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## Genshin's *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth* and the Transmission of Pure Land Buddhism to Japan.

### Part II. The Third Phase of Transmission: A Quantitative Survey of the Resources utilized by Genshin

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In Part One of this study we examined the first and second phases of transmission of Pure Land teachings to Japan during the Nara [646-794] and early Heian [794-1185] periods. With regard to phase one during the Nara Period, we pointed out that the first documented instance of Japanese Pure Land piety was in 640, that almost all important continental Pure Land texts then extant were imported during this phase, and that Pure Land rituals and scholarship attained great popularity among the aristocracy and clergy respectively. However, we also pointed out that during the Nara Period there was very little *nembutsu* cultivation or concern with personal Pure Land salvation.

In examining the second phase of transmission, we found that Saichō [767-822] and Ennin [794-864] had imported to Japan Pure Land texts and *nembutsu* rituals then popular in China which became established features in the ceremonial and intellectual life of the Tendai School. These eventually stimulated interest in *nembutsu* cultivation and Pure Land piety among both the Tendai clergy and the lay aristocracy. The Tendai priest Kūya [893-972] propagated *nembutsu* among the folk, and clergy like Ryōgen [912-985], Senkan [918-983], and Zen'yu [909-990] composed Pure Land works which drew heavily on Nara Period Pure Land scholarship and on the T'ien-t'ai Pure Land works transmitted by Saichō. Further, we found that by the early tenth century Pure Land piety had begun to replace esoteric Buddhism in the lives of the aristocracy. Finally, in 986 the aristocrat

Yōshishige Yasutane [d. 997] together with Genshin [942-1017] formed a Pure Land devotional society called the *Nembutsu-samadhi* Society of Twenty-five. Genshin's *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth* [*Ōjo yōshū*],<sup>1</sup> completed in 985, was written as a manual of *nembutsu* cultivation for this society.

As we noted in Part One, while the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth* was a product of the second phase of transmission of Pure Land piety to Japan, it transcended its origins. It initiated a third phase, a new impulse, in the transmission of Pure Land ideas and practices to Japan. Unlike earlier transmissions, however, no monks crossed the waters, no texts were imported. Genshin's transmission of Pure Land piety consisted rather in a lucid and thorough introduction of ideas and practices inherent in texts and rites imported to Japan centuries before, but not yet comprehended. Genshin responded to the needs of his contemporaries for Pure Land practices more rigorous and devotional, and for a more radical Pure Land soteriology, by introducing to them the ideas and methods of the continental populist Pure Land masters Tao-ch'ō [Dōshaku, 562-645], Shan-tao [Zendō, 613-681], Chia-ts'ai [Kazai, d. after 648], and Huai-kan [Ekan, d. 710].<sup>2</sup>

In Part Two and Part Three of this study our task will be to demonstrate this transmission of populist Pure Land ideas in the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth*. Here in Part Two we will conduct a statistical analysis of the texts Genshin cites in the

*Essentials*. In Part Three, to be published in a later issue of this journal, we will examine exactly what ideas of which populist thinkers Genshin introduced to his contemporaries and later generations.

Thus, our task here is to determine which texts the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth* drew on with what frequency. The enormity of this assignment becomes apparent when we realize that the *Essentials* utilized some 160 different texts in over

960 citations [Hanayama, 2.34].<sup>3</sup> An initial approach to deciding which of these texts were more important for Genshin is obviously to determine which were more frequently cited. Hanayama Shinshō has listed the twenty-three most cited texts [2.34] as shown in Table 1. I have added the percentage (rounded to the first decimal place) which the number of citations from each text represents of the total 960 citations.

TABLE 1. TEXTS MOST FREQUENTLY CITED IN THE *ESSENTIALS*

TEXTS	CITATIONS	%
Buddha Contemplation Samadhi Ocean Sutra (Kambutsu sammai kai kyō) T643 <sup>4</sup>	58	6.0
Avatamsaka sutras (Daihōkō Butsu kegon kyō) T278, 279, 293	55	5.7
Great Perfection of Wisdom Shastra (Dai chido ron) T1509	46	4.8
Nagarjuna Shastra on the Ten Bodhisattva Stages (Jūjū bibasha ron) T1521	43	4.5
Amitabha Contemplation Sutra (Bussetsu kammuryōjubutsu kyō) T365	40	4.2
Great Heap of Jewels Sutra (Dai hōshaku kyō) T310	35	3.6
Sutra of Limitless Life (Bussetsu muryōju kyō) T360	34	3.5
Interpretation of the Multitude of Pure Land Problems (Shaku Jōdo gungi ron) T1960	33	3.4
Great Assembled Sutra (Daihōdō daijikkō) T397	32	3.3
Nirvana sutras (Daihatsu nehan gyō) T374, 375	32	3.3
Seeing All Buddhas Samadhi Sutra (Hanju sammai kyō) T418	24	2.5
Mindfulness of the Right Dharma Sutra (Shōbō nenjō kyō) T721	23	2.4
Great Concentration and Contemplation (Maka shikan) T1911	22	2.3
Shastra on the Stages of Yoga (Yuga shiji ron) T1579	20	2.2
Standard Interpretations on the Western Land (Saihō yōketsu shakugi tsūki) T1964	18	1.9
Assembled Passages on the Land of Peace and Bliss (Anraku shū) T1958	15	1.6
Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra (Dai hannya haramita kyō) T220	14	1.5
Mahayana Mind-ground Contemplation Sutra (Daijō honjō shinji kangyō) T159	14	1.5
Hymns in Praise of Pure Land Rebirth (Ōjō raisan ge) T1980	13	1.4
Lotus Sutra (Myōhō renge kyō) T262	12	1.3
Treatise on the Pure Land (Jōdo ron of Chia-ts'ai) T1963	12	1.3
Great Sorrow Sutra (Daihi kyō) T380	10	1.0
Sutra on the Amitabha Regal Drum Voice Dharani (Amida kuon jōō darani kyō) T370	7	0.7
Total Citations	612	63.8%

This is an impressive list, chiefly for its variety. The most frequently cited text is utilized only six percent of the time. Yet, all the texts which are cited 1% or more of the total add up to 63.8% of all citations. The most frequently cited text, the *Buddha Contemplation Samadhi Ocean Sutra*, is neither a Tendai nor a Pure Land text. And though works of Chih-i [Chigi, 538-579, founder of the T'ien-t'ai School] and the populist Pure Land masters Tao-ch'o, Shan-iao and Huai-kan are included among these 23 most cited texts, a pattern of reliance on major texts of the Tendai School or of the populist Pure Land movement is not apparent.

We can refine this quantitative approach by isolating types of texts, chiefly Tendai and Pure

Land, and comparing the frequency of citation of these types for specific chapters of the *Essentials*. We have some very useful data for such an investigation in the painstaking researches of Hanayama Shinshō who devised a chart of all the 160 texts cited in the *Essentials* listing the number of times each text is cited in each chapter of the *Essentials*, and the total number of citations from each text for each chapter. Using this data we can quantitatively compare the resources utilized by the *Essentials* for different aspects of its teachings. Let us first analyze the major resources utilized by the *Essentials* into four categories — T'ien-t'ai [i.e., Tendai] resources, Pure Land resources, Japanese and Korean Pure Land works, and other major resources, as in Table 2.

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TABLE 2. MAJOR T'IENT-T'AI, PURE LAND, AND OTHER TEXTS CITED BY THE  
*ESSENTIALS*

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I. T'ien-t'ai Texts

- A. T'ien-t'ai Sutras
  - Lotus Sutra T262
  - Nirvana Sutra T374, 375
  - Avatamsaka sutras T278, 279, 293
- B. Perfection of Wisdom (*prajñā pāramitā*) Sutras and Shastras
  - Sutras — T159, 220, 232, 235, 243, 245, 261, 463, 475
  - Shastras — T1509, 1511, 1521, 1564
- C. Works of Chih-i
  - Great Concentration and Contemplation (Maka shikan) T1911
  - Commentary on the Vimalakīrti sūtra T1778
  - Commentary on the Passages of the Lotus Sutra T1718
- D. T'ien-t'ai Pure Land Works
  - T'ien-t'ai Commentary on the Amitabha Contemplation Sutra T1750
  - T'ien-t'ai Ten Doubts on the Pure Land (Jōdo jūgi ron) T1961

II. Populist Pure Land Texts

- A. Pure Land Sutras and Shastras
  - Amitabha Contemplation Sutra (Kammuryōju kyō) T365
  - Larger Pure Land sutras (Daikyō, Byōdōgaku kyō, Dai Amida kyō) T360, 361, 362

Amitabha sutra (Amida kyō) T366

Seeing All Buddhas Samadhi Sutra (Hanju sammai kyō) T417 in 1 scroll

Chapter on the Easy Practice (Igyō bon of the Jūjū bibasha ron) T1521

Vasubandhu Pure Land Shastra (Jōdo ron, Ōjō ron) T1524

B. Works of Pure Land Masters

1. Tao-ch'o (and T'an-luan)

Assembled Passages on the Land of Peace and Bliss (Anraku shū) T1958

Commentary on the Vasubandhu Pure Land Shastra T1819, and Short Treatise on the Pure Land of Peace and Bliss T1957 (T'an-luan's Ōjō ronchō and Ryakuron Anraku Jōdo gi)

2. Shan-tao

Methods and Merits of Samadhi of Contemplation and Reflection upon the Ocean-like Features of Amitabha Buddha (Kannen bōmon) T1959

Hymns in Praise of Pure Land Rebirth (Ōjō raisan ge) T1980

Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra (Kangyō sho, Gengi bun) T1753

3. Chia-ts'ai

Treatise on the Pure Land (Jōdo ron) T1963

4. Huai-kan

Interpretation of the Multitude of Pure Land Problems (Shaku Jōdo gungi ron) T1960

III. Korean and Japanese Pure Land Texts

Supplement to the Exposition of the Sutra of Limitless Life (Muryōjūkyō rengi jutsūbun san by Ching-hsing) T1748

Joyous Road to the Land of Peace and Bliss (Yushin anraku dō by Yuan-hsiao) T1965

Commentary on the Shastra on the Sutra of Limitless Life (Ōjō ron, Chikō shaku)

Meaning of the Nine Grades of Rebirth into the Pure Land (Gokuraku Jōdo kubon ōjō gi by Ryōgen)

Records of Japanese Rebirth into the Land Utter Bliss (Nihon ōjō Gokuraku ki by Yoshishige Yasutane)

*Et cetera.*<sup>5</sup>

IV. Miscellaneous Frequently Cited Texts

Buddha Contemplation Samadhi Ocean Sutra (Kambutsu sammai kai kyō) T643

Great Heap of Jewels Sutra (Maha ratnakuta sūtra) T310

Great Assembled Sutra (Maha samnipata sūtra) T397

Mindfulness of the Right Dharma Sutra (Shōbō nenjō kyō) T721

Shastra on the Stages of Yoga (Yogacarabhūmi śāstra) T1579

Standard Interpretations on the Western Land (Saihō yōketsu) T1964

Mahayana Mind-ground Contemplation Sutra (Daijō honjō shinji kangyō) T159

Great Sorrow Sutra (Daihi kyō) T380

Sutra on the Amitabha Regal Drum Voice Dharani (Amida kuon jōdō darani kyō) T370

Some comments are in order concerning the reasons for this selection and grouping of texts. Fifty-six texts in all have been selected as the initial pool for comparison. All the texts in Hanayama's list of 23 are somewhere in these four groups, which means that all texts cited in the *Essentials* at least ten times (1% of all citations) have been included. We have chosen to isolate Tendai (Ch., T'ien-t'ai) texts because Genshin was a high-ranking priest in the Tendai School and we could expect him to draw heavily upon that school's scriptures in presenting a Buddhist praxis. This group can thus serve as a standard, our control group if you will, against which we can compare the other groups. On the other hand, we have claimed that the third phase of transmission of Pure Land devotionalism consists in the introduction by Genshin's *Essentials* of the ideas and practices of the Chinese populist Pure Land movement. If this is the case, we should find our second resource group, that consisting of populist Pure Land texts, frequently cited. Resource Group Three, Korean and Japanese Pure Land texts, has been included so that we may determine to what extent Genshin was influenced by earlier Japanese Pure Land thought versus continental Pure Land thought. The miscellaneous category of texts includes works which were significantly cited (at least 1% of all instances), but fall within none of the other resource groups.

Regarding the contents of resource group one, T'ien-t'ai texts, the works selected as T'ien-t'ai sutras are those which were important to Chih-i. They were either frequently cited by him or highly valued in his system of doctrinal classification. Perfection of Wisdom thought is central to T'ien-t'ai doctrine, thus Perfection of Wisdom sutras and shastras have been designated as T'ien-t'ai texts. The *T'ien-t'ai Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra* and the *T'ien-t'ai Ten Doubts on the Pure Land* are not works of Chih-i as once

thought [Andrews 1989], but were highly valued in the T'ien-t'ai School. As we have seen, they represent the influence of Pure Land devotionalism on T'ien-t'ai thought.

With regard to the populist Pure Land resource group, we have of course included the three sutras and two shastras fundamental to the Pure Land movement since the time of T'an-luan [488-c. 554]. To these three sutras we have added the *Seeing All Buddhas Samadhi Sutra* which was very influential on Tao-ch'o and Shan-tao. One of the two shāstras, the *Nagarjuna Shastra on the Ten Bodhisattva Stages*, is represented here by just one of its chapters, the Ninth, the so-called "Chapter on the Easy Practice" [*Igyō bon*]. (The entire Shastra [T1521] is included with T'ien-t'ai texts as a perfection of wisdom shastra.) Because Hanayama's chart does not give data for this chapter specifically, the numbers of citations credited below to this text are my calculations. Among works of populist Chinese Pure Land masters we have selected all those of six major masters (all except one active in the early T'ang Period) cited in the *Essentials*. The works of T'an-luan — the *Commentary on the Vasubandhu Pure Land Shastra* [Ōjōron chū] and the *Short Treatise on the Pure Land of Peace and Bliss* [Ryakuron Anraku Jōdo gi] — have been included even though they are cited very infrequently. T'an-luan's influence on the *Essentials* is exerted primarily by way of his influence on Tao-ch'o's *Assembled Passages on the Land of Peace and Bliss*.

