maintains there is an indigenous religious tradition that may be rightly referred to as "Japanese religion."²⁵ This tradition, Kitagawa asserts, developed from an unnamed and unsystematized early Japanese native magico-religious tradition. This early tradition held "a unitary meaning-structure, a structure which affirmed the belief that the natural world is the original world."²⁶ "From this tradition," Kitagawa argues, "an indigenous religious form, which came to be designated as Shinto, or 'the way of *kami*,' developed in the early historic period."²⁷

As a result of contact with the more culturally developed Sino-Korean civilizations, however, the indigenous tradition, which Kitagawa considered to be an early form of "Japanese religion" (in the singular), began to adopt complex foreign systems. The major foreign traditions introduced by the fourth century were Confucianism, Taoism, the Yin-Yang school, and Buddhism. The term "Shinto" was coined in the sixth century to refer to the hitherto-unnamed native tradition "in contradistinction to Confucian and Buddhist traditions."²⁸ Out of this cultural contact, Court Shinto, an official imperial *kami* worship, evolved as a particular form of the indigenous tradition. Many features of the indigenous tradition remained outside the framework of official Shinto. "They have," Kitagawa remarks, "usually been placed in the category of folk religion."²⁹ Kitagawa's vision of "Japanese religion" is based on an "immanent theocratic model" of Japanese religion which emerged from the syntheses of polity, religion, society, and culture.

Basically I am persuaded that Japanese religion has been singularly preoccupied with this world, with its emphasis on finding ways to cohabit with *kami* (sacred) and with other human beings. Also, Japanese religion, like other nonrevelatory religions, ultimately seeks an "immanent theocratic model" from a synthesis of polity, religion, society, and culture, just as religions based on a transcendental deity and its revelation often seek a "theocratic principle."³⁰

In the development of the immanent theocracy of Japan, Kitagawa distinguishes three periods in the "religious/cultural/social/political syn-

thesis.³¹ They are, chronologically, the Ritsuryō synthesis (7th and 8th centuries), the Tokugawa synthesis (1603–1868), and the Meiji synthesis (1868–1945).³²

Kitagawa considers the basis of "Japanese religion" to be pre-historic *kami* worship, which was practiced at the end of the Yayoi period (ca. 250 B.C.E.–250 C.E.)³³ by those who "had attained a degree of self-consciousness as one people sharing a common culture."³⁴ Kami worship, however, was "not a coherent system of beliefs and practices." Furthermore,

... there is every reason to suppose that early Japanese religion had within it several different traditions, and that it took many centuries before what may be rightly called Shinto took its shape. On the other hand, *it is also a mistake to think that early Japanese religion is simply a name enveloping a mass of contradictory local religious practices scattered throughout the Japanese islands.* Long before the compilation of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, people in Japan knew they were not left alone, helpless, in this mysterious universe; *for they possessed divine models for all human, social, and communal activities.* ... [people in Japan] during the prehistoric and the early historic periods, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, took it for granted that they or their ancestors had learned all the necessary knowledge and technique regarding social behavior and practical affairs from the world of the *kami* which was far away from, and yet closely related to, their world, such that the success or failure of their daily work, to say nothing of the meaning of the whole of life, was interpreted religiously.³⁵

Kitagawa argues that the Ritsuryō (imperial rescript) system,³⁶ promulgated during the seventh and eighth centuries, created a classical paradigm of "immanent theocracy" of "Japanese religion."³⁷ Though the origin of the imperial rescript is clearly Chinese, Kitagawa emphasizes the uniqueness of the Japanese Ritsuryō system. He says,

It must be stressed in this connection that the Ritsuryō ideal was not simply to appropriate the classical Chinese idea of the nation as a liturgical community with its sovereign as the supreme mediator between Heaven and Earth as well as between Tao and mankind, but rather to create a soteriological community with the emperor functioning simultaneously as the chief priest, the sacred king, and the living *kami*. With the elevation of the throne to divine status, the imperial court now became the earthly counterpart of the heavenly court of the Sun deity.³⁸

The ideal of the rescript "in which the sovereign functioned simultaneously as the living *kami*," was, according to Kitagawa, unmistakably Japanese.

Kitagawa's immanent theocracy is supported by three principles of the Ritsuryō synthesis. They are the principles of *ōbō-buppō* (the mutual dependence of the sovereign's law and the Buddha's law), *shinbutsu-shūgō* (the institutional syncretism of the Shinto and Buddhist ecclesiastical systems), and *honji-suijaku* (the belief that the original identity of Japanese *kami* were Buddhas and Bodhisattvas).³⁹ Although the Ritsuryō system has been significantly modified, Kitagawa maintains that the ideal of the Ritsuryō synthesis has persisted throughout the history of Japanese religion.⁴⁰

According to Kitagawa, Japanese religion during the Tokugawa period was transformed into a different kind of "immanent theocracy." Kitagawa calls the change the "Tokugawa synthesis." The Tokugawa shōguns replaced "a Shinto version of sacred kingship" centered on an imperial court with "the Neo-Confucian principles of natural laws and natural norms implicit in human, social, and political order, all grounded in the Will of Heaven."⁴¹ As a result, according to Kitagawa, the first principle of the Ritsuryō synthesis, *ōbō-buppō* (the principle of mutual dependence of the sovereign's law and the teaching of Buddha), was dropped.⁴² The Tokugawa government was, however, "surprisingly supportive of Shinto-Buddhist institutional syncretism (second principle), and openly affirmed the doctrine of *honji suijaku* (the third principle)."⁴³

After the fall of the Tokugawa government, the Meiji government was installed in 1868 under the authority of the emperor. The Meiji regime "dissolved Shinto-Buddhist institutional syncretism by proclaiming the separation of Shinto from Buddhism."⁴⁴ As a result, the second principle of the Ritsuryō synthesis, the *shinbutsu-shūgō*, was dropped. "Instead, the Meiji government concocted the hitherto unknown State Shinto as a 'nonreligious' (the term used by the government) national cult closely related to the cult of the emperor."⁴⁵ According to Kitagawa the third principle of the Ritsuryō synthesis, *honji-suijaku* was kept alive in this new synthesis. After World War II, the new democratic constitution promulgated in 1946 abolished State Shinto. There is no room for an "immanent theocracy" in any form in modern Japan. But Kitagawa maintains that the third principle of "equating Shinto and Buddhist deities" is still affirmed by many modern Japanese.⁴⁶

Throughout his interpretation of "Japanese religion," Kitagawa consistently rejects the view of "Japanese religion" as a composite of different religious traditions, such as Shinto, folk religion, Confucianism, Taoism, the Yin-Yang school, Buddhism, and so on. Kitagawa writes,

This perspective suggests that "Japanese religion" is not a coherent reality but is, rather, diffuse and composite. We expected to find this kind of approach in sectarian literature; it is surprising to find it in the scholarly monographs of the social sciences, art history, philosophy, and *Religionswissenschaft* as well.⁴⁷

Rather, he claims, Japanese religion is a coherent reality shared by all Japanese, and is a tradition which originated from indigenous *kami* worship.⁴⁸

Kitagawa's vision of "Japanese religion" is not simply a personal academic pursuit. It is his critique of the "West-centric critical method." Kitagawa constantly criticizes the use of modern Western methods to study non-Western traditions because the former presupposes "that the only thing non-Westerners should do is present their languages, religions, cultures, and histories as 'raw material,' as it were."⁴⁹ As one of the pioneers of the Western study of Japanese religious history, he seems to welcome the current trend away from its West-centric orientation.

Today an increasing number of competent historical works that deal with the *zeitgeist* of important epochs, for example, ancient Japan, the Ritsuryō, Nara, Heian, Kamakura, Tokugawa, and modern periods, as well as some illuminating biographical works, portray the religiously homologous nature of various ages. Equally edifying is the growing trend among some scholars, Asian and Western, who seem to feel that the Western logic and taxonomy that underlie the modern critical approach may not be the most dependable tools to unlock the depth of non-Western traditions, and they are willing to conjecture that East Asian peoples had their own unique ways of perceiving the texture of human experience and/or reality. Accordingly, there are more serious efforts being made today than ever before to come to terms with non-Westerners' own unique conventions of exploring human experiences instead of analyzing them simply by means of modern critical methods (based on Western concepts, logic, and rhetoric).⁵⁰

Kitagawa's method of the dual perspectives—"biographical" and "auto-biographical"—is his response to a "Western" way of dividing human experience into a series of semi-autonomous pigeonholes—religion, philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, and so forth.⁵¹

Kitagawa's applies his non-West-centric method to the various studies of "Japanese religion." His method corresponds with the first and second approaches of the study of religions he outlined, namely: (1) the general inquiry into diverse religions, and (2) the more specialized

study of specific religions. Through these two approaches, Kitagawa visualizes a unified interpretation of "Japanese religion" as a "religious/cultural/social/political synthesis." This unified vision of "Japanese religion" leads him to the third approach of the study of religion, namely, (3) the exploration into the general nature of "religion."

Kitagawa, in his recent publication, *The Quest for Human Unity*, further develops his comprehensive vision of "religious history" through his dual perspectives and three approaches. He applies his method to the history of various world religious traditions, ancient and modern, to create a vision of a global human unity based on his thesis that "religion" is a "religious/cultural/social/political synthesis." This book is Kitagawa's final contribution to the field of the history of religions. Kitagawa, in this work, tries to present a comprehensive human vision of religion.⁵²

2. CRITICS OF KITAGAWA'S VISION OF JAPANESE RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Kitagawa's vision of the development of "Japanese religion" which appears in *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (1987), has its critics. Two such critics, Allan Grapard and Neil McMullin, attack Kitagawa's thesis of "Japanese religion" as a singular tradition. Grapard and McMullin argue that Kitagawa neglects the religious/cultural/social/political plurality and diversity in the history of Japanese religious experience in order to create a seamless vision of "Japanese religion."

Their criticisms expose a serious methodological defect in Kitagawa's quest for "Japanese religion," namely, Kitagawa's vision lacks analytical theory. For example, Kitagawa maintains that the ideas of "*obō-buppō*," "*shinbutsu-shūgō*," and "*honji-suijaku*" are the pillars of his vision of a "Japanese religion." Surprisingly, however, Kitagawa does not explain how these ideas actually functioned in Japanese religious history. I will in this section critically examine Kitagawa's methodology for the study of Japanese religious history through his critics, Allan Grapard and Neil McMullin.

A. CRITIQUES OF KITAGAWA'S SINGULARITY THESIS OF JAPANESE RELIGION

After the publication of Kitagawa's *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (1987), Allan Grapard and Neil McMullin responded with critical reviews. Both of them cast grave doubts on Kitagawa's singularity thesis for the history of "Japanese religion." In his review published in 1990, Grapard writes "Kitagawa's interpretive work is guided by a fun-

damental presupposition that comes about in the systematic use of the term 'Japanese religion'.⁵³

Grapard points out that Kitagawa uses the qualifying term "Japanese," to mean the "regional and subjective aspects of religion," and also "an overarching presence of immutable characteristics, shared by all Japanese people at all times, that makes religious behavior unmistakably Japanese."⁵⁴ Grapard wonders whether Kitagawa's systematic use of the singular in the term "Japanese religion" is based on the critical examination of historical sources, or whether it is his presupposition and "cultural exceptionalism."⁵⁵

Kitagawa's singularity thesis appears in the first paragraph of his article, "Japanese Religion," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. I will compare the first paragraphs of "Japanese Religion" by Kitagawa (1), with "Korean Religion" by Yim et al. (2), also from the same encyclopedia, in order to clarify the difference between Kitagawa's and other usages of the singular term "religion" with regional qualifying terms. I quote Kitagawa's article first. Yim's article is quoted second.

(1) Like many other ethnic groups throughout the world, *the earliest inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago had from time immemorial their own unique way of viewing the world and the meaning of human existence and their own characteristic rituals for celebrating various events and phases of their individual and corporate life* To them the whole of life was permeated by religious symbols and authenticated by myths. *From this tradition an indigenous religious form, which came to be designated as Shinto, or "the way of kami," developed in the early historic period.* Many aspects of the archaic tradition have also been preserved as basic features of an unorganized folk religion. Meanwhile, through contacts with Korea and China, Japan came under the impact of religious and cultural influences from the continent of Asia. Invariably, Japanese religion was greatly enriched as it appropriated the *concepts, symbols, rituals, and art forms* of Confucianism, Taoism, the Yin-yang school, and Buddhism. *Although these religious and semireligious systems kept a measure of their own identity, they are by no means to be considered mutually exclusive; to all intents and purposes they became facets of the nebulous but enduring religious tradition that may be referred to as "Japanese religion."*⁵⁶

Below is the opening passage of "Korean Religion." We are able to see the difference between these two articles in their usage of the singular and plural forms of "religion(s)" and "religious tradition(s)."

(2) *Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, often said to be Korea's major religions, all came to Korea from or through China* Another faith, indigenous to Korea, has usually been considered superstition rather than religion because it lacks an explicitly formulated, elaborated, and rationalized body of doctrine. Yet this indigenous creed possesses a rich set of supernatural beliefs, a mythology, and a variety of ritual practices. In recent years, therefore, an increasing number of scholars have come to recognize *this folk system of beliefs and rites as another of Korea's major religious traditions*⁵⁷

Kitagawa, in his article, consistently uses the regional term "Japanese" with "religion" in the singular form to represent a particular religious tradition. He also identifies "indigenous religious form" (also in the singular) with "Japanese religion." Note that, although Yim's article uses the term "Korea" with "religion" in the singular form in its title, the authors of the article use the term "religions," or "religious traditions" in Korea in the plural form. Unlike Kitagawa, Yim does not insist on the existence of a "Korean religion" as a singular tradition.

Kitagawa acknowledges that like Korea various foreign religious "systems" have also existed in Japan. According to Kitagawa, these foreign religious "systems," however, once introduced into Japan miraculously became "facets" of "Japanese religion" nurtured by the soil of Japan. Kitagawa uses the term "Japanese" not merely as a regional qualifying term, but also a qualifying term of a religion which, according to Kitagawa, is uniquely and unanimously shared by the people living in the Japanese archipelago from time immemorial.

The drawback of the "singularity thesis" is not simply this potentially chauvinistic cultural exceptionalism. Rather, as Grapard points out, Kitagawa concentrates always on the aspect of permanence in "Japanese religion."⁵⁸ His method lacks the critical analysis of Japanese religious history, especially with respect to the mutual interactions between foreign and (what Kitagawa calls) indigenous Japanese traditions.

Kitagawa maintains that "Japanese religion" has developed from an "unnamed, unorganized, and unsystematized cluster of religio-magical views, beliefs, and practices of early Japan."⁵⁹ Kitagawa, however, overlooks the mutual interactions among separate traditions co-existing in the Japanese religious history. Grapard criticizes,

Thus, Japanese religion is presented in this book [*On Understanding Japanese Religion*] as an assortment of monolithic, separate traditions that rarely impinge on each other: Shinto, for example, is discussed as though it were an enduring phenomenon that underwent little or no significant historical change, and even as a

unique essence that kept reaffirming itself over and against all radical social and political changes.⁶⁰

In Kitagawa's vision, there is no room for a critical analysis of Japanese religious history which is filled with tensions and conflicts among different traditions.⁶¹

Neil McMullin also presented his review on *On Understanding Japanese Religion* in 1989. McMullin points out another shortcoming of Kitagawa's singularity thesis of "Japanese religion." Like Grapard, McMullin criticizes Kitagawa's vision for neglecting the tension-filled dynamics of Japanese religious history. McMullin adds that Kitagawa not only neglected the horizontal diversity of Japanese religious history, but also the vertical dimension of diversity, e.g. its political and economical class structure, urban-rural divisions, and so on. McMullin writes,

We might ask whether there is, or ever was, such a thing as Japanese religion (singular)? The religious discourse of any age (not to mention across the ages) was *not* a single, unified one at all; rather, it was a tension-filled, multi-valent field of *competing* discourses that were differentiated one from the other *not* simply along horizontal sectarian/denominational lines (i.e., Buddhism, Shinto, Confucianism, etc.), but also along the *vertical* axis of class divisions and urban-rural divisions.⁶²

Kitagawa, McMullin criticizes, systematically apoliticizes the horizontal and vertical dynamics of the religious experience of the Japanese.⁶³

Here and there Professor Kitagawa refers to the masses, but as a rule they are treated as passengers on the ship of state and are not considered to have been major players in the religious dramas. Moreover, there is little mention of the conflict between the religious institutions and the state, or among and within those institutions, over the centuries, and faint recognition of the fractured, tension-filled character of so many of those communities.⁶⁴

McMullin's critique presents, perhaps, a generic problem in Kitagawa's methodology for the history of religions. As I pointed out in section one, Kitagawa disavowed every conventional academic principle, which he often dubbed as "Western", including the critical methods of the social sciences. Although Kitagawa claims his methodology to be free of modern Western bias, it is not free of ideology.⁶⁵ Kitagawa's vision of "Japanese religion" tends to overlook, as McMullin mentions,

the vertical class structure of Japanese society. His vision tends to reflect a sense of history as it is visualized by the ruling powers. Kitagawa continually speaks about religious synthesis effected by the established power, but he avoids speaking about, for example, religiously inspired revolts against the central government's attempt to contain and control all religious movements.

Kitagawa does, however, sporadically mention new religious communities which arose during the Kamakura period. For him, the emergence of these new religious communities and the rise of a new feudal regime were coincidental.⁶⁶ Thus Kitagawa pays little notice to religiously-inspired civil disobedience, such as, the *ikkō ikki* and the *hokke ikki*. McMullin also criticizes Kitagawa for not taking into account why religious communities tried to dissociate themselves from the prevailing social system. In the next section, through Grapard's and McMullin's reviews, I will try to explain Kitagawa's reluctance to discuss the tension-filled dynamics of Japanese religious history.

B. CRITIQUES OF KITAGAWA'S LACK OF ANALYTICAL THEORY IN HIS VISION OF JAPANESE RELIGION

In their reviews of Kitagawa's *On Understanding of Japanese Religion*, both Grapard and McMullin contend that Kitagawa does not provide a rational theory to explain how such ideas as *ōbō-buppō*, *honji-suijaku*, and *shinbutsu-shūgō* arose. Further, this lack of analytical theory resulted in Kitagawa's imprecise definition of "Shinto" and the Shinto tradition. Both Grapard and McMullin find it difficult to accept Kitagawa's definition and usage of the term "Shinto," because Kitagawa often loosely identifies "Japanese religion" with "Shinto" without sufficient explanation. Kitagawa seems to take this identity as a matter of "fact," even though, historically and historiographically, it remains largely unconfirmed. Nor does he provide sufficient explanation for this identity other than by saying that he has "more questions than answers about the Shinto tradition as a part of Japanese religion."⁶⁷

In an article titled "Shinto," Kitagawa identifies "Shinto" to be a designation for an indigenous Japanese religion. He writes,

Shinto, which is usually translated as the "way of the kami (gods)" (kannagara), is the indigenous religion of Japan. The term Shinto was coined in the sixth century A.D. by using two Chinese characters—shin (in Chinese, shen: unfathomable spiritual power, superhuman or god-like nature or being) and dō or tō (in Chinese, tao: way, path or teaching)—in order to differentiate the loosely organized native religious tradition from Buddhism, which was then

being introduced to Japan. The beginnings of Shinto are clouded in the mists of the prehistory of Japan, and it eludes such simple characterizations as polytheism, emperor cult, fertility cult, or nature worship, although these features are embodied in it. Having no founder, no official sacred scriptures, and no fixed system of ethics or doctrines, Shinto has been influenced historically by Chinese civilization, especially Confucianism and Buddhism. Nevertheless, it has preserved its abiding, if nebulous, ethos throughout the ages. *Thus, in a real sense, Shinto may be regarded as the ensemble of contradictory and yet peculiarly Japanese types of religious beliefs, sentiments, and approaches, which have been shaped and conditioned by the historical experience of the Japanese people from the prehistoric period to the present.*⁶⁸

Kitagawa's vague definition of Shinto may be easily accepted by the general reader. From the standpoint of view of the methodology of religious studies, however, Kitagawa's imprecision is critical. Grapard notes that "Kitagawa uses the same term, 'Shinto' to refer to the non-Buddhist tradition throughout Japanese history."⁶⁹ McMullin also points out that Kitagawa uses the term "Shinto" and "Japanese religion" interchangeably.⁷⁰ Kitagawa's usage can be justified, if his definition were limited to "Modern Shintoism." This claim would be a legitimate "autobiographical" description, as well as a correct "biographical" description of modern Shinto practice, if Kitagawa's proposed categories for understanding a religious tradition were used. But instead Kitagawa uncritically adopts the modern Shintoists' characterization of their Shinto tradition.⁷¹

Although Kitagawa maintains that the early Japanese coined the expression "Shinto" to distinguish their native religion from Buddhism, his "what-seems-very-obvious" claim that Shinto developed from an indigenous religious form in the early historic period may need revision as a result of recent archaeological and historiographical research. For example, Fukunaga Mitsuji, a Japanese scholar in Chinese Studies, proposes an alternative interpretation of pre-historic *kami* worship and Shinto. He suggests that what we believe to be early Shinto is "not so much an indigenous religion but merely a local brand of Taoism, and the word Shinto simply meant Taoism."⁷² Kuroda Toshio, a Japanese historian, shares the same opinion. Kuroda argues that early "Shinto" is in fact a synonym for "Taoism."⁷³ Kuroda Toshio further critically examined the chronological changes in use of "Shinto" in the various historiographical records and concludes that the notion of Shinto as Japan's indigenous religion finally emerged complete both in name and in fact with the rise of modern nationalism.⁷⁴

Grapard and McMullin point out that Kitagawa's view of the Shinto tradition arises because his methodology lacks an analytical theory from which the historical development of a religious tradition can be understood. Kitagawa presents a vision of "Japanese religion" as a unified "religious/cultural/social/political synthesis." He does not, however, theorize how the synthesis was achieved. As a result, the tension-filled dynamics of Japanese religious history dropped out of his vision.⁷⁵ Grapard and McMullin wonder why Kitagawa avoids theorizing on the historiographical issues which arose in the institutional history of Shinto. Grapard writes,

The problem arises precisely because Shinto is treated as an abstract set of religious ideas and not as a local-specific, ritual, institutional, and political system endowed with elite and popular dimensions and historically interacting with non-native systems. In this book [*On Understanding Japanese Religion*], which spans over twenty-five years of writing, the author does mention those interactions, but he never says more than that there is a phenomenon called "*Shin-Butsu-shugo*"... and a phenomenon called *honji suijaku*—which he never cares to define in such a manner that the reader might know the relation between the two phenomena.⁷⁶

McMullin also writes,

Here and there Professor Kitagawa acknowledges the intimate relations between Buddhism and Shinto over the centuries, but as a rule he pays surprisingly little attention to the *honji-suijaku* mechanism, and does not take into account Kuroda Toshio's *kenmitsu taisei* theory⁷⁷ which helps us to overcome the inclination to treat the various religious traditions in pre-modern Japan as thoroughly separate and autonomous.⁷⁸

McMullin raises an interesting point when he mentions Kuroda Toshio and his *kenmitsu taisei* theory. Kuroda's *kenmitsu taisei* theory is one of the major modern interpretations of the institutional development of medieval Japanese Buddhism.⁷⁹ This theory is crucial for understanding the development of the idea of *obō-buppō* in medieval and pre-modern Japan.⁸⁰ The fact that Kitagawa never acknowledges Kuroda's theory is an indication, I believe, that he is not interested in establishing analytical theory for his understanding of "Japanese religion."

3. "A PAST OF THINGS PRESENT": SOME ACCOUNTS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE DURING THE SEVENTH CENTURY

Even though Kitagawa does not provide a viable analytical theory of the Ritsuryō synthesis, he does provide an important perspective on the development of the Ritsuryō system during the seventh and eighth centuries, particularly in his two articles "A Past of Things Present": Notes on Major Motifs of Early Japanese Religions,"⁸¹ and "Some Remarks on the Study of Sacred Texts."⁸² These articles are his contributions to the critical study of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* (or *Nihongi*) which were compiled during the seventh and eighth centuries.

In these articles, Kitagawa maintains that these chronicles were heavily "Sinicized" by the compilers who rewrote the past from the perspective of the present. Even though the chroniclers were under foreign influence, he emphasizes that their essential unified vision of Japanese religion had not been altered. Contrary to Kitagawa's claim, however, various accounts in the chronicles clearly reveal the existence of plural traditions.

A. "A PAST OF THINGS PRESENT": KITAGAWA'S VISION

Kitagawa does not link the compilations of these two official chronicles, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, directly with the Ritsuryō synthesis. He does, however, clearly believe that the ideology supporting the compilation of these chronicles had a significant role in creating the "immanent theocracy" of the Ritsuryō synthesis. Kitagawa writes,

{in these two articles}, I attempt to show that the so-called chronicles—the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*—were not unbiased ancient histories but *were written from the perspective of the Ritsuryō synthesis of the seventh and eighth centuries*. These chronicles contain mythologies of the old "imperial ideology," as N. Saigō has phrased it.⁸³

These chronicles claim to record the oral history of ancient Japan. The texts were, as Kitagawa mentions, written by people who had their own political agenda, as well as that of the Ritsuryō system in mind. Undoubtedly they were equipped with the Chinese, or Continental, mental prisms through which they viewed the Japanese world.⁸⁴

Kitagawa describes the existence of the political and intellectual background of the compilation of these national chronicles. Kitagawa writes,

the compilation of the *Kojiki* (The Records of Ancient Matters) and *Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan) was ordered in A.D. 673 by Emperor Temmu in part to justify his accession to the throne after he usurped it from another emperor. By the time these two documents were completed in the eighth century (the *Kojiki* in 712; the *Nihongi* in 720) Japanese intelligentsia were well acquainted with the literary, legal, and philosophical traditions of China.⁸⁵

As Kitagawa points out, the compilers of the chronicles were very knowledgeable about Chinese culture. One of the best known examples of their knowledge is found in the myth of the origin of the world. The outline of the story was obviously borrowed from the Chinese idea of *yin-yang wu-hsing*.⁸⁶ The intellectuals, who created the history of ancient Japan, were not critical historians. Nor were they neutral and objective. They intentionally created the new vision of ancient Japanese history in order to support the political discourse of the Ritsuryō politicians. Kitagawa writes,

It must also be mentioned in this connection that those who were engaged in writing and editing official chronicles in the seventh and eighth centuries were members of the cultural elite. Otherwise they would have lacked the time, opportunity, and motivation to study the native lore as well as to acquire the ability to read and write Chinese. Moreover, unlike the critical historian of our own time, the early Japanese chroniclers were court officials, and as such they shared the outlooks and politics of the government. Thus they viewed the past history of Japan—reversing the Augustinian formula⁸⁷—as “a past of things present.” As the preface of the *Kojiki* explicitly states, it was the task of the chroniclers to correct the mistakes and corruptions of available court documents and provincial records as seen from their “present” perspective. *Such a project had its own agenda, rectifying the “mistaken” facts and “corrupt” documents and rearranging if need be the sequence of events in order to recreate or create the past as an integral constituent element of the present.*⁸⁸

Kitagawa's analysis, however, stops here. He neither asks why the government needed to monopolize the past nor how it integrated the society by using this historical vision.

Kitagawa describes the recreation of history as if the production of official history were done only within a small circle of mostly “Sinicized” intellectuals. While Kitagawa emphasizes that Chinese civilization penetrated the intellectual discourse of the seventh and eighth

centuries, he discusses the foreign traditions only at the level of fragmented abstract ideas or concepts. When he talks about Japan, he suddenly reverts to a realm of simple, unitary, monistic, and mythical characteristics attributed to the early Japanese. Kitagawa writes,

With the penetration of Chinese civilization and Buddhism, the simplistic, unitary meaning structure of the early Japanese was greatly enriched. For example, Buddhism introduced the belief in the various realms of existence, whereas the Yin-Yang school offered cosmological theories based on the concepts of two principles (yin and yang), the five elements (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth), and the orderly rotation of these principles and elements in the formation of nature, seasons, and humankind. *Nevertheless, these and other theories and concepts from outside never completely obliterated the early Japanese unitary meaning structure.*⁸⁹

But who were the Japanese under the Ritsuryō synthesis? Kitagawa does not discuss the concrete examples recorded in the chronicles. Contrary to Kitagawa's assertion, the chronicles record that the early Japanese may not have lived in a simple, unitary, monistic, and mythical realm unique to the Japanese. In the next section, I will examine some accounts of the Japanese during the pre-Ritsuryō era which reveal the early Japanese were not so indigenous as Kitagawa believes.

B. SOME ACCOUNTS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE DURING THE SEVENTH CENTURY

We are not exactly sure of the identity of the early Japanese during the seventh century C.E. As far as the description in the *Nihonshoki* goes, the Japanese, whom the Ritsuryō ideologues wanted to unify, were not as uniquely indigenous as Kitagawa presumed. I cite two examples from the *Nihonshoki* which are accounts of the era of Empress Kōgyoku⁹⁰ (594-661).

The first account is a record of ritual prayers for rain during drought in 642 C.E.

[7th month, 25th day.] The Ministers conversed with one another, saying:—"In accordance with the teachings of the village *hafuri* [priest], there have been in some places *horses and cattle killed as a sacrifice to the Gods of the various (Shinto) shrines*, in others *frequent changes of the market-places, or prayers to the River-Gods*. None of these practices have had hitherto any good result." Then Soga no Oho-omi answered and said:—"The *Mahayāna Sutra* ought

to be read by way of extract in the temples, our sins repented of, as Buddha teaches, and thus with humility rain should be prayed for." 27th day. In the South Court of the Great Temple, the images of Buddha and of the Bosatsu, and the images of the four Heavenly Kings, were magnificently adorned. A multitude of priests, by humble request, read the "Mahāyāna Sutra." On this occasion *Soga no Oho-omi held a censer in his hands, and having burnt incense in it, put up a prayer.* 28th day. A slight rain fell. 29th day. The prayers for rain being unsuccessful, the reading of the "Sutra" was discontinued.

8th month, 1st day. The Emperor [sic] made a progress to the river-source of Minamibuchi. Here he [sic] knelt down and prayed, *worshipping toward the four quarters* and looking up to Heaven. Straightway there was thunder and a great rain, which eventually fell for five days, and plentifully bedewed the Empire...

Hereupon the peasantry throughout the Empire cried with one voice, "Bansai," and said, "An Emperor of Exceeding virtue!"⁹¹

In the first passage, we see three different types of religious practices according to the vertical social classes: 1) "animal sacrifices" of popular *kami* worship, 2) a "ritual of sutra chanting" of aristocratic Buddhism, and 3) an imperial ritual of "worshipping toward the four quarters." Popular *kami* worship and the imperial practice were both obviously of Chinese origin and most likely Taoist practices.⁹²

The second account is of the emergence and persecution of a popular religious movement in 644 C.E.

Autumn, 7th month. A man of the neighborhood of the River Fuji in the East Country named Ohofu Be no Oho urged his fellow-villagers to *worship an insect*, saying:—"This is the God of the Everlasting World. Those who worship this God will have long life and riches" At length the wizards and witches, pretending an inspiration of the Gods, said:—"Those who worship the God of the Everlasting World will, if poor, become rich, and, if old, will become young again." So they more and more persuaded the people to cast out the valuables of their houses, and to set out by the roadside sake, vegetables, and the six domestic animals. They also made them cry out:—"The new riches have come!" Both in the country and in the metropolis people took the insect of the Everlasting World and, placing it in a pure place, with song and dance invoked happiness. They threw away their treasures, but to no purpose whatever. The loss and waste was extreme. Hereupon *Kahakatsu, Kadono no Hada no Miyakko*, was wroth that the people should be so much deluded, and slew

Ohofu Be no Oho. The wizards and witches were intimidated, and ceased to persuade people to this worship. The men of that time made a song, saying:—Udzumasa has executed the God of the Everlasting World who we were told was the very God of Gods. The insect is usually bred on orange trees, and sometimes on the Hosoki. It is of a grass-green colour with black spots, and in appearance entirely resembles the silkworm.⁹³

In the second passage, we find, perhaps, the earliest account of the persecution of a popular religious practice, which was of Chinese origin, and which was most likely Taoist.⁹⁴

Japanese people during the seventh century had developed fairly systematized teachings and rituals, and were organized into communities. Besides the aristocratic Buddhist practices, the popular and imperial religious practices recorded in the *Nihonshoki* were not indigenous, but of Chinese origin, perhaps Taoist. Foreign traditions existed, not only abstract ideas or concepts among the "Sinicized" intellectuals. These foreign traditions were being practiced by many Japanese. According to accounts in the *Nihonshoki*, the religious lives of the Japanese did not seem, contrary to Kitagawa's vision, to be uniquely indigenous.

The historicity of these records is uncertain. The compiler's intention in these accounts was to authenticate imperial practices and to subordinate popular and aristocratic religious practices. The Ritsuryō politicians employed "Sinicized" intellectuals to rectify the "mistaken" and "corrupt" popular religious practices, and to rearrange them if necessary to create or recreate an unified "immanent theocracy." Kitagawa, however, here again avoided discussing the hidden agendas of the Ritsuryō politicians. Grapard and McMullin rightly point out that Kitagawa tends to "mystify" and "romanticize" the "immanent theocracy."⁹⁵ Kitagawa, during his entire academic career, never critically examined how the ideal of the "immanent theocracy" was created and applied to the Japanese people in the course of their history.

C. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ORIGINS OF THE IDEAS OF ŌBŌ-BUPPŌ, SHIN-BUTSU-SHŪGŌ, AND HONJI-SUIJAKU

Kitagawa's lack of concern with analytical theory is, I suspect, produced by his inattention to the historiographical perspective in his method of studying "Japanese religion," which makes his thesis of "Ritsuryō synthesis" more controversial. Kitagawa argues that the major elements of "Ritsuryō synthesis," during the seventh and eighth century, are the ideas of *ōbō-buppō*, *shin-butsu-shūgō*, and *honji-suijaku*. These ideas, however, did not exist historiographically during the sev-

enth and eighth century. The major principles of the Ritsuryō system conceived by Kitagawa include *ōbō-buppō*, *shin-butsu-shūgō*, and *honji-suijaku*. In an article published in 1991, Kitagawa reconfirms his thesis:

Elsewhere I have stated that the foundation of the Ritsuryō synthesis was based on three broad principles, namely, (1) *the mutual dependence between the sovereign's law (ōbō, in Japanese, which was in effect a homology of the earlier Japanese feature of tribal- or uji-chieftainship and the Chinese-Taoist cosmological notion of the monarch, operating in the Chinese-Confucian-inspired notion of sociopolitical order) and Buddha's Law (Buppō, in Japanese, which was also believed to authenticate the legitimacy of the sovereign's rule in Japan)*, (2) *the institutional syncretism between Shinto and Buddhist ecclesiastical systems (Shin-Butsu shūgō, in Japanese, which preceded the doctrinal formula of the amalgam of the two religions as a practical accommodation of Shinto edifices and practices on the Buddhist temple-owned lands and also de facto recognition of Buddhist establishments on Shinto shrine-owned areas)*, and (3) *the belief that the original nature of Japanese kami were Buddhas and bodhisattvas in India (honji sui-jaku, in Japanese, that gradually emerged as an eclectic folk belief, which was given more articulate Buddhist doctrinal interpretation after the tenth century, later precipitating the reverse honji sui-jaku theory that asserted Japanese kami as the original nature of Buddhas and bodhisattvas)*. Although *the external structure of the Ritsuryō synthesis was greatly altered* by the regency of the Fujiwara oligarchy, the rule by the nominally retired ex-monarchs, and the rule by the shogun (the military administrator), *the overall framework of the Ritsuryō system—notably its three underlying principles—survived until the sixteenth century.*⁹⁶

Kitagawa defends these three principles as supports for his understanding of the Ritsuryō synthesis by appealing to the famous "Vow (*ganmon*)" of Saichō (762-822), the founder of the Japanese Tendai school. Kitagawa writes,

Saichō, called posthumously Dengyō Daishi (A.D. 767-822), described himself in his famous vow as "the greatest among all fools, and the least worthy among men, having violated the teaching of the Buddha and the laws of the sovereign, and failed in filial piety and propriety...."⁹⁷ Thus he portrayed himself as both a firm believer in *Ōbō-Buppō* mutual dependence and a practitioner of the Shinto-

Buddhist-Confucian combination which was the main tenet of the Ritsuryō system.⁹⁸

Kitagawa's interpretation of Saichō's passage is, however, problematic and misleading, because the original passage neither mentions the mutual dependence of *ōbo-buppō* nor does it refer to Shinto. According to the original text of Saichō's Vow, "having violated the teaching of the Buddha *and* the laws of the sovereign, *and* failed in filial piety and propriety" should be read as "First, I have often violated the teaching of Buddhas. Second, I have often deviated from the sovereign's law. Third, I have often failed in filial piety and propriety."⁹⁹

We can see from this passage of the "Vow (*ganmon*)," that Saichō portrayed himself neither as "a firm believer in *Ōbo-Buppō* mutual dependence" nor as "a practitioner of the Shinto-Buddhist-Confucian combination" in contradiction to what Kitagawa would have us believe. Rather, Saichō is, in all possibility, reflecting on his conduct, first, with reference to the Buddha's law, which he believes to be universal, second, with reference to the state law, which is a secular law he is to obey, and third with reference to individual moral and ethical conduct, which he defines with Confucian expression. Saichō, in this passage, places Buppō before the state law. He makes mention of the Buddha's law and uses Confucian terminology. But he makes no reference to Shinto. Kitagawa arbitrarily replaces conjunctions and punctuation in Saichō's original words to create his own vision of Saichō's thought.

There are, in addition, some major flaws in Kitagawa's notion of the Ritsuryō synthesis. First the idea of mutual dependence between *ōbō* and *buppō* did not appear in historical documents until the early eleventh century, approximately four hundred years after the Ritsuryō system was formulated. Neil McMullin writes,

*From the eleventh century there appear in the documents declarations to the effect that although the ōbō and the buppō are two in terminology, they are one in reality. The ōbō, with its sanction of the kami, and the buppō, with its sanction of the Buddhas, formed the two chambers of the heart of a single living organism, the Japanese body politic.*¹⁰⁰

Under the Ritsuryō system institutional Buddhism was controlled by the *sōniryō*, laws for Buddhist institutions to regulate monks (*sō*) and nuns (*ni*). In the Ritsuryō government, the relationship between the Buddhist institutions and the government was not mutual, but one-sided. The secular government materially and financially supported the spiritual institution and in return the temples guaranteed its prosper-

ity and protection. This relationship is crystallized in the term *chingo-kokka* (protection of the of the state).¹⁰¹

The two possible interpretations of the relationship between the idea of the *chingo-kokka* and the *ōbō-buppō* are that (1) the latter is a direct expansion of the ideal of the Ritsuryō government as a result of the development of Buddhist institutions through the support of the Ritsuryō government, and (2) the latter is the declaration of institutional independence of Buddhism from the Ritsuryō government by which Buddhists claim that they are not the servants of the sovereign's law. In either case, mutuality of *ōbō-buppō* did not gain currency until the early eleventh century.

The second and third principles, *shin-butsu-shūgō*, and *honji-suijaku*, were also absent in the Ritsuryō system. In the Ritsuryō system, government regulations of the *kami* affairs and Buddhist affairs were clearly separated. Kuroda Toshio writes,

As the section following the *jingiryō* in the *ritsuryō*, the government drew up the *sōniryō*, laws for Buddhist institutions, to regulate priests and nuns. By compiling the *sōniryō* separately from the *jingiryō*, the government placed ceremonies for *kami* in a different dimension from religions such as Buddhism which exerted a special influence on society through its high doctrines.¹⁰²

The idea of *shin-butsu-shūgō* first became popular during the late eighth century. The idea of *honji-suijaku* was introduced to support institutional amalgamation, or more likely the annexation of shrines of the local *kami* by Buddhist institutions during the mid-ninth century. Kuroda Toshio summarizes the process of the development of the ideas of the *shin-butsu-shūgō* and *honji-suijaku*,

As is already well known, between the late eighth century and the eleventh century Shinto and Buddhism gradually coalesced with one another (*shinbutsu shūgō*)—or, more precisely, veneration of the *kami* was absorbed into Buddhism through a variety of doctrinal innovations and new religious forms. Among the doctrinal explanations of the *kami* were the following: 1) the *kami* realize that they themselves are trapped in this world of samsara and transmigration and they also seek liberation through the Buddhist teachings; 2) the *kami* are benevolent deities who protect Buddhism; 3) the *kami* are transformations of the Buddhas manifested in Japan to save all sentient beings (*honji suijaku*); and 4) the *kami* are the pure spirits of the Buddhas (*hongaku*)... The first stage in this process of Shinto-Buddhist syncretization covered the late eighth

*century and early ninth century. During that period the first two doctrinal explanations of kami, mentioned above, became current*¹⁰³

Historical evidence indicates that the idea of *shinbutsu-shūgō* first appeared during the late eighth century, and that the ideas of *ōbō-buppō* and *honji-suijyaku* did not exist during the seventh and eighth centuries. Consequently these three principles could not have provided the essential framework for the Ritsuryō system. On the contrary, these principles emerged during the late Nara (the late eighth century) and Heian periods, a time when the Ritsuryō system was eroding. In fact, among these principles the idea of *ōbō-buppō* was often used by influential Buddhist monasteries to protect and expand the privileges of tax-exempt temple estates outside the Ritsuryō system.¹⁰⁴

D. TRANSFORMATION OF THE IDEA OF *ŌBŌ-BUPPŌ* AND THE TOKUNAGA SYNTHESIS

Kitagawa's lack of analytical and historiographical concerns naturally produces another confusing vision of "Japanese religion" when he applies his thesis of "Ritsuryō synthesis" to interpret the historical transformation of "Japanese religion." For example, when he discusses the rhetoric of mutual dependence of *ōbō-buppō*, Kitagawa does not examine the social-political context in which the idea of *ōbō-buppō* was used or the historical transformation of the socio-political meanings behind the idea. In his explanation of "Tokugawa synthesis," Kitagawa maintains that the Tokugawa government dropped the principle of *ōbō-buppō* (the principle of mutual dependence of the sovereign's law and the teaching of the Buddha). Kitagawa asserts that after the decline of the Ashikaga shogunate,

It took three strongmen, Oda Nobunaga (d. 1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (d. 1598), and Tokugawa Iyeyasu [sic] (d. 1616), to unify Japan. The first two, Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, gave lip service to the sovereign's law (*ō-bō*), but *rejected the first cardinal principle of the Ritsuryō synthesis: that the sovereign's law needed the cooperation of the Buddha's law (buppō) for the sake of the nation*. Both men thus campaigned against powerful Buddhist institutions, such as Mount Hiei and Mount Kōya, and the main temple of the True Pure Land school (*Jōdo Shinshū*) at Ishiyama (present Osaka). Thus ended the coherence of the once influential Ritsuryō system form of religious-cultural-social-political synthesis, which had dominated the Japanese religious-cultural universe from the seventh century.¹⁰⁵

Kitagawa's argument that the Tokugawa government *dropped* the principle of *ōbō-buppō* is misleading for two reasons. First, the shōgunate had essentially nothing to do with the idea of the mutual dependence of the sovereign's law and the Buddha's law, which applied specifically to the emperor (*ō*), and which had been concocted by Buddhist institutions during the Heian period. Second, the rhetoric of mutual dependence was a claim always made by Buddhist institutions, not by the court or the shōgunate. Accordingly, the shōgunate was in no position to abandon a claim which it had never made.

Furthermore, historically, the Tokugawa shogunate neither dropped nor rejected the idea of the *ōbō-buppō*. What changed was the relationship between the *ōbō* and the *buppō*. First of all, the principle of *ōbō-buppō* had not always implied mutual dependence. Neil McMullin describes the historical transformation of the rhetoric of *ōbō-buppō*.

In the mid-Heian period, for example, as the monastery-shrine complexes became richer and stronger, the definition of the nature of the relationship between the *ōbō* and the *buppō* changed from one that described the *buppō* as the servant of the *ōbō* to one that identified the two as equals. From the late Heian through the medieval periods, the relation between the *ōbō* and the *buppō* was likened to the relation between the two wings of a bird, the two horns of a cow, and the two wheels of a cart: the *ōbō* and the *buppō* were, so to speak, the two oars that propelled the Japanese ship of state.¹⁰⁶

Thus, the idea that the principle of *ōbō-buppō* was based on mutuality changed in accordance with the relationship between Buddhist institutions and secular authority. As McMullin noted, the idea of mutual dependence appeared during the late Heian period, not during the formative period of the Ritsuryō system as Kitagawa assumes.

Further, the idea of the mutual dependence between *ōbō-buppō* was always a view advocated by Buddhist institutions. Moreover, secular authority did not fully accept the rhetoric propagated by the Buddhist monasteries. McMullin writes,

[There is a] question of just how pervasive and persuasive the "*ōbō-buppō* mutual dependence rhetoric" might have been in the late medieval period. He [Martin Collcutt] suggests that it was a one-sided rhetoric on the part of the monasteries, and that there is no reason to think that the sixteenth century *daimyō* ever accepted that rhetoric "or anything like parity between Buddhist claims and secular claims."¹⁰⁷

McMullin and other scholars reject Kitagawa's contention that *obō-buppō* had been the "first cardinal principle." Furthermore, Kitagawa's belief that the relationship between *obō* and *buppō* was a mutual one was rejected by Oda Nobunaga, who campaigned most fiercely against the major Buddhist institutions. Nobunaga used the idea of the *obō-buppō* to justify his attacks on the True Pure Land School. His aim was to subjugate the True Pure Land and other Buddhist institutions to his secular power. For Nobunaga *obō-buppō* meant ruler and ruled.

Nobunaga arranged the final surrender of Kenryo, the head of Honganji, through imperial emissaries, giving Honganji's defeat the appearance of submission to imperial will and not to his own forces. Far from being an enemy of the law, of faith, of the public order, Nobunaga instead posed as its defender. *Obō ihon*, the official *Ikko* doctrine that upheld respect for the secular order (*obō*) as fundamental, was subsumed under the new equation that identified *obō* with *tenka*, with Nobunaga.¹⁰⁶

With Oda Nobunaga, *buppō* became once more a servant of *obō*. This time, however, *obō* was controlled by the military government, not by the imperial court. Toyotomi Hideyoshi continued Nobunaga's policy. He, however, helped to restore those Buddhist institutions which surrendered to his authority. Tokugawa Ieyasu also followed Hideyoshi's policy. In retrospect, Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa neither dropped nor rejected the idea of the *obō-buppō*. They subjugated and utilized both the secular and religious authorities, the *obō* and the *buppō* on behalf of their military power.

CONCLUSION

Joseph Kitagawa, throughout his academic career, opposed classifying the study of the history of religions as one of the divisions of modern Western modes of analysis. Kitagawa called for the integration and balance of "biographical (outsider's)" and "autobiographical (insider's)" perspectives so as to understand this holistic synthesis of human experience, called "religion." Religion is a synthesis of religious/cultural/social/political human experience. His academic pursuit of "Japanese religion" employs this dual perspective.

Kitagawa's synthetic vision of the development of "Japanese religion" in *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, however, has been severely criticized. Critics challenge Kitagawa's thesis that "Japanese religion" is a singular tradition. This singularity thesis sacrifices the religious/cultural/social/political diversity in the history of Japanese religious traditions for the sake of creating a seamless vision of "Japa-

nese religion." Kitagawa's critics also cite Kitagawa's vision of "Japanese religion" for its inadequate theoretical support. Kitagawa does not cogently address how his vision is historically related to the people living in the society.

Kitagawa pursues only a religious/cultural/social/political synthesis. Thus, he constantly avoids discussing religious/cultural/social/political conflicts. Kitagawa's critics point out that Kitagawa tends to mystify and romanticize "immanent theocracy." During his entire academic career, Kitagawa never critically theorizes how his religious/cultural/social/political synthesis applied to and transformed the history of the Japanese people.

Kitagawa does, however, provide an important perspective in understanding the development of the Ritsuryō system during the seventh and eighth centuries, which is crucial to his vision of "Japanese religion." Particularly, Kitagawa did make a significant contribution to the critical study of the chronicles the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* (or *Nihongi*). But one problem in Kitagawa's studies of these ancient chronicles is his one-sided emphasis of the singular and unified vision of "Japanese religion." Contrary to Kitagawa's claim, however, various accounts in the chronicles reveal the existence of plural traditions.

While Kitagawa presented his version of a unified "Japanese religion," he did not specify where his vision came from. Kitagawa's approach to "Japanese religion" is, unfortunately, historically and historiographically not conversant with current academic work in the field. The most serious problem in Kitagawa's works on "Japanese religion," I believe, is that Kitagawa's approach to Japanese religious history is methodologically uncritical.

Kitagawa is a sharp critic of modern Western critical theory. His methodology itself is a critique of conventional methodology. The question remains for others to speculate upon why Kitagawa avoided articulating a theoretical basis for his thesis.

I would like to close this paper with Terry Eagleton's remark on "theory," which characterizes the difference of viewpoint between Kitagawa and his critics.

Children make the best theorists, since they have not yet been educated into accepting our routine social practices as 'natural,' and so insist on posing to those practices the most embarrassingly general and fundamental questions, regarding them with a wondering estrangement which we adults have long forgotten. Since they do not yet grasp our social practices as inevitable, they do not see why we might not do things entirely differently. 'Where does

capitalism come from, mummy?" is thus the prototypical theoretical question, one which usually receives what one might term a Wittgensteinian reply: 'This is just the way we do things, dear.' It is those children who remain discontent with this shabby parental response who tend to grow up to be emancipatory theorists, unable to conquer their amazement at what everyone else seems to take for granted.¹⁰⁹

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NOTES

¹ Neil McMullin, a Canadian historian of Japanese religions, praises, "It was largely through the efforts of Professor Kitagawa that the

Japanese religious traditions came to be studied in the West, and he is one of the intellectual parents of virtually all of us in the field of Japanese Religious Studies." Neil McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, A Critique of Joseph Kitagawa's Opus in the Field of Japanese Religious Studies," Berkeley: Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990. Photocopied. Paper distributed by the author at the Numata Lecture [1990, Fall] at the Institute of Buddhist Studies. This paper was originally presented to the Society for the Study of Japanese Religion and reprinted in the *Supplement to the May 1989 Issue of the Japanese Religions Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Japanese Religion* (June 1989).

According to the bibliographical notes in one of Kitagawa's publications, he studied at Rikkyō University in Tokyo, Japan. Kitagawa came to the United States in 1941, and briefly enrolled at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific before the outbreak of World War II. He spent three and a half years during the War at camps for persons of Japanese ancestry in New Mexico and Idaho. He was ordained an Episcopal minister, during his internment, in 1942. Kitagawa became an American citizen in 1955. He also studied at Seabury Western Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago. He taught the history of religions from 1951-85 at the University of Chicago where he served as Dean of the Divinity School, 1970-80. Kitagawa was President (1969-72) of the American Society for the Study of Religion, a past chairman of ACLS's Committee on the History of Religions, and former vice-president of Conseil International Philosophie Sciences Humaines. Joseph Kitagawa passed away on October 7, 1992. His major publications include *Religion in Japanese History*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), *The History of Religions: Understanding Human Experience* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1987), *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), and *The Quest for Human Unity: A Religious History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). See Joseph Mitsuo Kitagawa, ed., *Religious Studies, Theological Studies and the University-Divinity School*, (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1992), 198, and an obituary in *History of Religion*, 32 (1993).

- ² Kitagawa maintains that "Japanese religion" should not be interpreted to be "an umbrella term overarching a group of disparate and coexisting religious and semireligious systems." Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," *History of Religions* 31 (1991): 187.
- ³ For example, Kitagawa says that "Japanese religion was greatly enriched as it appropriated the concepts, symbols, rituals, and art forms of Confucianism, Taoism, the Yin-yang school, and Buddhism. Al-

though these religious and semireligious systems kept a measure of their own identity, they are by no means to be considered mutually exclusive; to all intents and purposes they became facets of the nebulous but enduring religious tradition that may be referred to as 'Japanese religion.'" Kitagawa, "Japanese Religion," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 7 (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 520.

- ⁴ In a paper originally published in 1981, Kitagawa states that "In retrospect it becomes evident that the Ritsuryō ideologies of monarchy and government, which were developed from the intricate fusion of indigenous and Chinese features during the seventh and eighth centuries, characterized by sacred kingship and an immanentist theocratic government, remained a classical paradigm throughout pre-modern Japanese history." Kitagawa, "Monarchy and Government: Traditions and Ideologies in Pre-Modern Japan," in *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 96.

⁵ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xii-xiii.

⁶ Kitagawa, "Monarchy and Government," 96.

⁷ English translation is available by Donald L. Philippi, *Kojiki*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁸ English translation is available by W. G. Aston, *Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles Tuttle Company, 1896, reprint 1972).

⁹ Kitagawa reflects that "After studying the history of religions for some time, I came to be struck by the simple and obvious fact that underneath the Westerner's way of dividing human experience into a series of semi-autonomous pigeonholes—religion, philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, and so forth." Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," *Criterion* 28 (Spring 1989): 8.

¹⁰ Kitagawa says, "Working in the history of religions, I worry about the elusive meaning, status, and identity of the notion of 'religion.' I am inclined to agree with Mircea Eliade's sentiment that 'it is unfortunate that we do not have at our disposal a more precise word than 'religion'. . . ' (Eliade, *The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion* [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969], preface). Unfortunately, we have not discovered a better notion to replace this ambiguous and difficult term, although I am currently exploring the feasibility and adequacy of focusing on the 'religious/cultural/social/political synthesis' rather than simply on what Western convention designates as 'religion,' a move which you might have noticed in my 'Introduction' to *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (see my effort to articulate the Ritsuryō, Tokugawa, and Meiji forms of religious/cultural/social/political synthesis)." Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 8.

- ¹¹ Of the ten titles, two are from the Chinese tradition—A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (1989), and Anne D. Birdwhistell, *Transition to Neo-Confucianism* (1989)—and eight are from the Japanese tradition; Bunsaku Kurata and Yoshiro Tamura, eds., *Art of Lotus Sutra* (1987), George J. Tanabe Jr. and Willa Jane Tanabe, eds., *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture* (1989), Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota, *Shinran* (1989), James C. Dobbins, *Jōdo Shinshū* (1989), Carl Bielefeldt, *Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation* (1988), Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism* (1989), Helen Hardacre, *Shinto and the State 1868-1988* (1989), and Willis Stoesz, *Kurozumi Shinto* (1989).
- ¹² This article is the most concise and comprehensive summary of Kitagawa's approach to the study of history of religions. In the opening passages of the article, Kitagawa briefly comments that the article is also his response to reactions to his *On Understanding Japanese Religion*.
- ¹³ Kitagawa quotes the analogy attributed to Sir Hamilton Gibb to explain the difference between "biographical" and "autobiographical" perspectives. Sir Gibb writes, "Islam is the religion of Muslims [biographical], but to Muslims Islam is the religion of truth [autobiographical]." See Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 6.
- ¹⁴ Kitagawa says, "Although I have felt my share of personal tension, I have been motivated to study, and to hold in balance, three related and equally demanding orientations to the study of religion(s): 1) general inquiries into diverse religions; 2) more specialized studies of specific religions; and 3) explorations into the general nature of 'religion.'" See Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 5.
- ¹⁵ Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 6.
- ¹⁶ Kitagawa describes the existing Western bias in the study of non-Western religion. "Throughout my career, I have met a number of otherwise sophisticated and fair-minded Western historians of religions and Orientalists who think that the only thing non-Westerners should do is present histories as "raw materials," as it were, for Western scholars to analyze and interpret with West-centric critical methods. (I have become increasingly uncomfortable, too, with a similar orientation still held in some quarters of Western Japanological studies. On this score, I sometimes wonder whether our current Japanese linguistic-thought systems...can really deal adequately with the pre-modern Japanese religious and cultural materials.)" Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 9.