As we mentioned above, we want to compare the frequency with which these groups of texts are cited in specific chapters of the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth*. We therefore need an overview of the *Essentials*. Table 3 gives an outline of the titles and major topics of the ten chapters of the *Essentials*. Those sections with important teachings on the cultivation or efficacy of *nembutsu* are printed in bold-face type.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR TITLES AND TOPICS OF THE *ESSENTIALS*

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- I. Despising the Defiled Realm — Depictions of the sufferings of the rebirth-paths of hell, hungry spirits, beasts, angry gods, humans and deities
  - II. Longing for the Pure Land — Descriptions of the bliss of being welcomed at death, being reborn in the Pure Land, seeing and hearing the Buddha, *etc.*
  - III. Authorities for the Superiority of the Pure Land — Scriptural verification of the superiority of the Amida's Pure Land over all the others and over the Tusita Heaven of Maitreya
  - IV. The Right Cultivation of Nembutsu — How to comprehensively cultivate orthodox and effective nembutsu: the practice of the five dharma-gates of buddha-reflection
    1. The Dharma-gate of Worship
    2. The Dharma-gate of Praise
    3. The Dharma-gate of Resolve
      - (1) Relative vows — Conforming to relative truth
      - (2) Ultimate vows — Conforming to Ultimate Truth
    4. The Gate of Contemplative Examination
      - (1) Buddha-mark contemplation
      - (2) General Buddha contemplation
        - i. Contemplation of the phenomenal Buddha
        - ii. Contemplation of the noumenal Buddha
      - (3) Simplified Buddha contemplation
        - i. Contemplation of the "wisdom-eye" buddha-mark or one's own rebirth in the Pure Land
        - ii. Extremely simplified buddha reflection
        - iii. Buddha reflection for those who cannot contemplate
    5. The Dharma-gate of Dedication of Merit
  - V. Aids to the Cultivation of Nembutsu
    1. The Place and Its Preparation
    2. The Manner of Practice
      - (1) The four modes of practice
        - i. Life-long
        - ii. Reverentially
        - iii. Ceaseless
        - iv. Exclusive
      - (2) The three kinds of faith
        - i. Sincere faith
        - ii. Deep faith
        - iii. Faith which dedicates all merits toward the mutual rebirth of self and others
    3. Preventing Indolence
    4. Stopping Evil and Performing Good — the necessity of keeping the precepts
    5. Repenting of Transgressions



6. Resisting Evil Spirits
7. Summary of Essentials — Nembutsu is the fundamental karmic cause of rebirth; if assisted by arousing the aspiration for enlightenment, observance of precepts, deep and sincere faith, and constant cultivation, then in accord with one's resolve rebirth will be certain.
- VI. Nembutsu for Special Occasions
  1. Nembutsu Sessions
    - (1) Seven-day nembutsu-samadhi of Shan-tao
    - (2) Ninety-day constantly walking samadhi of 'Chih-i's *Great Concentration and Contemplation*
  2. Extreme Nembutsu — Prescriptions for nembutsu at death by Shan-tao and Tao-ch'o
- VII. The Benefits of Nembutsu — Verifying with citations from scripture the efficacy of nembutsu cultivation
  1. The Benefit of Extinguishing Evil Karma and Generating Good
  2. The Benefit of Receiving Protection
  3. The Benefit of Seeing Buddha
  4. The Benefit of Pure Land Rebirth
  5. The Benefits of Reflecting upon Amida — Verification of Benefits 1 to 5 above
- VIII. Authorities for Nembutsu — Further verification of rebirth by easy and convenient nembutsu
- IX. Other Practices for Rebirth — Verification that practices other than nembutsu are effective for rebirth
- X. Discussion of Issues
  1. The Land Utter Bliss and Its Beings — The ontological status of Amida and his land
  2. The Grades of Rebirth — The spiritual status of the nine grades of the *Contemplation Sutra*
  3. The Quantity of Those Reborn in the Pure Land — The difficulty or ease of rebirth by nembutsu
  4. The Nature of Nembutsu — Types of nembutsu
  5. The Nature of Extreme Nembutsu — The character and power of the "ten-reflections" nembutsu of the *Sutra of Limitless Life*
  6. Fine Rewards for Course Minds — The efficacy of nembutsu for even the evil and faithless
  7. Superior and Inferior Practices — The Efficacy of nembutsu versus that of all other practices
  8. The Causes and Conditions of Faith and Faltering — The Minimum conditions necessary for rebirth
  9. Material Aids to Practice — The importance of the precepts for ordinary beings
  10. Human and Scriptural Aids to Practice — The texts most useful for nembutsu cultivation

We are now able to compare the frequency of citations from the four groups of texts in specific chapters of the *Essentials*. Table 4 presents the number of citations per text in Chapters 4 and 6, Chapter 7, Chapter 8, and Chapter 10 of the *Essentials*, and the total citations in all five of these chapters. Also listed are the total citations from each text and each group of texts. Chapters 4 and 5 were chosen for this survey because they are the sections of the *Essentials* which set out methods of *nembutsu* cultivation — Chapter 4, *nembutsu* cultivation in general, Chapter 6, *nembutsu* for special sessions and extreme *nembutsu*. Chapter 5, Section 2 is also important for the manner and faith with

which to cultivate *nembutsu*, but because Hanayama does not supply data for individual sections of chapters, we have omitted this section entirely. Chapters 7 and 8, as indicated in our outline of the *Essentials*, are concerned with the efficacy of *nembutsu* — Chapter 7 with the efficacy of *nembutsu* of all varieties and for several kinds of benefits, Chapter 8 with the efficacy of easy, invocational *nembutsu* for just Pure Land rebirth. While only the first five sections of Chapter 10 are concerned specifically with the cultivation and efficacy of *nembutsu*, it is my judgement that valuable data can nonetheless be derived from a survey of the citations in all 10 sections.

TABLE 4. SURVEY OF CITATIONS IN THE *ESSENTIALS OF PURE LAND REBIRTH* ON THE CULTIVATION AND EFFICACY OF *NEMBUTSU*

ŌJŌYŌSHŪ CHAPTERS	4 & 6	7	8	10	4,6-8,10
TOTAL CITATIONS ALL TEXT	205	93	12	220	530
RESOURCE TEXTS					
I. T'ien-t'ai Texts					
A. T'ien-t'ai Sutras					
Lotus Sutra T262	1	1	0	4	6(1%)
Nirvana sutras T374, 375	13	0	0	10	23(4%)
Kegon sutras T278, 279, 293	16	3	0	11	30(6%)
Totals	30(15%)	4(4%)	0(0%)	25(11%)	59(11%)
B. Perfection of Wisdom Sutras and Shastras					
Sutras T159, 220, 232, 235, 243, 245, 261, 463, 475	13	2	0	5	20(4%)
Shastras T1509, 1511, 1521, 1564	32	0	1	8	41(7%)
Totals	45(22%)	2(2%)	1(8%)	13(6%)	61(11%)
C. Works of Chih-i					
Great Concentration and Contemplation T1911	7	0	0	4	11(2%)
Commentary on the Vimalakirti sutra T1778	0	0	0	1	1(0%)



Commentary on the Lotus Sutra T1718	1	0	0	1	2(1%)
Total Works of Chih-i	8(4%)	0	0	6(3%)	14(3%)
D. T'ien-t'ai Pure Land Works					
T'ien-t'ai Ten Doubts on the Pure Land T1961	3	0	0	3	6(1%)
T'ien-t'ai Commentary on the Amitabha Contemplation Sutra T1750	0	0	0	1	1(0%)
Total T'ien-t'ai Pure Land	3(1%)	0	0	4(2%)	7(1%)
Grand Total T'ien-t'ai Citations	86(42%)	6(6%)	1(8%)	48(22%)	141(26%)
II. Populist Pure Land Texts					
A. Sutras and Shastras					
Amitabha Contemplation Sutra T365	9(4%)	12(13%)	3(25%)	3(1%)	27(5%)
Larger Pure Land sutras T360, 361, 362	5(2%)	4(4%)	2(17%)	18(8%)	29(6%)
Amitabha sutra T366	0	0	1(8%)	6(3%)	7(1%)
Seeing All Buddhas Samadhi Sutra T418	4(2%)	7(7%)	1(8%)	5(2%)	17(3%)
Chapter on the Easy Practice T1521	1(?)	0	0	0	1(?)
Vasubandhu Pure Land Shastra T1524	3(1%)	0	1(8%)	1	5(1%)
Totals	22(11%)	23(25%)	8(66%)	33(15%)	86(16%)
B. Works of Pure Land Masters					
Tao-ch'o T1958	3(1%)	1(1%)	0	10(5%)	14(3%)
T'an-luan T1819, 1957	1	0	0	1	2
Total Tao-ch'o and T'an-luan Shan-tao	4(2%)	1(1%)	0	11(5%)	16(3%)
Methods and Merits of Samadhi T1959	4(2%)	1(1%)	0	1	6(1%)
Hymns in Praise of Pure Land Rebirth T1980	2(1%)	1(1%)	0	2(1%)	5(1%)
Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra T1753	1	0	0	2(1%)	3(1%)
Total Shan-tao	7(3%)	2(2%)	0	5(2%)	14(3%)
Chai-ts'ai T1963	1	2(2%)	0	4(2%)	7(1%)
Huai-kan T1960	1	1(1%)	0	22(10%)	24(5%)
Grand Total Pure Land Masters	13(6%)	6(6%)	0	42(19%)	61(12%)
Grand Total Pure Land Citations	35(17%)	29(31%)	8(66%)	75(34%)	147(28%)
III. Korean and Japanese Pure Land Texts					
Supplement to the Exposition of the Sutra of Limitless Life T1748	0	0	0	0	0

Joyous Path to the Land of Peace and Bliss T1965	0	0	0	0	0
Chikō	0	2	0	1	3
Ryōgen	1	0	0	2	3
Yoshishige	0	1	0	1	2
Etc.	0	0	0	3	3
Total Citations	1(0.5%)	3(3%)	0	7(3%)	11(2%)

## IV. Miscellaneous Works

Buddha Contemplation Samadhi Ocean Sutra T643	18	18	0	10	46(9%)
Great Heap of Jewels Sutra T310	5	4	0	3	12(2%)
Great Assembled Sutra T397	13	2	0	10	25(5%)
Mindfulness of Right Dharma Sutra T721	0	0	0	0	0(0%)
Shastra on the Stages of Yoga T1579	8	0	0	2	10(2%)
Standard Interpretations on the Western Land T1964	2	0	0	5	7(1%)
Mahayana Mind-ground Contemplation Sutra T159	2	0	0	0	2(0%)
Great Sorrow Sutra T380	0	5	0	4	9(2%)
Sutra on the Amitabha Regal Drum Voice Dharani T370	1	0	1	1	3(1%)
Total Miscellaneous Texts Citations	49(24%)	29(31%)	1(8%)	35(16%)	114(22%)

What insights can we derive from this survey? First of all, while the 56 texts in our 4 groups comprise only 35% of the 160 texts cited by the *Essentials*, they account for 78% of all citations in the 5 chapters under consideration. Thus we can be confident that we have surveyed the most important resources of the *Essentials* for its teachings on the cultivation and efficacy of *nembutsu*. Proceeding to examine the grand totals for the four resource groups, we find surprisingly that the percentage of total citations drawn from T'ien-t'ai works and from Pure Land works are nearly equal — T'ien-t'ai works account for 26% of the citations in the chapters under consideration, and Pure

Land works 28%. This conforms with the traditional view that the *Essentials* skillfully integrates T'ien-t'ai and Pure Land positions. More importantly for our investigation, this tells us that Pure Land works were a major resource for the *Essentials*, exceeding even T'ien-t'ai works in number of citations within these chapters. On the other hand, citations of Japanese and Korean Pure Land works, group three, constitute a mere 2% of the total, confirming that the *Essentials* virtually ignored earlier Japanese Pure Land texts, especially those of the Nara Period, and went directly to the continental sources of populist Pure Land piety. Finally, the miscellaneous resource group ac-

counts for a very significant 22% of citations. One thing this tells us is that Genshin was very eclectic in his thinking and virtually encyclopedic in his learning. And while we may be able to determine with this survey the major influences on the *Essentials*, we should not assume that Genshin's purview was restricted within even the broad confines of T'ien-t'ai and Pure Land teachings.

Within the T'ien-t'ai resource group, we find that an equal percentage of citations were derived from the sutras and the perfection of wisdom texts, 11% each. Of the remaining 4% of this group's citations, 3% are from Chih-i's works and 1% from T'ien-t'ai Pure Land texts. While 3% may seem insignificant, it is a substantial figure considering that it represents citations from the works of a Chinese master rather than from purportedly Indian sutras and shastras. We should note, furthermore, that over three quarters of these citations from Chih-i's works — 11 of the 14 citations — are from the *Great Concentration and Contemplation*. This suggests that the *Great Concentration and Contemplation* was a substantial resource for the *Essentials*. Finally 7 citations, or slightly more than 1%, are derived from the T'ien-t'ai Pure Land works, *T'ien-t'ai Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra* and the *T'ien-t'ai Ten Doubts on the Pure Land*. This is not insignificant, but is less impressive a contribution than could be expected from texts with both T'ien-t'ai and Pure Land credentials, and which, moreover, had been cited extensively by Genshin's contemporaries, Ryōgen and Zen'yu. A likely reason for the poor showing in the *Essentials* of the *T'ien-t'ai Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra* is that there is relatively little populist influence on this work. As for the *T'ien-t'ai Ten Doubts*, while it was heavily influenced by populist Pure Land thought, especially that of Tao-ch'o, and strongly defends Pure Land piety, it has little to say about *nembutsu* cultivation.

Turning to the populist Pure Land resource group, we find first that among sutras the three versions of the *Larger Pure Land Sutra* are together

cited more frequently than the *Amitabha Contemplation Sutra* [*Kammuryōju kyō*]. This is surprising since the *Contemplation Sutra* is very rich in *nembutsu* instruction, but confirms Genshin's high evaluation of the populist Pure Land position. The *Larger Sutra* is the repository of the fundamental populist principal, the promise and power of the vows of Amitabha Buddha to save all sentient beings.