- ¹⁷ Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 6.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 6.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., 6.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 7.
- ²¹ Ibid., 7. Emphasis added.
- ²² Ibid., 7.
- ²³ This interpretation was probably first presented in his article, "Japanese Religion," 520–538. (This article is also available in *The Religious Traditions of Asia* [New York: Macmillan, 1987]: 305–332). The interpretation was a product of Kitagawa's continuous studies on the subject which were published under the title *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, in 1987. His interpretation of a unified vision of "Japanese religion" is concisely summarized in the preface of the book (ix–xxii). As he mentions in the preface, this is a substantially updated version of his earlier concept of Japanese religious history presented in the *Religion in Japanese History* published in 1966.
- ²⁴ Kitagawa mentions that he has "studied Japanese religion and Buddhism for what the richness of these traditions might contribute to my understanding of the history of religions." (ix) He also defines Japanese religion to be "non-revelatory," and seems to differentiate the use of the term "religion" and "religious systems." He calls Confucianism, Taoism, Yin-yang school, and Buddhism specific "religious systems" when he refer to their influence on Japanese "religion." Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xi.
- ²⁵ Kitagawa says, "Like many other ethnic groups throughout the world, the earliest inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago had from time immemorial their own unique way of viewing the world and the meaning of human existence and their own characteristic rituals for celebrating various events and phases of their individual and corporate life. To them the whole of life was permeated by religious symbols and authenticated by myths." Kitagawa, "Japanese Religion," 520.
- ²⁶ Kitagawa says, "According to this paradigm, the total cosmos—including physical elements such as fire, water, wood, and stone, as well as animal and celestial bodies—is permeated by sacred, or *kami*, nature." Kitagawa, "Paradigm Change in Japanese Buddhism," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 260.
- ²⁷ Kitagawa, "Japanese Religion," 520.
- ²⁸ Kitagawa, "Paradigm Change in Japanese Buddhism," 260.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xii.
- ³¹ Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 9.

- ³² See Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xii.
- ³³ Kitagawa says, "While no one is absolutely certain, most scholars recognize the appearance of a certain kind of pottery with characteristic rope-like markings somewhere around the fourth millennium B.C. as the first sign of the earliest phase of the prehistory of Japan, known as the Jōmon (literally, 'code pattern,' which indicates the pottery decoration) period. The Jōmon period, which had a sub-Neolithic level of culture, was followed around 250 B.C. by the Yayoi (so named because of pottery of this period unearthed in the Yayoi district of Tokyo) period, which had lasted until about A.D. 250. During this period, hunting and fishing continued, but people also acquired the arts of rice cultivation, spinning, and weaving, as well as the use of iron, and established communities in the lowlands. It is widely held that the culture of this period was a blending of northeast Asian, Korean, Chinese, and other cultural influences with the residual features of the earlier Jōmon tradition. The Yayoi period was succeeded by what archaeologists call the Kofun ("Tumulus") period, which covered the period of A.D. 250–600 or the earliest phase of Japanese history." Kitagawa, "Shinto," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 140.
- ³⁴ Kitagawa, "Japanese Religion," 522. See also, Kitagawa, "Shinto," 140.
- ³⁵ Kitagawa, "Prehistoric Background of Japanese Religion," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 39–40. Emphasis added.
- ³⁶ The origin of the Ritsuryō system in Japan is an outcome of the Taika reform (645–646), a political power struggle over imperial succession. The newly enthroned emperor Kōtoku (596–654), supported by prince Nakano Ōe (626–671) and Nakatomi no Kamatari (614–669), issued an edict "to consolidate the power of the centralized government by such Chinese-style measures as land redistribution, collection of revenues, and a census. During the second half of the seventeenth century the government, utilizing the talents of those who had studied in China, supported the compilation of a written law. Significantly, those penal codes (*ritsu*; Chinese, *li*) and civil statutes (*ryō*; Chinese, *ling*), which were modeled after Chinese legal systems, were issued in the name of the emperor as the will of *kami*. The government structure thus developed during the late seventh century is referred to as the Ritsuryō ('imperial rescript') state." Kitagawa, "Japanese Religion," 525. The first imperial rescript, *Taihō-ritsuryō* (the Taihō Penal and Civil Codes), was promulgated in 702. The rescript was soon replaced by *Yōrō-ritsuryō* (the Yōrō Penal and Civil Codes) enacted in 757.
- ³⁷ Kitagawa says, "In retrospect it becomes evident that the Ritsuryō ideologies of monarchy and government, which were developed from the intricate fusion of indigenous and Chinese features during the seventh and eighth centuries, characterized by sacred kingship and

an immanent theocratic government, remained a classical paradigm throughout pre-modern Japanese history." Kitagawa, "Monarchy and Government," 96. See also 87–89.

³⁸ Kitagawa, "Monarchy and Government," 88.

³⁹ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xii–xiii. See also "Monarchy and Government," 83–97, and "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 194–195. Kitagawa's claim that these principles are the foundation of the Ritsuryō synthesis of the seventh and eighth centuries is, however, highly controversial. I will discuss this problem later in the third section of this paper.

⁴⁰ Kitagawa says, "Ironically, while the Ritsuryō system came to be regarded as a classical paradigm in Japan, it never functioned as well as the architects of the system intended. Rather, the reality of Japanese life throughout the pre-modern period compelled the nature of both the monarchy and the government to be modified, without, however, rejecting altogether the Ritsuryō ideal as such." Kitagawa, "Monarchy and Government," 90.

⁴¹ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xiv. See also Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 201–202.

⁴² Kitagawa's argument that the Tokugawa government "dropped" the principle of *obō-buppō* is misleading because the shōgunate had essentially nothing to do with the idea of mutual dependence of the sovereign's law and the Buddha's law, as it was in fact concocted by Buddhist institutions during the Heian period. I will discuss this problem later in the third section of this paper.

⁴³ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xiv.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., xiv–xv.

⁴⁶ Ibid., xv, and Kitagawa, *The Quest for Human Unity*, 146. Kitagawa's argument, here, is confusing. If the theory of "*honji-suijaku*" is taken literally, that is, if the Japanese deities are manifestations of the original nature of the Buddha, this principle was, logically speaking, also officially abolished along with the separation of Shinto from Buddhism. Kitagawa, however, changed the meaning of "*honji-suijaku*" to mean the equation of *kami* and Buddha without any explanation.

⁴⁷ Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 187.

⁴⁸ Kitagawa further says, in this article published in 1991, "Unfortunately, in dealing with East Asian religious traditions, I am far less informed about the state of scholarship on Chinese religious traditions than on its Japanese counterpart. In addition, *I have not come across many recent works (with some notable exceptions) that deal with significant differences or the interrelationships between Chinese*

and Japanese traditions." Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 187. Emphasis added. This comment is very surprising. Fukunaga Mitsuji and Yoshino Hiroko's works which discuss the close affinity of the Japanese *kami* worship and Taoism were published in the past two decades. Also Kuroda Toshio's article on Shinto, which I mentioned earlier, was published in 1981 in English. These works substantially changed the direction in the study of Japanese religious culture, which used to be dominated by the cultural exceptionalist thesis. According to recent archaeological and historiographical studies, "the perspective [which] suggests that 'Japanese religion' is not a coherent reality" is not only a historical perspective but also has already become a part of historical reality of the Japanese religious culture. See Kuroda Toshio, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," translated by James C. Dobbins and Suzanne Gay, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 7 (1981): 9–13. See also Fukunaga Mitsuji, ed. *Dōkyō to higashi ajia: Chūgoku, Chōsen, Nihon*, (Kyoto: Jinbun shoin, 1989), and Yoshino Hiroko. *In'yō gogyō to nihon no minzoku* (Kyoto: Jinbun Shoin, 1983).

⁴⁹ Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 9.

⁵⁰ Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 187–188.

⁵¹ Kitagawa, "A Historian of Religions Reflects upon His Perspectives," 8.

⁵² Kitagawa's preliminary sketch of a global vision of "religion" is found in his article originally published in 1973, "Religion as a Principle of Integration and Cooperation for a Global Community," reprinted in Kitagawa, *The History of Religions, Understanding Human Experience*, 165–173.

⁵³ Allan G. Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 73. It is important to note, however, that throughout Kitagawa's work, the use of the term "Japanese religion" is inconsistent. He seems to have two contradictory understandings of "Japanese religion." On the one hand, he defines it as "the unnamed, unorganized, and unsystematized cluster of religio-magical views, beliefs, and practices of early Japan." Kitagawa, *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 259. This definition seems to refer to early Shinto. Furthermore he states that he has "studied Japanese religion and Buddhism," (ix) and that "Buddhist studies is obviously a legitimate area quite apart from Japanese religion as such" (ibid.), again implying that "Japanese religion" is to be equated with Shinto as opposed to Buddhism.

On the other hand, as Grapard notes, in Kitagawa's book overall "Japanese religion" is presented as "an assortment of monolithic, sepa-

rate traditions that rarely impinge on each other and that must be studied independently from each other." Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 75. Kitagawa himself says that "the way to study Japanese religion is to study these traditions [Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto, etc.] separately." Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, x. Kitagawa thus also uses the term "Japanese religion" as a blanket term indicating all religious traditions that exist in Japan.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 74.

⁵⁵ Grapard writes, "In other words, on the basis of the title alone, one is led to wonder whether Japan is to religion what Bach is to music (this might be an interesting question, but it is not asked) or whether Japan offers merely a variation on a theme and therefore does not deserve to be treated from the point of view of cultural exceptionalism. Furthermore, one might say that the use of the singular leaves little room for dissenting or competing views within Japanese society, either in the past or today, and makes little allowance for argument within academic circles, be they Japanese or not. One might posit the thesis that the way in which all competing views interact with each other, either in the past or today, is what forms religion in the Japanese context, but that is not advanced either. And, although Kitagawa makes passing references to 'paradigmatic change' in Japanese history, it is not the modalities of that change that are studied in any detail: the emphasis in these articles is on permanence, and that is paradigmatic of Kitagawa's approach to, and conceptualization of, his field of inquiry." Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 74. Emphasis added.

⁵⁶ Kitagawa, "Japanese Religion," 520. Emphasis added.

⁵⁷ Yim Suk-jay, Roger L. Janelli, and Dawnhee Yim Janelli, "Korean Religion," *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8, 367-368. Emphasis added.

⁵⁸ Grapard says that "the emphasis in these articles is on permanence, and that is paradigmatic of Kitagawa's approach to, and conceptualization of, his field of inquiry." Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 74.

⁵⁹ Kitagawa defines "Japanese religion" thus: "By the phrase 'Japanese Religion' I refer to the unnamed, unorganized, and unsystematized cluster of religio-magical views, beliefs, and practices of early Japan." Kitagawa, "Paradigm Change in Japanese Buddhism," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 259.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 75.

⁶¹ In a recent article, Kitagawa explains this process by the formula of "inclusion by reconnection" which is suggested by William Ernest

Hocking. See Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 194. See also William Ernest Hocking, *Living Religions and a World Faith* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), 190–208.

Kitagawa's view of "Japanese religion" is always on the side of the "permanent" which has maintained that religion's unchanging character and which has continuously transformed foreign traditions. The following comment clearly represent Kitagawa's analytical paradigm; "I believe that it was this strong impact of Esoteric insights that later enabled the *Japanese Buddhist tradition to be integrated so smoothly into the mainstream of Japanese religion*" Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xx. Emphasis added.

Kitagawa, however, has also studied Buddhism as a separate tradition which is "obviously a legitimate area quite apart from Japanese religion as such." Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, ix. The result is his very confusing view of Japanese Buddhism; "Contrary to those who uphold the 'plural belonging theory'—that the Japanese belong simultaneously to Shinto, Buddhist, Confucian, folk religious, and other traditions—I believe that *Japanese Buddhists are self-consciously heirs of both historic Buddhism and Japanese religion*" Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xx. Emphasis added.

⁶² McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*," 21.

⁶³ See McMullin, "The *Encyclopedia of Religion*: A Critique from the Perspective of the History of the Japanese Religious Traditions," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 1/1 (1989): 80–96.

⁶⁴ McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*," 21.

⁶⁵ McMullin points out Kitagawa's rhetoric often shows close affinity with the mental prism of pre-war Japanese. McMullin writes that, "Also, the nativeness of Shinto is stressed persistently by Professor Kitagawa, as is the foreignness of Buddhism. This is, I suggest, Meijispeak. If Buddhism is not part of Japanese Religion, then what is it? Is Japanese Buddhism not as native to the Japanese world as European Christianity is to the European?" McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*," 24. McMullin also writes in his review of Kitagawa's article in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, "At one point it explains the new Meiji government's legislated separation of divinities and buddhas toward the end of the nineteenth century thus: 'the government's feeling [note the choice of terms] was that the Shinto-Buddhist amalgam of the preceding ten centuries was contrary to indigenous religious tradition' (Vol. 7, 533). This is obscurantist in the extreme: it is like saying that the Christian Church

condemned Galileo for supporting Copernican heliocentrism because of its 'feeling' that that view was contrary to indigenous European religious tradition. Posh! The dangerous implication of the decentralization of the Church's place in human society, etc. The Meiji politicians, whom the ER portrays as, at heart, history-of-religion purists who wanted to correct a ten-centuries-long theological fallacy, were cold-eyed ideologues who redefined the religious discourse in order to have it support the newly developing state ideology. The entry cited immediately above acknowledges that the Meiji thinkers were trying to create an overarching new religion called State Shinto, but the crass, oppressive, and duplicitous character of that enterprise is completely muted in that entry. Why is a profoundly important political-ideological development portrayed in such anaemic terms?" McMullin, *"The Encyclopedia of Religion,"* 85–86.

⁶⁶ Neil McMullin writes, "Consider, for example, the following quotation: 'The establishment of the feudal regime (*Bakufu*) in Kamakura in the thirteenth century coincided with these new Buddhist movements [Pure Land, Nichiren, Zen, etc.] (p.225, emphasis added).' What does 'coincided with' mean? Surely it was more than a 'co-incidence' that the new religious movements appeared at precisely the same time that the classical Japanese world was being transformed into feudal one. Professor Kitagawa asserts, in quoting one of his earlier works, that he studies Japanese religion's 'involvement in the social and political life of the nation' (p. xii), but as a rule, in his works, religion maintains a considerable distance from the rest of society: he sees proximity where there is intertwining, and intertwining where in fact there is little or no distinction at all to be made." McMullin, *"On Understanding On Understanding Japanese Religion,"* 25.

⁶⁷ Kitagawa asks himself that "Is the imperial system *esse*, *bene esse*, or accidental to Shinto? What other institutions or qualities are necessary for Shinto? Unfortunately, I have more questions than answers about the Shinto tradition as a part of Japanese religion." Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xviii–xix.

⁶⁸ Kitagawa, "Shinto," 139. Emphasis added.

⁶⁹ Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 75.

⁷⁰ McMullin writes, "I find some confusion in Professor Kitagawa's definitions of Shinto and Japanese Religion in that he appears to use those terms interchangeably. For example, at one point he defines Japanese Religion as 'the unnamed, unorganized, and unsystematized cluster of religio-magical views, beliefs, and practices of early Japan' (p.259), but elsewhere he offers an almost identical definition of Shinto. Namely, 'Sometime during the sixth century the term "Shinto" was

coined, to refer to the hitherto unnamed and unsystematized native magico-religious tradition' (p.260)." McMullin, "On Understanding On Understanding Japanese Religion," 24.

- ⁷¹ Kitagawa especially does not inquire into the institutional development of Shinto tradition during the medieval period. As specialists in medieval Japanese religious history, Grapard and McMullin point out that Kitagawa presents a confused definition of Shinto, because he tends to describe the historical development of Shinto tradition as a history of the liberation of a mystical indigenous tradition from foreign Buddhist control. For some aspects of Medieval Shintoism, See McMullin, "On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace: the Case of the Gion Goryō Cult," *History of Religions* 27/3 (1988): 270–293, and Grapard, "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology: the Twenty-Two Shrine-Temple Multiplexes of Heian Japan," *History of Religions* 27/3 (1988): 246–269.

- ⁷² Kuroda, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," 6.

- ⁷³ Kuroda writes, "Another possible interpretation of Shinto in the *Nihon shoki* is Taoism. Based on recent studies, it is clear that Shinto was another term for Taoism in China during the same period. Moreover, as Taoist concepts and practices steadily passed into Japan between the first century A.D. and the period when the *Nihon shoki* was compiled, they no doubt exerted a considerable influence on the ceremonies and the beliefs of communal groups bound by blood ties or geographical proximity and on those which emerged around imperial authority. Among the many elements of Taoist origin transmitted to Japan are the following: veneration of swords and mirrors as religious symbols; titles such as *mahito* or *shinjin* (Taoist meaning—perfected man, Japanese meaning—the highest of eight court ranks in ancient times which the emperor bestowed on his descendants), *hijiri* or *sen* (Taoist—immortal, Japanese—saint, emperor, or recluse) and *tennō* (Taoist—lord of the universe, Japanese—emperor); the cults of Polaris and the Big Dipper; terms associated with Ise Shrine such as *jingu* (Taoist—a hall enshrining a deity, Japanese—Ise Shrine), *naiku* (Chinese—inner palace, Japanese—inner shrine at Ise), *geku* (Chinese—detached palace, Japanese—outer shrine at Ise), and *taiichi* (Taoist—the undifferentiated origin of all things, Japanese—no longer in general use, except at Ise Shrine where it has been used since ancient times on flags signifying Amaterasu Ōmikami); the concept of *daiwa* (meaning a state of ideal peace, but in Japan used to refer to Yamato, the center of the country); and the Taoist concept of immortality. Early Japanese perhaps regarded their ceremonies and beliefs as Taoist, even though they may have differed from those in China. Hence, it is possible to view these teachings, rituals, and even the

concepts of imperial authority and of nation as remnants of an attempt to establish a Taoist tradition in Japan. If that is so, *Japan's ancient popular beliefs were not so much an indigenous religion but merely a local brand of Taoism, and the word Shinto simply meant Taoism.* The accepted theory today is that a systematic form of Taoism did not enter Japan in ancient times, but it is not unreasonable to think that over a long period of time Taoism gradually pervaded Japan's religious milieu until medieval times when Buddhism dominated it completely . . . Moreover, *when Buddhism was introduced into Japan there was a controversy over whether or not to accept it, but there is no indication that these popular beliefs were extolled as an indigenous tradition. Hence, Shinto need not imply a formal religion per se, and it need not indicate something which is uniquely Japanese.*" Kuroda, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," 6–7. Emphasis added.

⁷⁴ Kuroda writes, "The notion of Shinto as Japan's indigenous religion finally emerged complete both in name and in fact with the rise of modern nationalism, which evolved from the National Learning school of Motoori Norinaga and the Restoration Shinto movement of the Edo period down to the establishment of State Shinto in the Meiji period. The Meiji separation of Shinto and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri*) and its concomitant suppression of Buddhism (*haibutsu kishaku*) were coercive and destructive 'correctives' pressed forward by the hand of government. With them Shinto achieved for the first time the status of an independent religion, distorted though it was. *During this period the 'historical consciousness' of an indigenous religion called Shinto, existing in Japan since ancient times, clearly took shape for the first time.* This had remained the basis for defining the word Shinto down to the present. Scholars have yielded to this use of the word, and the population at large has been educated in this vein.

"There is one further thing which should be pointed out. That is that separating Shinto from Buddhism cut Shinto off from the highest level of religious philosophy achieved by the Japanese up to that time and *inevitably, moreover artificially, gave it the features of a primitive religion.* Hence, while acquiring independence, Shinto declined to the state of religion that disavowed being a religion." Kuroda, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," 19. Emphasis added.

⁷⁵ McMullin writes, "He [Kitagawa] states that religion 'is *closely related to other aspects of human life*' (p. xi, emphasis added), and he recognizes a 'proximity' (p. xi) of the various components of premodern Japanese societies, but he does not explain *how* religion and those other aspects of life were related." McMullin, "On Understanding On Understanding Japanese Religion," 24–25. And Grapard writes,

"Whether one looks at an article written in 1960 or at another written in 1980, Kitagawa never raises any historiographical issue, and this static framework leaves no room for 'intraparadigm' historical treatments of any of the movements, no room for an analysis of the crises and conflicts that must have animated their founder, no room for the study of the protests that must have taken place, either symbolically or not, through Japanese history. In other words, we are never told what the conditions of production, maintenance, or rejection, of religious discourse were. The net result of that approach is that, since historical dialectics never seem to impinge on its formulation, Japanese religion is treated as though it formed a single entity that consists of neatly separated categories: the elite (Buddhist) tradition, the Shinto tradition, and folk religion. While this may appear to be a convenient and, to some students of Japanese cultural history, a proper way to establish fields of academic inquiry, it might also be seen as the result of unexamined conceptions of history on the one hand, and of religions on the other." Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 76–77. As Grapard notes, there are also significant problems in Kitagawa's historiographical approach. The most serious problem is his indifference to it.

⁷⁶ Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 75. Emphasis added.

⁷⁷ Kuroda concisely summarizes his *kenmitsu taisei* thesis as follows; "Nominally, medieval Buddhism comprised eight sects, but it was not unusual for individuals to study the teachings and rituals of all the sects. The reason is that the eight held a single doctrinal system in common, that of *mikkyō* or esoteric Buddhism (Skt. Vajrayāna). The medieval period had *mikkyō* as their base, combined with the exoteric teachings or *kengyō* (Buddhist and other teachings outside of *mikkyō*) of each of the eight schools—Tendai, Kegon, Yuishiki (Hossō), Ritsu, etc. These eight sects, sometimes called *kenmitsu* or exoteric-esoteric Buddhism, acknowledged their interdependence with state authority, and together they dominated the religious system of medieval Japan. Shinto was drawn into this Buddhist system as one segment of it, and its religious content was replaced with Buddhist doctrine, particularly *mikkyō* and Tendai philosophy. The term *kenmitsu* used here refers to this kind of system. At the end of the twelfth century, various reform movements arose in opposition to this system, and there even appeared heretical sects which stressed exclusive religious practices—the chanting of the *nembutsu*, *zen* meditation, etc. Nonetheless, the *kenmitsu* system maintained its status as the orthodox religion until the beginning of the sixteenth century." Kuroda, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," 11–12.

The *kenmitsu* system which includes virtually everything religious in Japan was, however, not merely religious but also depended on powerful temple-shrine-estate complexes. These religious-secular powers claimed the *ōbō-buppō* mutual dependence to protect their tax-exempted estates. The authority of *kamis* associated with the *kenmitsu* system, such as Kasuga Shrine or Hie Shrine, often used by the Buddhist institutions to claim their power to override the *ōbō*, or the secular authority.

⁷⁵ McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*," 24.

⁷⁹ See McMullin, *Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 8–9. See also McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*," 24–25.

⁸⁰ Kitagawa must know about Kuroda and his theory because he cites Kuroda at least twice in his works. See 'footnote 38' in Joseph Kitagawa, *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 58, and "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 195. In the latter article, he even recommends Kuroda's article on *honji-suijaku* theory that "I am of the opinion that if readers have only limited to read about the Lotus tradition, they should read (at least) the last chapter [sic] of this volume [George J. Tanabe Jr. and Willa Jane Tanabe, eds., *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture*], entitled "Historical Consciousness and Hon-jaku Philosophy in the Medieval Period on Moun Hiei," by a leading historian, Kuroda Toshio." Ironically, however, if readers read the article, they will find Kuroda's statement that *honji-suijaku* theory "appeared in texts from the latter half of the ninth century and became the basis for the combinations and associations of Shinto and Buddhist divinities [page 144]." This obviously contradicts Kitagawa's assertion in his article (page 194) that *honji-suijaku* theory as one of the fundamental principles of the Ritsuryō synthesis which, he believe, appeared during the seventh century). See section four "Historiographical Critiques of Kitagawa's Vision of Japanese Religion" in this paper.

⁸¹ Originally published in 1980. Kitagawa, *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 43–58.

⁸² Originally published in 1979. Kitagawa, *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 59–68.

⁸³ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xvi. Emphasis added.

⁸⁴ Kitagawa writes, "Undoubtedly the eighth-century chroniclers in Japan were greatly indebted to Chinese Historical writings. Indeed, it was the influence of Chinese thought that initially aroused the historical consciousness of the Japanese, whereby the Japanese began to review their racial memories of the past by using Chinese chronicles

as their guide. Thus the meaning (or overarching idea) as well as the significance (the relationship between the meaning of the text and something outside the text) of *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* will not become intelligible unless we compare them with Chinese historical writings and delineate the differences between the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* on the one hand and Japanese and Chinese historiography of the other." Kitagawa, "Some Remarks on the Study of Sacred Texts," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 64.

⁸⁵ Kitagawa, "Some Remarks on the Study of Sacred Texts," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 63.

⁸⁶ In *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, the editor notes that "Elements of Chinese cosmology were most apparent in rationalistic passages explaining the origin of the world in terms of the yin and yang principles, which seem to come directly from Chinese works such as *Huainan tsu*. The prevalence of paired male and female deities, such as Izanagi and Izanami, may also be a result of conscious selection with yin and yang principles in mind. Also the frequency of Seven Generations of Heavenly Deities of the *Nihongi*, may represent an attempt at selection and organization in terms of Chinese cosmological series in this case the Five Elements and Seven Heavenly Luminaries." Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, vol. 1, (New York: Columbia University, 1958): 24-25. The Chinese influences in the opening passages of the *Nihonshoki*, especially, have been criticized since the eighteenth century by the Shintoists, like Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), and Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843). See the *Nihon shoki*, Book 1, Part 1 and Aston, *Nihongi*, 1-2.

Fukunaga Mitsuji also identifies a possible source of the *Kojiki's* opening passages in a text called *Chiu-t'ien-shêng-shên-ching* in *Tao-tsang*. The text, which was compiled during the sixth century, explains the births of the gods in the same pattern; three gods (three primordials; *san-yüan*) > five gods (five elements; *wu-hsing*) > seven gods (*yin-yang* and *wu-hsing*, or seven heavenly bodies), and the expression that these gods are invisible. See Fukunaga Mitsuji, *Dōkyō to nihon shisō*, (Tokyo: Tokuma shoten, 1985), 216-236, and *Chiu-t'ien-shêng-shên-ching* in *Tao-tsang*, vol. 3, 266. See also Philippi's *Kojiki*, Preface, Chapter One, and Chapter 2.

⁸⁷ St. Augustine says, "What now is clear and plain is, that neither things to come nor past are. Nor is it properly said, 'there be three times, past, present, and to come:' yet perchance it might be properly said, 'there be three times; a present of things past, a present of things present, and a present of things future.'" *Confession*, Book 11 [XX], 26.

⁸⁸ Kitagawa, " 'A Past of Things Present': Notes on Major Motifs of Early Japanese Religions," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 54. Emphasis added.

⁸⁹ Kitagawa, "A Past of Things Present," 45. Emphasis added.

⁹⁰ Empress Kōgyoku reigned (642–644) before the Taika-reform (645–646). The result of the Taika-reform provided the basis for introducing the Ritsuryō system.

⁹¹ Aston, *Nihongi*, vol. 2, 174–175. Emphasis added.