Looking next at the citations from works of Pure Land masters, we find that 12% of all citations in the chapters under consideration are from these works. This is a very significant number in that it is larger than the percent of total citations of any other sub-category we have examined yet, except Pure Land sutras and shastras. We have noted in Part One of this study that the first work listed in this sub-category, Tao-ch'o's *Assembled Passages on the Land of Peace and Bliss*, was first transmitted to Japan during the Nara Period. It was transmitted again by Ennin during the early Heian Period. But it was here in Genshin's *Essentials* that this work was first cited in a Japanese text [Yamamoto, 117 and 174-175]. Genshin introduced ideas of the *Assembled Passages on the Land of Peace and Bliss* to Japan with 15 citations, 14 in the chapters being surveyed, amounting to 3% of total citations. This is a greater number of citations than Genshin took from the *Great Concentration and Contemplation*, and almost as many as were derived from the perfection of wisdom sutras or the *Amitabha Contemplation Sutra*.

We see that three of Shan-tao's works — his *Methods and Merits of Samadhi*, *Hymns in Praise of Pure Land Rebirth*, and *Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra* — are cited by Genshin a total of 14 times, amounting to 3%, figures identical to those for Tao-ch'o's *Assembled Passages* and for the works of Chih-i. This means that Genshin substantially utilized Shan-tao's works as well. Moreover, Shan-tao's *Hymns* is cited 5 additional times in Section 2 of Chapter 5 which was excluded from our survey for lack of specific data in Hanayama. We noted in Part One of this

study that two of these three works, the *Hymns* and the *Commentary*, were transmitted during the Nara Period. They were probably re-transmitted by Ennin or his disciple Enchin [814-891] during the early Heian Period, together with Shan-tao's *Methods and Merits of Samadhi*, which had not reached Japan during the Nara Period [Ōhara, 50-51]. But by this time three scrolls of Shan-tao's *Commentary on the Contemplation Sutra* had in China been lost, so that in all likelihood only the first scroll was re-transmitted to Japan. Genshin knew only this first scroll of Shan-tao's commentary, that entitled "Chapter on the Profound Meaning [of the *Amitabha Contemplation Sutra*]" [*Gengi bun*] [Yagi 1940, 174-181]. Little if any notice was taken of Shan-tao's works at any time subsequent to their first and second importations to Japan. The *Methods and Merits of Samadhi* was not cited at all, except in the little known *Western Pure Land Penance* [*Saihō sangebō*] [Andrews 1989], until its use here in the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth*. The *Essentials* thus introduced the populist Pure Land devotionism of both Tao-ch'o and Shan-tao to Japan.

Finally, we see that Huai-kan's *Interpretation of the Multitude of Pure Land Problems* was cited 24 times, 22 times in Chapter 10 alone, which represents 10% of that chapter's citations. While the major topic of Chapter 10 is the possibility of rebirth of common, deluded beings, its style is apologetic, responding to doubts and concerns about Pure Land soteriology by means of hypothetical questions and answers citing scriptural authorities. This is identical to the style of the *Interpretation of the Multitude of Pure Land Problems*. This work is an extensive exploration of 116 such concerns and issues in seven scrolls. Many of the issues that were of concern to Huai-kan and his contemporaries remained of concern to Genshin and his colleagues, and thus Genshin draws upon

the Huai-kan's *Interpretations* extensively throughout the *Essentials*, but especially in Chapter 10. While Genshin does not always necessarily agree with the views of Huai-kan, he finds him a convenient source of opinions on difficult issues. These observations are not intended, however, to dismiss Huai-kan's influence on the *Essentials*. On the contrary, Huai-kan is a major figure in the populist Pure Land movement whose views were highly valued by Genshin and extensively introduced to Japan in the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth*.

To conclude our quantitative, statistical survey of the resources for *nembutsu* of the *Essentials of Pure Land Rebirth*, we see that Genshin has drawn extensively on both T'ien-t'ai and populist Pure Land texts. Unlike the first transmission which drew heavily on Korean Pure Land masters of the Hua-yen and Fa-hsiang schools and the second transmission which utilized T'ien-t'ai Pure Land works and Nara Period Pure Land scholarship, our survey shows that for this third transmission the *Essentials* went directly to the sources of the populist Pure Land movement — the primary Pure Land scriptures and the continental populist Pure Land masters.

A quantitative survey, however, has its limitations. It can tell us how many citations were used, but not the content nor import of those citations. Moreover, such numbers can be misleading, especially in the case of the *Essentials*, which often cites an array of positions on a particular issue before indicating a preference for one of them. Some issues and the citations used to explore them are superficial, while others are central to Pure Land praxis and soteriology. Thus it now remains to determine what ideas and methods Genshin borrowed from his continental sources and how he used them. This we shall do in Part Three of this study.

## FOOTNOTES

1. See "References" for bibliographic details on this and other texts referred to in this study.

2. The Populist Pure Land tradition is so called because of its concern for the salvation of the most populous groups of Chinese society. By radical soteriology, we mean the assertion of Pure Land salvation for even the most spiritually destitute by the easiest of means. On both of these points see Part One of this study, Andrews 1989. For a general description of the contents of the *Essentials*, see Andrews 1973.

3. Hanayama's translation of, and introduction to, the *Essentials* is contained in one volume (see References), but with separate pagination for the translation and the introductory materials. Here we will designate the first sequence of pages, that of the translation by "1.", and the second sequence, that of the introduction, by "2."

4. See "References" for Chinese titles. "T" refers to the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon (see References); the numerals following "T" indicate the text serial number in the Taishō edition. However, "T" followed by a numeral, a period, and more numerals and characters (e.g., T84.33a) indicates volume, page, and page section in the Taishō collection (in this example, Vol. 84, p. 33, section a).

5. Four additional Japanese texts listed by Hanayama, 2.43.

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## The Theme of Subjectivity in Kiyozawa Manshi's *Seishinshugi*

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A careful consideration of the notion of subjectivity is an appropriate starting point for understanding Kiyozawa Manshi's religious faith. Subjectivity emerges as a major theme in Kiyozawa's thinking especially during the last five years of his life, from 1898 until 1903. It is also during this period that he adopts the name *Seishinshugi* for his distinctive interpretation of the Shinshu faith. This name is usually rendered as Spiritualism in English, although the more common usage of the term spiritualism with its belief in communication with the dead has nothing to do with Kiyozawa's term. The meaning Kiyozawa gives to *Seishinshugi* clearly points to a form of religious faith centering on the development of the *seishin* (mind or spirit) as a subjective reality, not after death but here and now.

Kiyozawa's contributions to the *Seishinshugi* movement and some of his other published articles from this same period are the basic sources for learning about his notion of subjectivity and its application to religious faith. We see him, in effect, attempting to restate the Shinshu faith in terms that were intended to make it more accessible to modern minds.

Looking back from our present perspective nearly a century later, we see Kiyozawa's language and his religious ideas as belonging more to the 19th century than to our own. But the fruitfulness of his insights should not be judged merely by our own standards. Paradigms do change, but change in itself is not necessarily progress. The change of our paradigms makes it increasingly difficult to recover the values imbedded in past systems of thought. Yet, that is precisely why we study the past, and, in this case, why we are to

attend to Kiyozawa's subjectivity. Some of the values he was earnestly trying to achieve may still be recoverable. And some of his ideas may be found to point in forgotten directions. This is reason enough, I think, to take another look at Kiyozawa's subjectivity.

And so, it seems worthy to ask what was Kiyozawa's understanding of subjectivity? This is the central question. But at the same time, it will be necessary to know something about the circumstances under which Kiyozawa's thought developed in the last years of his life. The distinctively practical as opposed to theoretical nature of his thought must be kept in mind, because Kiyozawa nowhere treats the matter of subjectivity with analytical rigor. It will be appropriate, therefore, to proceed from a general introduction of subjectivity as a concept to some of the more specific applications of the idea that can be found in Kiyozawa's essays. I trust that, in the process, some notion of the value of Kiyozawa's thought to present-day reflection will become apparent.

### CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HELPED TO SHAPE THE *SEISHINSHUGI*

Kiyozawa's *Seishinshugi* movement began with the publication of a magazine called *Seishinkai* (Spiritual World) in January of 1901. At this time Kiyozawa was living in Tokyo and was serving as president of the newly relocated Shinshu College (the forerunner of Ōtani University). His home, to which he gave the name *Kōkōdō*, quickly became a lively center for lectures and discussions of religious matters. Unfortunately, his early death in 1903 deprived the fledgling



movement of his leadership, and the movement lasted for only a few years after his death. Yet, in the last several years of his life, Kiyozawa made a significant contribution through his lectures and articles, and it is this material that will be of particular importance for the present inquiry.

The character of the movement was significantly influenced by Kiyozawa's reading and reflections during the years immediately preceding the move to Tokyo. A case of pulmonary tuberculosis had forced him into semi-retirement in 1898 and had given him time to synthesize his thoughts. It is said that the three sources that most occupied his attention at this time were the *Āgamas* of the *Theravāda* tradition, the *Tannisho*, and the *Discourses and Manual of Epictetus*. One must be struck by the breadth of his interests and his openness to traditions other than his own. He was, for instance, in the forefront of those who, in the 1890's, were giving serious attention to the *Theravāda* texts. Among Shinshu scholars, he was an early advocate of opening up the *Tannisho* for public use instead of keeping it restricted to the priestly curriculum. He was conversant, through his studies in Tokyo Imperial University in the 1880's, with the broad sweep of Western philosophy and particularly with German Idealism from Kant through Hegel and Lotze. His views toward the end of his life reflected this earlier philosophical study in a general way, but it was the Stoic philosopher Epictetus who most inspired him at this time and helped to shape his thought in the *Seishinshugi*. The very heart of Epictetus' message was subjective in character, as it focused on the power of the mind to maintain equanimity by controlling its own states.

#### THE PRACTICAL NATURE OF KIYOZAWA'S THOUGHT

Kiyozawa's prevailing attitude during his final years could be called existential and practical rather than theoretical. He was motivated by a

strong need to make sense out of his own life in the face of life-threatening illness and bitter personal disappointments. Likewise, the view of religious faith that he offered to the public at this time was intended for the practical use of the modern seeker and not for the religious specialist or the philosopher. He wrote in October, 1901:

In propagating our *Seishinshugi*, we have discussed spirit to the utter disregard of matter, adopting a subjective view of things instead of an objective view. But it is far from our intention to encroach upon the area of philosophy with this *Seishinshugi*, which is only for the practical life. . . . Monistic idealism regards the universe as a mental phenomenon. It holds that what is called matter is a mental phenomenon having no existence of its own. Our Spiritualism has no such theory. It is quite unconcerned over such philosophical questions as whether the universe is a mental phenomenon or a material one, or whether so-called matter is a mental process with its own existence. Our Spiritualism is based on the correlation of the individual and the universe, the subject and the object. This can never be neglected by any philosophical theory, and on it we base our satisfaction and freedom as a practical need in life. [VI, 29]<sup>1</sup>

Kiyozawa's emphasis on the practical benefits of faith shows clearly in his short piece, the *Waga Shinnen* (My Faith), written just a few days before his death. It is, in fact, the benefits of faith which first command his attention in the essay:

My faith helps me in that it drives away all my cares and suffering; I may call this relief or succor. When I am bewildered and troubled by various annoyances, my faith comes to my help, and at once brings comfort and peace to

my mind. The fact is that when my faith enters, it completely fills my mind; there is no room for evil thoughts. . . . My sense of gratitude comes indeed from this religious faith which saves me from all worry and pain. [VI, 228]

In religious terms, Kiyozawa speaks of the benefits in terms of a "boundless mercy," a "vast wisdom," and "an unlimited power" that come from the *Tathāgata*. He does not allow these terms to remain abstractions; he translates them into practical effects that can be felt in the daily life.

Another aspect of the practicality of Kiyozawa's faith is its this-worldliness. His message has little to do with the idea of rebirth in a future Pure Land, as these comments make clear:

. . . The chief aim of *Seishinshugi* is to live at peace in this actual present. A thorough understanding of the way of the Immeasurable Mercy can not come before we are established in our firm belief about the present. . . . The true significance of the past and the future will appear only to those who appreciate the fact that perfect salvation is realized in our present faith and our everlasting future is the direct result of that present faith. [VI, 39]

Again, in another context, he calls attention to those unfortunate ones who "turn their eyes only to the distant future instead of to the present. The freedom of spirit, the absence of worldly cares, true satisfaction — those people long to possess these things in the future, but not in the present. They see vaguely the blessed state of the soul only in the future; they do not want it now. This is poor judgment, for we are not living in the future but in this very present!" [VI, 97]

#### THE CONCEPT OF SUBJECTIVITY

We come now to the heart of the matter, which is: To identify and describe the particular

sense in which Kiyozawa used the terms subjective and subjectivity. In its broadest sense, the word subjective simply designates something coming from, belonging to, or affected by, the mind. The functions of the mind, that is, thinking, feeling, and willing, are considered to be the immediate sources of subjective experience. In common usage at the present time, however, the word "subjective" carries with it a negative connotation. In psychological parlance, a subjective judgment is one originating and existing within the observer's mind, hence, it becomes a judgment incapable of external verification. Without the possibility of such verification according to objective criteria, any personal judgment stands the risk of distortion due to bias or lack of adequate information. So, both in the scientific community and in the popular mind in so far as it values what it perceives as "scientific objectivity," the word "subjective" has lost favor since the time when Kiyozawa was writing.

In philosophical circles, mostly in times prior to Kiyozawa's productive years, the word has had a more illustrious history. Forms of idealism, starting with the so-called Subjective Idealism of Berkeley, have thoroughly explored the possibilities for subjective knowledge. Kant's analysis of the so-called categories of pure reason influenced the way nearly all philosophical enterprises after his time were to be done. Fichte and Schelling developed subjectivist systems with implications for ethics, art, literature, and religion. Hegel carried the subjectivist trend to a culmination with his confident claim to knowledge of the Absolute through the application of the dialectical method. Coleridge, as a writer and critic, explored the implications of subjectivity for the literary imagination. Schleiermacher constructed a systematic view of religion based on a subjective definition of religion as a feeling of dependence. These are just a few examples from among many that might be cited.