⁹² Sacrificing horses and cattle, changing the market-places, and offering prayers to the River-Gods are popularly practiced in China for rain during the drought season. See commentary in Sakamoto Tarō, Iendaga Saburo, Inoue Mitsusada, and Ōno Susumu, eds. *Nihon shoki*, *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 68. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1967), 240–241. Fukunaga Mitsuji identifies Empress Kōgyoku's worshipping toward the four quarters to be a Taoist practice of worshipping Peitou (the Big Dipper). Fukunaga, *Dōkyō to kodai nihon* (Kyoto: Jinbun shoin, 1978), 249–250, and Fukunaga, *Nihon no dōkyō iseki* (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1987), 186–188.

⁹³ Aston, *Nihongi*, vol. 2. 188–189. Emphasis added.

⁹⁴ Fukunaga, *Dōkyō to kodai no tennōsei* (Tokyo: Tokuma shoten, 1982), 67–69.

⁹⁵ McMullin writes, "I suggest that Professor Kitagawa tends to 'spiritualize' or, in stronger terms, 'other-worldly'ize' religious traditions, and to 'doctrinalize' them and to emphasize their enchanted dimension.[20]" He also writes, "There is also quite a bit of romanticization of the Japanese tradition in general in the works of Professor Kitagawa. For example, he states that 'It is virtually impossible to explain the history of the Fujiwara family . . . to non-Japanese' (p.xviii), and that 'only those who live within Japanese culture and society can fully understand the mystique of Japan, although not every Japanese attains such a lofty goal' (p.294)! . . . I consider modern Texas to be far more incomprehensible than Heian Japan.[26]" McMullin, "On Understanding *On Understanding Japanese Religion*," 20 and 26.

Grapard writes, "Kitagawa states that in ancient times Japan was 'a world in which all facets of daily living were considered religious acts,' that there was 'no line of demarcation between sacred and profane dimensions of life' or between ritual and government, and that 'this principle lasted until 1945' (p.71). This kind of generalization contributes to the mystique that some Japanese have fostered about themselves in a nativistic, nationalistic context. It is to be associated with the claim that the authors of Japanese mythology 'historicize the Yamato myths concerning the legendary first emperor Jimmu' (p.89) which might be countered with the opposite, namely, that they (who-

ever they were) mythologized remembrances of Jimmu. The author treats the question of the religious aspects of oligarchy and kingship as if there was a set of institutions that sustained the ideas in question or that there were antithetic forces. For him, there is no conflict whatever in Japanese history." Grapard, "Enduring Problems in the Study of Japanese Religions," 77.

⁹⁶ Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 194-195. Emphasis added.

⁹⁷ An abridged translation of Saichō's vow by Kitagawa is in Wing-tsit Chan, I.R. al-Fārūqī, J.M. Kitagawa, and P.T. Raju, comps., *The Great Asian Religions: An Anthology* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 266-267.

⁹⁸ Kitagawa, "Preface," *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, xii.

⁹⁹ 上達於諸仏。中背於皇法。下闕於孝礼。 See Andō Toshio and Sonoda Kōyū, eds, *Saichō, Nihon shisō taikēi*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1974), 395.

¹⁰⁰ McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues in the Study of Pre-Modern Japanese Religions," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 16/1 (1989): 14. Emphasis added.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

¹⁰² Kuroda, "Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion," 8. Emphasis added. *Jingiryō* is a set of laws which instituted ceremonies to the *kami*.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 9. Emphasis added. Kuroda also writes that the *honji-suijaku* theory "appeared in texts from the latter half of the ninth century and became the basis for the combinations and associations of Shinto and Buddhist divinities." Kuroda, "Historical Consciousness and Honjaku Philosophy in the Medieval Period on Mount Hiei," George J. Tanabe Jr. and Willa Jane Tanabe, eds., *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture*, [Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989]: 144. Ironically, Kitagawa in his article, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe" (page 195), recommends Kuroda's article on *honji-suijaku* theory, writing "I am of the opinion that if readers have only limited time to read about the Lotus tradition, they should read (at least) the last chapter [sic] of this volume . . . by a leading historian, Kuroda Toshio." If readers peruse the article, however, they will find out that, contrary to Kitagawa's assertion, *honji-suijaku* theory cannot be the fundamental principle of the Ritsuryō synthesis which, Kitagawa believes, appeared during the seventh century.

¹⁰⁴ See McMullin, *Buddhism and the State*, 15-58.

¹⁰⁵ Kitagawa, "Dimensions of the East Asian Religious Universe," 201. Emphasis added.

¹⁰⁶ McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues in the Study of Pre-Modern Japanese Religions," 14-15.

- ¹⁰⁷ McMullin, "Historical and Historiographical Issues in the Study of Pre-Modern Japanese Religions," 15. See also Martin Collcutt's review of "Buddhism and the State in Sixteenth-Century Japan by Neil McMullin," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 12/2 (1986): 406.
- ¹⁰⁸ Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570-1680* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 34. Nobunaga identified himself as *tenka* which literally means "the realm." See Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology*, 33.
- ¹⁰⁹ Terry Eagleton, *The Significance of Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 34.

Imperial Ritual in the Heisei Era: A Report on Research¹

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It was perhaps inevitable that the death of the emperor Hirohito on January 7, 1989, would be the occasion for a new and vigorous round of debates over the Japanese emperor system—its history, its practices, and its symbolic significance in contemporary Japan. What has been striking about discussions on every side, however, has been the lack of sustained critical attention to the ritual dynamics of the emperor system, despite the fact that it has long been recognized that it is in the ritual arena that the modern emperor system exposes itself most completely. Just as conventional wisdom mistakenly maintains that all vestiges of Buddhism were removed from the imperial system during the Meiji era, so also the impression remains that the postwar “symbolic emperor” system has effectively removed religious sentiment from at least the public sphere of imperial activity.² The strength of these impressions was one reason that both the funeral of the old emperor and the Grand Festival of First Fruits (*Daijōsai*) of the new one raised such conflicted public reactions in 1989 and again in 1990.³

In order to understand these reactions we must attend more carefully to the ritual articulation of the emperor system. The accession ceremonies comprise the most spectacular and awesome examples of imperial ritual, providing a well-documented and persistent illustration of the ways in which ritual inscribes social, political, and religious meanings and, as importantly, of how these meanings change over time. I have found that a detailed examination of the ensemble of performances associated with the imperial accession process reveals a dynamic, contentious system of practice whose effects on contemporary Japanese life Norma Field characterized so poignantly in her book *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor*.⁴ There, Field opined that too much attention has been focused on passionate demonstrations of support for

(or opposition to) the emperor system, while the vast majority of ordinary Japanese are disturbingly disinterested or indifferent altogether. Public opinion polls confirm the prevalence of the attitudes Field found so troubling, but they also reveal that the very people who consider the emperor "irrelevant" also find it utterly unimaginable to live in a Japan *without* an emperor. What are the roots of this paradox, and what does it imply? The arguably benign "givenness" of the emperor system, I contend, is more the result of a very sophisticated process of ritual inscription than a matter of historical inertia or social amnesia. In this essay, I would like to introduce some examples of the ritual dynamics of the emperor system and indicate some ways that ritual analysis might illuminate certain strategies of its inscription.

Western scholars have directed little sustained critical attention to the role of imperial ritual in Japan. Even in the limited context of imperial accession ceremonies, there have been few studies by Western scholars. The two monographs in English are still valuable, of course, but they are limited in both historical range and topical focus, and obviously do not take into account important Japanese scholarship during the past twenty years.⁵ Indeed, events since the death of the emperor Hirohito in January, 1989, have produced a host of new primary and secondary materials and once again raised issues that are as important for the study of religion and culture in general as they are for understanding the emperor system today. Still, scholarly research on the imperial ritual system appearing in English since Hirohito's death has generally followed a predictable pattern of analysis. This general pattern can be broken down into two related trajectories. The first is characterized by a continuing interest in the "timeless" mysteries connected with so-called secret rites (*higi*) during the Grand Festival of First Fruits (*Daijōsai*). Typically, the historical analysis in these studies is limited; the intention is to recover some "original" meaning of the Grand Festival and its various components.⁶ This perspective is noteworthy for its attention to ritual evidence, however narrowly or speculatively conceived, but it lacks a critical sense of wider socio-historical as well as ritual contexts. The second trajectory is more directly concerned with the modern accession process, and is especially attentive to recent historical changes in particular rites and procedures. Unfortunately, studies of this kind tend to be either very narrowly conceived or journalistic.⁷ We are alerted to the importance of specific historical contexts, but left with no clear sense of either how particular rites fit into the larger ritual process or what significance any changes in their production might have for our understanding of the imperial system as a whole.

These two trajectories of scholarship form the background for my own investigation of the modern Japanese imperial system.⁸ In the larger

historical frame of my study of imperial ritual, I attend to comparative issues of continuity and change, but here I would like to illustrate something far simpler. While historians rightly argue that we must acknowledge an external (social, economic, political) context for our ritual studies, I intend in this essay to be much less ambitious. I want to demonstrate that "context" can be structural as well as historical, and to that end will identify a series of "matched performances" that constitute internal ritual contexts that might serve as frames for more rigorous historical studies. It should go without saying that the ritual ensembles that I will introduce are meant to be illustrative, so the description and analysis of each will be correspondingly limited. After a brief outline of three types of matched performances that occur early in the process, I will suggest ways such ensembles could fruitfully be elaborated as part of a larger and more complicated analysis of imperial accession.

TYPE 1. SYNCHRONOUS PERFORMANCES

Minimally, the ritualized emperor system can be said to have two aspects, one representing the constitutional monarchy of postwar Japan—the civil dimension of the imperial presence—and the other representing the domestic institution of the imperial household—the cultural dimension of the imperial presence. The ground distinguishing these two dimensions is unstable, however, and it is one of the functions of the ritual process to negotiate the contending claims of those who would define the system in favor of one or the other.⁹ This ritualized negotiation began simultaneously at three separate sites on the morning of January 7, 1989. The first site, the Hall of State (*Seiden matsu no ma*) inside the official palace building (*kyūden*), is indisputably public and associated with the civil function of the emperor system, while the second, the imperial sanctuary compound (*Kyāchū sanden*), is indisputably religious and officially identified with the domestic cultural heritage of the imperial household. Ritual performances at these two sites were foregrounded during the opening movements of the process, while funereal activities at the third, the residential palace (*Fukuage gosho*) of the deceased emperor, were conducted as extremely private affairs with virtually no media attention or official representation at the proceedings.¹⁰

The ritual process began with the death of emperor Hirohito (and the automatic constitutional succession of Crown Prince Akihito) at 6:33 on the morning of January 7, 1989. The death was publicly announced at 7:55 am, and at 8:22 a brief emergency meeting of the Prime Minister's cabinet was convened to discuss official arrangements for the immediate transition. It was decided that the Transfer of Regalia and the post-

accession Imperial Audience (see below, "Type 3") would be performed as state ceremonies as opposed to private imperial family rites. This decision was certified by the new emperor, who signed and sealed the measures at 9:35 in his first official act in the capacity of emperor.¹¹

At 10:01 that same morning, the imperial regalia were formally transferred to the new emperor Akihito in a brief state rite called the *kenjitō shōkei no gi*.¹² This first formal ceremony of the accession took place in the Pine Room of the Great Hall of State inside the imperial palace, and was attended by the male members of the imperial family (those in the line of succession) as well as by high officials of the national government. The treasures, emblems of the office of emperor, include 1) a sacred sword; 2) sacred jewels; and 3) the Seals of the Emperor and of the State.¹³

Prior to the ceremony proper, the officials who were to witness the transfer took their places in three rows directly in front of the central ritual space where the emperor would shortly stand for the presentation. The central ritual space in front of them was marked by a plain white rectangular carpet. Behind the carpet stood a huge purple screen, the lower third delicately illuminated with Georgia Pine branches in muted gold. Toward the back of the carpet stood an elegant high-backed cherrywood throne chair (*gyokuza*) with brass fittings and upholstered arms, seat, and back. Along the front of the carpet stood three small rectangular tables of white wood, the one in the center noticeably shorter than the other two (for reasons that will become apparent shortly).

At the appropriate moment, the new emperor and six imperial princes, led by the Grand Master of Ceremonies (*Shikibu kanchō*) and the Grand Steward of the Imperial Household Agency (*Kunaichō chōkan*), entered in a rather loose single-file procession from stage right to take their places. The emperor assumed a formal stance in front of the throne chair, facing the tables and the 26 official witnesses, while the other imperial heirs lined up parallel to the emperor on either side of the carpet. The heir apparent, the new Crown Prince Naruhito, stood closest to the emperor on the right side, while the emperor's second son took up his position to the emperor's left.

Everyone, including the emperor, was dressed in black morning coat and striped grey trousers, and each wore a black mourning band on his left arm. They stood at attention as a second procession entered from stage left, this one escorting the imperial treasures. Three court chamberlains (*jijū*), carrying ceremonial packages wrapped in imperial silk, proceeded to the center of the hall. Holding the treasures high in their outstretched hands, they bowed toward the emperor, then stepped forward to arrange the containers on the tables in front of him. The sword was set on the table to the emperor's left, the jewels to his right.

Only when the sacred regalia had been properly positioned (facing away from the emperor) were the Seals laid on the shorter table in the center.¹⁴ The emperor did not take actual physical possession of the objects—he did not approach the tables, nor did the attendants step onto the carpet. Rather, the rite involved only the *presentation* of the treasures by members of the imperial household staff and their subsequent momentary *display*. The emperor stood motionless and silent during their presentation, then offered a slight formal bow when everything was finally in its proper place. Thereupon, the sword and jewels were solemnly retrieved by the chamberlains and the ceremony seemed to draw to a close, with the emperor taking his position between the sacred sword and the sacred jewels in the exiting procession. The princes followed in single file in order of rank, departing the Pine Room to stage right. Finally, only after the imperial participants had disappeared from view, the third chamberlain approached the ritual tables, picked up the tray holding the Imperial Seal and the State Seal, and was escorted out of the room to stage left. The entire ceremony lasted but four minutes.

A number of things about the ceremony are noteworthy here. First, the entire performance was unabashedly “symbolic.” That is, it was both unproductive in the literal sense—legally, the transfer of the imperial status had been accomplished by Hirohito’s final earthly act, his death—and yet inferential in every detail. From the timing to the ritual space itself to the passivity of the principal participants, the impression was created that this was a momentous and *inevitable* event of state. Indeed, it was the studied inevitability of the brief performance, during which the treasures themselves seemed to dictate the action, that lent such moment to the event. This was neither a family affair (else why the absence of women?) nor a diplomatic display (else why the absence of foreigners?), but rather a domestic political affirmation of the legitimacy of the imperial claim to “symbolic” authority. Second, the emblems (*shirushi*) of authority included both religious and civil items, the former deeply imbued with mythical powers, the latter (the seals) having practical as well as symbolic value. The ritualized interaction between these objects—their entrance together, their placement during the ceremony, and the separation of the religious from the civil icons at the conclusion of the rite—was an official acknowledgment of the intimate relationship between the civil and cultural (religious) dimensions of the emperor system. Though in the end the tension between the two was resolved ritually through physical separation, this detail went unnoticed in both live television commentary and subsequent reports in the print media. We can see how productions such as this allow one to see what one wants to see, permitting the official sponsors to claim only to be preserving tradition.¹⁵

Meanwhile, at the very moment the presentation of imperial treasures was taking place in the Hall of State, another set of rites was beginning at the Palace Sanctuaries (*kyūchū sanden*) a few hundred meters to the west of the official palace building. The sanctuaries, established during the early Meiji period, are comprised of three main shrine buildings lined up on an east-west axis.¹⁶ At the center (and slightly higher) stands the *Kashikodokoro*, dedicated to the imperial ancestral goddess Amaterasu and enshrining the third article of the sacred regalia, a sacred mirror, which duplicates the primary icon of Amaterasu in the principal sanctuary of the Inner Shrine at Ise. To the west of the *Kashikodokoro* stands the Shrine of the Imperial Ancestors (*Kōreiden*), and to the east is the Shrine of the national Gods of Heaven and Earth (*Shinden*). At each shrine, special rites were carried out on the morning of January 7, 1989, to announce to the gods and ancestors on behalf of the new emperor the fact of accession, and to pray for a successful transition from one reign to the next.¹⁷

The most obvious feature of these rites was their physical separation from the official palace. This separation instantiated the ritualized distinction between imperial family rites on the one hand and state ceremonies on the other, and reasserted the strategy introduced (albeit in muted form) simultaneously at the conclusion of the Transfer of Regalia ceremony. We should not ignore a second physical feature, however, and that is that the Palace Sanctuaries are, after all, *palace* sanctuaries. They stand inside the imperial palace grounds, and until the end of World War II served as the ritual center of State Shinto. Their maintenance is paid for with public funds from a special budget devoted to official court functions.¹⁸

In any case, two things are noteworthy about the synchrony of these two events. First, both sets of ceremonies were sponsored by the state, and neither was privileged in terms of temporal priority. Yet it is clear from the media attention afforded it that the transfer of imperial treasures was being ritually privileged during the Heisei accession process. Indeed, the sanctuary rites can be seen to have reinforced the religio-cultural dimension of imperial tradition that was openly (if ambiguously) embodied in the transfer ceremony. In short, both sets of performances underlined the state's continuing regard for modern imperial tradition, but while the transfer ceremony incorporated the same mythic elements that the sanctuary rites invoked, it framed them in terms of civil as opposed to religious principles. In conscious contrast, the sanctuary rites were explicitly religious and resolutely "private"—even the "symbolic" emperor was not in attendance.¹⁹

TYPE 2. CONNECTING PERFORMANCES

Ceremonies at the palace sanctuary during the opening days of the new era also illustrate a way that connections between two or more elements of the ritual process can be asserted. While funerary rites continued to be carried out in private at the residential palace of the deceased emperor, daily offerings were likewise being presented at the Kashikodokoro shrine by ritualists of the Imperial Household Agency staff. On the first day, these offerings were accompanied by the oral presentation of an imperial report (*otsugebumi*) announcing the accession, but on the second and third day no special reports were made. What is significant for our discussion is that the official post-accession audience (*Sokui-go chōken no gi*) scheduled for the morning of January 9, 1989, could not take place before the Kashikodokoro rites had been completed. In other words, according to ritual protocol the ceremonial public announcement by the emperor of his accession had to be delayed until the sequence of religious ceremonies begun at the palace sanctuary on the morning of January 7 had been accomplished. Although the connections between the sanctuary rites and the civil ceremonies were never made explicit in official accounts of the accession schedule, and despite the fact that the Kashikodokoro rites were themselves associated in the media only with the private ancestral cult of the imperial family, there can be no doubt that the link between the civil and religious-cultural dimensions of the emperor system itself was being ritually reinforced at the same time that the more controversial link between the ancestral cult and the deceased emperor Hirohito was (at least publicly) being ignored.²⁰

TYPE 3. CORRESPONDING PERFORMANCES

At 11:00 on Monday morning, January 9, 1989, following the completion of the three-day liturgy at the Kashikodokoro shrine, the new emperor appeared again in the Hall of State, this time in the company of both male and female members of the imperial family. In front of some 300 Japanese dignitaries—"representatives of the people"—he formally proclaimed his accession in a ceremony known as the *Sokuigo chōken no gi*. This of course replicated for a civil audience the earlier announcement at the palace sanctuaries, but here the Emperor himself made the proclamation in a live television broadcast. And here, instead of the sacred bells (*osuzu*) of the Kashikodokoro that signalled the presence of the imperial progenitor Amaterasu, the formal response came from the Prime Minister (see below). It was this ceremony that would be repeated—with great fanfare and majesty—almost two years later in front of the whole world.

The ceremony took place in the same hall of state as did the earlier transfer ceremony, and again attire was diplomatic and formal rather than archaic.²¹ Once the public representatives had taken their places, the imperial entrance began from stage left. The procession was again led by the Grand Master of Court Ceremonies and the head of the Imperial Household Agency, who took their places on either side of the Grand Chamberlain to stage right, facing east toward the open space separating the imperial stage from the assembled guests. The empress stood to the left of the emperor on the ritual stage; to her left, off the carpet, stood six female members of the imperial family, and to the right of the emperor stood the crown prince and five other male imperial heirs. Facing them, the Prime Minister stood at the center of the first row of officials, again flanked by the heads of the upper and lower houses of the Diet and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Behind them stood other officials and representatives of the nation, including provincial governors and local political leaders.

When all had taken their places, the ceremony proper began with a corporate bow. The Grand Chamberlain approached center stage, faced the emperor, and bowed again. He then formally presented a document to the emperor, bowed once again, and returned to his place at stage right. The emperor unfolded and proceeded to read the proclamation (*okotoba*):

The late emperor's demise has truly brought us to the extreme of grief but, in accordance with stipulations of the Constitution of Japan and of the Imperial Household Law, I have now ascended the throne.

Even in the depth of my sorrow I think of the great responsibilities he bore, and remember the natural gentleness of his heart. In retrospect, the late emperor during his sixty-some-odd years on the throne fervently prayed for peace in the world and for the welfare of our people. In a tumultuous world, he continually strove in concert with the whole nation to overcome innumerable tribulations, so that today we have come to realize a stable and prosperous national life and have assumed a distinguished place in international society as a peaceful nation-state.

Having ascended the throne under these circumstances, I cannot but reflect on the profound debt owed to the late emperor and, mindful of his heart's desire to be always in concert with the people of this nation, I vow to uphold the Constitution of Japan and to discharge the duties thus incumbent on me in concert with all of you. To promote the continuing development of our nation's good fortune, of world peace, and of the welfare of humanity is my most earnest desire.²²

When he had finished, the emperor refolded the document and bowed, then stood to wait as the Grand Chamberlain returned to center stage, bowed, and received the manuscript back again. After another bow, the Grand Chamberlain returned to his original station.

The Prime Minister then took one step forward, bowed, and proceeded to read the formal reply (*hōtō*):

Allow me to express my deep condolences.

Despite the fervent hopes of the nation, the late emperor has passed away—how ever can our grief be allayed?

In the midst of this grief, we have been graced with the words of our illustrious new emperor, who has just ascended to the throne. He has expressed his eagerness to abide by the Constitution of Japan and to carry on the virtuous work of the late emperor, (as well as) to promote the continuing development of our nation's good fortune, of world peace, and of the welfare of all humanity.

The nation as a whole, looking up to the emperor as a symbol of the unity of the nation under the Constitution of Japan, will once again apply itself to the utmost to opening up to the world while energetically building a culturally-rich Japan in order to promote world peace and the welfare of all humanity. I offer this as my solemn pledge.²³

After refolding his text and bowing, the Prime Minister returned to his place. Following a final corporate bow, the emperor and his family exited in procession to stage right and the ceremony was complete.²⁴

I have already noted the parallels between this post-accession ceremony and the civil and religious ceremonies that preceded it, as well as suggesting its correspondence with the spectacular "Enthronement Ceremony" (*Sokui no rei*) that would mark the climax of the civil celebrations of the accession process almost two years later. In addition to a detailed analysis of the shared performative elements characterizing the two state ceremonies (the first primarily for a domestic audience, the second for an international one), we could learn a great deal from a comparison of the public announcements themselves. Clearly, one intended effect of both was to reassure the respective audiences, *in the contexts* of peculiarly Japanese cultural displays, of the conscientious aspirations of the new emperor and of the Japanese government as well.²⁵ A second and more contentious intent was to reassert the humanity and *humaneness* of Hirohito, for the new emperor's claim of continuity with a *tradition* of pacific commitment and resolve denied the very object of postwar criticism of the imperial system embodied by his father.

Examples of other types of matched performances could easily be offered, but for the point I want to make it would be superfluous. From

the illustrations above it should be obvious that when we pay attention to the ritual contexts of particular rites and ceremonies, to their place in the larger ritual process, our view of those events changes. For example, we can no longer be satisfied with the kind of straightforward explanation of the "Transfer of Regalia" ceremony that conventional scholarship has provided; we see that the timing and performative details of any particular transfer ceremony cannot fully be appreciated without reference to the sanctuary rites and the attendant publication that each receives. The same holds true for the subsequent post-accession imperial audience. Without both retrospective and prospective reference to the particular ritual contexts of a specific accession, the historical nuances of the ceremony are likely to lose their significance, and the production's multivocality liable to be reduced to an unremarkable hum.

I am convinced that such an outcome is the result of a concerted strategy designed to neutralize the imperial presence in contemporary Japan, to constitute it as an uncontroversial and "given" part of Japanese cultural tradition. Perhaps that is an appropriate result, but it is hardly a natural one. If we truly want to get to the root of the paradox of the modern emperor system, we must get beyond the hum of its ritual inscription. It is that hum that sustains the emperor system today. And it is that hum that most Japanese cannot imagine living without.

NOTES

¹ I would like to thank the Japan Foundation, the Institute for Japanese Culture and Classics at Kokugakuin University (Tokyo), the Harvard-Yenching Library, and the Bowdoin College Asian Studies Program for their encouragement and support at various stages of this project. I would also like to thank the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley and the Museum of Natural History in New York City for allowing me to present early reports of my findings. Needless to say, individuals too numerous to mention here have also provided generous criticism, insight, and friendship since the inception of the project.

² Buddhist monks are regular and active participants in imperial ritual. For example, annual rites (*viz.*, *Nochi no nanoka no mishiho*), initiated by Kūkai in 834, continued (with a temporary hiatus of about 170 years during the medieval period) to take place in the Shingon-in at the Kyōto imperial palace until 1883, when their performance was moved to the Kanjōin at Tōji, where they are still carried out each year on behalf of the emperor and of the state. They were performed for the new emperor January 8-14, 1989. Similar services were car-

ried out by Tendai monks at Enryakuji April 4-11, 1989. In each case, items of imperial clothing were provided by the Imperial Household Agency, and Agency representatives participated in the ceremonies. *Jinja shimpō* 2023 (February 6, 1989): 2.

- ³ During my field research I found remarkable evidence of tension on the local level at ritual sites in Akita and Ōita Prefectures as well as in rural Tokyo; in educational settings as diverse as a junior high school in rural Hiroshima and the campus of Kokugakuin University in Tokyo; and in such unusual television programs as the all-night roundtable debate on the emperor system broadcast live by TV Asahi the night of the *Daijōsai*.
- ⁴ Norma Field, *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor* (New York: Pantheon, 1991).
- ⁵ D. C. Holtom, *The Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1972 [1928]); and Robert S. Ellwood, *The Feast of Kingship* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1973).
- ⁶ A few critical studies have argued that the object of these studies—a timeless “essence”—does not in fact exist, and that the apparent existence of such an “essence” is a product of rather than an inspiration for the rites. OKADA Shōji has located the scholarly *ur-text* for this orientation in the work of ORIGUCHI Shinobu, and offers a valuable (if controversial) revisionist historical analysis of the *Daijōsai* in his *Ōnie no matsuri* (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1990).
- ⁷ Adrian Mayer’s brief review of modern imperial funeral practices (“The funeral of the Emperor of Japan,” *Anthropology Today* 5.3 (June, 1989): 3-6) is representative. For ethnographic details, he draws heavily on Takashi Fujitani’s admirable 1986 doctoral dissertation (“Japan’s Modern National Ceremonies: A Historical Ethnography, 1868-1912” [University of California, Berkeley]). Fujitani himself takes an entirely different approach from Mayer’s in his “Electronic Pageantry and Japan’s ‘Symbolic Emperor’” (*Journal of Asian Studies* 51.4 (Nov., 1992): 824-850), claiming to demonstrate through an analysis of media coverage of the funeral that the “emperor phenomenon” in contemporary Japan is “a product of our present historical moment.” (828) An example of the journalistic (non-specialist) type is Thomas Crump’s *The Death of an Emperor: Japan at the Crossroads* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1989).
- ⁸ Tentatively entitled “Processing Tradition: Imperial Accession in Modern Japan,” the manuscript is in the final stages of composition.
- ⁹ Needless to say, other interests are also involved (including those opposed to the system itself), but the fact remains that it is in terms of these primary dimensions that ritualized contestation is played out.
- ¹⁰ This generalization about participation in the rites at the Fukuage

residential palace is complicated in an essay, tentatively entitled "Publication and Transformation," which I have just completed. Because the funereal rites constitutes the "retrospective" aspect of accession (focused on the imperial remains of the old era), I will not burden this discussion with further elaboration of their place in the overall process.