It should be acknowledged in this context that subjectivity, in one form or another, has

played an important role in Buddhist thought as well. The Mahayana tradition has shown a fundamental inclination toward subjective idealism, especially in the *Yogacarashool* (*Hossō* in Japan) with its teaching of mind as the sole reality. The history of these developments is amply recorded elsewhere and does not require further treatment in the present context.

The Pure Land tradition, both in China and in Japan, has usually been associated more with practice than with theory, and therefore has been minimally involved with the effort to explain the world as a subjective reality. Persons motivated by piety directed to Amida seldom bothered to explore the subject-object implications of the relationship between the Buddha and the believer. Is Amida Buddha an objective reality outside the mind, an "Other Power" that is genuinely Other? Or is Amida really one with the mind of the believer, yet experienced as Other because of the limitations of human understanding? Or is the otherness of the Other Power nothing more than a symbol used to emphasize the shortcomings of a self-sufficient view of the self? Such speculations as these, if they occurred at all, seemed to lapse into insignificance in the face of more practical considerations generated by a living faith.

As has already been shown, Kiyozawa carried on the tradition of emphasizing the practical over the merely theoretical. Yet, at the same time, he testified to a powerful tendency within himself to conceptualize, or as he put it in the *Waga Shinnen*, to engage in study aimed at measuring "the absolute and unlimited reality with a limited and incomplete standard." Throughout his final years, Kiyozawa continued to raise probing questions about the faith. It was only a few days before his death that he wrote, "It was necessary for me to be at my wits' end with what knowledge I had, before the realization of my helplessness came." [VI, 227]

## SUBJECTIVITY AS A THEME IN KIYOZAWA'S WRITINGS

This section and the next one will focus on a number of passages from Kiyozawa's writings that shed light on his thinking about subjectivity. Passages are numbered for convenience of identification.

(1) The activity of *Seishinshugi* is based on our firm belief that Truth pervades every nook and corner of the world. If the omnipresence of Truth is thus accepted, we are compelled to admit that Truth is present both in our subjective and objective worlds. And, because the Truth in the objective world can only be known through that Truth in our subjective world, it is evident that our consciousness of subjective Truth must precede our awareness of objective Truth.

As *Seishinshugi* is nothing but our consciousness of subjective Truth, it is the conviction of *Seishinshugi* that our subjective experiences can reach to the heights of perfection. [VI, 17] (May, 1901)

Notice how sharply Kiyozawa states his disagreement with the view that objectivity is the reliable pathway to truth, a view which was already gaining popularity in his day. It should also be noticed that what he claims is omnipresent is something he calls "truth." Truth, here, is not to be equated with facts about the existence of physical things and processes. The latter is the proper concern of the scientific enterprise, but the word "truth" belongs more naturally to the province of philosophy and religion. Another way to say this would be to say that the word "truth" is integral to the language and logic of subjectivity.

(2) Any religion is a subjective fact. A subjective fact of any kind is examined as to its

validity only in our own heart. It should not be judged true or false by its relation to the outer world or because of other men's comments about it, as in the case of all objective facts. [VI, 102] (November, 1901)

The question of validity had to emerge in an environment more and more inclined to depend upon scientific observation, measurement, and experimentation. This was the trend in Kiyozawa's day. The case he sought to make was a defensive one in the face of a process that threatened to obliterate the traditional religious values.

(3) There is a contention that the existence of gods or Buddha can be ascertained only after a decision is reached whether gods or Buddha are inevitable facts in the relations between all things in the universe. This contention is apparently based on the attitude that the existence of supernatural beings must be studied as objective facts. Some men insist that the existence of gods or Buddha is beyond doubt because all prominent men in both the East and the West through all ages have believed in them. This is also a manifestation of the mind which regards the existence of holy beings as objective facts.

It is the same with the existence of paradise or hell. Undoubtedly, it is from the motive of proving things as facts that some men wish to fly ten billion miles westward to inspect paradise or dig down one thousand *yojanas* to ascertain the whereabouts of hell. Some people wish to vindicate the existence of heaven and hell on the grounds that they are mentioned in the teachings of all religions, including Christianity and Buddhism. But we can only regard a question reached in such a way as merely an academic concern which has nothing to do with religion. For those methods

reduce religion to an objective fact suitable for academic research and are far from the truth that all religion is a subjective fact. [VI, 102] (November, 1901)

In short, the defense of religion in the face of skeptical criticism is not to be carried on on the basis of objective arguments. Such arguments are bound to fail. The only adequate defense of religion, and the only necessary one from Kiyozawa's point of view, is one that starts from a clear recognition that religious truth is *sui generis*. It does not require validation from anything in the objective world. It is through and through a subjective reality.

One may make an interesting comparison at this point with Tillich's description of religion in *The Dynamics of Faith*. Instead of arguing for a distinctively subjective realm within which religion exists and must be judged, Tillich points to a distinctive language in which we find religious statements expressed, namely, a language of symbols. The symbols point, it is true, to a subjective realm in which the individual experiences a sense of ultimacy, but, at least the symbols themselves stand in the world of objective realities and can be studied as such. One may wish, in this connection, that Kiyozawa might have had an opportunity to grapple with the phenomenon of symbols. Unfortunately, we find no evidence in his writings to indicate that he did.

(4) How can we prove the existence of hell or paradise while holding that religion is a subjective fact? Indeed, it is one of the hardest questions to answer. For it is as if we were trying to answer the questions, "What is cold?" or "What is warmth?" But if you were forced to answer, perhaps this might be somewhere near the truth: We do not believe in gods or Buddha because they exist; gods and Buddha exist because we believe in them. We

do not believe in hell or paradise because they exist; rather, they come to exist for us because we believe in them. [VI, 102] (November, 1901)

This is one of the most arresting passages in Kiyozawa's work. His attitude in putting it forward is one of tentativeness. Yet, what he says here is in line with everything else that he says about subjectivity. One may speculate here about the possible reaction of a conservative-minded believer in Amida Buddha. In effect, Kiyozawa is telling such a believer, "There is no Buddha until the very moment you come to believe in him. Likewise, there is no Pure Land until the moment you come to believe that such a thing exists." The logic of such a statement precludes the believer from taking the traditional language of faith literally. How can faith be viewed as a gift from Amida Buddha if the Buddha doesn't even exist until we believe in him? How can the faithful believer say the *nembutsu* in gratitude to a Buddha who hasn't done anything, hasn't even existed until this very moment?

Such a line of questioning, however intriguing to the logical mind, would not begin to touch the real heart of Kiyozawa's confident faith in subjective reality. The reason is that, within the framework of subjective logic, the existence of the Buddha for the believer is to be understood as a particular manifestation of the universal reality of the Absolute. For Kiyozawa, the Absolute may be known by many and various names: Amida Buddha, *Tathāgata*, the Other Power, the Most Merciful, the Infinite, the Unlimited, even God. These are simply names given by different persons at different times to the One Reality when it manifests itself to them. In the language of subjectivity, the One Reality always and everywhere is or has its being, but this is to be distinguished from existing, which is what it does when it manifests itself to a particular believer.

Thus, on the basis of subjective reasoning, the Pure Land faith is not in the least undermined by the assertion that the Buddha comes into existence only as individuals believe in him. Kiyozawa's faith is grounded in the ultimate being of the Absolute and not in the existence of its manifestations.

(5a) This *Seishinshugi* of mine does not mean that there are two kinds of things in the world, subjective and objective, and that we should accept only subjective things and unhesitatingly reject objective things. It means that all things are subjective, including even those generally believed to be objective. In other words, subjective and objective things are not two kinds of existence, but all belong to a single kind of existence. [VI, 109f] (April, 1901)

Again, the logic of subjectivity attributes all assertions about the existence of objective things (all things in the world, including the bodily self) to the action of the perceiving mind. The operations of the mind are, by definition, subjective. Therefore, as the mind surveys the world, it subjectively registers the existence of objective things and processes. And as that same mind turns in upon itself it registers the existence of subjective things and processes. Or, in other words, consciousness takes objective things as its objects, while self-consciousness takes subjective things as its objects. But both kinds of consciousness are subjective in nature.

(5b) To change the expression again, both subjectivity and objectivity are the products of one's fancy; it is in the same fancy that subjectivity and objectivity exist. And that fancy itself is a subjective thing. [*Ibid.*]



Here, Kiyozawa touches on the role of the imagination (*sōzō*), or as he calls it, the fancy (*kūsō*). These references to fancy, as well as other later ones in the same context, seem to have been inspired, at least in part, by a conversation Kiyozawa had just had with an employee of the Sugamo Insane Asylum in Tokyo. This person told how the inmates under his charge were accustomed to expressing themselves. Giving free rein to personal fancy, one would claim to be king, another a queen, and another a great general. As Kiyozawa recounted the conversation, he made the observation that the inmates never quarreled with one another because, as he said, "each has built up his own world of fancy and does not take seriously what others say about him." In contrast, quarrels and bad feelings that occur among people generally are indications, Kiyozawa says, "that men are not in possession of their full freedom. We are not as wise as the lunatics in this respect, at least. Once the world of fancy is firmly built within us, and we obtain perfect freedom of our spirits, everything which occurs before our eyes (everything, that is, of an untoward nature) . . . will be accepted with gratitude as warnings to us."

It seems significant that Kiyozawa chooses to use here the word "fancy," (the word *kūsō* having such English equivalents as idle fancy, daydream, vain dream, fantasy, chimera, etc.) rather than the more general word "imagination" (*sōzō*, meaning imagination, fancy, the mind's eye, a supposition, etc.). Perhaps it was for the shock value of employing an unexpectedly light-hearted word for such a seemingly important function. But, in any case, it was not his intention to engage in a serious analysis of the faculty by which artists create and writers write. It was more to his purpose to suggest that the all-important faculty of the subjective mind to form faith-affirming images is a faculty that belongs to everyone. It is so immediately accessible that it resembles a daydream more than it resembles an achievement of the trained artistic imagination.

(5c) Any religious faith is, after all, a fancy standing on a firm basis. Such things as hell, paradise, and Amida Buddha cannot be actually proved in concrete form; they are fancies in this respect. Assuredly, however, they have a practical use which exists whether the object in question is a reality or not. In other words, there is utility where there is faith — faith being a fancy built up in our mind with unshakable firmness. [*Ibid.*]

The dual identification of fancy with faith, and of faith with utility, deserves careful attention. Kiyozawa's use of the word "fancy" is broad enough to include both the fantasy world of a mental patient (the claim to be a king, a queen, or a general) and the religious beliefs of a devotee (hell, paradise, and Amida Buddha). Clearly the meaning he has in mind is closer to "belief" than to mere "whim" or "caprice." "Fancy" in this sense includes "fantasy" but without the ephemeral quality suggested by a mere daydream. "Fancy" also includes "belief," but it links the notion of belief so closely to fantasy that it clearly suggests the illusory nature of belief. In Kiyozawa's mind, the beliefs of all religions partake of the same quality: Instead of pointing to an objective "truth" outside the self, they indicate the presence of a subjective reality and give palpable form to that reality. Rather than concerning himself with the objective existence of the things in which religious people believe, Kiyozawa prefers to interpret the objects of faith as things of essentially practical significance. Thus, belief in hell, paradise, and even Amida Buddha, while partaking of the illusory nature of all beliefs, are nevertheless practically useful for the person of faith.

(5d) We are naturally led to think that since both subjectivity and objectivity are the products of the same fancy, such a fancy or subjectivity includes both subjectivity and

objectivity. These two kinds of subjectivity are commonly called the Larger Universe (*dai-uchū*) and the Smaller Universe (*shō-uchū*). All objective phenomena exist in the smaller universe of subjectivity, while both objective and subjective phenomena are contained in the larger universe of subjectivity. . . We may say, on the other hand, the Greater Self (*dai-ga*) and the Smaller Self (*shō-ga*), respectively, for the larger universe and the smaller universe. We ourselves are both the larger universe and the smaller universe at the same time. [*Ibid.*]

Here, Kiyozawa links the language of subjectivity with the traditional Buddhist terms, larger and smaller universe, and larger and smaller self. One significant feature of his usage of the terms is that the small self is given a continuing function and is allowed to remain unchallenged. Kiyozawa's "small self" is not identified with that false conception of individual selfhood (Skt., *ātman*) which must be eliminated before liberation can be attained. Instead, the small self (or universe) is made a part of the on-going life of a religious person and corresponds to the ground level subjectivity with its two forms of consciousness, as mentioned above.

The fact that the small self (or universe) is contained within the larger one suggests the relation of cell to body. Kiyozawa did, in fact, view the world in terms of the organic analogy. In the same essay here being quoted, he had earlier said, "All things are inseparably related to me in organic relation. And so I have recently been teaching the oneness of everything in the universe (*bambutsu ittai*)."

Thus, he stresses the oneness of the small self with the larger self rather than the elimination of the small self to make way for a fuller identification with the larger self. His reliance on the organic analogy enables him to say, "We ourselves are both the larger universe and the smaller universe at the same time. There is no difference between myself and others or between this thing

and that one, as viewed in this light. All things are the same, not only from this angle but from all angles."

A fuller expression of the organic view is contained in the following passage:

(6) I, with other persons, constitute an organism called society. And going further, I, with other persons, have an inseparable, organic relation with heaven and earth, mountains and rivers. Following the same logic even further, I, together with all the things in heaven and earth, constitute an inseparable, organic system. Because of such reasoning as this, I have recently been advocating the truth of *bambutsu ittai*. To put it in a word, let anything in the universe be touched, and the effects of this act will extend eventually to all things, if only we were able to trace their relationships. Even a single ant, for example — when we inquire into its essence and investigate its relationships — turns out to be related to all things in heaven and earth, and to have as its essence the essence of the whole. Based on this reasoning, there is nothing to prevent us from saying that, even though things may differ in their appearances, they are all equal in their essence. [VI, 107-108]

The logic here described was not invented by Kiyozawa; he was simply giving expression to a way of thinking that was current in his day. In doing so, however, he placed himself in line with an earlier Buddhist tradition, represented for instance by the totalistic thinking of the Hua-yen school. But, whether these ideas are original or not, they begin to take on a new relevance in our day, after years of neglect, because of our concern about the environmental crisis. Ecological research has led us once again to begin to take seriously the remarkable interconnectedness of things. The projection of ecosystem terminology on larger and larger dimensions of reality follows naturally from our concern for particular environ-

ments and, indeed, for the fate of the earth itself. In this light, Kiyozawa's organicism may turn out to be not so much a reflection of an outmoded way of thinking as, in fact, a pointer to the future.

#### KIYOZAWA'S VIEW OF SUBJECTIVITY AS A PROCESS

In this section, particular attention is given to the process by which a person moves from an ordinary, or objective, view of reality to a subjective one, and then, beyond that, to a transcendent level of subjectivity.

(7a) Whatever our undertaking may be, our thoughts, in the first stage, are attracted to external things. Then our next thoughts are turned toward how we may make those outer things conform to our own mind. When we reach the next stage we overcome the distinction between self and other and we carry on our life with our minds calmly composed. We may say that the first stage is the objective stage; the second is the subjective stage; and the third is that of subject/object transcendence (*shūkyaku-chōetsu-shugi*). According to our own experience, the changes that take place in our minds follow such an order as this, and we see the same process taking place in other people. [VI, 132] (October, 1901)

This is the first and most general statement of the process. Kiyozawa places this discussion in the context of an essay on the way people change their minds. He begins by acknowledging that most people change their minds countless numbers of times in life. But then he classifies those numerous changes into the three principal stages just mentioned. One interesting feature of his treatment of the subject is that he applies the scheme to a variety of enterprises and does not confine himself to the sphere of religion, as the following excerpt shows.

(7b) The three stages of our mental development may also be seen in our seeking after profit. In the beginning, we are quite indiscriminate in our profit-making; we do not mind slightly disreputable trading. We see only money and other valuables and never stop to think whether it is good or bad to lay hands on them, for we are solely absorbed in acquiring everything in view. . . . Gradually, however, we see that having profit as the sole purpose is not the best means of gaining profit. Then we begin to think more or less of ourselves, and finally make up our minds to take no kind of profit that is unsuitable for us. This is the stage of the subjective view. Next, this second stage will gradually disappear, being overcome, for instance, by some run-in with others. Thus we come to see neither objective profit nor subjective gain; and we then come to be established in our own business. When this third stage is reached, we never think of profit while engaged in business; we never think of crops when cultivating the fields. We are simply satisfied with doing what we ought to do. . . . Furthermore, this is the stage in which more profit will come than when we were almost beside ourselves running after it! [*Ibid.*, 132f]

It should be remembered that Kiyozawa was neither a business man nor a farmer, and that these observations were made, as it were, from the outside of the economic arena. The main reason for including these remarks here is to show that the development of the mind was not viewed simply as a religious undertaking. He went on to comment on such things as the gaining of fame, the establishing of social relations in the community, and the choosing of ethical principles to guide one's life. Passing over these remarks which are not central to our main concern, we move directly to the matter of religion.



(7c) Finally, the same thing may be said about religion. When we are in the embryonic stage of religious faith, we take wooden images or painted pictures and make them the objects of our worship. Then, advancing further, such things as gods and the Buddha come to be in our own mind. If we cultivate the mind, it becomes the Buddha and then it is no longer necessary to worship images. The first stage, that of idolatry, is the stage of objective faith. The stage at which one's mind is the *Tathāgata* is the stage of subjective faith. But the two are alike in that they have not yet reached the goal. As for those who worship merely images and know nothing else and those who know Amida within the mind and ignore all else, I would have to say that neither has yet arrived at (true) religion. When the state of religion has been truly reached, you see neither wooden images nor the mind within; but yet you worship images and you appreciate Amida within. The person who has really arrived appreciates Amida in the mind and also acknowledges the images. At one and the same time he believes in the *Tathāgata* that is everywhere and he believes in Amida in the West. At the same time that he believes in this corrupt world he believes in the paradise at the western limit of the world. Only when he arrives at this point has he (truly) entered into religion. [*Ibid.*, 133]

Here, then, is a description of the process of mental cultivation that leads to true religious faith. Two points deserve attention. One is that religious faith is depicted as a goal to be achieved through mental cultivation rather than something that simply happens or something that happens because of the conscious intervention of the Other Power. Kiyozawa actually seems to view the process at two different levels, what might be called a micro level and a macro level. At the micro level, the individual moves through a series of mental stages as he is guided by experience and

personal reflection, arriving, if he is fortunate, at a point at which a transcendent-subjective faith enables him to live in the world with a sense of freedom and serenity. At the macro level, the world of living beings moves along the same path, but very slowly and gradually, as many remain attached to objective or ordinary subjective views and long periods of time are required in order to wean whole societies of people to the highest level. Reflections of the evolutionary mode of thinking Kiyozawa found in Herbert Spencer are detectable in this macro level process as he describes it.

The other point of special interest is that Kiyozawa was here, in effect, pointing a finger at many in the Shinshu tradition whose religious faith was in a state of arrested development. First of all, those who viewed Amida Buddha and the Pure Land as completely external phenomena with an objective existence outside themselves were grievously mistaken. They were only fooling themselves in thinking that they had acquired a religious faith. But then, in the second place, even those who viewed Amida as an inner reality identical with the mind — and surely there were many such persons among the more thoughtful, conservative members of the denomination — even those were not yet at the stage of true religious faith! They had, he would have said, accepted the limited framework of the subject-object view of reality, and even though they could see the limits of mere objectivity, they could not yet see the limits implied by the framework itself. In short, Kiyozawa was saying that true religious faith cannot exist within the limits of subject-object thinking but only by transcending that dichotomy, transcending it, that is, in a way that did not obliterate the subject-object distinction but rather embraced it in organic unity.

#### THE PRESENCE OF THE ABSOLUTE IN TRANSCENDENT SUBJECTIVITY

To portray the pathway to faith as a self-motivated process leading, through personal effort, to a personally anticipated goal is to give a

very one-sided view. Actually, in Kiyozawa's thinking, the point at which religious faith becomes real for the individual is a point of meeting, a meeting of the self and the Other, a meeting shrouded in mystery and incapable of mere logical expression.

(8) On casual view, our *Seishinshugi* seems to insist on the omnipotence of self-power. But in reality, it does nothing of the sort. It relies on the Other Power. This *Seishinshugi* is a practical doctrine which develops at the point where the relative enters into the absolute, where the limited meets the unlimited, where the finite meets the infinite. These words, "enters into" and "meets," are almost beyond explanation; but in order to show that our *Seishinshugi* relies on Other Power, we must use them to distinguish between Other Power and self-exertion. When using such terms as "the relative enters into the absolute" and "the finite meets the infinite," we imply that the Absolute is other than the relative and the Infinite is other than the finite. Then we can say that this contentment that we feel within ourselves is a gift bestowed on us by the Absolute and the Infinite. [VI, 32]

Here is the point at which language fails; words fall short in trying to mirror experience. The state of contentment is real and can be talked about, but the sense of confrontation with the noumena defies description. In another context, Kiyozawa writes, "How is it possible for us, relative and finite beings, to describe the absolute and infinite being? It is impossible! And that is why the Buddha is called the light or existence beyond human thought." [VI, 164] Nevertheless, two things can be said. One is that, whatever it is that happens in this confrontation, it is not something that happens by our willful effort. It is, as it were, a crossing of a boundary, an entering, a meeting. Yet it defies description. The second thing that can be noted is

the state of contentment that results from the meeting and verifies the fact that something has really happened. Little more than this can be said about something that remains a great mystery.

The final quotation in this series comes from the *Waga Shinnen* essay. It speaks to the same point that has just been made, but in a slightly different way:

(9) It goes without saying that when I speak of my faith I refer to my state of mind when I believe in *Tathagāta*. There are two things connected with this: the believing and the *Tathagāta*. These two things may appear to be entirely separate, but to me they are not; the two things are completely one. What is my faith? Believing in *Tathagāta*. What is the *Tathagāta* of which I speak? It is the essence of that in which I believe. If I were to distinguish them, I might speak of them in terms of the distinction between *nōshin* (the active aspect of believing) and *shōshin* (the passive aspect of believing). Or I might distinguish them as *ki* (the believing person, the fulcrum upon which the Dharma exerts its force) and *hō* (the Dharma that is believed and felt). Yet, when I resort to such categories as these I am afraid that things that are understandable will become obscure, so I shall omit such things entirely. [VI, 227] (June, 1903)

Once more, Kiyozawa reaffirms the practical and eschews the merely theoretical. Religious faith is, after all, something to be experienced and not just talked about. Words point to reality in a cumbersome way, more or less indicating the region in one's subjective experience where faith is to be found, but never really comprehending its fullness. This final testament of Kiyozawa's faith prior to his death was an appropriate expression of the end of words and the beginning of ultimate experience.

In conclusion, we have seen how Kiyozawa's thought in the final years of his life moved in the direction of an attempted definition of a higher form of subjectivity as the distinctive ground of religious faith. The *Seishinshugi*, which gave practical expression to Kiyozawa's point of view, spoke briefly to the religious seeker of Japan at the turn of the century, and then, shortly after his death, ceased to exist as a distinct movement. Later decades were to see the continued growth of confidence in the primacy of objective, materialist values. It remains to be seen whether the values that Japan has chosen — and with it, the rest of the

world — will continue to sustain us. It may be that the time has come for us to look for new directions in some of the closed books of the past, and it may be that Kiyozawa still has something of irreplaceable value to say to us and to our children.

#### FOOTNOTE

1. This and all later references are taken from *Kiyozawa Manshi Zenshū* (Collected Works of Kiyozawa Manshi). Eds. Akegarasu Haya and Nishimura Kengyō. 8 vols. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1953-1957.

## The Buddhist Churches of America: Challenges for Change in the 21st Century

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The Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) celebrates its centennial anniversary in 1999. For almost a century, this collection of Jodo Shinshu temples and churches has successfully maintained a constancy of organization while facing numerous challenges that emerged from both internal sources within the Japanese American group and externally from the larger, often hostile religious environment (Kashima, 1977).

Internally, varying levels of pressures confronted the BCA and the sangha (Buddhist fellowship), for which they had to find acceptable solutions. The following three main areas of responsibilities were involved: the initial religious needs of the Issei (first generation), the changing needs of the Nisei (second generation), and the escalating need to reorient the Jodo Shinshu presentation toward an English-speaking group.

Externally, from the early 1900's, especially in California, the BCA faced an extremely hostile anti-Japanese environment. A majority of the society — politicians, publishers and the general public — whipped up this social hostility. Everything Japanese was suspect. For example, Valentine McClatchy, publisher of the *Sacramento Bee* newspaper, publicly called into question the practice of Buddhism and mistakenly identified it as a form of Mikado worship (Kashima, 1977:32). During the 1920's, the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924 in effect cut off Japanese immigration. By the 1930's the anti-Japanese forces in California claimed achievement in four important areas: nullifying the Gentlemen's Agreement, stopping the practice of "picture brides," denying the Issei

the right of naturalization and denying the Issei the right to own land in California and in nine other states. The declaration of war on Japan, in December 1941, led to the later mass incarceration of the Issei and Nisei along with their religious institutions and their ministers. Since then, through the present, major readjustments occurred while the BCA and its sangha worked diligently to sustain and maintain themselves.

This paper will focus on the possible future course of the BCA. From its inception, the BCA and its sangha have triumphed over numerous crises and now face an uncertain future. Important changes through the years have led to the formation of a religious organization markedly different, in significant ways, from that initiated by its originators. In 1977, I published a socio-historical study of the BCA from its inception through 1975, leading up to the entrance and emergent importance of the third-generation Japanese Americans to the organization. Now, fifteen years later, what can be said about the future of the BCA as its members and its priests look forward to the next century?

### UNCERTAIN FUTURE

In discussing the future of the BCA, any prognostication should be viewed with extreme skepticism. As I pointed out:

At any particular point, individuals have the option of choosing a multiplicity of realities. We can literally choose the reality that we

desire to perceive and interact with the surrounding social world at any particular moment.... The future of the BCA is shrouded in uncertainties because the members can choose from any present realities, all of which would produce different future conditions (1977: 203-204).

The perspective here is not to view the future through a sociological or historical lens superimposed or supposing *a priori* any trends, patterns or cycles within the history of the organization. Rather, the perspective should be one in which the social actors try to "make sense of" the larger world in which they live and, in so doing, come to create their own world and their future. Moreover, one must understand one's past and present actions before being able to predict one's future.

A true understanding of the BCA necessitates an awareness of its unique history as it acted and reacted to the myriad social events that it created or encountered. This article, then, will focus on two types of challenges facing the BCA as it wends its way to the next centennial. The first originates from internal sources: (1) a decreasing and changing membership, (2) the ethnic character of the membership, (3) economic problems facing the temples and the BCA administrative level, (4) the proper technique for teaching Buddhism and (5) and the interrelated problems of the ministry. The second is an ever present externally imposed challenge — America's civil religion.

The emphasis here is on the BCA as a national institution rather than on the individual temples. The main reason for this level of analysis is space limitation. All temples face collectively the challenges facing the BCA itself. It is impossible to document all the changes at each temple, and the temple's character will continue to change. The emphasis on the BCA at its national level does not denigrate the importance of the local temples since, collectively, they make up the entity known as the BCA.

Let us start with the following internal challenges confronting the BCA: membership, the ethnic character of the BCA, economic issues, propagation of Jodo Shinshu, and ministerial concerns.

1. **Membership.** First, with the membership numbers as reported, the count remains quite steady for a number of years. The definition of membership includes both families — husband and wife (children are not officially counted in this category) — and single members. In 1988, for example, there were 20,021 paid members, compared with 21,421 for 1981 and 21,540 for 1971 (*BCA Annual Report*, 1988). Between 1976 and 1981, the average membership was 21,556, and between 1982 to 1985 it was 21,256. However, according to the 1980 United States Census, the Japanese Americans mainland population increased 18.9%, to 561,129.<sup>1</sup> Discounting the fact that some of the BCA population is composed of non-Japanese, the BCA generally has not kept up with the overall increase in the Japanese American population figures.