¹¹ *Asahi shimbun*, 1/8/89. Akihito had acted on behalf of the Emperor Showa (Hirohito) frequently in the past, especially during his final illness. He had performed administrative functions such as these in the *Bara no ma* office of his father. Henceforth he would use the *Hōō no ma*, which also is located in the private imperial chambers of the official palace.

¹² This ceremony is conventionally identified in English as the Transfer of Regalia. To say that the ceremony was a public one would be literally correct only in the sense that public money was used and that elected representatives of the public participated in their official capacities. Signalling while at the same time belying the public nature of the event was live television coverage, which for the first time functioned as an integral part of the ritual production.

¹³ The most sacred of the imperial regalia is the mirror, which is noticeably absent from the transfer ceremony but is the central icon in the Palace Sanctuaries, to which we will turn our attention momentarily. For a fuller treatment in English of the history and possible meanings of the regalia, see Holtom. It should be noted that the seals are not strictly speaking included among the imperial regalia [*sanshu no jingi*], even though they hold a significant ritual place in this rite of transfer. When referring to the regalia and seals collectively, I use the term "treasures."

¹⁴ It should be noted incidentally that the treasures themselves were not visible during the ceremony; they remained in their wrapped containers, which to all appearances might well have been empty. The observation that the treasures were placed facing outward is based on the direction they faced during the entrance and exit processions.

¹⁵ Such a strategy (albeit in a different context) was explicitly acknowledged by sources close to the Prime Minister in early February. In discussing final arrangements for Hirohito's funeral, one told reporters, "It was decided [to stage the funeral] in such a way that those who want to think of the ceremonies as integrating (civil and religious rites) can see them that way, while those who want to think of them as separate and distinct can see them as separate and distinct." (*Asahi shimbun* [2/10/89]: 2).

¹⁶ See Murakami Shigeo, *Tennō no saishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami shinsho, 1977), 55-67, for an account of the establishment of these shrines. While his descriptions of the details of imperial rites sometimes in-

vites skepticism, his historical overview is detailed and reliable. Though there are other important structures within the sanctuary compound, only the three shrines discussed here are "residential" shrines, that is, they have permanent numinous residents.

¹⁷ As we will see below, the Kashikodokoro rites alone were repeated on the mornings of January 8 and 9. The ritual presentation of the emperor's announcement (*otsugebumi*) was omitted on the second and third days.

¹⁸ The ongoing interest of the state is apparent in the budgetary support for the shrines and for the rites performed there. The imperial household is funded by three separate accounts: the "Domestic Allowance" (*naiteihi*) for the emperor and his immediate family's private expenses (food, clothing, etc.); the "Court Allowance" (*kyūteihi*) for imperial expenses associated with official responsibilities; and the "Extended Family Allowance" (*kōshitsuhi*) for the support of members of the imperial household outside the emperor's immediate family. Maintenance of the palace shrines is paid for from the Court Allowance, due to their "historic association" (*yūen*) with the imperial tradition. Needless to say, this arrangement conflates the religious, cultural, and political legitimacy of the imperial presence in contemporary Japan, much as the rites themselves do.

¹⁹ Admittedly, this too had a legitimate ritual explanation. Being in mourning, the emperor could not personally participate in the sanctuary rites, but the fact remains that his presence was required for the state ceremony. The point is that the sanctuary rites were carried out in virtual secrecy; only the fact of their performance was reported, with no details available through the mass media concerning the actual procedures employed or the exact content of the imperial announcement (*otsugebumi*).

²⁰ A second and more obvious form of "connecting performance" involves physical rather than liturgical linkages. It was particularly evident in the funereal phase of the process, where it marked various moments of transition from one ritual site to another both within the palace grounds and between the official palace and locations outside. The funeral processions from the palace to Shinjuku Park (the site of the state funeral ceremonies for Hirohito) and again from Shinjuku to the imperial tomb in the western suburb of Hachioji are the most obvious examples.

²¹ At the same ceremony for the Shōwa emperor (Hirohito) the new sovereign had worn *daigensui*, a ritual costume from the Heian period. The media attributed the change to the postwar "symbolic emperor" system and the effort to demystify the emperor's role in contemporary Japan. Given that such attributions generally emerge from Imperial

Household Agency briefings, it is reasonable to assume that this represented the official government explanation.

²² The official text of the proclamation (and of the response by the Prime Minister, quoted below) was published in all the major newspapers. Both translations are my own.

²³ It is curious, perhaps, that the domestic ceremony was performed in contemporary diplomatic garb while that directed toward an international audience was carried out in archaic costumes. Let me note also that the form of response (*yogoto*) of the Prime Minister at the Enthronement Ceremonies in 1990 was a particularly contentious matter. In the end, he simply led a collective *banzai* cheer for the new emperor, but the overall style of his performance differed in significant details from that for the emperor Hirohito's accession.

²⁴ The direction of movement—from stage left to stage right—duplicates that of the regalia during the transfer ceremony.

Activity of the Aya and Hata in the Domain of the Sacred

a translation of the sixth chapter of
Bruno Lewin's
*Aya und Hata: Bevölkerungsgruppen
Altjapans kontinentaler Herkunft*
Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1962
Studien zur Japanologie, vol. 3

translation by
Richard K. Payne, with Ellen Rozett
Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley

All of the *kikajin* (immigrants) have a close connection with the introduction and dissemination of Buddhism in Japan. In the same way that Buddhism was brought to Japan via China and Korea, they came into the country, and there are numerous monks to be found among the Korean and Chinese immigrants who had made Japan their adopted country since the sixth century. But also, the oldest strata of immigrants, who had already been residing in Japan for a century and a half prior to the introduction of Buddhism, show a certain affinity to the new teaching.

It is well known that beginning in the second half of the sixth century the powerful Soga clan brought their influence to bear in support of Buddhism, against the opposition of the conservative, high aristocracy. In close contact with the Soga stood the Kura families of the Aya and Hata,¹ who—under the supervision of the Soga—were to administer state finances. This may have contributed to the oldest foreign aristocrats, who, being under the influence of the Soga, accepted the Buddhist teachings early on. The proof is found in some temple foundations which go back to the activity of the Kochi-no-Aya no Obito, the descendants of Wani, and of the Hata no Miyatsuko, the descendants of Yuzuki.

In the city of Furuchi in the Minami-kawachi district of Kawachi Province (Osaka-fu) is found the Sairinji Temple.² It lies in the old settlement territory of Kochi-no-Aya no Obito³ and was the house temple of this association of families. The original name refers back to the site of Furuchidera. According to the *Kawachi-shi* this temple was established in the twentieth reign year of Kimmei-tenno (558) on the estate and land of the Soga.⁴ That the founding was actually done by the Fumi no Obito, is proven by the inscription which has been preserved on the bronze statue of Amida Buddha, who is worshipped there. According to it [the inscription] Fumi no Obito Oashiko and his son Kimiko, made a vow to erect the temple. The Buddha Hall was built by Fumi no Obito Sendanko (?), Yako and Karaeko, as well as by Hanishi no Muraji Nagaeko, probably related to the Fumi no Obito by marriage. The year of the temple's founding is given as Hogen 5, Tsuchinoto-hitsuji, which most probably denotes the year 659.⁵ The question of dating leaves us without a clear certainty.⁶ The source is unequivocal, however, in its proof that the Fumi no Obito already maintained the Amida cult there quite early. Even in the late Heian era the temple stood under the administration of the Fumi no Obito, as a record of the year 1063 demonstrates.⁷

From a branch line of the Fumi no Obito, the Koshi no Fubito, descends the priest Gyoki (668-749) of the Hosso-shu, founder of the Todai-ji and of another forty-eight temples in the country, first defender of the Ryobu-Shinto and first Archbishop (Daisojō) of Japan.⁸

Better known than the Sairinji in Kawachi is the Koryuji in Yamashiro, founded by the Hata. According to the *Nihongi* this temple was established in the year 603.⁹ In the *Suiko-ki* it is reported:

The crown prince (Shotoku-taishi) spoke to all the dignitaries: "I have a statue of the Buddha who is worthy of worship. Who would like to receive this statue and devotedly venerate it?"—Then Hata no Miyatsuko Kawakatsu stepped forward and said: "I would like to venerate it."—Thus he received the Buddha statue and constructed the Hachiokadera for it.¹⁰

Hachiokadera is the original name of this temple, named for the placttlement, beside Uzumasa, the site of the main family.¹² It was henceforth the house temple of the Hata, therefore it was also known as the Hata-no-kimi-dera. It is the oldest Buddhist temple in the district of today's Kyoto. The founding year of 603 is, however, not confirmed by the temple records of Koryuji: In the *Koryuji-engi* and *Koryuji-shizai-kotai-jitsuroku* the year is said to be Muzunoe-uma, i.e., the thirtieth reign year of Suiko-tenno (622).¹³ Moreover, this also corresponds with

another report in the *Nihongi*, that in the year 623 a Buddha statue presented by envoys from Silla and Mimana was installed in the Hatadera in Kadono.¹⁴ In the year 818 the temple burned down for the first time. In the reports transmitted by the *Nihon-kiryaku* it is called Uzumasa-no-Kimi-dera,¹⁵ a sign that its ties with the name of the Hata lasted after its founding in Heian-kyo. Besides, on the temple grounds there is an Uzumasaden, in which Hata no Kawakatsu is venerated as the temple's founder.

The inclination of the Hata toward Buddhism also found expression, later, in the Nara and Heian eras, in several Buddhist dignitaries who came from their midst. Gonzō (758-827), born to a Hata family in the Takechi district, was an adherent of Sanron-shu. He worked in turn as the Abbot of Tōdaiji (Heijōkyō) and of the Saiji (Heiankyō) and founded the Iwabuchidera in the Sonokami district of Yamato. Shortly before his death he was appointed First Bishop (?).¹⁶ Just as well known is Priest Dōshō (798-875) of the Shingon-shū, born in the Kagawa district of Sanuki province. For quite a while he was Bettō of the Kōryūji and founded the Hōrinji not too far to the west of that temple. He made it [to the rank of] Second Bishop.¹⁷ Also from Sanuki came the Shingon priest Kangen (853-925). He was supervisor of the Ninnaji and Tōji in Heiankyō and later became Meditation Master at Daigoji (Uji district, Yamashiro). He was invested with the rank of Archbishop a few months before his death.¹⁸ Gomyō (750 to 834) from Mino (Kagami district) belonged to the Hossō-shū. From time to time he functioned as Court Priest and was named as First Bishop in the year 827.¹⁹ The only monk of the Hata clan born in Heiankyō whom we could identify is Jōro (731 to 814), who lived in the Akishinodera (Yamato) and who belonged to the Jōdo-shū.²⁰ Finally, one should also note the monk Etatsu (796 to 878) from Mimasaka Province, who belonged to the Hossō-shū and who lived and was active in the Yakushiji (Yamato).²¹

In contrast to the Kōchi-no-Aya no Obito and the Hata are the Aya no Atae who do not appear at all in the history of Japanese Buddhism. This is all the more surprising, since because of their close ties with the Soga family they were direct witnesses to the introduction of the Buddhist teaching into Japan. Founding of temples by the Aya no Atae or priests from this family group are unknown. Only in connection with sacred art work do the names of the Fumi no Atae, Naga no Atae and Yamaguchi no Atae appear during the seventh century.²²

On the other hand the families of Kuratsukuri no Suguri and the Mitsu no Obito—apparently part of the same wave of immigrants, but not related to the Aya no Atae to which the Yamato no Aya belonged—produced many strong Buddhist figures. The foremost of those to be remembered here is Kuratsukuri no Suguri Shiba-tattō and his descen-

dants.²³ Shiba-tattō was one of the first Buddhists in Japan, an ally of the Soga no Umako for the propagation of the new teaching. His daughter Shima became a nun at eleven years of age.²⁴ His son Tasuna also became a monk, as he is supposed to have vowed to the dying Yōmei-tennō.²⁵ In the year 590 he entered the order and took the monastic name Tokusai. At the same time seven members of the Aya hito took monastic vows: Zensō, Zentsu, Myōtoku, Zenchisō, Zenchikei, and Zenkō.²⁶ The son of Tasuna, Tori, continued the tradition.

Supposedly he gave to the Empress Suiko the model for the seventeen foot tall statue of the Buddha which was set up in the newly erected Hōkōji (Takechi district, Yamato). Tori found a means of conveying the large statue into the temple, without having to tear down the gate. Empress Suiko praised the merits of this family in the propagation of Buddhism and granted him twenty *cho* of wet fields in the Sakata district of Ōmi, and with the income [from the fields] Tori established the Kongōji.²⁷ The three-fold bronze Buddha statues (*shaka-sanzonzō*) bear an inscription to the effect that Tori had made it in the thirty-first reign year of Emperor Suiko (623) at the commission of the Princes and dignitaries to honor the late Shōtoku-taishi.²⁸ With the decline of the Soga reports of the Buddhist activity of the Kuratsukuri clan were silenced. Apparently they had enjoyed the support of the Soga family and were dragged along in their downfall.²⁹

The most famous Buddhist priest amongst the descendants of the Yamato-no-Aya is Saichō (767 to 822), the founder of the Tendai-shū and builder of the Enryakuji on Hieizan [Mt. Hiei] near Kyōto. His lay name was Mitsu no Obito Hirono, and he came from the Shiga district in Ōmi. The biographies agree in their reports that the ancestors of this family came from the Hsien-ti, the later Han, who emigrated to Japan under Emperor Ōjin and were later settled in Shiga.³⁰ Consequently, the family can be traced back to Achi no Omi's wave of immigrants.³¹

From amongst the old *kikajin*, the Hata acquired a special position in the domain of the sacred. It is remarkable that the Hata found entrance into the national kami cult, that they established Shintō shrines and were active as Shintō priests. It is hardly probable that the Hata took on foreign religious forms, but rather that the Japanese cult of ancestors and nature deities may have corresponded with their own ancient religious form, which along with their ancient conceptions of the sacred had been influenced by many centuries of living with the Korean peoples. In contrast to the other old *kikajin*, the Hata possessed larger ancestral shrines, which were probably located at all of their places of settlement.³² The Ōsaka shrines in Yamashiro (Kadono district) and Harima (Akaho district) are well known, which were consecrated to the memory of Hata no Kimi Sake. Also, a few Hata shrines

should be noted which are mentioned in the *Engi Shiki*, but which no longer exist: in the Sōnokami and Takechi districts of Yamato, in the Izumi and Hine districts of Izumi, in the Ikaruga district of Tamba, and in the Ichishi district of Ise.³³ The administration of the Tamura shrine (Ichi no miya) in the Kagawa district of Sanuki, the principle settlement area of the Hata on Shikoku, was the duty of the Hata clans.³⁴ It is noteworthy that the Hata played a remarkable role in the Hachiman cult of Kyūshū. They were responsible for the administration of the Hakozaki shrine in the Kazuya district of Chikuzen, in which Ōjin Tennō and Jingū-kogo are worshipped as the main deities.³⁵ In the main shrine of Hachiman at Usa in Buzen, relatives of the Karashima no Suguri family were employed as prayer priests (*negi*). The rank-title points without a doubt to *kikajin*, and since in Buzen many Hata were settled, it is very probable, therefore, that these Karashima no Suguri stemmed from their circles.³⁶

The name of the Hata is particularly attached, however, to the three great shrine grounds in Yamashiro. These are the Kamo shrines, the Matsuno'o and the Inari shrine, all situated in the central area of Hata settlement in the Kyoto basin.

To the north of Heiankyō, in the Otagi district, there are the Kamo shrines where three gods are worshipped: in the Kamikamo shrine, the god Waki'ikazuchi-no-mikoto, wherefore the shrine is also known as Kamo-no-Waki-ikazuchi-no-jinsha; and in the Shimokamo shrine, the gods Taketsunumi-no-mikoto and Tameyori hime-no-mikoto, the divine grandfather and grandmother of the Waki'ikazuchi, wherefore this shrine is also known as the Kami-no-mioya-no-jinsha.³⁷ In the *Yamashiro-fudoki* the history of these gods is described,³⁸ Taketsunumi-no-mikoto is identical with Yatagarasu, the heavenly crow, who accompanied Jimmu-tennō in his victorious march to Yamato.³⁹ Taketsunumi-no-mikoto had taken as wife Ikakoyahime, the daughter of an earth deity from Tamba, and produced two children: Tamayorihiko and Tamayorihime. One day Tamayorihime had seen a red lacquered arrow floating in the Semi-no-ogawa (Otagi district), which she fished out of the water and which she laid beside herself on her bower. Soon she was pregnant and gave birth to a boy. Since the father of the boy was not determined, Taketsunumi-no-mikoto summoned all the deities to a drinking party, in the course of which she let the maturing boy himself decide on his father. The boy selected the storm god Honoikazuchi-no-mikoto, who is identified with the red lacquered arrow. Thereupon, he received the name Waki'ikazuchi.⁴⁰

A variant form of this myth is reproduced in the Hata-ujihonkeichō.⁴¹ Here a Hata maiden and her parents take the place of Tamayorihime and Taketsunumi. The father makes the same test with

the guests—relatives and neighbors—and his grandchild indicated the said arrow, which was recognized as the storm deity. Further, it says:

Hence, the deity of the upper Kamo shrine is known as Waki'ikazuchi-no-mikoto, the deity of the lower Kamo shrine, Mioya-no-kami. The arrow in the house is the great, very well-known deity of Matsuno'o.⁴² Hence the Hata clan worships the three very well-known deities there, and the relations of the Kamo clan are the in-laws of the Hata family.⁴³

This family tradition of the Hata reflects the historical circumstances. It is probable that the long-established Japanese family of Kamo no Agatanushi⁴⁴ married into the Hata families who were settled in their surroundings, and that from this connection emerged the priestly families of the Kamo shrines. Since the name of the priestly families was handed down through the male line, the Hata do not appear, but the portion of their family's blood is large.⁴⁵ This also explains the worship of the Kamo deities by the Hata in these districts. After the Imperial residence was transferred to Heiankyō, the Kamo shrines of the north became the protective shrines of the new capital, whereby the shrines and their priests attained power and influence.

Whereas in the history of the Kamo shrines the Hata are not directly visible, the Hata are unequivocally responsible for the founding and cult of the Matsuno'o shrines. The founding tale is retained in the Hata-uchi-honkeichō⁴⁶:

Concerning the shrine of the great deity of Matsuno'o of the actual first rank and merit rank of first grade⁴⁷: the Munakata at Tsukuchi enthrones the middle great deity⁴⁸ [who] descended on the third day of the third month in the year Tsuchinoetatsu⁴⁹ at Matsuzakibiwo.⁵⁰ In the first year of the Taiho era (701) Hata no Imiki Tsuru, a son of the family branch of Kawakatsu⁵¹ requested that she descend from the peak of Hizaki⁵² to Matsuno'o. Further, a daughter of a branch family of Taguchi,⁵³ Hata no Imiki Chimarume, first raised up offerings, and the son of the Chimarume, Hata no Imiki Tsukafu, was installed as offering priest in the year Tsuchinoe-uma.⁵⁴ Sons and grandsons succeeded one another (to the position), and prayed and sacrificed to the great deity.⁵⁵

Many priestly families of the Matsuno'o shrine descended from the Hata: the Kanushi of the eastern house, the Shōnegi of the southern house, the Shōhōri, the Gonkannushi of the eastern house, the Tsukiyomi-negi of the Matsumuro house and the Tsukiyomi-hori of the

Matsumuro house.⁵⁶ In addition to the clan-like associations of the priesthood, there are cultic ties between the Matsuno'o and the Kamo shrines. Besides Nakatsushima hime, the father deity of the Waki'ikazuchi (Kami-Kamo shrine!) is also worshipped in the Matsuo'o shrine. This is Ōyamaguchi-no-mikoto, a deity who is identified with Honoikazuchi (Otokuni-shrine).⁵⁷ The rise of the Matsuno'o shrine and its priesthood began in the year 784, when the capitol was transferred from Nara into its vicinity at Nagaoka. Immediately after the transfer, high dignitaries were dispatched to the Kamo shrines and also the Matsuno'o and Otokuni⁵⁸ shrines to report the event to the deities worshipped there and to promote the shrines to a higher rank.⁵⁹ In the course of the Middle Ages the Matsuno'o became a guardian shrine for sake brewers. Seemingly this is a conversion recalling of Hata no Kimi Sake, who as forefather of the Hata priests of this shrine was perhaps also worshipped there. Because of his name (Sake) he was associated with the production of rice wine.⁶⁰

One of the most wide-sweeping impacts on folk Shinto was the Inari cult initiated by the Hata, which consists of the worship of the deities of the crops. The point of origin of the cult was the Inari Shrine, in the Kii District of Yamashiro and situated in the territory of the old royal domain of Fukakusa.⁶¹ Concerning the establishment of this shrine, the *Yamashiro-fudoki*⁶² reports:

Hata no Kimi Irogu, a distant ancestor of Hata-no-Nakatsue no Imiki, had amassed rice and possessed overflowing wealth. When he made a target (for archery) from pounded rice, this transformed itself into a white bird, which flew up and alighted atop a mountain. There it again became rice and grew upward. Inenari ("becoming rice") is given therefore as the shrine's name.⁶³

In addition the *Jingi-shiryō*⁶⁴ clarifies this, saying that Irogu, moved by this wonder, in the fourth year of Wado (711) erected a shrine there and worshipped the transformed rice plant, on account of which the shrine was called Inari (< inenari). Accordingly, the shrine is of a comparatively late date, though there can be no doubt that the Hata as long-standing cultivators of rice had long possessed the cultic worship of the rice gods, but now mixed with the cult of Inari shrine worship of the Japanese food deity Ukemochi-no-kami.⁶⁵ In the Inari shrine the deities Uka-no-mitama-no-kami, Saruka-biko-no-kami and Ōmiya-no-me-no-mikoto are worshipped. Uka-no-mitama is the main deity of the shrine, identical with Ukemochi.⁶⁶ During the middle ages, the worship of the rice and food deities in the Inari cult spread over the whole of Japan. One can still count about 1,500 Inari shrines, most of them small

field and village shrines, in which the fox, whom one frequently comes across in the fields, is also worshipped, either as messenger of the deity or even as an incarnation [or the deity] itself. The Inari shrine of Fukakusa is considered to be the mother shrine of all of these cultic sites. Its priesthood descended without exception from the prosperous Hata families of the surrounding area. From the Heian era the priests have borne the status name of Hata no Sukune. Gradually there separated out from amongst them more branch families: the Nakatsue, Nakatsuse, Ōushi, Matsumoto, Haraigawa, Yasuda, Toriiminami and Mori.⁶⁷

The Inari shrine forms a triangle with the shrines of Kamo and Matsuno'o, in the middle of which was placed the final capital, Heian kyō. All three cultic sites enjoyed the support of the Imperial palaces and were visited in the course of history again and again by individual emperors to venerate the divinities there. The integration of the Hata with the history of these powerful shrines shows what a prominent position they possessed in the territory around Heian kyō. We can well assume that Kammu-tennō, in shifting the capital, allowed himself to be guided by the effort to remove himself from the immediate of the Yamato aristocracy and to lean [instead] on the rich and loyal, though politically unambitious, Hata clans.

NOTES

- ¹ [The author refers the reader to *supra* pp. 148-9, where he says: "In the battles of the year 587, in which the Soga no Ōomi totally defeated their adversaries, the Mononobe no Ōmuraji, the Aya no Atae were not mentioned as partisans of the Soga; however, the Aya knights doubtless fulfilled the role of allies."]
- ² Illustrated in *Zusetsu-Nihon-bunkashi-taikei* (1957), vol. 2, p. 38. The present temple is a reconstruction of Sairinji, which fell into decay in the middle ages.
- ³ [The author refers the reader to p. 71, where he discusses the settlement patterns of the Kōchi-no-Aya.]
- ⁴ Cited in Yoshida Tōgo, *Dai-Nihon-chimei-jisho* (DChJ. 1907), p. 336.
- ⁵ The 5th year of the reign of Saimyō-tennō (659) bears these cyclic designations. "Hōgen" is presumably an old year name, which has not been carried on. Inoue Mitsusada gives an analysis of this inscription, *Wani no kōei-shizoku to sono bukkyō* (Shigaku-zasshi 54, 9/1943), pp. 940-2.
- ⁶ In a cabinet order of the year 1281 (Kōan 4) the founding year of Sairinji is given as the "thirtieth year before (Shi-) Tennōji," i.e., 557 (cited in DChJ, p. 336). In his *Kokyō-ibun* Kariya Ekisai also notes

that a passage in the *Sairinji-engi* from the year Tempyō 5 (733) states that since the year Tsuchinoto-u of Kimmei-tennō (559) Fumi no Obito Ashiko together with all of his relations had been dedicated to temple service (cited *DChJ*, p. 336). Evidently this Ashiko is identical with the previously mentioned Ōashiko; but he is here attired in the rank-cap "Daisan-jō," which, like all of these rank-caps, was only introduced in the year 649, which again could support the date 659. [For information regarding rank-caps, cf. G. B. Sansom, *Japan: A Short Cultural History*, p. 91.]

- ⁷ Kōhei 6/I/10: "Since the establishment of this temple the administration of the temple has gone to the Fumi family." Cf. Inoue-Mitsusada, *op. cit.*, p. 947.
- ⁸ Biography in the *Genkō-shakushō*, Dai-Nihon-bukkyō-zensho 101, p. 299 (167). [For further information regarding Koshi no Fubito, the author refers readers to *supra*, p. 73.]
- ⁹ *Nihongi* (N), Suiko-ki, 11/XI/1.
- ¹⁰ Cf. Karl Florenz, *Japanische Annalen AD 592-697, Nihongi (Books 22-30)*, Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens (Tokyo), suppl. 1903, 10.
- ¹¹ A different name, Kadonodera, also refers to this district.
- ¹² Illustration in *Zusetsu-Nihon-bunkashi-taikei* (1957), vol. 2, p. 39. In the course of history the Kōryūji has been repeatedly burned down, but was always rebuilt in its original form.
- ¹³ Cited *DChJ*, p. 121.
- ¹⁴ N 22, Suiko-ki 31/VII.
- ¹⁵ *Nihon-kiryaku*, Kōnin 9/IV/23.
- ¹⁶ Biography in *Genkō-shakushō*, *op. cit.*, p. 164 (32).
- ¹⁷ Biography, *ibid.*, p. 175 (43).
- ¹⁸ Biography, *ibid.*, p. 255 (123).
- ¹⁹ Biography, *ibid.*, p. 165 (33).
- ²⁰ Biography, *ibid.*, p. 163 (31).
- ²¹ Biography, *ibid.*, p. 250 (118).
- ²² [The author refers readers *supra*, p. 150.]
- ²³ [Regarding the questionable origin of Shiba-tattō, the author refers readers to see *supra* p. 148.]
- ²⁴ N 20, Bidatsu-ki 13/IX.
- ²⁵ N 21, Yōmei-ki 2/IV.
- ²⁶ N 21, Sujun-ki 3/X. The monks' lay names are not given.
- ²⁷ N 22, Suikō-ki 14/IV/8, 14/V/5 (606). The Kongōji is identical with the Sakata-dera in Minabuchi (Takechi district).
- ²⁸ Cf. *Zusetsu-Nihon-bunkashi-taikei* (1957), vol. 2, p. 179. His name is inscribed as follows: Shiba no Kura (-tsukuri) no Obito Tori. Furthermore, although the *Nihongi* does not explicitly mention it, the same

artist created the sixteen foot tall Buddha statue of Hōkōji. Although this statue is not extant, there are others, such as the Shaka-san-zonzō, which show the style which derives from Tori or his school.

²⁹ Indicative of the close union between Soga and Kuratsukuri is the epithet by which Soga no Iruka was known: "Kuratsukuri no Omi" (N 24, Kōgyoku-ki 4/VI/12). Seki Akira (*Kikajin*, 1956, p. 126) considers it possible that Iruka's wet nurse descended from the Kuratsukuri clan and for this reason he bore this epithet.

³⁰ Cf. *Genkō-shakusho*, op. cit., p. 147 (15); see also *Eigaku-yōki*, *Kujō bukkaku-shō*, *Sōgō-bunin* (cited by Ōta Akira, *Seishi-kakei-daijiten*, p. 5804).

³¹ Which family the monk Chiyū was a member of has not been established. He is twice mentioned in the *Nihongi* as the builder of compass vehicles (*shinsha*). The second entry identifies him as belonging to the Yamato-no-Aya. Cf. N 26, Saimyō-ki 4/XI/11; N 27, Tenchi-ki 5/X/26.

³² The only shrine which can be seen as having a connection with the ancestral cult of the Aya no Atae is the Omiashi-no-jinsha in Yamato (Takechi district). [The author refers readers to see supra, p. 53.]

³³ [The author refers readers to see supra, pp. 84 ff., under the district in question.]

³⁴ This shrine is supposed to have been established in the year 709. The statement that the Hata were the chief of the shrine officials (Daigūji, Chief Priest) there is taken from the *Zensanshi*, a history of the Sanuki district from the beginning of the nineteenth century (cited *DChJ*, p. 1257).

³⁵ In the genealogical history of these shrine administrators it says: "A descendant of Hata no Hayao no Sukune in the tenth or later generation, Hata no Sukune Tonori, Chief Priest of the upper fourth rank, served under Daigo-tennō (897-930). During the Engi era [901-930] he was first given the family name Hata. He was awarded the upper fourth rank. He is the ancestor of the Chief Priests of the Hakozaiki shrine." Cited in Ōta Akira, *Seishi-kakei-daijiten*, p. 4674.

³⁶ According to the *Usa-engi*. See Handa Yasuo, *Hata-ujī to sono kami* (Rekishi-chiri 82, 3/1943), pp. 98-9. Handa especially examines the connections between the Hata who had settled in Buzen and the Usa-Hachiman cult, and holds the view that the Hata had worked there as priests in the pre-Nara and Nara periods.

³⁷ Cf. *Jinsha-taikan*, Tokyo 1940, p. 373.

³⁸ Transmitted in *Shaku-Nihongi* 9, Yatagarasu (Kokushi-taiki, vol. 7, p. 633).

³⁹ Cf. Karl Florenz, *Die Historischen Quellen der Shinto-Religion* (Göttingen, 1919), p. 88.

- ⁴⁰ Cr. R.A.B. Ponsonby-Fane, *Studies in Shintō and Shrines*, Kyoto, 1953, p. 202.
- ⁴¹ Transmitted in *Honchō-getsurei*, Naka-no-tori no Kamo no saiji.
- ⁴² Ōyamagui = Honoikazuchi; see *infra*, p. 224.
- ⁴³ *Op. cit.*, Gunsho-ruijū 5 (Kōjibu), p. 91.
- ⁴⁴ See *ShSh* [Shinsen-shōjiroku ?] 16, Shimbetsu, Yamashiro: Taketsunumi-no-mikoto is noted as the ancestral deity, who, as the tutelary deity of Jimmu-tennō, transformed himself into an eight-headed crow (Yatagarasu).
- ⁴⁵ The Hata are not mentioned in the genealogies of the priestly families of the Kamo shrines, however—as with all such genealogies—these only note the patrilineage. Cf. Ponsonby-Fane, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-217.
- ⁴⁶ See *Honchō-getsurei*, Kami-no-saru no Matsuno'o no saiji.
- ⁴⁷ The classification of this shrine into the highest rank was achieved in the year 866 (*SJ* [Sandai-jitsuroku ?] 13, Seiwa-ki, Jōgan 8/XI/20). The registry of ranks in the *Hata-uji-honkeichō* shows that these family historical records begin no earlier than the end of the ninth century, and presumably resulted from the decree concerning the delivery of albums in the year 881 (Gangyō 5/III/26).
- ⁴⁸ I.e., Ichishimahime-no-mikoto, divine daughter of Amaterasu. As the middle of three divine sisters who were worshipped in Munakata (Chikuzen), she is also known as Nakatsu-ōkami. Cf. Florenz, *Quellen*, p. 35.
- ⁴⁹ Corresponds to the seventh reign year of Tenchi-tennō (668).
- ⁵⁰ The shrine is located on the eastern slopes of Arashiyama, which is identical with Matsuzakibiwo, near the Ōigawa. Cf. *DChJ*, p. 125.
- ⁵¹ Hata no Miyatsuko Kawakatsu.
- ⁵² Evidently the same as the aforementioned Matsuzakibiwo (cf. *Anm.* 50). Neither of these two names for the peak of Arashiyama are transmitted elsewhere.
- ⁵³ Hata no Imiki-Taguchi. Further evidence of this name is lacking. This Taguchi certainly seems to correspond chronologically with the General Takutsu known in the Tenchi-ki.
- ⁵⁴ Yōrō 2 = 718.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. Gunsho-ruijū 81, Kujibu 3, p. 84.
- ⁵⁶ Cf. Ōta Akira, *Seishi-kakei-daijiten*, p. 5593. This account is drawn from the *Matsu-no'o-shake-keizu*.
- ⁵⁷ Cf. *supra*, p. 223. *DChJ*, pp. 125, 132.
- ⁵⁸ The Otokuni shrine was in the same area, immediately adjacent to Nagaoka.
- ⁵⁹ *Shoku Nihongi* 38, Kammu-ki, Enryaku 3/XI/20.
- ⁶⁰ Cf. *DChJ*, p. 125.

- ⁶¹ Today the district of Fushimi-ku in Kyoto. One should remember that the homeland of Hata no Miyatsuko Ōtsuchi, the confidante and financial chancellor of Kimmei-tennō, was known as Fukakusa [the author refers the reader to *supra*, p. 146]. Besides Uzumasa in the district of Kadono, this district appears to be one of the oldest Hata settlements. The lands were probably at that time Hata estates.
- ⁶² Cited *DChJ*, p. 141.
- ⁶³ A different etymology, originating in the old, chief commentary on the Shimmei-chō of the *Engi-shiki* explains *inari* as "that (divinity) who carries rice on his shoulder," accordingly written *ina-ni* (*ine wo niwau*). A satisfactory explanation has yet to be found.
- ⁶⁴ Materials on the History of the Kami Cults, compiled by Kurita Hiroshi. Cited *DChJ*, p. 141.
- ⁶⁵ Cf. Florenz, *Quellen*, pp. 144-6.
- ⁶⁶ This divinity also bears the names: Toyo'uke-hime, Waka'ukame, Ōgetsu-hime, Miketsu.
- ⁶⁷ Cf. Ōta Akira, *Sesihi-kakei-daijiten*, p. 481. Only the Inari priestly family of Kada, to which the renowned Kokugakusha Azumamaro (1668-1736) belonged, trace their genealogy back to Yūryaku-tennō (Kōbetsu); *op. cit.*, p. 1504.

BOOK REVIEWS

Tibetan Thangka Painting: Methods and Materials. by David and Janice Jackson. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, second revised ed., 1988. U.S. \$29.95

We have before us a remarkably good trade paperback book organized as an artist's manual. We are reminded of artists' manuals popular during the European Renaissance that were aimed at, not just artists (who already knew how to paint anyway), but at art connoisseurs. *Tibetan Thangka Painting* wraps erudition in a popular presentation to introduce the non-artist to the methods and materials used by Tibetans to create hanging scrolls known as thangka (ཐང་ཀླ). But this book may also be profitably studied by artists themselves; either as a review by people who already know how to paint in the Tibetan style, or as an *entrée* to this discipline by artists who work in other traditions.¹

Tibetan Thangka Painting leads us through six specific steps of manufacture: the preparation of the cotton ground; the initial sketch or transfer of the overall design; laying down the first coats of paint; shading; outlining; and the finishing touches, including gold work. We also find a useful overview and explanation of iconometric theory.

Tibetan art (which drew its greatest lungful of inspiration from Indian art) measures its icons according to specific canons of proportions (མཐོང་ཆུང་). The figure of a deity is constructed the way a building is constructed: it is planned and measured. The resulting figure is even imagined something like a building and is called in Tibetan a support (རྩུ་) or bodily container (ཁྱེད་རྩུ་). It is within the confines of this construction that a spiritual force eventually resides.

The residence of the deity in a painted (or sculpted) image usually takes place after it's made by way of an investiture of breath performed by a lama at the moment of consecration (རྒྱུ་གནས་). But before such a ritual may be executed successfully the physical habitat for the deity must be suitably constructed. Iconometry, therefore, is considered an obligatory step by the Tibetan artist.

Previous artist's manuals,² in English and written by Tibetans, tend to present the iconometric traditions in which the respective authors have been trained. The Jacksons offer us a refreshingly wider and more objective view of canonical proportion. They present a variety of iconometric traditions, including some famous contradictions. Iconometry often occupies the small talk of Tibetan painters and much tongue flapping has ensued striving to resolve these contradictions. Efforts to determine the "correct" way to measure this or that deity has, at times, fostered unnecessary animosity between painters. The objective overview presented by the Jacksons permits an important insight into such supposed "correctness": we come away feeling that each tradition may be appreciated as valid unto itself.

An interesting note regarding iconometry concerns two informants listed by the Jacksons in their preface ("Dorje Drakpa and his monk brother..."). Once, during a course of study with these men, they suggested abandoning measurement altogether to draw everything free-hand. The proportions were still considered to be important, but they indicated that the vitality of a rendered deity could just as well be accomplished with a fluency of draftsmanship as by incrementally laying down lines measured a piece at a time. Both men learned to paint in the far east of Tibet and perhaps a possible exposure to Chinese painting influenced their attitude. No other Tibetan painter in this reviewer's experience ever suggested such a thing before or since; and the Jacksons do not mention it either.

A useful first chapter in *Tibetan Thangka Painting* sets the stage for readers by providing the historical backdrop and the cultural context in which Tibetan thangkas arise. We might make the argument (and many artists in the West do) that any form of art, produced anywhere on the globe and at any period in history, may be appreciated as it is without explanation. As far as sensual stimulation and the natural play of suggestion are concerned this may be a fair way to approach art. But it is also true that perception changes profoundly when we understand the specific conditions (social, economic, cultural, religious, etc.) that help elicit the graphic forms at hand. Obviously, the symbolic nature of Tibetan painting rather demands that we take a firm grasp on meaning.

The introductory essay impresses upon readers the far-reaching, indeed extraordinary, grip that Buddhism exerted on traditional Ti-

betan life and therefore on Tibet's arts and crafts. The appreciation of Tibetan art depends upon (perhaps to a greater degree than most other arts) understanding this backdrop — specifically upon understanding Buddhism. Thangkas were found everywhere in old Tibet; they hung on palatial walls and in yak hair tents. But unlike Western art, thangkas are neither conceived as nor intended to be decorations, however edifying. They are tools — technical appliances employed by the Buddhist adept as aids in visualization.

The authors tell us: "A Tibetan artist once explained to us why most of his patrons requested the painting of a thangka. The main reasons he mentioned were (1) sickness or troubles, (2) death in the family and (3) the need for an image in connection with a particular religious practice." Such reasons emphasize the immense gap that separates modern Western art from that of Tibet. Westerners tend to understand art as an aesthetic (from a Greek word referring to the senses), but the art of Tibet (and of India and medieval Europe) may be more accurately grasped as classical rhetoric; "the art of giving effectiveness to truth."³

The enormous "vocabulary" of forms in Tibetan art; the wide range of symbolic representations; the often rigid rules of iconometry; and the codification of color and gestures specified by various texts, tend to reinforce the image of Tibetan painting as an articulate "language." The rules governing the arrangement of these various graphic expressions are analogous to morphology, syntax and grammar. Tibetan Buddhist art could almost be thought of as an elaborate ideography; an ideography that stands nearly equidistant between aesthetic execution (a necessary ingredient in anything painted), and rhetorical meaning (considered by Tibetans to be highly significant).

This characterization begs the question: who speaks this language? Who imagines in it? And who are its scribes? The Jacksons also ask and answer similar questions. "Tibetan thangka painters by and large were ordinary artisans," they say, "the same people who painted wooden furniture and decorated the walls and architectural details of wealthy people's residences. The majority of them were pious laymen, and they usually came from families whose hereditary occupation was painting."

The authors point out that: "In the past many people thought that thangka painters were yogis who ritually evoked the deities and then depicted them in painted form. Although such a characterization has a slight basis in fact, it does not adequately describe most painters ... The misconception of the thangka painter as yogi no doubt mainly derives from textual sources. A number of sources ... set forth the ritual steps and visualizations that should accompany the painting of certain images. Yet in their everyday practice few artists followed such methods."

True, few do, but some artists are indeed yogis. One Sherpa artist depicted in the Jackson's book, Au Leshi, was (while he lived) the very

model of the artist/yogi. Unfortunately, the Jackson's do not expand on the life of this extraordinary man.⁴ The Nyingmapa lama Trulshig Rinpoche once remarked that Au Leshi's thangkas required no consecration. It was assumed that Au Leshi's spiritual achievements permitted any deity that flowed from his brush to be considered fully inspired as it hit the canvass. This is a particularly remarkable assessment of a painter, since most painters operate as little more than copyists and generally perform duties somewhat akin to that of a sign painter.

This interesting bit of intelligence regarding Au Leshi's work prompted a colleague to joke that *his* deities were in such a catastrophic condition when he painted them that they were in desperate need of CPR or maybe oxygen. He deemed these emergency measures indispensable supplements to the lama's munificent application of ritual breath during consecration. But Au Leshi, who was also quite funny, consistently admonished patrons to obtain proper consecration of his work regardless of any reputation of authority that he may have accumulated from important lamas — a typical, self-deprecating gesture frequently displayed by artists of the better class.

There are many types of artists and they display varying degrees of integrity and ability. In fact, the manufacture of sacred art informs the intellectual life of any studied Tibetan. Most monks are quite familiar with the rules of proportion, the classes of deities, and — much to the surprise of outsiders — appear to be fully equipped to execute full blown paintings on their own but do not. Not everyone is an artist, to be sure, but many monks during the course of their education, will attempt to paint or draw something, at least once. Participation is important.

In the West, scholars and laypeople who study Tibetan painting and who may know a great deal about the subject rarely attempt to write in this language of forms. We find no examples of the Jackson's attempts at drawing or painting here either. And we may wonder why? Drawing and painting constitute the experimental basis of art and yield to the experimenter as much information about art as textual study or any other serious investigation. Imagine a chemist who, although widely read in chemistry, failed to perform experiments. Or, for that matter, a yogi who fails to establish empirical proofs. Yet few students of Tibetan art actually perform the experiments. Perhaps this reticence is due to an association with unfavorable status. Here in the West, as was also true in traditional Tibetan and Indian society, the social rank of artist is low.

The Tibetan "artist" (ལྷ་རྩེ་མཁན་) generally painted traditional images envisioned by others; and artists were accorded only slightly higher social status than that occupied by tailors or bootblacks. Painters were,

after all, craftsmen and not artists in the Western sense of individuals creating original work. Some of them, it's true, were gifted at what they did, and brought powerful aesthetic interpretations to classical motifs. But the true authors of those motifs were lamas, meditators or visionaries.

Some modern (Western) artists dismiss the Tibetan artistic tradition as being stifled by too many rules; or, more bluntly, that it simply is not art at all. For them, "art" begins with Giotto and Ciambue. The march through medieval agriculturalism; through Renaissance, and Reformation; through industrial and scientific revolutions seems to have left a substantial "language" barrier between modernism and tradition.

Humbled by the magnitude of this barrier, we might wonder why *Tibetan Thangka Painting* has been brought out yet again. Why would a Western audience (the book is also available in Europe) buy such a book? Mr. Jeff Cox, the publisher of Snow Lion Publications, informs us that the book originally came out in 1984, in cloth cover, by Shambala Publications. Then, by 1988 it was out of stock and unavailable. Mr. Cox says that in that year sales of books dealing with Tibetan subjects stagnated at disappointing levels. But then, in 1991, coinciding with the Year of Tibet, Tibetan culture received enormous publicity. Sales shot up, and Mr. Cox claims that this year (1994), for the first time, Snow Lion turned a profit. *Tibetan Thangka Painting* was brought out again, with a new four-color cover, to meet this dramatic rise in interest.

To get an idea of the true aperture of this public dialation of interest in Tibet, Mr. Cox tells us that Lalapalooza (a yearly music fete organized by the people at MTV and now in its third year) recently toured the United States with eight Namgyal monks who came from India to perform Tibetan music. These eight ululating Tibetan clerics shared the bill with the likes of The Beastie Boys and Smashin' Pumpkins. Stage props included Tibetan art. Lalapalooza made twenty stops in as many different cities across the country and played, on average, to crowds 25,000 strong. Surely, some of those in attendance were artists. *Tibetan Thangka Painting: Methods and Materials awaits them.*

H.R. Downs
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NOTES

¹The appendix contains valuable information by a British painter, one of the illustrators of this book, Mr. Robert Beer, who explains in detail how to proceed with materials found in the average Western art supply store.

- ² A partial list would include: *New Tibetan Art Book*, Jamyang Losal, Jayyed Press, Balliram Delhi, 1982; *Concise Tibetan Art Book*, Pema Namdol Thaye, Zangdok Palri New Monastery, Kalimpong, West Bengal, 1987; *Principles of Tibetan Art*, Gega Lama, vol. 1 & 2, Jamyang Singe Targain House, Darjeeling, West Bengal, 1983; *Tibetan Religious Art*, Loden Sherap Dagab, part 1 & 2, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1977.
- ³ cf. *A Figure of Speech or a Figure of Thought?*, by Ananda Coomaraswamy, in *Coomaraswamy*, vol 1, ed. Roger Lipsey, Bollingen Series LXXXIX, Princeton, 1977.
- ⁴ The Jacksons mention in their preface that Mr. Rohert Beer, the main illustrator of their book, was "formerly a student of ... Au Leshi" — a statement which makes the absence of more information seem odd. The confusion has been cleared up in a private communication from Mr. Beer who says that the description is merely a publication error. Mr. Beer saw a great deal of Au Leshi's work and it was in that sense that he studied from him.



The Zen Eye: A Collection of Talks by Sokei-an Edited and with an introduction by Mary Farkas. Tokyo and New York: Weatherhill, 1993. xxi + 167. With a foreword by Huston Smith. ISBN 0-8348-0272-4 \$12.95 paperback.

Sokei-an (Sasaki Shigetsu, 1882-1945) was among the very first of the first generation of Japanese teachers to arrive in America. His life and teaching deserve to be much better known, for he played a major role in the transmission of Zen to the West. However, beyond the several pages which Rick Fields devoted to him in his book, *How the Swans Came to the Lake* (Boston: Shambhala, 1986), readers interested in Sokei-an have had to seek out the now out of print *Cat's Yawn* (New York: First Zen Institute of America, 1947) or old back issues of *Zen Notes*, the First Zen Institute's newsletter. Now, to help fill out our understanding of this monk who formed the rock around which so much of early Zen in America flowed, Mary Farkas has produced *The Zen Eye*, an edited collection of Sokei-an's talks. The book also includes her introduction, a short biography of Sokei-an. Mary Farkas died in 1992. She was the former head of the First Zen Institute of America and, along with Ruth Fuller Sasaki, she must be counted among the very first of the serious first generation students. This book is partly a memorial to her as well.

Sokei-an first arrived in America as koji or layman Sasaki Shigetsu with that party of confident monks under Shaku Sokatsu Roshi who came in 1906 to plant the seeds of Zen in the West. Two years later, when Sokatsu packed up his group and returned to Japan, layman Sasaki lingered on in America. By 1916 he had made his way to New York City. Sasaki, sculptor and carver of dragons, felt much at home with the artists and writers of Greenwich Village. Although he returned to Japan for further training, thereafter he considered his home New York City, a city of which he often spoke with obvious affection.

Between 1919 and 1928, Sasaki went back and forth between Japan and America, and also back and forth in his resolve to complete Zen training. Ruth Fuller Sasaki, in an article published in *Wind Bell*, (San Francisco Zen Center, VIII, 1-2, [Fall 1969]) says that whenever he was in America, he worked as a wood carver; then finally on one of his trips, he threw his chisel into the sea and resolved to do what had to be done. After several more years of committed training, in 1928, Sokatsu acknowledged Sasaki's attainment and by August of the same year, Sasaki Sokei-an was back in New York, this time as a Zen teacher and this time to "bury his bones" in the West.

Sokei-an had adopted America as his country but when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the United States arrested him as an enemy alien and sent him to relocation camp. Sokei-an's students managed finally to get his release in 1944 but his health had already been weakened by the rigors of camp life. Before his death, he married Ruth Fuller Everett and charged her with the task of finding a replacement roshi for the First Zen Institute and of completing his translation of the *Rinzai-roku* (*Record of Rinzai*). As Ruth Fuller Sasaki, she crossed the ocean in the opposite direction and rebuilt Sokei-an's lineage temple, Ryosen-an on the grounds of Daitokuji, to house the research center for the First Zen Institute of America in Japan. Tall silver-haired Ruth-san became the first Westerner and the first woman to become a priest of a sub-temple of the Daitokuji. She died in 1967 in the sunroom of Ryosen-an.

Sokei-an's influence in the transmission of Zen to the West is important but, until recently, unmeasured. In 1930 he began the Hermitage of Sokei, "the First Zen Temple in the Western World," as *Cat's Yawn* describes it. The Hermitage formally became the Buddhist Society of America in 1931 and later evolved into the First Zen Institute of America. Alan Watts started *sanzen* there under Sokei-an. Sokei-an's extended influence reached across the ocean. At Ruth Fuller Sasaki's center at Daitokuji were Yanagida Seizan, now the recognized dean of scholarly Zen studies in Japan; Philip Yampolski, who later made translations of *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* as well as of works by Hakuin; Gary Snyder, poet and environmental activist; and Walter

Nowick, who later established his own *Zendo* in Maine. To fulfill Sokei-an's charge to her, Ruth Fuller Sasaki herself helped produce *The Record of Rinzai*, *The Recorded Sayings of Layman Pang* and the important compendium of Zen scholarship, *Zen Dust*, with Miura Isshu Roshi and her research staff.

The Zen Eye brings together fifty-five of Sokei-an's talks. Mary Farkas, in both her introduction and in an afterward, gives a personal impression of Sokei-an's talks. He spoke in a deep voice. To begin each talk, Sokei-an uttered "[a]s is common with Japanese speakers, some sort of sound, midway between a purr and a growl" (167). He spoke with extreme slowness and apologized thus: "I beg your pardon for my slow speech. First, I must think about what I am going to say in English. Then I must carry out the *dharmakaya* itself before your eyes. So naturally I cannot speak as I would read a book" (ix). True to his *sanzen* training, Sokei-an did not describe but become the subject of his talk. Says Mary Farkas, "Sometimes he would be a huge mountain, sometimes a lonely coyote on the plains; at other times a willowy Chinese princess or a Japanese geisha would appear before our eyes" (167). He described his own talks without pretension. "I am like an artist... who makes pictures in the sand. I am happy doing this. In a few minutes the waves will come and erase them" (x).

A traditional Japanese monastery roshi lectures only on koan texts such as the *Mumonkan* (*Gateless Barrier*) or the *Hekigan-roku* (*Blue Cliff Record*) expounding all the cases in order. Sokei-an did not do this. He was a Zen master who had received his training as a layman, not as a monastery monk. In fact, in choice of topic, few of the talks collected in *The Zen Eye* deal directly with what we now think are the traditional topics of Zen lectures: koans, emptiness, the Zen patriarchs (Rinzai's name is mentioned not even once). Instead, Sokei-an seems to have been fascinated by philosophy in general and by Yogacara Buddhism, the "Mind Only" school, in particular. Of his early interest, he writes, "in my seventeenth year I had come upon two words—'subjective' and 'objective'—'Ha!' After that my brain flowed like water, and I became a no-good boy for daily life" (12). Six talks treating consciousness are grouped together in this collection (26-49) and the series of talks on meditation (50-78) express a recognizable mind-only outlook. Later talks speak openly of Yogacara Buddhism, the Buddhism of "Mind Only" (126-7) and some talks even attempt to explain *alaya* consciousness (42-45, 102-6). He seems never to have tired of repeating this sort of argument:

The sound of this gong is created on the drum of your ear; there is no sound in the gong itself. Taste is produced on your tongue. It

does not exist in food. I do not need to explain more carefully, for science proves this.

... The blue sky, the green water, the pink flowers—these are only phenomena; they are the appearances of reality, not reality itself. When I was young and studied Western philosophy in school, I was amazed. I thought, "Western philosophers are thinking with our Buddhism." (26)

But Sokei-an's explanation is not that of the Western philosopher.

The Buddhist thinks the universe is eternal existence; it has never been created, it will never be destroyed. "... We think the universe is another name for infinite consciousness. There is nothing in the universe but consciousness, only consciousness exists. What is this gong? Consciousness. What is this fire? Consciousness." (31)

This is not ordinary consciousness for my birth and my death do not interfere at all with its uncreated, undestroyed existence (33). Can one step forth from ordinary consciousness into infinite consciousness?

There is only one key that opens the door to the new transcendental world. I can find no single word for it in English, but, using two words perhaps I can convey the meaning: shining trance. In that clear, crystallized trance—"Ztt!"—you enter the transcendental world. (13)

This is starting to sound more like Zen: "Ztt!"

Sokei-an spoke on a wide variety of topics. He gravitated towards explaining the very basic Buddhist concepts—the five *skandhas* (85-88), the three principles of *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajña* (92-95), *dhyana* (119-121), the six *paramitas* (133-135), three Buddha-bodies (146-149, 150-153), inter-relatedness (162-163). His explanations are neat and precise. Of meditation, he writes:

The Buddha founded his religion upon samadhi. His object of meditation was his own mind. He did not meditate upon any external object, upon thoughts or words or ideas. He meditated simply upon mind—mind from which had been extracted every thought, every image, every concept. He paid no attention either to the outside or to the inside; he meditated upon his own mind. Perhaps we should say that mind meditated upon itself, for, in true Buddhist meditation, mind by itself is the meditator and at the same time the object of meditation. (55)

Then later he says:

Zen meditation is not to meditate *on* something, but to handle the mind as though it doesn't belong to you (70).

His images grip the imagination. In an aside while speaking on the importance of physical posture to meditation, he says:

I might add that it is not good to look from the corner of the eyes. I once met a Zen master in Japan who was like a wild boar when he looked at you. He never turned his head or moved his eyes to look at something. When he turned, he moved from the waist, turning his whole upper body. (58)

It is the originality of these insights that conveys the strong feeling of authenticity.

Sokei-an saw the many ways in which the West and the "Orient" contrast and complement each other. In a talk entitled, "A Japanese in New York City" (6-8), apparently triggered by a conversation with D.T. Suzuki, Sokei-an spoke against the stereotypical division between the materialistic, urban West and the spiritual, natural Orient. In fact, he inverted the usual fixed image and claimed that nature is material and the city is spiritual.