A detailed examination reveals a more complex picture. First, there are increasing numbers of Issei passing on. In 1972, those between 60-99 years of age represented 18% of the BCA membership (Kashima, 1977:149). Even those who were in the early 60's then are now in their 80's today. The consistent membership figure comes from three main sources: Sansei (third generation) and Yonsei (fourth generation), joining as individuals and families but separate from their parents; post-war Japanese immigrants; and the increasing number of non-Japanese seeking alternative religious practices. Historically, the BCA has not relied on active proselytization to increase its sangha numbers, although it has had to face the problem of contending with an increasing proselytizing efforts effectively carried out by non-Buddhist religious organizations within the Japanese American population.



Nevertheless, new BCA temples have and are being established. In 1982 and 1983, the BCA granted independent status to the Vista (California) Buddhist Temple, the San Fernando Valley (California) Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, and the Ekoji (Springfield, VA) Buddhist Temple. Moreover three new fellowships, defined as a gathering of Buddhists but not a temple nor a dues-paying independent member of the BCA, joined the BCA: in Columbus, Ohio; Richmond, Virginia; and Las Vegas, Nevada. These new sanghas, except for the one in Las Vegas, are much more ethnically diverse.

Beyond just membership numbers, the increasing importance of the Sansei to the BCA is becoming obvious. As the older generation pass on, more Sansei are taking leadership roles in various temple activities. It appears that no drastic or revolutionary changes are occurring simply because more Sansei are in the temple's decision-making bodies. In fact, the present leadership base is still largely composed of Nisei. Thus, in many instances, when a Sansei enters the temple's leadership, he or she might feel that extraordinary effort is required to convince the existing board of the worth or merit of any proposed change or suggestion.

**2. Ethnic Character.** Thesecond concernis with the ethnic character of the BCA. For example, Rev. Kenryu Tsuji, the past BCA Bishop, advocated the desirability of opening the sangha for the purpose of propagating the Buddhist teachings to more non-Japanese members: "The BCA cannot remain an ethnic organization if it is to become a vital religious organization in the United States" (*BCA Annual Report*, 1980:5).

In 1983, the Ekoji Buddhist Temple, committed to caring for the religious needs of Jodo Shinshu believers and to spreading the Jodo Shinshu teachings among other Americans, was established in Springfield, Virginia, near Washington D.C. This temple, dedicated by Rev. Kenryu Tsuji, was built with the financial support of the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai. In May, 1986, the BCA accepted

the Ekoji Buddhist Sangha, of Richmond, Virginia as a fellowship (*Wheel of Dharma*, Vol. 13, No. 6, June, 1986, p. 4).

Thus, one possible solution for opening the BCA membership to non-Japanese is to create programs or temples for those outside the ethnic communities. From early 1970, several attempts were made by Rev. Kenneth O'Neill and underwritten by the San Jose Betsuin and the BCA to institute programs — such as the New Horizons Program and the Dharmadana Fellowship — aimed at propagating Jodo Shinshu outside the regular temple membership. These programs included lectures at various colleges, small meetings, home visitations, etc. Although both programs disbanded in 1982, further efforts have been made and are currently being made to make Jodo Shinshu Buddhism available to a larger religious group. If successful, this culturally integrated sangha will differ greatly from its historically Japanese American base.

One example of this effort to recruit new groups into the sangha can be witnessed at the Cleveland, Ohio, Buddhist Temple. Because of the small number of Japanese American Buddhists in the region, a substantially different approach was instituted to attract new members. The local Buddhists in Ohio established the temple during World War II with other Japanese Americans from the Relocation Camps who came to Cleveland to fill a war-time labor shortage. Since then, the Japanese American population has steadily dwindled. Yet, the Buddhist Temple continues to operate and, under Rev. Koshin Ogui, has even increased its sangha size. Rev. Ronald Nakasone visited the Temple in 1985 and made these observations:

The Cleveland Buddhist Temple under the leadership of Rev. Koshin Ogui has evolved, by far, the most novel approach to establishing a viable American Buddhist temple. Rev. Ogui has established a parallel organizational structure — one for the ethnic Japanese and another for the non-Japanese — under one

umbrella of the Cleveland temple. Rev. Ogui has been remarkably successful in bringing non-Japanese into the Buddhist fold. At this time about half of the membership is non-Japanese. To the Japanese American Sangha, Rev. Ogui conducts his services in the traditional BCA manner. To the non-Japanese Sangha, the Zenshin Sangha, Rev. Ogui has introduced Jodoshin liturgical forms and Zen meditations. *Zenshokada*, an ancient chant is recited regularly by this group and has great appeal. In addition, he has transformed the traditional *gojokesa* [into] an "American" form. All the elements of the original *kesa* are present but in slightly altered form. Like the Japanese pagoda which contains all of the elements of its parent stupa, Ogui's new *kesa* is an attempt to translate tradition into a modern medium. This "modern" is presented to his more advanced meditation students. Meditation, the disciplinary aspect of the Dharma, which traditional Jodoshin theology has abandoned is a great draw for non-Japanese. The Chicago or Midwest and Ekoji Buddhist temples have also found meditation sessions an enhancement (*BCA Annual Report*, 1985:101).

Since various BCA *kaikyōshi* (ministers) have instituted the use of meditation, or *seiza*, through the years, this is not a radical change. However, Nakasone points out, "no other temple within the BCA has been as successful in bringing non-Japanese into the Jodo Shinshu fold ... . The BCA can learn from his approach and methods if it wishes to appeal more broadly to non-Japanese" (*BCA Annual Report*, 1985:101). To learn, however, does not mean to emulate or implement these examples. It does mean that the BCA should be cognizant of the various techniques in use at its temple services so that it can assess the efficacy or applicability of the methods to the particular or general situation.

For most BCA temples, the Japanese American character and population will probably still continue. This has been the tradition and will remain a dominant feature as the BCA tries to meet the religious and social needs of the Japanese Americans wherever they are found. For example, in April, 1985, the Las Vegas (Nevada) Buddhist sangha observed a *Nyubutsushiki* (Altar Dedication) and first *Hanamatsuri* (Buddha Day) service. Nearly 25 families comprise the core group of this new sangha. Although not yet a regular member of the BCA organization, its members are planning to construct a temple to hold their services and meetings and eventually attain independent temple status (*Wheel of Dharma*, Vol. 12, No. 6, June 1985, p. 8).

3. *Economic Issues*. The third area of concern is with the economic problems of the BCA and its temples. From the mid-1970's to the early 1980's, the United States saw a steady economic inflationary pattern. This resulted in increased costs for basic materials and services — from telephones and electricity, to paper and stamps. The basic upkeep has increased — from the operations and general upkeep of the temple buildings and the *kaikyōshi*'s house, to the purchasing of automobiles as well as real estate for temple expansion. Lately, with the dollar decreasing in strength relative to a stronger *yen*, the basic costs for purchases or replacements of religious items from Japan — altars, incense burners and *ojuzus* — have also increased.

Even to maintain a no-growth budget within a time of inflated costs requires more income. Earlier, BCA's economic programs helped its temples but its influence was only modestly felt. The Fraternal Benefit Association, for example, from 1973 to 1988, allocated \$462,000 to the BCA budget and \$152,726.03 to the individual temples (*BCA Annual Report*, 1988:169). The Sustaining Membership Program, instituted to supplement BCA programs, still continues. By December, 1988, there were 777 renewals and 33 new mem-

bers. From the pledges, which is set at \$25 per year with varying amounts given, plus interest earnings and other sources, it disbursed \$24,097 through the Bishop's office for unbudgeted expenses. These expenses in 1988 included covering the costs for various Buddhist publications and emergency monies needed by various BCA ministers (*BCA Annual Report*, 1988:196).

In the last five years, the BCA examined suggestions to decrease the size of the budget for the BCA and the Institute for Buddhist Studies (IBS), a seminary and graduate school. The 1984 budget request equaled \$482,000; in 1985, it was \$798,000 and in 1986 it was \$805,000. The increase from 1984 to 1985 represents a melding of the BCA budget with the IBS budget. Subtracting the 1985 IBS budget of \$295,642 leaves \$502,358 as the BCA portion (*BCA Annual Report*, 1985:127). The actual income for 1985 was \$848,078 with a disbursement of \$841,867.

The 1986 BCA income was \$864,263; in 1987, it was \$890,846; and for 1988, \$954,273. The BCA kept the disbursements within the parameters of the actual income. For example, in 1988, it was \$912,389 (*BCA Annual Report*, 1988:250). The fiscal situation appears to be healthy, and the BCA annual budget, given the many programs it supports and the overhead for its staff, is a parsimonious one. And, although some members complain about the size of the support budget, the BCA members are asked to donate on a per capita basis far less amounts than many other American churches and religious organizations.

There is a dramatic invigoration of an earlier BCA project, the *Hokubei Kaikyo Zaidan*, or the BCA Endowment Foundation. The initial 1929 *Zaidan* goal was for \$500,000; in 1964 it was raised to 1 million dollars. Through the intervening years, the Endowment capital slowly increased but inflation eroded the purchasing power of the accumulated amount. In 1983 the BCA Endowment Foundation started "The Campaign for Buddhism in America" to raise fifteen million dollars. This campaign, with an initial projected

five year life-span, had three main priorities: propagation and development of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, Jodo Shinshu education (especially to support the Institute of Buddhist Studies), and ministerial concerns. The plan included nearly two-thirds of the contributions (\$5.4 million for Dharma School, IBS programs, etc.) placed in an endowment fund and a capital investment (\$4 million for IBS and Ministerial retirement homes) fund where the annual interest income would be available for use. The Campaign budgeted an additional \$5.6 million dollars for particular programs and projects such as pensions and support for ministers, membership development, Dharma School, Youth/Adult Education, IBS Library, etc., (*BCA Annual Report*, 1977:48). The new campaign combined the original *Zaidan* monies, totaling \$443,317 in December, 1985, with cash gifts from new solicitation, appreciated securities or real estate, life insurance with the BCA as the beneficiary, trust accounts for the BCA, life income gifts, trustees savings account, and wills or bequests to the BCA. By December, 1988, the Campaign had \$6,740,195 in gifts or pledges and \$5,114,243 in actual receipts (*BCA Annual Report*, 1988:36). The Campaign committee also decided to continue the program past 1988, with the hope that the campaign would eventually reach its stated monetary goal.<sup>2</sup>

**4. Propagation of Buddhism.** The fourth challenge deals with the necessity of an adequate and proper method to impart the teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism to an English speaking audience. Although the need for more English Jodo Shinshu texts has been apparent for some time, available materials were difficult to find before 1975. There have been dramatic changes since then. For example, the Tri-State Buddhist Church, Denver, Colorado, made a significant addition through an edited compilation of the *Shinshu Seiten* (Jodo Shinshu Scriptures). This major Jodo Shinshu Buddhist text includes excerpts from out-of-print as well as new writings. It is a comprehensive, readable and authoritative version endorsed



by the BCA. It is used now by many BCA temples and churches as the basis for Buddhist study classes.

The Nishi Hongwanji Kokusai (International) Center in Kyoto published a number of significant translations of Shinran's works since 1978: *Mattōshō* (Translation of Letters of Shinran), 1978; *Yuishinshō-mon'i* (Notes on Essentials of Faith Alone), 1979; *Ichinen-tanen mon'i* (Notes on Once-Calling and Many Calling), 1980; and *Songō Shinzō Meimon* (Notes on the Inscription on Sacred Scrolls), 1981; *Jōdo monrui jushō* (Passages on the Pure Land Way), 1982; and his major work *Kyōgyōshinshō* (The True teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way), 1983-1989.<sup>3</sup> This translation series promises to be one important means for increasing the availability of Buddhist literature.

Another important outlet for English Jodo Shinshu texts was the BCA Literary Publication Department. This Department published such works as *Insights: A Collection of Essays by Jodo Shinshu Ministers in America* (1980), and *Dharma School Teacher's Guide* (1981). Current BCA publications are being issued by its Department of Buddhist Education.

Moreover, other publication sources are also available. In Hawaii, the Buddhist Study Center published a number of important books through the years. Some examples are *One Man's Journey: A Spiritual Autobiography* (1981) by Kazuo Miyamoto, a noted Nisei doctor and Buddhist; *Tannishō: Resource for Modern Living* (1981) and *Shoshinge: the Heart of Shin Buddhism* (1986) by Dr. Alfred Bloom. One publisher, with close ties to the BCA, is Heian International of Union City, California, which publishes many important works on Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu.

Another BCA sponsored organization that has played a vital role in the propagation of Buddhism is the Institute of Buddhist Studies. It has undergone various transformations through the years of its existence. Its main function is to offer instruction in Buddhist studies, both to the

general population and to BCA ministerial candidates. The IBS offered numerous programs and summer institutes, e.g., IBS Summer Sessions, Ministers' Post Graduate Studies Program, and IBS Orientation Program. From its official beginning in 1966 to 1984, the IBS graduated nineteen students with Master of Arts degrees in Buddhism. Most went to Japan for further study and eleven received *kaikyōshi* ordination and presently minister within the BCA. During 1988, IBS had nine enrolled graduate students plus five more studying in Japan (*BCA Annual Report*, 1987, 1988). In the latter group, many are either women or of non-Japanese American ethnicity. Thus, the future character of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist clergy in America will be significantly different from the pre-World War II *kaikyōshi* group composed almost entirely of Issei males.

Another significant change for the IBS came about with the success of a protracted negotiation whereby the Institute became an affiliate member of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California, in Fall, 1985.<sup>4</sup> This affiliation affords the IBS closer ties to the University of California, Berkeley, through a sharing of library resources, the possibility of awarding a joint Doctor of Philosophy degree in Eastern Religions, and the opportunity to have other faculty members serve on doctoral committees.

The affiliation also affords other mutual advantages to both institutions. For example, IBS gains scholarly recognition in offering an accredited IBS/GTU Master of Arts degree, acknowledged by the Western Association of Colleges and Universities. This academic association provides the means to further upgrade their academic programs in Buddhist studies; to obtain access to scholarships, financial aid and student loans; and to transfer student credits with other GTU schools. Moreover, additional inter-religious courses outside of IBS are facilitated, as well as access to other libraries. At the same time, IBS does not lose its autonomy; it is still directed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the BCA National Board. For the

GTU, the affiliation with IBS represents their first major step to incorporate Eastern religions into their curriculum. In the past, there had been no systematic introduction of courses and instructors in the Buddhist area (*BCA Annual Report*, 1982).