When nature has not been thrown into the melting pot of the human mind and molded into a solid shape of form like a city, it is just "material." The wide plains, the miles of virgin country with no cattle, no fish—that is material, because it has not been touched by the human brain, has had no association with human beings. (8)

For him, city life encapsulated the Buddhist life of non-ego and cooperation.

To live in New York, you must pay a very high price: you can only satisfy your desires cooperatively with your neighbors. The civilization of cooperation really makes you develop non-ego. In order to satisfy your desires, you must develop the non-ego attitude.... From my standpoint, this New York civilization is Buddhist; we do not need to do anything more than enjoy it. (8)

So also he found Buddhism and Christianity complementary. Although the Buddha in his time taught compassion and sympathy, Sokei-an found these qualities missing in the practice of early Buddhist monks.

They emphasized Nirvana so strongly that they forgot about human beings; they forgot about love. Christ came and completed the side of Buddhism that Buddhism did not touch. (23)

And he considered himself fortunate to have encountered Christianity.

Two thousand years ago, Christ spoke the word "love" aloud, and people's minds awoke. Love, in its purity, freed their minds.

I am happy that I, one human being, understand these two wonderful religions of the East and West, whose common basis is non-ego. (24)

Seen from the sophisticated perspective of the 1990s, Sokei-an's views may seem naive but in their innocence, they escape the stereotypical positions associated with Orientalism and with political correctness.

Sokei-an gives us many more lessons in this little volume. Where most modern Westerners find the Buddhist notion of karma and rebirth unacceptable, Sokei-an explains karma in terms of four concrete attitudes of performing daily life: in every act, compensate by paying back old debts, do everything in accordance with nature, act without expecting a result, live in accordance with the *dharma* (111-114). Where Zen teachers these days are wont to speak of just letting go of attachment and preconception, old-fashioned Sokei-an talks of how to develop the qualities of a human being: love, duty, propriety, intelligence, confidence (136-140).

One element of these edited talks bothers me—their poetry and their eloquence. The many passages quoted above display a fine feel for aptness of expression, strong imagery, the rhythm of English words, the poetry of colloquial speech. Could a native Japanese person have developed such a sensitivity for English as to create so elegant a phrase as "shining trance"? Sokei-an's students took notes at his lectures when he first gave them in the 1930s. The collated lecture notes were worked up into rough drafts by other editors and some drafts were then further polished for publication in *Zen Notes* or *Cat's Yawn*. For publication of this book half a century later, even further editing was done. Mary Farkas names fully 23 people who helped in the task of editing. With so much editing, one wonders how much of the beauty of English expression originated with Sokei-an and how much was contributed by his many well-meaning editors.

Nonetheless, regardless of these qualms, we rejoice at having this reappearance of Sokei-an. In the tradition of First Zen Institute people who perform a great deed before they die, Mary Farkas has given us *The Zen Eye*. Squinty-eyed Sokei-an glares at us from the back cover of

the book. Thank her for giving us the chance to stare back. Perhaps the Zen eye with which Sokei-an squints at us is the eye with which we squint at him.

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The Zen Monastic Experience: Buddhist Practice in Contemporary Korea. By Robert E. Buswell, Jr. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992. xvi + 264 pp. Plates, Appendix, Glossary of Sinitic Logographs, Works Cited, and Index. Cloth: \$29.95, paper: \$12.95.

This detailed, first-hand report gives new insight to those who are interested in Zen Buddhism particularly in contemporary Korea. Most Western readers who are interested in Zen have long paid attention to works of D.T. Suzuki, Alan Watts, and so on. This book will challenge them to reconsider that there are different and significant aspects of Zen tradition that have been completely overlooked in the West. Having spent five years as a Buddhist monk in Korea, Robert Buswell has brought his personal knowledge of Korean Buddhism to the West, where persons of such experience are rare. Indeed, this book grew, for the most part, out of his experience at Songgwang-sa, one of the largest monasteries in Korea, during the period 1974 to 1979.

The Zen Monastic Experience is organized in nine chapters, preceded by an introduction and followed by a conclusion, epilogue, and appendix. The introduction treats the relationship between Zen monasticism and the context of belief. Buswell first stresses that "without access to Zen's monastic life—the context within which that thought evolved—much of the import of Zen beliefs and training may never be known, or at least may be prone to misinterpretation" (p. 5). He then directs Westerners' attention in a new direction: Korean Zen—known as Sŏn—is also a tradition worthy of far more attention than it has gleaned to date in Western scholarship. Indeed, given the pervasive emphasis on Japanese forms of Zen found in Western literature on the tradition (as indicated by our common English usage of the Japanese pronunciation "Zen" to represent all the national branches of the school), we may forget that there are other, equally compelling and authentic approaches to Zen thought and practice found elsewhere in Asia" (p. 6). Buswell confesses the personal impetus behind this book: "Zen as I was

experiencing it as a monk living in a monastic community just did not quite mesh with Zen as I found it described in this literature" (p. 8). He wanted to point out discrepancies between Western portrayals of Zen and the testimony of its living tradition in Korea. He believes that "Buddhism weaves doctrine, praxis, and lifeway together into an intricate tapestry... each aspect intimately interconnected with the other... Without understanding the regimen of monastic life, we have little basis upon which to comprehend the meaning of enlightenment—Zen's home run" (pp. 9-10). In addition, he deals in a scholarly manner with the value of modern traditions in understanding Zen, marginalizations of the Buddhist monastic tradition, and stereotypes of monks.

In chapter one, Buswell provides a brief background of the development of Buddhism in Korea from its introductory stage to the present, including a table of the "Census of Korean Buddhism (1972-1983)" (p. 35). He relates Zen tradition in various East Asian countries—China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam—"each of which has its own independent history, doctrine, and mode of practice. While each of these traditions has developed independently, all have been heavily influenced by the Chinese schools of Ch'an (Kor. Sŏn; Jpn. Zen; Viet. Thiên)... have considerable synergy between them... Continuities and transformations between the different strands must be both kept in mind in order to understand the character of the 'Zen Tradition'" (p. 21). He outlines the structure and activities of the Chogye Order, the major and most traditional Buddhist order in Korea, focusing on four *Ch'ongnim* where separate compounds for Sŏn meditation, doctrinal study, precepts studies, and Pure Land practice have been established: Haein at Haein-sa, Chogye at Songgwang-sa, Yŏngch'uk at T'ongdo-sa, and Tŏksung at Sudŏk-sa.

In chapter two Buswell describes the daily and annual schedules of Zen monasteries, based on *an'ger*, formal religious retreats in summer and winter, with ceremonies and commemorative services including Buddha's Birthday and New Year's celebration. Buswell describes all events in detail: exactly when and how they are prepared and managed. (Korean Buddhist monasteries use the lunar calendar for their traditional events.)

Chapter three deals with Songgwang-sa and Master Kusan (1908-1983): The history of the monastery and the life of the master. Buswell depicts the general layout of Korean monasteries focusing on Songgwang-sa. He introduces Kusan, his own teacher, as a model of a Zen master in contemporary Korea.

Chapter four talks about a monk's early career from *hangja* (postulant) and *sami* (Skt. 'śramaṇera, novice) to *pigu* (Skt. bhikṣu, a fully ordained monk). Buswell discusses the motivation for being ordained

and depicts the process and ceremonies of ordination. He also touches upon family ties after ordination, secession from the order, postordination career, pilgrimage, and monks' clothing. He provides psychological and sociological analyses of these topics.

Chapter five describes the support division of the monastery: positions and their functions in the organization. The personnel include the abbot, the office monks, the kitchen staff, and lay workers. Buswell sketches preparation of meals, group work in the monastery and in the fields, such as rice-planting, *kimch'i* and *meju* making, fruit picking, and construction. In the next chapter Buswell discusses relations with the laity focusing on the Puril Hoe, Songgwang-sa's lay association. He stresses that the lay organization is not only important to provide support to the monastery but also to disseminate Buddhism into the society.

In chapter seven, the practice of Zen meditation is described. Following a brief history of Zen in Korea, Buswell explains the technique of *kanhwa Sŏn* (Ch. k'an-hua Ch'an, the Sŏn approach of observing the critical phrase), with a detailed review of Kusan's teaching. In the next chapter, Buswell covers training in the meditation hall. He discusses the place of the meditation hall in Korean Buddhist practice throughout its history, particularly the rules listed in *Chŏngsu pyŏlchŏn Sŏnjong hwalgu ch'amsŏn kyŏlsa sŏnjŏn-mun* (Promulgation of a Religious Society That Will Cultivate Diligently Sŏn Meditation on the Live Word of the Separately Transmitted Sŏn School) of Sŏn master Yongsŏng (1868-1937) (pp. 164-165). Buswell covers the schedule of the modern meditation hall, entering the meditation hall, and decorum in it. He also describes the formal rules of the meditation hall and life of the hall such as sleeping, bathing, nursing sickness, and attending the fortnightly lecture. He also depicts a session of intensive meditation and ascetic practices, for instance, eating only raw foods, fasting, never lying down to sleep, silence, finger burning, self-immolation. He also delineates special retreats and the end of the retreat.

Chapter nine deals with the officers of the meditation compound, such as *Pangjang* or *Chosil* (Sŏn Master), *Yuna* (rector), *Yŏlchung* (succentor), *Ch'ŏngjung* (disciplinarian), *Chikse* (proctor), *Cjijŏn* (verger), *Hwakae* (firemaker), *Tagak* (tea boys) and so on. Buswell describes the process of selection and the responsibilities and function of each officer in the community. In the conclusion, Buswell suggests a reappraisal of Zen religious experience by Western academia. He points out that limited understanding of Zen has caused it to be seen by Western scholars as literally iconoclastic, bibliophobic, and antinomian. From his experience, he shows that: the Sŏn monks of Korea are decidedly not ignorant of Buddhist doctrinal teachings, and have much in common with their

Buddhist counterparts elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Moreover, Zen monks have generally been depicted in Western literature as oriented toward aesthetics, manual labor, or both; Korean Zen practitioners, however, do not do much labor and do not pay much attention to artistic activities, but concentrate on meditation.

In the epilogue, Buswell adds more information which he obtained in Korea after he had returned to secular life. After he settled down in the United States as a lay scholar, he visited Korea several times and observed a number of changes. First he reports the story of Zen master Kusan's passing away. Then he talks about new leadership in Songgwang-sa, and many changes in the surroundings, including new buildings constructed in the monastery, tourism, and other activities that have influenced the monastic atmosphere.

The appendix is Buswell's English translation of principle chants used in Korean monasteries, which are composed in literary Chinese, but pronounced in Korean: Morning Bell Chant, the Evening Bell Chants, Homage to the Three Jewels, the *Heart Sutra*, Formal Meal Chanting, Chanting at Formal Dharma Lectures, and *Thousand Hands Sutra*. They are performed at daily and occasional services everywhere.

As the above summary shows, *The Zen Monastic Experience* covers many aspects of Buddhist practice in Korea and in offers invaluable sources to Westerners. In addition to his previous works, *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea: The Vajrasamadhi-Sutra, a Buddhist Apocryphon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), *Tracing Back the Radiance: Chinul's Korean Way of Zen* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), and others, Buswell, through this unique field study, surely has contributed much to Western academia by providing detailed data about Buddhism in Korea and more broadly in East Asia.

So far as this reviewer knows, this book is the first work in English based on personal experience at a Korean Buddhist monastery. The book is greatly strengthened by the author's proficiency in all the relevant languages—Korean, Chinese, Sanskrit—and his thorough documentation. There are also valuable photographic plates. However, it is unfortunate that the author was unable to spend extended time at other monasteries or study under other Zen masters, because Songgwang-sa was the only major monastery that permitted foreigners to participate fully in the regular practice.

As a Korean Buddhist monk, with my own experience of practicing Sōn meditation at many different monasteries throughout South Korea for more than ten years, including about two years at Songgwang-sa, I can say, briefly but with confidence, that Buswell's reports in *Zen*

Monastic Experience are basically accurate. I believe that all readers of this book, not only scholars, could enrich their religious experience by learning more of this living Asian monastic tradition and its cultivation of the spiritual life.

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The Lotus-Born: The Life Story of Padmasambhava, by Yeshe Tsogyal.
Boston: Shambhala, 1993; 321 pp.; paper: \$17.00

Dakini Teachings: Padmasambhava's Oral Instructions to Lady Tsogyal,
by Yeshe Tsogyal. Boston: Shambhala, 1990; 210 pp.; paper: \$18.00

Both books, Padmasambhava's life story and his oral instructions, were written by his closest disciple and consort Yeshe Tsogyal (757-817 C.E.). She was one of the few women in Buddhism who have been accepted as official lineage holders, or "matriarchs" as they might be called in the East-Asian context.

The biography already contains many of Padmasambhava's teachings, but the second collection records more of them. As both sets of teachings reflect basic Tibetan Buddhist doctrine and are written in the same style by the same author, they will be discussed as one unit.

Padmasambhava, or "Guru Rinpoche" (Precious Guru) as the Tibetans simply call him, is considered the single most important person in bringing Buddhism to Tibet. Only this great sorcerer knew how to subdue the armies of Tibetan demons, gods, spirits, subterranean beings, etc. that stood opposed to the Holy Dharma. The Tibetans hold him in such high esteem that they call him the Second Buddha. And not only that, it is even said that he never died. He is believed to remain somewhere in meditative absorption and will return one day to instruct disciples.

It is difficult to summarize Padmasambhava's life story because it is written based on a vision of reality that is diametrically opposed to Western concepts. It defies all logic, Western and Eastern. Underlying the story is the view that there are different coexisting levels of reality, often called "outer, inner, and secret." (Which may provisionally be ex-

plained as material, psychological, and ultimate/spiritual.) What is true on one level of reality may not be true on another, yet each has its own validity.

If one wishes to get acquainted with this paradigm and would like to learn the juggling of different levels of reality, these kinds of Tibetan story books are a good exercise.

Imagine this: Actually the master's nature is beyond life and death. Nevertheless he took on form as an emanation (*nirmanakaya*) of Buddha Amitabha, embodying the activity and compassion of all buddhas. As such he took birth in the first half of the eighth century as the prince of Uddiyana, a kingdom to the northwest of India. Though actually he was born on a lotus flower on a lake, without having been "defiled" by a woman's womb, he also manifested as ordinary birth from his mother's body, in order to "tame" human beings. Though he needed no teacher to accomplish all levels of tantric practice, he pretended to train under a guru, in order to set a good example. Because of their previous karmic connection, he had to follow King Trisong Deutsen's invitation to Tibet. How long you believe he stayed there depends on your faith. "Faithless people" (e.g., historians?) say he stayed only a few months, but the faithful believe he stayed fifty-six years. Besides enlisting demons in the services of the dharma, he also helped construct the first Buddhist temple and monastery in Tibet, taught, translated, visited, and consecrated holy places all over Tibet, and wrote and concealed texts for future generations. The biography ends when he returns to India to subdue some more demons.

These two books reveal two sides of Guru Rinpoche. A little more than half the life story emphasizes the tantric magician who rides on beams of sunlight, brings down meteors on his enemies, and subdues all evil forces. In the rest of his biography and the *Dakini Teachings*, he appears as a regular dharma teacher. He instructs his students on all levels: in outer discipline and morals, in the inner attitude of love and compassion, and in the secret view of emptiness. Although he had many consorts in the course of his life, he is a strict and orthodox teacher (which is no contradiction for an enlightened tantrika). Padmasambhava is very concerned about people breaking their vows and practicing virtuous conduct.

Life stories of enlightened masters are a well-loved genre of central importance in Tibetan literature. They are usually written by a close disciple, after the master's passing away, and comprise much of the guru's spiritual legacy. Two things make them valuable.

First, they reveal how Buddhism is applied to and affects real life situations. They paint the image of a Buddhist culture beyond the philosophical doctrine. For example, when it comes to karma and reincarna-

tion in the scholarly context, all kinds of theoretical hair-splitting distinctions between Hindu and Buddhist concepts can be conceived. But when we read about what it implies for people's lives, such subtle differentiations become quite insignificant.

In "The Lotus-Born" for example, Padmasambhava, the King Trisong Deutsen, and the Khenpo Bodhisattva, had been three Indian brothers in a former life. In memory of their mother they had built a stupa and prayed that they might spread the dharma in their future lives. That karma brings them back together in the Land of Snow, as the Tibetan king and the two Indian masters. They are bound together until their former prayers are fulfilled and Buddhism is established in Tibet. Would a Hindu tell this story differently than Yeshe Tsogyal does? Probably not. When it comes to how karma affects our lives, it doesn't matter whether we see it from the Hindu or the Buddhist perspective.

Secondly, life stories are to inspire our own practice. As opposed to dry treatises, they put the teachings into a human context that serves as an ideal example practitioners can strive to follow. They usually describe the guru's path to enlightenment with all its very human joys, trials and tribulations that lead to final victory. Padmasambhava's life story, however, is different. Most of the account is given from the perspective that the master was already enlightened before he even descended into our world. Since Tibetans like to see their great masters as emanations of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and dakinis, many biographies start out this way. Nevertheless, most of them proceed to portray a truly human development. Yeshe Tsogyal however, only once, in quickly passing, describes her master as anything like an ordinary person with human emotions: He is said to shed tears when he sees his parents crying about him being exiled from their kingdom. None of the other greater and lesser catastrophes in his life seem to touch his heart. Maybe, being a woman, the author was taught so well to be ever humble, that she simply couldn't get herself to depict the great master as an ordinary human at more than one point in his life.

There are many biographies that are more inspiring and more suitable for non-experts than these two books; for example those of Yeshe Tsogyal herself, of Naropa, Marpa, and Milarepa. An anthology edited by Tsultrim Allione of Tibetan female masters' biographies was published under the title "Women of Wisdom." All of these are highly recommended. For historians however, Padmasambhava's biography should represent a valuable source. It contains lists of the pre-Buddhist Bon pantheon whose gods he subdued one and all. It reveals a lot of historical details, from intrigues and power struggles in India and Tibet, to the etiquette at the Tibetan court; not to mention the long lists of who translated which texts for what purpose.

The *Dakini Teachings* are a selection representing one fifth of what has been found of Padmasambhava's oral instructions to Lady Tsogyal, chosen by the translator Erik Pema Kunsang. The original was written in a secret code language called "Dakini script" and hidden for future generations. "Oral instructions" is a very serious term in Tantric Buddhism. It has to do with keeping the most profound teachings secret in order to heighten the power of their impact on the aspirant when they are revealed. Secrecy can either be accomplished by not writing or publishing certain works, or by writing them in a "self-secret" (literally: "locked inside") manner. The latter implies that it is impossible to understand the written words, unless they are accompanied by oral instructions from a qualified teacher to an initiated student.

The translator of the *Dakini Teachings* honored this tradition by selecting only those instructions for translation that are often given to the general public. Thus, much of what we find here are the usual admonitions: be good, fear suffering and death, renounce the world, family, friends, and homeland, have great devotion to the dharma, and don't waste time but hurry diligently towards enlightenment. Sometimes there are nice surprises: for example Padmasambhava's urging to study and respect all schools of Buddhism to avoid falling into sectarianism. Other times the surprises are less pleasant, even sad; for example when he tells women: "Since, due to negative karma, your birth is inferior, you may not be able to act as a learned preceptor." Or: "A bad husband is your karmic residual, so give him what he wishes and do not be contemptuous." (*The Lotus-Born*, pp. 161 and 174.) Especially coming from a man who is famous for having had many enlightened consorts and is so concerned about keeping vows, this is disappointing. (One of the tantric vows is not to look down upon women.)

Yet there are also parts of these books which are likely to be very confusing if one has not received teachings before. Because of the aforementioned issue of secrecy and the tradition never to study a religious book without a teacher who is fully qualified to interpret it, Yeshe Tsogyal made no effort to make these teachings understandable to the non-initiated. The translator's glossary and excellent, comprehensible translation help. Many issues become clear, yet others are only hinted at or expressed with the typically Buddhist admiration for numbers. For example: "You should receive (the bodhisattva vow) from a master who has realized the twofold selflessness through training in the three types of knowledge, and is thus free from the eight worldly concerns." (*Dakini Teachings*, p. 51.)

These selections of Yeshe Tsogyal's works are more of a quick refresher course for reviewing all one has learned in years of training

than an introduction to any particular subject. They could be very useful as reference books or guidelines and syllabi for teaching programs. Her books should be part of every Buddhist library. Because of the lady's and Padmasambhava's historical importance, these are essential documents for the study and preservation of Tibetan Buddhism.

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Aikido and the Harmony of Nature by Saotome Mitsugi. Translated by Patricia Saotome. Forward by David Jones. Boston and London: Shambhala, 1993. xvi + 250pp. Paper: \$25.00.

In the twenty-five years since the death of the founder of Aikido, Ueshiba Morihei (1883-1969), interest in this martial art has spread around much of the world. There have also appeared a number of books detailing the life story of "O Sensei" (meaning "Great Teacher", the term is the Aikido community's title for Ueshiba) or the technical, "how-to" aspect of performing the various Aikido techniques. Now there is a most timely book which, as far as I am aware, is totally unlike any which has preceded it.

Shihan (a master teacher who has attained at least the rank of sixth Dan) Saotome Mitsugi was one of the last *uchi deshi* of the Founder. *Uchi deshi* literally means an inner student or disciple. He or she lives with the teacher and performs many personal services, such as arranging transportation, carrying luggage, preparing bath water, and so on. A long-term proposition, it is an honor to be chosen, for the student is accorded an opportunity to thoroughly learn the subject and to become, in effect, a child of, and successor to, the teacher.

From such a highly-qualified individual comes this unique work. It is unique because it addresses the "why" of Aikido. Saotome Sensei reveals herein the life history, philosophy, and insights of the Founder, all of which combined to lead O Sensei to a profound understanding of the nature of Nature, of the nature of reality. This understanding helped him to see clearly how Nature acts and reacts in different situations. Nature does not compete; it does not aggress; it simply is. There are explained in this work many of the processes of Nature. Yet, they are all secondary to an understanding of the one process that is "essential"

to the workings of this Nature in whose midst we live, yet which we often ignore, to our peril. That process is harmony.

The founder clearly believed that humanity has, by and large, lost the understanding of such reality. As a result, we often set out to tame nature, to master it, to "use" it. Yet we too often do not understand what it is we seek to tame. As a result of our poor understanding, we often find ourselves in situations of conflict - with Nature, with other humans, and with ourselves. Saotome Sensei helps us to understand the workings of Nature, the great insights of Ueshiba Morihei, and the means by which Aikido finds the harmony which exists in every situation of potential conflict.

He does this by a discussion of these processes of Nature. It is quite evident that the author has undertaken a solid investigation of these processes by using physics, chemistry, biology and astronomy - at a minimum. For example, he discusses the carbon-nitrogen-oxygen cycle of nuclear energy production in stars and how Nature uses the spiral shape is the electromagnetic vibration of light, in the movements of the earth and sun, and in the structure of amino acids and proteins - the latter being essential to life.

Next is explained how these scientific processes are useful for understanding the relationship of religion and science. Study of the latter can aid in comprehending the importance of symbolic truths of the former. The author states that religious myth is ancient wisdom, is the "first form of science" (p. 59), and is most useful for fostering a code of morality. However, looking to science alone for answers to the great questions of life is as unfulfilling as examining only mythic stories. Science too often divides knowledge, such that the original question may well be lost.

The author then proceeds to show how the understanding of such processes served as the basis for the development of Aikido. The goal of Aikido is nothing less than the promotion of a deep understanding of, and appreciation for, the balance, the harmony of Nature, and its Creator. Ueshiba Sensei clearly believed in, and spoke of, God. As is explained here, people of different cultures often have a different concept of what "God" means. Given that O Sensei's background was Japanese, and his life was shaped by Shinto religious traditions, his image of the Creator proceeds from, but is not limited to, those traditions.

Also addressed are the realities of being human, including the very characteristic of aggression, which helped our species to survive in its long development. This inherent characteristic is not to be denied or repressed, but acknowledged and redirected to productive and life-enhancing ends. Saotome Sensei presents a summary of aggression in human development, the evolution of *bujutsu* (military skills) in Japan, and how the latter was often subverted to the former.

Proceeding from a clear view of reality, O Sensei fashioned a Way, a model for life, to have meaning for all people. He sought to better the world demonstrably - not to escape it. Harmony is the method so chosen. An entire chapter describes the workings of harmony in nature. However, what is described is what truly exists, not what we wish were so. Individuals tend to distort what they see through the filter of ego so, for example, we tend to equate "harmony" with "no conflict." Existence, as depicted herein, is, however, a dynamic spiral, encompassing both conflict and harmony. Nature is always flexible and eventually returns to a balance.

Aikido is a process of retraining human instinct to more clearly understand our relationship to all that exists. Beginning on a physical level, it goes beyond mere intellectualization and moves into the very consciousness of humanity. It is in the demanding training, the sharing of experiences, stress and frustration, the learning how to trust and depend on your partners that one develops strong bonds of respect, concern, and compassion for others. In the learning of each technique is the understanding of how energy operates in the universe and in our own bodies.

The book discusses what Aikido is not. It is not a game or a sport. It is not competitive. We must understand competition to be potentially constructive and to function as an outlet for aggression. We must also realize that competition often quickly becomes excessive, producing frustration, pettiness, anger and aggression as indeed we see all around us in much of society.

While it may appear a paradox, the process of studying conflict in order to achieve harmony, under the personal direction and guidance of a legitimate teacher, is crucial for the student's development. It is simply too easy for many students, in many areas of training, to fixate on developing power and strength, heading off in the wrong direction. Aikido does address human maturation and personality development. O Sensei was directly concerned about the sort of person to whom he would transmit his insights, his knowledge. Years ago, any potential student of his was required to supply letters of recommendation from two reliable sponsors before they were allowed to begin training. In all my years of martial arts training, in the United States and abroad, with several famous teachers, never before had I seen or heard of a teacher's requiring such recommendations.

The book recounts many of Saotome Sensei's personal experiences as an inner disciple, and some of his conversations with O Sensei. The last chapter discusses the *dojo* (literally, the place of the Way.) Included are very useful sections on "Rules of the Dojo," "Rules of Training," and "Proper Dojo Etiquette."

In addition, the book contains many photographs and the author's own drawings, illustrating both particular techniques and the processes of Nature. Calligraphy is used to great effect to depict the names of techniques or concepts. Translations of several lectures by Ueshiba Morihei to his then *uchi deshi* are very interesting and insightful.

Aikido and the Harmony of Nature is a most welcome addition to the spectrum of works dealing with Aikido. People seeking more in the way of Aikido background, or explanation of Aikido techniques, would do well to consult the works of John Stevens: *Aikido: The Way of Harmony* (Shambhala, 1984) or *The Sword of No Sword* (Shambhala, 1984.) Most useful is *A Beginner's Guide to Aikido*, by Larry Reynosa and Joseph Billingsiere (R&B Publishing Company, 1989.)

In his preface, Saotome Sensei states that perhaps many people may find this book difficult to comprehend, due to his approach. In this particular work, he is less concerned with self-defense techniques and more concerned with "...the true meaning of the teachings of Morihei Ueshiba..." (xi). This was the teaching of O Sensei. This is the reason for the writing of this book.

It is a terrific book. The authors approach is the strength of the book. He has accomplished all he set out to do. Perhaps some novice martial artists will not find in it those explanations of the techniques for which they are searching. As related above, there exist other fine books concentrating on this aspect. Perhaps some people will not appreciate what has been set down herein.

Yet, I suspect anyone who has diligently trained in martial arts for more than a year or two will appreciate this book. Anyone who is familiar with the reality of many, if not most, martial arts competitions (i.e., tournaments) and has been disgusted with the all-too-common "...strutting display of childish ego..." (p. 138) will respond to this book.

Another strength of Aikido, well-explained in the book, is the responsibility of the martial artist to protect life - all life, even that of the attacker. Failure to defend the self or another because of weakness contributes to the crime of the attacker. However, should you be attacked and kill the attacker, you are also guilty of destroying life. Aikido posits another possibility - defending yourself but controlling the attacker, effectively neutralizing him or her.

My one negative comment about the book is a minor one. Romanized Japanese terms are sometimes used in captions, several pages before the term is explained in the text. The reader who does not understand such a term's meaning the first time it is encountered must search through the text for the meaning. There exists no index or glossary of these terms.

The reader can find influences from Taoism, Buddhism, and Shinto, and how pertinent they all are to this Way of living. For that is what

Aikido really is. As the author writes, "The objective of Aikido training on the mat is to carry that training into every part of your life. If it stops with the technique it has no real value." (p. 237)

An oversize, expensive paperback, this book should nonetheless grace the library of any practitioner of Aikido. Its value is not, however, to be seen as applying only to Aikido students. Other martial artists who examine it may well find themselves deciding to switch affiliations. Anyone with an interest in Asian culture and philosophy will also find it interesting and entertaining. Over the years I have heard many people ask, "What is Aikido?" Saitome Mitsugi has provided us with a well-written and thorough answer.

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Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism By Miranda Shaw. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994. pp. 291. \$29.95.

Passionate Enlightenment is the first book in English to address a too long ignored area of Buddhist history, namely, the contributions of women to Indian Buddhist tantra. It has long been asserted by many respected scholars of Buddhism that men were the primary practitioners of Indian Buddhist tantra, with women playing only a marginal and sexually degraded role. Female tantric practitioners have widely been characterized as "prostitutes" or "witches" who were "depraved and debauched." It has been asserted that they were mere "ritual objects" to be used and cast aside. This view has been almost unanimously held among Western scholars (the notable exception being Herbert V. Guenther). This book is a passionate defense of women's role in Indian Buddhist tantra, aimed at disproving scholarly assertions of women's marginal role.

Miranda Shaw was first inspired to question the scholarly assertions of when she observed the raw power of traditional artistic representations of female tantric practitioners and deities. She points out that "these female figures, with their exuberant air of passion and freedom, communicate a sense of mastery and spiritual power" (p. 3). She

felt the presence of such positive feminine imagery was a strong indication that women fully participated in the formation of the Buddhist tantric tradition.

Shaw's book draws on over forty texts written by women which she discovered while researching in India, Nepal, and Japan. She also examines and reinterprets the major *yoginī-tantras*, the classic tantric texts which "describe spiritual companionship between men and women and sexual union as a vehicle of religious transformation" (p. 14). In addition, she draws on a number of interpretive commentaries. From these sources, Shaw weaves a vivid portrait of women's participation in Indian Buddhist tantric life.

Shaw begins by outlining the historical framework of Buddhist tantra. Tantric Buddhism arose in India during the Pāla period (eighth through twelfth centuries) as a new movement within Mahāyāna Buddhism. At this time, Mahāyāna was a flourishing intellectual movement. Many richly endowed monasteries produced scholar-monks who wrote great philosophical works. Academic success was a "direct route to tremendous wealth, political influence, and social prestige" (p. 20).

According to Shaw, tantric Buddhism arose as a reform movement, in an attempt to return to Mahāyāna's vaunted universalism. Tantric teachings built on Mahāyāna philosophy, with innovations only in technique and practice. Tantric practice did not require the purified atmosphere of an exclusive monastic institution, but instead took place amidst the tumult of lay life, in towns and in the wilderness. It was an egalitarian lay movement which was open to people from all walks of life, from royalty to craftspeople to beggars. It claimed that enlightenment could be found in all activities and all emotions. In direct contradiction to traditional monastic practice, tantrics "insisted that desire, passion and ecstasy should be embraced on the religious path.... They sought to master desires by immersion in them" (p. 21). Consonant with this position, "sexual intimacy became a major paradigm of Tantric ritual and meditation" (p. 21).

Shaw points out that the classic tantric texts never state that men are superior to women, but instead, tend to depict women as powerful, independent spiritual aspirants. Women are not defined in relation to men. However, male tantrics are enjoined to pay homage to women. Women should always be respected and honored. Men should always see women as the embodiments of Vajrayoginī, a female buddha. Denigrating attitudes towards women are criticized as being incompatible with the tantric path. Shaw recounts a number of tantric stories of men whose spiritual progress was severely hampered because they failed to be properly respectful of women.

Since sexual intimacy was a realm of tantric practice, male and female tantric practitioners practiced together. As Shaw describes it, their relationships were a weaving of mutual goals that strove for a perfect balance between the two partners. However, even while striving for balance, men sought female approval, while women were not enjoined to seek male approval.

Shaw claims that a careful reading of the sources leads to the conclusion that there were many women among tantric circles. She cites many examples of women who are described as having reached high levels of spiritual attainment. She also includes translations of some of the songs of attainment written by women. There are many records of women acting as gurus, spiritual mentors teaching both male and female students.

Shaw found that a number of important tantric practices were originally taught and written by women, including long life practices and fasting practices devoted to Avalokiteśvara, both of which are still frequently practiced by Tibetan Buddhists. In one chapter, Shaw describes as much as is known of the life stories of "female founders" and then explains the gist of the practices they began. Shaw paints vivid portraits of both the social contexts in which these women acted and the nature of the practices they were doing.

Next, Shaw has a chapter on tantric sexual union. She describes both the theory and the practice. This is clearly not a series of techniques for producing "good sex," but rather a subtle method of using one's physical energies to increase spiritual awakening. Her description makes it obvious that only advanced tantric practitioners could even hope to perform this practice correctly. As Shaw describes it, this practice cannot be done correctly unless *both* partners are highly realized practitioners, thus giving the lie to the old theory that the women who performed these rituals were nothing more than prostitutes or women of questionable morals who performed a merely physical service for male tantrics.

Passionate Enlightenment does a thorough job of addressing and refuting the many ill-informed, androcentric assertions which have been made regarding women's participation in Buddhist tantra. Shaw has found many important primary sources which were previously unknown or ignored. She gives vivid descriptions of women's participation in tantric life in India.

It is an enjoyable book to read. Shaw's writing style is flowing and often almost lyrical. She weaves a lovely picture of words, dealing with her many topics with sensitivity and passion. Her descriptions are clear, avoiding the obscurantism so common in scholarly work. The passages she translates have a poetic grace. The following is one example of her translations, a woman's song of enlightenment:

Hum! What do you think when you cry out in surprise?
 What can distract you when you stare in amazement?
 How can the sky be polished?
 What does a butterlamp think?
 The track of a water-bubble can't be found.
 Upon waking, dream thoughts evaporate. (p. 95)

This book is clearly written with the intention of being accessible to a popular audience. It does not presuppose a great deal of knowledge about tantric Buddhism. (For those who are interested in learning more about this field, she includes a thorough bibliography.) In this work, Shaw seems primarily concerned with providing a coherent, seamless narrative. She does not explore all of the ambiguities, uncertainties, and contradictions which are actually present in the historical evidence. In the introductory chapter, Shaw states that "Exegetical and sectarian traditions do not evince unanimity on these issues" (p. 15). However, this is the only mention she makes of any contradictory voices in the tradition. Throughout the rest of the book, she makes it sound as though Buddhist tantra was uniformly egalitarian and affirming of women. One finds oneself wondering what constituted the lack of unanimity Shaw mentions in the introduction. A detailed exploration of the multiplicity of voices which are present in the exegetical and sectarian traditions would make a fascinating area for future study.

Another work Shaw might consider publishing is a translation of the various sources she discovered and utilized in creating *Passionate Enlightenment*. They are a crucially important collection of texts for this field of inquiry. Readers may find themselves wanting to read the entire sources, not merely the tantalizingly brief passages and summaries that were fit into this book. A translation would make these texts accessible to a wider audience and would take advantage of Shaw's gracefully poetic translation style.

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NOTES AND NEWS

The BDK English Tripiṭaka Series

This article is the second in a series about the translation of the Chinese Buddhist Cannon. The first appeared in the 1993 *Pacific World*.

Mr. Yehan Numata, a Japanese industrialist and philanthropist established the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai. The BDK (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism) has undertaken many projects to offer and spread the teachings of the Buddha. One of the most significant efforts is the translation of the Taishō canon into English. "Taishō" refers to the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Newly Revised Tripiṭaka Inaugurated in the Taishō Era), which was published from 1924 to 1934. This consists of one hundred volumes, in which as many as 3,360 scriptures in both Chinese and Japanese are included. This edition is acknowledged to be the most complete Tripiṭaka (Scriptures) of the Northern tradition of Buddhism ever published. Under Mr. Numata's leadership in July of 1982 the translation committee of the English Tripiṭaka was officially convened.

A publication committee was established at the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research in Berkeley, California, to see the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series into print. This committee performs the duties of copyediting, formatting, proofreading, indexing, consulting with the translators on questionable passages, and so on—the routine duties of any publishing house. On the committee are specialists in Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese, who will attempt to ensure that fidelity to the texts is maintained. For the convenience of scholars who may wish to turn to the original texts, Taishō page and column numbers are provided in the left-hand margins of each volume.

About the BDK English Translation Project, University of California at Berkeley Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien wrote in 1994:

The creation of the translation project has certainly been one of the most impressive projects ever undertaken in the field of Asian religious literature.

Dr. Lewis Lancaster of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature at Univ. of California at Berkeley, leader of the Group in Buddhist Studies, praises the Project in this way:

The project to translate the Chinese Buddhist canon into English ranks as one of the most important events in the transmission of Buddhist material. The Numata Translation Center's massive plan for providing English versions of important Buddhist texts will give us a new and valuable source for the study of the religion. The availability of such a variety of texts will allow people at all levels of training and interest to read and understand more about the Buddhist tradition. Cross cultural study will be enhanced by the publication of the many translations of works, that have been previously only available to the Chinese reader.

The Numata Center is now distributing these books. Six titles in five books have been published, and another four are expected soon. Descriptions, information, and quotations from the books follow.

The Summary of the Great Vehicle

The Summary of the Great Vehicle by Bodhisattva Asaṅga translated from the Chinese of Paramārtha, translated by Prof. John P. Keenan of Middlebury College is the first to be available. 147 pages long, it is fully indexed, with a Glossary and Selected Bibliography.

Concerning *The Summary of the Great Vehicle*, Dr. Hajime Nakamura, a professor emeritus of Tokyo University and eminent Buddhist scholar, says:

The first-ever English translation of *The Summary of the Great Vehicle* has now been published. The work is a good compendium of the basic tenets of Buddhism, written by Asaṅga (4th century A.D.) in India. The original work has been faithfully translated, yet the book is in easily readable form. The selection of words shows how difficult the translation must have been.

The volume is also receiving praise from American scholars. Many important universities and libraries are subscribing to the BDK Series. Among the American community Drs. Alfred Bloom and Lewis Lancaster

have praised the work. In his review of *The Summary* in the 1993 *Pacific World*, Dr. Alfred Bloom notes:

The present volume (*Taishō* 31, No. 1593) by Asaṅga (ca. 310-390) is a significant addition to the study of Buddhism by making available in English a very important text of the Yogācāra school. This stream of teaching, together with the Mādhyamika teaching of Nāgārjuna, provided the foundation for the philosophical and epistemological development of the Mahāyāna tradition and its practices.

This translation is competent and clear. The introduction, glossary, and bibliography are helpful for those who may engage in deeper study. A careful reading of the text and reflection will permit the reader to catch the major thesis of the work and to appreciate its value as a summary of the Great Vehicle.

Like all volumes in the Series, *The Summary* begins with an essay by the translator. Professor Keenan's Introduction gives a clean overview, and helps the reader to understand the text. He mentions the history of the scripture, and its place amongst other works of its kind.

The Summary presents the classic argument for the basic Yogācāra themes on conscious interiority, attempting to reinterpret within this context the general Mahayana teachings of emptiness and dependent co-arising. The entire Yogācāra endeavor, it would appear, is aimed at evolving a critical understanding of consciousness that would ground the Prajñāparamitā (and Mādhyamika) insistence on emptiness within a critically understood notion of the structure and functioning of conscious interiority. It then proceeds to explain the etiology of imaginative illusion, sketch its reversal by offering an explanation of the nature of conversion, champion the recovered insight into dependent co-arising in terms of the converted other-dependent pattern of consciousness, and thus allow for a valid, if limited, role for language-formed, conventional discourse, both commonsense and theoretical. (pg. 1)

The Summary of the Great Vehicle is valuable for its treatment of the nature of mind and consciousness. It is concerned with the relationship between the subject and object, and the perpetuation of karma. The examination of consciousness and co-dependent co-origination is critical to Buddhist epistemology and soteriology. The Trikaya is also fundamental to Mahāyāna thought and practice, which is based largely on the bodhisattva ideal, and continues today.

The Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka

The second book to be published in the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series is *The Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka Translated from the Chinese of Saṃghapāla*. Here is Taishō vol. 50, no. 2043 translated by Professor Li Rongxi of the Buddhist Association of China in Beijing. The book is 203 pages long, with an Introduction, Glossary, and Index. There are eight chapters, under the following table of contents:

Chapter I	The Causes of His Birth
II	The Causes of Seeing Upagupta
III	The Causes of Making Offerings to the Bodhi Tree The Causes of Vitaśoka
IV	The Causes of Kuṇāla
V	The Causes of Offering Half an Āmra Fruit to the Sangha
VI	The Causes of the Buddha's Prediction Concerning Upagupta
VII	The Causes of the Transmission of the Dharma-piṭaka by the Five Disciples of the Buddha The Causes of Kāśyapa; The Causes of Ānanda; The Causes of Madhyāntika; The Causes of Upagupta; The Causes of Śāṅkavāsin's Attainment of the Way
VIII	The Causes of Upagupta's Disciples; The Causes of the Son of a Tigress; The Causes of Gorasa; The Causes of a Southern Indian; The Causes of a Northern Indian; The Causes of Devarakṣita; The Causes of the Brahman with the View That the Ego Is Real; The Causes of Sleepiness; The Causes of the Provisor; The Causes of the Artisan; The Causes of Food and Drink; The Causes of Contentment with Few Desires; The Causes of the Rākṣasas; The Causes of the Tree; The Causes of a Miser; The Causes of the Ghost; The Causes of Being Bitten by Vermin; The Causes of Contemplation on a Skeleton; The Causes of Avarice; The Causes of a Bamboo Brush; The Causes of Parental Sentiment; The Causes of the River; The Causes of a Whim in Meditation; The Causes of the Cowherds; The Causes of the Transformed Person; The Causes of Taking No Delight in the Dwelling Place; The Causes of a Monk's Pewter Staff; The Causes of Sudarśana; The Causes of the Fief for a Monastery; The Causes of Dhītika.

King Aśoka is one of the most famous and valuable persons in the history of the Buddhist tradition. His faith and deeds continue to be upheld as models for the Buddhist community. Dr. Li explains:

Besides recounting the major events in the life of King Aśoka, this work devotes half of its space to stories concerning the six patriarchs who succeeded the Buddha in transmitting the Dharma: Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda, Madhyāntika, Śāṇakavāsin, Upagupta, and Dhṛitika. It also includes some other stories for the elucidation of the Dharma.

As Dr. Li states, there are two subjects together in this one volume. The first concerns Aśoka, and the second the early Saṅgha and its development. On the second point alone, this is a valuable text. Few sources give details about the growth of the Buddhist movement in its earliest days. Here is a resource, and a view into those beginnings. Because the Scripture of King Aśoka is a dramatic narrative, it is fascinating reading. Once opened, the book is nearly impossible to put down. This is a volume to be studied, and also enjoyed by everyone.

The second section of the work speaks about the monks who carried the teaching of the Buddha after his Parinirvāṇa. This is also in narrative form, and exciting. The Tathāgata gives a prediction about a different Buddha to come in the future.

Thus in total, *The Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka* is an important contribution to the English language resources in Buddhist Studies. Certainly King Aśoka, his actions and times deserve study. This is also an excellent source on the development of the Saṅgha, and the transmission of the Dharma. Any scholar or interested reader should be glad to have this book.

The Lotus Sutra

The Lotus Sutra is the third offering in the BDK English Tripiṭaka Translation Series. Professors Kubo Tsugunari and Yuyama Akira of the International Institute for Buddhist Studies in Tokyo Japan have produced *The Lotus Sutra translated from the Chinese of Kumārajīva* Taishō Vol. 9, No. 262. is in 363 pages, 28 chapters, with a Sanskrit Glossary, a Selected Bibliography, and an Index. This is a new and authoritative translation, applying the latest scholarship to one of the most important works in history. They introduce the text in the following way:

In translating the Chinese text into English we used the Kasuga Edition of the *Lotus Sutra* as a basic text rather than the Taishō Edition. With very few exceptions the readings in these two editions are almost exactly the same in meaning, and the differences are too slight to have any significant effect on the translation. We have tried to make our translation as readable as possible without straying from the original meaning.

Within the Buddhist canon, the *Lotus Sutra* is one text which should be read as a whole. We recommend reading the text from the beginning and continuing chapter by chapter so that this magnificent drama can be fully grasped as it unfolds. In this sense, Chapter I can be seen as a dramatic prelude; while the well-known parables which emerge during the course of the sutra serve to clarify and enliven the entire narrative. (pp. 1-2)

The chapter headings are nearly as well known as the sūtra itself:

Chapter I	Introduction
II	Skillful Means
III	Parable
IV	Willing Acceptance
V	Herbs
VI	Prediction
VII	Apparitional City
VIII	The Five Hundred Disciples Receive Their Predictions
IX	The Predictions for Those Who Still Have More to Learn and Those Who Do Not
X	The Expounder of the Dharma
XI	The Appearance of a Jeweled Stupa
XII	Devadatta
XIII	Perseverance
XIV	Ease in Practice
XV	Bodhisattvas Emerging from the Earth
XVI	The Life-span of the Tathāgata
XVII	Description of Merits
XVIII	The Merits of Joyful Acceptance
XIX	The Benefits Obtained by an Expounder of the Dharma
XX	Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta
XXI	Transcendent Powers of the Tathāgata
XXII	The Entrustment
XXIII	Ancient Accounts of the Bodhisattva Bhaiṣajyarāja
XXIV	Bodhisattva Gadgadasvara

- XXV The Gateway to Every Direction
[Manifested by the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara]
- XXVI The Dhāraṇī
- XXVII Ancient Accounts of the King Śubhavyūha
- XXVIII Encouragement of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra

Upāya is central to the bodhisattva way. Without a firm grasp of skillful means the bodhisattva risks defilement, and ordinary sentient beings continue transmigration in saṃsāra. Understanding this is crucial to further spiritual progress, and academic study. Without question, *The Lotus Sutra* is one of the most important works in world history. It has been used as a religious textbook, reading primer, moral guide, and means of salvation. Entire schools have grown around this sūtra, and it continues to be popular and normative. This is the newest and most modern scholarship available. No Buddhist library or informed reader should be without *The Lotus Sutra*.

The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts

Venerable Shih Heng-ching of the Fa-Kuang Institute of Buddhist Studies in Taipei is the translator of *The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts translated from the Chinese of Dharmarakṣa*. The book is 225 pages long, with 28 chapters, Glossary, Selected Bibliography, and Index. This is a significant text, as it gives the canonical guidelines for lay followers of the Buddha. Ven. Shih's Introduction is an excellent overview of the work:

The chapter "On Taking Precepts" is the pivot of the *Upāsakaśīla-sūtra*. It explains how a lay Buddhist should conduct himself with respect to six groups of people represented by the six directions. This chapter enumerates six major and twenty-eight minor precepts that are different from the other two main categories of bodhisattva precepts. The Yogācāra tradition has four major and forty-three minor bodhisattva precepts, and the Brahmajāla tradition has ten major and forty-eight minor bodhisattva precepts. Although all three categories of bodhisattva precepts are for bodhisattvas to observe, the six major and twenty-eight minor precepts in this sūtra are mainly for the lay bodhisattva, whereas precepts of the other two traditions are for ordained bodhisattvas. There are twenty-eight chapters in this sūtra. The key points of each chapter can be summarized as follows:

Chapter I: On the Assembly. In response to Sujāta's question, the Buddha points out that in contrast to non-Buddhists' worship

of the six directions in order to procure wealth, Buddhists venerate another six directions—parents, teachers, spouse, friends, subordinates, and *śramanas*—in order to practice the six *pāramitās* (perfections). This is the crux of the sutra.

Chapter II: On Arousing the Aspiration for Enlightenment.

Chapter III: On Compassion. This chapter explains that compassion derived from the observation of the suffering and anguish of sentient beings is the root of the aspiration for enlightenment.

Chapter IV: On Liberation. The cultivation of compassion is said to be the root of liberation.

Chapter V: On Three Kinds of Enlightenment. In this chapter, the three kinds of enlightenment, that of the *śrāvaka*, the *pratyekabuddha*, and the Buddha, are explained using the analogy of the crossing of a river by a rabbit, a horse, and an elephant.

Chapter VI: On Cultivating the Thirty-two Marks. This chapter enumerates the thirty-two marks of the Buddha and explains the sequence by which each mark is cultivated and attained.

Chapter VII: On Making Vows. This chapter emphasizes the importance of vows as the foundation of bodhisattva practice and names those vows that a bodhisattva should make in order to fortify his resolve for enlightenment.

Chapter VIII: On the Meaning of "Bodhisattva." This chapter distinguishes a true bodhisattva from a bodhisattva in name only.

Chapter IX: On the Firm Determination of a True Bodhisattva.

Chapter X: On Benefitting Oneself and Others. This chapter states the eight kinds of wisdom and sixteen qualities with which a bodhisattva should be equipped in order to benefit himself and others.

Chapter XI: On the Adornment of Oneself and Others. This chapter sets forth the eight ways of cultivation with which one adorns oneself and others.

Chapter XII: On Two Adornments. The two adornments of blessing and wisdom achieved through the practice of the six *pāramitās* are elucidated in this chapter.

Chapter XIII: On Drawing In. This chapter explains how to teach ordained and lay Buddhist followers.

Chapter XIV: On Taking Precepts. This chapter expounds the rites of taking the *upāsaka* precepts and enumerates and expounds the six major and twenty-eight minor precepts.

Chapter XV: On the Purification of Precepts. Various ways to purify the precepts are explained in this chapter.

Chapter XVI: On Eliminating Evils.

Chapter XVII: On Making Offerings to the Three Treasures.

Chapter XVIII: On the Six Perfections. This chapter elucidates the meaning and details the practice of the six *pāramitās* of giving, morality, endurance, vigor, meditation, and wisdom.

Chapter XIX: On Miscellaneous Subjects. This chapter explains the categories, merits, and fruitions of the practice of giving.

Chapter XX: On the Three Pure Refuges. The meaning and meritorious virtues of the Three Refuges are explained in this chapter.

Chapter XXI: On the Eight Precepts. This chapter relates the blessings and virtues of taking the eight precepts.

Chapter XXII: On the Five Precepts. This chapter explains the difference between the worldly precepts and the ultimate precepts.

Chapters XXIII to XXVIII: These chapters reiterate the practice of the perfections of morality, endurance, vigor, meditation, and wisdom. (pp. 1-4)

As Venerable Shih has stated, these are the canonical precepts. Anyone interested in the development of the Buddhist movement, or the history and doctrine of Buddhism in China, needs to know this material.

The Essentials of the Eight Traditions
The Candle of the Latter Dharma

The late Dr. Leo Pruden has translated the *Hasshū-kōyō* as *The Essentials of the Eight Traditions* by Gyōnen. It is bound together with Prof. Robert Rhodes' translation of *The Candle of the Latter Dharma* by Saichō. They comprise 181 pages, with indexes, glossaries, and introductions.

The Table of Contents of the *Eight Traditions* gives a clear picture of the structure and content of the work:

Translator's Introduction	
Preface	
Chapter I	The Kusha Tradition
II	The Jōjitsu Tradition
III	The Ritsu Tradition
IV	The Hossō Tradition
V	The Sanron Tradition
VI	The Tendai Tradition
VII	The Kegon Tradition
VIII	The Shingon Tradition

IX The Zen and Jōdo Traditions
 Glossary
 A List of the Texts Mentioned in the Work
 Index

The *Hasshū-kōyō* itself is a dialectic which describes and clarifies the doctrines and practices of the eight schools. The master is questioned on various points regarding each tradition. Dr. Pruden begins his introduction:

The *Hasshū-kōyō* was composed on 1268 (Bun'ei 5) by the scholar-monk Gyōnen (1240-1321), one of the most eminent scholars of his time. (pg. 1)

The translator goes on to discuss the historicity and other extant versions of the text. The *Preface* by Gyōnen gives a wonderful encapsulation of the Buddhist Tradition, and the transmission of the teachings to Japan. Gyōnen relates the beginning of Buddhist practice in Japan:

In the case of Japan in the eleventh month of the sixth year of the reign of the thirteenth Japanese sovereign, the Emperor Kimmei, which year corresponded to the eighth year of Ta-t'ung of the Liang Dynasty (A. D. 545), a *kinoto-ushi* year, the king of Paekche, Song-myōng wang, presented [to the Japanese court] one gold and one alloy image of the Buddha Śākyamuni, along with its pennants and banners, and some volumes of the Buddhist canon. The emperor was overjoyed at this, and when he saw them he worshipped them. (pg. 15)

Having said this, and completing his introduction, the master begins to answer questions specific to each of the Eight Traditions. This text is a standard in any study of the Japanese branch of the Buddhist Tradition.

Robert Rhodes' translation of the *Mappō-tōmyō-ki* is concise and easy to read. In his Introduction, Prof. Rhodes writes:

The Candle of the Latter Dharma (Mappō-tōmyō-ki) is a short but influential Japanese Buddhist text attributed to Saichō (Dengyō Daishi, 767-822), the founder of the Tendai (Chinese T'ien-t'ai) in Japan. This work argues that the true Buddhist of the age of the Latter Dharma is the nominal monk who does not keep the precepts—that is to say, a monk who shaves his hair and wears the Buddhist robes and maintains the outward appearance of a monk

but ignores the Buddhist precepts and acts in a manner that seems to go against the basic rules of monastic life. The argument set forth in this work must have been extremely persuasive to many Buddhists of that age. Although not all who came into contact with this work agreed with its thesis, the question it posed about the proper conduct of a monk living in the period of the Latter Dharma forced them to reflect seriously on what it meant to be a true Buddhist practitioner. Thus there is no question that it strongly influenced the Buddhists of this crucial period of Japanese history. (Introduction)

Also in dialectic style, the *Mappō-tomyō-ki* is a perfect companion to *The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts*. Both texts take up the vital question, "In this world, at this time, how to be a Buddhist?" Indeed, this issue is central to all who follow the Buddha, devotee and non-Buddhist alike.

These first five books give a superb overview and beginning to the Buddhist tradition, and especially Mahāyāna. In many ways, the books can be seen as sequential in their conceptual development. Beginning with *The Summary of the Great Vehicle*, the epistemological foundations of the Mahāyāna are built by Asaṅga. Many key elements of the Mahāyāna are presented, to be amplified by later followers and scholars. *King Asoka* gives us both sacred history, and a legendary example. With him, the growth of the saṅgha and the Buddhist movement gave rise to the lay followers. *The Upāsaka Precepts* address that very condition, and the tension between lay and monastic practice. As the Mahāyāna and the saṅgha grew, so did the role of the bodhisattva. This runs through all the texts, and is brought to a pinnacle in *The Lotus Sutra*. The concerns of real-life, everyday practice are the subject of *The Essentials of the Eight Traditions*, and *The Candle of the Latter Dharma*.

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Ann Yoshiko Imada

June 7, 1925 - January 31, 1995

Program clerk
at the
Institute of Buddhist Studies
from
January, 1991
to
January, 1995

With deep gratitude for
her warmth, kindness,
humor, and the joy she
brought into our lives.