With the IBS/GTU affiliation, IBS established the first professorial chair presently occupied by Dr. Alfred Bloom. In November 1989, Dr. Kenneth K. Tanaka was appointed to a second chair, the Reverend Yoshitaka Tamai Chair for Jodo Shinshu Studies. His duties include teaching, offering courses at GTU, and researching and writing in the Buddhist area.

IBS also continues its relationship with Ryukoku University of Kyoto, Japan. In 1982, the IBS Board of Trustees and the BCA National Board endorsed the proposal to make IBS a branch headquarters of Ryukoku University. One result was the availability of funds and professors from Ryukoku to the IBS (*BCA Annual Report*, 1982:1). Ryukoku University also provides a visiting professor to teach a seminar in the Spring term; IBS professors, in turn, lecture at Ryukoku University. Efforts continue to strengthen the relationship between them: in 1985, IBS dedicated a suite in the IBS building for use by Ryukoku University professors, and in 1986, Ryukoku University and IBS announced the expansion of the Japanese Culture and Language Program under the Ryukoku University Center for International Exchange. This one year preparatory program of Japanese language study and lectures on Japanese thought and society assists in the transition of IBS students during their sojourn in Japan.

**5. Ministerial Concerns.** The fifth challenge is with the ministry itself. The issue is not with the individual minister but with the different and often contradictory roles he/she must play. The BCA members have high expectations of their ministers, both in their roles as religious leaders and in their personal demeanor. It is often difficult for ministers to meet all these expectations. As one Sansei minister states:

Why are so many ministers leaving the BCA? The most common answer we hear has to do with the substandard salary and living conditions. Certainly they are significant factors in the dissatisfaction felt by ministers and their families. But I believe that the major factor is a condition that mental health professionals have labeled "burnout." Burnout is a depletion of physical, emotional and spiritual resources which most frequently strikes people in the helping professions such as counselors, social workers, police and doctors. Some psychologists claim that clergy run the greatest risk of burnout ... . The main reason ministers are most susceptible to burnout is that their profession really defies any job description. How is a minister supposed to answer anyone who asks him what his responsibilities are? A minister is expected to be a teacher, saint, scholar, counselor, marriage counselor, activities director, secretary, legal and financial advisor, janitor, handyman, entertainer in addition to being everybody's impartial friend. Obviously he cannot meet all of these expectations no matter how hard he tries (Rev. Ryo Imamura, *Wheel of Dharma*, December, 1981, p. 3).

There is no easy solution here. The difficulties inherent in meeting these stringent expectations have been a continual problem faced by all *kaikyoshi* through its history. To alleviate this difficulty the BCA has attempted to influence the attitudes of their members. For example, the Bishop asks continually that the sanghas allow their ministers more time for personal needs or encourage them to take at least one day a week to read, attend classes, etc. But it is one thing to request this and another to have it occur.

Nevertheless, the BCA has been able to effect changes, such as an upgrade in stipends for many ministers. Up to the 1970's, some large salary inequities occurred. The local temples,

however, still retaining control over their respective minister's salary, have prevented previous attempts to create a centralized disbursement of BCA standardized salaries, and equitable treatment is not foreseeable in the near future.

With the addition of new temples since 1977, there is an even greater need for more trained ministers. The ordination of more Sansei and Caucasian ministers, through IBS, meets some needs, but the supply does not meet the present demands. Moreover, since 1977, many BCA Issei ministers have passed away. Those who knew them appreciate and remember their long and dedicated service to the Buddhists sangha, and it is not an easy task to find ministers able to fill the gap left by these talented and experienced religious leaders.

Before 1973, the BCA had twenty-six Nisei and four Sansei ministers. Between 1974 and 1982, two Niseis (Revs. Ken Yamaguchi and Ben Maeda) and ten Sansei ministers (Revs. Kenshin Fujimoto, Russell Hamada, Carol Himaka, Ryo Imamura, Ron Kobata [now in the Hawaii Kyodan], Kanya Okamoto, Bob Oshita, Gerald Sakamoto, George Shibata, Dennis Shinseki and Dennis Yoshikawa) joined the BCA to enhance their visibility. From 1982, other Sanseis have received their *tokudoshiki* (minor ordination) and have gone or are planning to go to Japan to continue their Buddhist education, or are studying for their *kyōshi* (major ordination). Many of them have become part of the BCA organization, e.g., Marvin Harada, Sandra Hiramatsu (now in the Hawaii Kyodan), Jerry Hirano, John Iwihara (in training), Dean Koyama, Julie Hanada-Lee, David Matsumoto, Thomas Okamoto, and Kenneth Tanaka. Compared with the situation only a few years ago, there is now a very dramatic increase in the number of Sansei ministers.

But the increase in their numbers has brought with it a recognition of other problems for their ministers. First, the young Nikkei ministers are entering the BCA organization at a difficult time. The expectations placed upon them are

heavy. They are not only given the usual responsibilities for funerals, memorial services, ceremonial services, working with the Issei and Nisei, etc., but also for initiating programs to attract more Sansei into the sangha. Their training in Japan did not adequately prepare them for this, and they must attempt to find their own solutions to this expectation. Thus, each generation of BCA ministers creates new definitions for their American roles. These roles initially based on an older model, shaped and refined by Issei ministers, must now accommodate the new pressures and needs of the BCA.

For example, the Japan-born ministers coming to the BCA face a Buddhist community where the Issei members are passing away and leaving an ever increasing number of temple members who speak very little or no Japanese. Although their training in Japan included facts about the BCA and the American sangha, the initial adjustment period is usually very difficult. The BCA tries to ease their entrance into the American Buddhist community by allowing each Japanese minister from three to five months of individual study at the IBS. Although many of them are from Jodo Shinshu families and accustomed to the rigors of ministerial life, it is still difficult to adequately prepare them for the move.

The minister's life has always been difficult. The Issei ministers had few career alternatives once they arrived in America, because for most of them, their visas stipulated religious purposes for their immigration. They could not enter other occupations without risking deportation. Today's ministers have a greater number of alternatives to explore. The Japan-born ministers may return to their homeland where their services are vitally needed. Although at least three Sansei and Nisei ministers decided to emigrate to Japan, most Nisei and Sansei ministers do not avail themselves of that option. Rather, they must make personal adjustments according to the varying demands placed upon them and their families. This is not an easy problem to solve; it will take time for

the members and ministers to accept the changing role expectations.

There is a noticeable presence of non-Japanese ministers in the BCA. Rev. Alex White was a pioneer in 1940-41 as the first registered BCA non-Japanese minister, and Rev. Julius Goldwater was a non-registered BCA minister caring for the Buddhist temples in the Los Angeles area while the sangha remained incarcerated during World War II. Since then, Rev. Goldwater continued to serve the BCA members. In 1968 to 1973, five others were registered. Then in 1982, Rev. Don Castro became the resident minister of the Enmanji Buddhist Temple in Sebastopol, California, and ministered there for a number of years before transferring to the Seattle, Washington, Betsuin. Today, Rev. Rebecca MacDonald is the resident minister of the Seabrook, New Jersey, Temple. Thus, the past precedent of assigning Caucasian ministers to strictly multi-ministerial temples is no longer followed.

Moreover, more non-Japanese candidates have taken *tokudoshiki* and received the *kaikyōshi* rank. For example, in 1984, there were four non-Japanese ministerial students enrolled at the IBS: Lee Rosenthal, Jerry Bolick, Greg Gibbs and Lynn Olson (*WheelDharma*, Vol. 11, No. 6, Sept., 1984, p. 6). Where once their presence within the BCA required some adjustments for themselves and the members, this is becoming a routine situation. However, entrance into an ethnically dominated religious organization has never been easy. Some of the early non-Japanese ministers have passed away while others are involved in BCA activities away from ministerial positions in the temple.

Among the hundreds of *kaikyōshi* serving the BCA, most of them have been males. In recent years, more women have entered the ranks. The first woman to receive *tokudo* in the United States was British-born Sunya Pratt in 1936. She was active in the Northwest District (Washington and Oregon), especially at the Tacoma Buddhist Temple, organizing study groups, assisting in religious services, and working in the Dharma

School. In 1969, the BCA honored her for 50 years of work and recognized her as a BCA registered minister. She passed away in 1986. Others who received ordinations include Rev. Yuri Kyogoku in 1955, Revs. Keiko Horii and Seika Okahashi (now with the Hawaii Kyodan) in 1966, and Rev. June King (presently with the Canadian Kyodan) in 1973. In the 1980's two others became ministers: Revs. Carol Himaka (presently Director of the BCA Department of Buddhist Education) and Rebecca MacDonald.

A major structural change that affects the ministerial concerns occurred after 1974. The BCA National Council voted to amend their constitution to allow BCA ministers voting rights at the national meetings. Each temple could have one ministerial vote, and where a temple had more than one minister, the head minister would represent the others. The 1989 amendment went even further to allow all ministers voting rights. Historically, since 1944, elected lay leaders officially controlled the BCA National Council. The new change erases the separation between religious and secular activities and now the *kaikyōshi* can officially discuss and vote on matters of BCA policy, programs and finances.

Here, then, are the five internal challenges facing the BCA: membership, ethnic character, economic problems, propagation of Buddhism and the ministerial role. How the BCA works to meet these challenges will affect, importantly, the character of its future organization.

#### AMERICA'S CIVIL RELIGION

In addition to the above internal challenges, the BCA faces an external challenge in the form of America's civil religion. From the early beginnings of our country to the present — from President Washington to President Bush, politicians have used concepts like, "almighty God," and "the Deity," as ways to legitimize their secular activities with sacred sanctions. This is part of the American heritage. "In God we trust" is stamped



or printed on our currency, and in inaugural ceremonies for government office, elected officials place their hand on the family *Bible* to declare their oath of office. Moreover, the *Declaration of Independence* solemnly states: "They are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, ... to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them ... with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence." These are various instances of a public display of civil religion.

Words such as "creator" and "God" do not connote a specific religion. It is not particular to Catholics, Baptists, Congregationalists or Methodists, but it does offer a collection of beliefs such as "in God we trust," or the use of symbols like the Christian *Bible*, the Christmas tree or even the Easter bunny.

For Robert Bellah, a noted sociologist of religion, such beliefs and symbols, institutionalized in a collective way, constitute a civil religion. This religion is not a sectarian one since the doctrine of religious liberty is expressly given. Individual belief and personal piety is left to the church. However, Bellah asserts that the state transcended the particular and utilized a civil religion:

Though matters of personal religious belief, worship and association are considered to be strictly private affairs, there are, at the same time, certain common elements of religious orientations that the great majority of Americans share. These have played a crucial role in the development of American institutions and still provide a religious dimension for the whole fabric of American life, including the political sphere. This public religious dimension is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols and rituals I am calling the American civil religion (Bellah, 1970:171).

The significance of America's civil religion is not usually seen by those whose religious belief sys-

tems are consonant with it. Christians, of whatever denomination, often take for granted the legitimacy and correctness of national observances and holidays such as Christmas, Easter, Saint Patrick's Day and even Thanksgiving. Although the profit motive now seems to predominate these observances, some of which are more distant from their roots than others, many of these American sacred days still rest upon a Christian basis.

It is worthwhile noting that it is not only in the observance of these holidays that civil religion is expressed. In the schools, for example, the children recite a pledge of allegiance to the American flag that includes the words, "under God." Other pledges, such as the Boy Scout oath, affirm the common everyday nature of the American civil religion.

For non-Christians, the socio-psychological impact of these sentiments can cause a disturbance in the social relational network. An example that occurs in an home annually concerns the decision to display a gaily decorated tree in late December. If one cannot justify the omission of the tree as penury, all other excuses are tainted with the brush of the incredulous: "What's the matter, aren't you religious?," "What do you mean, you don't believe in Christmas?," "What is a Buddhist?," "Don't you believe in God?"

The First Amendment to the Constitution states, "the Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Individuals may freely exercise their religious beliefs, but for the state to maintain and perpetuate a particular religious belief system must be called into question. Americans should become aware that at the structural level, this particular civil religion has become an integral part of American life and its collective consciousness.

From the Buddhist's point of view, the supposed separation between the church and state in America does not exist. There is separation between individual churches and the state, but there exists an amalgam between the predominant reli-

gious groups and the state. That is, "Christian" religion becomes the "religion of the Land" and, more importantly, a state sanctioned religion.

The Buddhists in America have always been a minority group. In times past, when the BCA, created by and for immigrants and their children, represented only an ethnic minority population, the isolated nature of the Japanese American community worked as a buffer against a hostile environment of the wider community. Since World War II, a large number of the BCA sangha entered the mainstream social, political and economic activities, and the new dilemma of being a Buddhist within a state-supported civil Christian environment had to be faced. A strong, pervasive, and often blatant push for conformity to the state-supported civil religion has been observed, because the BCA is seen as inherently Japanese, even though many of its adherents are not of Japanese ethnicity.

This external challenge must be brought out into the open and discussed. A solution is needed to maintain a strong Buddhist sangha. Although each individual faces this challenge, this is not an insurmountable problem since the BCA could institute programs to assist its members to deal with this issue. As Buddhists mature, being Buddhist in a civil "Christian" environment does become easier to deal with. It is with the youth, however, where difficulties over peer influences are strongly felt. Early programs should be aimed at helping the young resist such pressures.

Buddhism is a major world religion. Yet, most Americans, knowing that fact, continue to associate its adherents with foreign, exotic lands. Buddhists in America obviously represent only a small fraction of the world Buddhist sangha. The Hompa Hongwanji denomination of Jodo Shinshu alone has 10,420 temples, 22,400 priests and over 16.5 million Jodo Shinshu Buddhists in Japan. World-wide, Buddhists are estimated at over 301 million. In Japan there is no awkwardness in being a Buddhist; the religion has permeated the society.

In America, however, the quality of Japanese American distinctiveness has been both part of its strength and a liability to this minority group. From the 1920's, with the pervading anti-Japanese movement in California and the West Coast, the Issei garnered social strength and solidarity by banding together within their ethnic communities. When the road to social acceptance from the American populace was blocked, what was then the forerunner to the BCA, the North American Buddhist Mission, acquired increasing strength as the Issei perspective focused back on things Japanese. The member temples met this need and flourished up to the 1940's.

Negative social pressures on individuals in groups, whether perceived or actual, often result in a heightened form of group awareness. Especially where religion is involved, a common reaction is to form a collective and mutual support system. It was this sense of community and network of social relations that helped make the Buddhist temples both the religious and the social center of many Japanese American communities. Facing real social adversity can help to reinforce solidarity.

Currently, the BCA faces a more benign social climate. Since the 1970's, increasing examples of tolerance for religious diversity have been exhibited. For example, in 1975, Rev. Shoko Masunaga of the Sacramento Buddhist Church was appointed California State Chaplain for that year. Although some Baptist preachers decried the election, the sponsoring Senator continued to support the appointment. Other BCA ministers have participated in pronouncing benedictions at graduation and other public ceremonies, in spite of occasional criticisms from other attendants and participants.

Nevertheless, since the BCA has tasted the sting of social adversity during the greater part of this century, the history of oppression cannot be easily forgotten. Recently, persons committing racist, anti-Semitic and anti-Asian acts seem to be increasing; the specter of past intolerances comes



to loom over the future. Such individual acts should be recognized but not given more serious consideration than they deserve.

The BCA should recognize that facing adversity together can help to strength solidarity but also that there are ways to maintain solidarity without the influence of persecution. The initial step is to raise and discuss the issue overtly, with suggestions for ways to face this challenge coming from the membership. To avoid the issue of America's civil religion is to risk losing adherents through neglect. And, as discussed earlier, in the first internal challenge with respect to membership, the numbers indicate that the sangha is already decreasing. The second step to take is open dialogue and discussions with other religious groups, outside the pale of America's civil religion. By facing certain common challenges and examining different approaches together, the BCA may discover alternative problem-solving techniques. As a third step, preparing an in-depth report, which contrasts and compares the various challenges facing Jodo Shinshu Buddhists in Canada, Hawaii, Brazil, Mexico and Europe, might be illuminating and helpful to all Buddhist communities.

The BCA should strengthen its effort to maintain a strong Buddhist sangha in America by de-emphasizing its ethnic character. Because the Constitution decrees a separation of church and state, each American is guaranteed the right to practice any religion that an individual desires. But the reality of the situation for religious freedom is muted by the existence of America's civil religion. A covert and subtle influence toward making Buddhism conform to Judeo-Christian tenet and belief is pervasive and strongly felt. Whether and how this external challenge is recognized and met by the BCA will affect its future.

### CONCLUSION

Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is relatively unknown in America, and the traditional unwilling-

ness for this religious group to proselytize among the non-Japanese have perpetuated this situation. However, there is some evidence that this situation is changing. At the international level, one example is the establishment of the *Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai* (Buddhist Promoting Foundation) in 1965 by Mr. Yehan Numata, a Jodo Shinshu follower and the founder of the Mitutoyo Company. Their first project was the compilation of the *Teaching of Buddha* and its translation into twenty-four languages. On September 11, 1981, for instance, an agreement was announced that the Grand Metropolitan Hotel, Ltd., of Great Britain, would place the text in their hotel rooms, worldwide. The Foundation endowed three professorial chairs of Buddhism, one each at the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Chicago, and Harvard University, and plans for two others at Oxford University and in Germany (*Wheel of Dharma*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Jan. 1987, p. 4). Since 1986, other chairs were established at the Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, and the University of Hawaii. The BCA itself has recently initiated an outreach program to encourage membership among Americans throughout the country.

As stated initially, the BCA will hold its centennial celebration in 1999. If there is anything to be learned from the past, it is that through the years, the BCA has been a mosaic created by met challenges within the context of its unique and dynamic history. There is, thus, every reason to predict that the BCA will face these challenges in meeting the needs of its changing sangha.

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#### FOOTNOTES

1. U.S. Census, *Race of the Population by States: 1980*, PC 80-S1-3.
2. Readers interested in a separate socio-historical analysis of the various methods the BCA

and temples utilize to raise funds for their religious and secular activities should see: Tetsuden Kashima, "An Ethnic Religious Institution's Economic Activities and Structure," *Annual Bulletin of the Research Institute for Social Science*, [Ryukoku University, Kyoto, Japan], 12 (March 1982), 127-142.

3. Yoshifumi Ueda (editor), *Shin Buddhism Translation Series*, Hongwanji International Center, Kyoto, Japan.

4. Affiliation refers to the creation of a joint program leading to a Master of Arts degree. The GTU is an accredited, non-sectarian graduate school for the study of religion; it is the largest ecumenical and inter-religious studies center in the United States and coordinates nine member schools. The aim of GTU is, "to be supportive of each school and its religious heritage, while forging cooperative arrangements and institutional policies that would respect the religious views of all the participants" (*Wheel of Dharma*, September, 1985, p. 4).

# Interior Practice in Shin Buddhism<sup>1</sup>

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A very common misunderstanding concerning the Pure Land teaching of Shin Buddhism is that it is a simplistic faith in an all-compassionate savior that requires nothing of the believer. This superficial view stems from the fact that Shin stipulates no form of religious practice, such as meditation, visualization, or works of any kind. An outside observer, however, is completely unaware of the inner struggle that takes place in what I call the "interior practice" in Shin Buddhism. Lacking this interior practice, a person cannot claim to be a Buddhist, for there would be no experience of the ultimate goal of Buddhism, *tenmei kaigo*, which may be loosely rendered as "the conversion of delusion into enlightenment." In modern parlance it is the liberation from destructive, egocentered impulses which become channeled properly into a creative life force. In short, what appears to be an ultimate form of passivity to an outsider requires, in fact, a radical transformation, called *parāvṛtti* in classical Mahayana, that is at the heart of all forms of Buddhist practice.

Shinran points to this interior process, hidden behind the façade of "easy practice," when he speaks of the immense challenge that the Shin path poses:

More difficult than believing  
in all the teachings  
Is the entrusting of the Primal Vow;  
"Most difficult of all difficulties,"  
so it is taught.  
"Nothing more difficult than this,"  
so it is said.<sup>2</sup>

This entrusting is not a volitional act, arising from a decision of a relative being, but a

confirmation of reality realizing itself in and through a person. Shinran calls this realization *shinjin* (true entrusting) which is not a human act but an act of the Primal Vow of the compassionate Amida Buddha. The supreme challenge for Shinran was not the attainment of enlightenment but this awakening of *shinjin* which is the cause that inevitably and necessarily leads to perfect enlightenment. Thus, he states:

For the foolish and ignorant who are ever sinking in birth-and-death, the multitude turning in transmigration, it is not attainment of unexcelled, incomparable fruit of enlightenment that is difficult; the genuine difficulty is realizing true *shinjin*.<sup>3</sup>

This formidable challenge was expressed in the vernacular by Ichitaro, a so-called *myōkōnin*, the exemplary Shin practitioner, who lived the life of *shinjin*, also known as *sono-mama*, as-it-is-ness. In a saying he left behind, he wrote: "Everything is as-it-is (*sono-mama*) means this: We undergo all kinds of difficult and painful practices. We travel to all kinds of places and then discover that we didn't have to do a thing, that things are as-they-are. Everything is as-it-is after we've broken our bones, trying everything."<sup>4</sup>

## I

In order to establish the process of Shin awakening, let us begin by turning to the classical definition of "practice" in the Mahayana tradition. In his commentary to the *Lotus Sutra*, *Fa-hua hsüan-i*, Chih-i (538-597) states:

Although religious practice implies forward movement, there is no progression without *prajñā*. The guidance of practice by *prajñā* would not be authentic unless it is based on true reality. The eyes of true wisdom together with the feet of true practice lead a person to the realm of coolness and serenity.<sup>5</sup>

The essential components of authentic practice, according to Chih-i, include: 1) a forward, progressive movement towards a goal, 2) which is guided by *prajñā* or wisdom, and 3) based on true reality.

The significance of this definition is that it focuses on the internal process, rather than the external requirements, of practice — a secluded and monastic environment, celibacy, physical posture, and others — as found in standard T'ien-t'ai works.<sup>6</sup> Shin religious practice, of course, is not bound by any such formalities, for everyday life is the *dōjō* (*bodhi-maṇḍa*), the arena of spiritual training. Through living authentically, we attain ultimate realization and express it in our actions in the world. When we look at the life of shinjin, we see that the three components of practice are fulfilled: 1) The path of Shin guarantees progression towards supreme enlightenment as found in the twofold realization of "birth in the Pure Land:" (a) here and now in the awakening of shinjin (when we become part of the Primal Vow as *ōsō-ekō*, going to the Pure Land) and (b) in the moment of death when one becomes part of the working of the Primal Vow (*gensō-ekō*, returning to samsara) in this life, effecting universal deliverance. 2) This forward movement is guided by the teaching, flowing forth from the world of true reality, which is realized in a person who is "granted Amida's wisdom".<sup>7</sup> This wisdom, together with compassion, dialectically deepen and broaden through living the nembutsu. 3) All this is based on the working of the Primal Vow, the compassionate working of true reality, called Amida Buddha, which is realized and actualized in

a person.<sup>8</sup> Let us now turn more specifically to what is involved in Shin interior practice.

First, traditionally Shin practice is said to be the single-hearted utterance of the Name, "Namu-amida-butsu" (called recitative nembutsu), based on Shinran's statement that "The great practice is to say the Name of the Tathagata of Unhindered Light."<sup>9</sup> "Great practice," however, is not mere vocalization but involves an interior event: the breakthrough of the boundless universe of Immeasurable Light and Immeasurable Life that is Amida in the awareness of a person. Since practice must be in accord with reality to bring about the proper effect, it cannot be something performed by an unenlightened being. The salvific activity of Amida becoming manifest in a foolish, evil person is the only true practice; hence it is said, "This practice arises from the Vow of great compassion." Such a manifestation of the vow of compassion is none other than shinjin, confirmed in the saying of the Name.<sup>10</sup>

Second, however, recitative nembutsu has two aspects, articulated by Shinran, as follows:

The person who feels that his attainment of birth is not settled should, to begin with, say the nembutsu in aspiration for birth. On the other hand, the person who feels that his attainment of birth is definitely settled should, thinking of the Buddha's benevolence, devote himself to the nembutsu in order to respond with gratitude for the benevolence and should hope for peace in the world and the spread of Buddha Dharma.<sup>11</sup>

According to the above, recitative nembutsu may refer to 1) the quest before the awakening of shinjin or 2) the life of gratitude subsequent to the awakening. The latter which deepens and widens with spiritual maturity has not been regarded traditionally as "practice," but it is part of the continuous Shin religious life, beginning with the quest for understanding and culminating in

Buddhahood. Otherwise, gratitude may be distorted into an animistic *okagesama* mentality, called "a theodicy for the happy days," which, lacking the element of negation, is unable to cope with misfortunes in life.<sup>12</sup> Both the quest and the consequent gratitude are ultimately made possible by the Primal Vow of true compassion.

Third, while the body is not involved in Shin practice in the sense of a formal meditative discipline, it is nevertheless an essential component of the fully realized state, for the mind-body complex is inseparable. Thus, the awakening of shinjin means no less than actualizing "the body and mind that are supple and gentle" (*shinshin-nyūnan*), as vowed in the Thirty-third Vow of Amida.<sup>13</sup> The person who lives the nembutsu is open, flexible, resilient, and youthful.

## II

We shall now proceed to analyze the two aspects central to Shin practice, beginning with the process found within recitative nembutsu both before and after shinjin and then explore its implications in the world. Since the practice of recitative nembutsu can be undertaken by anyone, anywhere, and anytime in the midst of everyday life, D.T. Suzuki chose to render the original term, *gyō*, as "living" rather than "practice" in his English translation of *Kyōgyōshinshō*.<sup>14</sup> This "living" in the true and real sense as a form of empowerment is at the core of Shin religious practice.

We have already noted that the authentic nembutsu practice is contingent upon the awakening of shinjin, the dynamic unity of the mind/heart of Amida and the mind/heart of a person. The saying of the Name, therefore, does not focus on such obvious factors as the number of times or loudness of the utterance, the mental and psychological state, or the physical posture involved, but on the interior process by which the boundless universe of Immeasurable Life and Immeasurable Light opens up in the life of a foolish being.

This opening up is the fruition of constant "hearing" (*mon*), not only as the gateway but the final destination as capsulized in the expression, "hearing is none other than shinjin" (*mon-soku-shin*). The practice of "hearing," therefore, involves several stages for its culmination in shinjin; they may be likened to the classical progression through 1) hearing (*śruta*), 2) reflecting (*cintā*), and 3) repetitive cultivation (*bhāvanā*) in traditional meditative practice. Of course, in Shin Buddhism the third stage is modified to mean the repeated application of what one has heard, the teaching, to solving contradictions in everyday life. But the three are to be capped by 4) hearing/awakening. This hearing differs from the hearing on the first stage which occurs within the subject-object dichotomy in which a gap exists between the one who hears and what is heard. Hearing/awakening is nondichotomous, that is, what is heard defines the total reality of the one who hears. No separation exists between the two, as suggested in T.S. Eliot's famous verse: "Music heard so deeply/It is not heard at all/And you are the music/While the music lasts."<sup>15</sup> The four stages — hearing, reflecting, applying, and hearing/awakening — may be amplified as follows:

1) Hearing the teaching: receive the teaching through dharma talks, reading scripture, encountering a teacher, harboring questions, and expressing doubts. Since hearing implies that an answer is being sought, our questions become crucial. However, at this level of subject-object dichotomy the teaching is seen objectively; the words and concepts seemingly have little to do with one's life. Nevertheless, at this stage it is crucial to know the teaching precisely and accurately; otherwise, one may be easily misled by subjective interpretations.<sup>16</sup>

2) Reflecting on the teaching: digesting its message as directed personally to oneself. One senses that there is much more to the teaching than mere words; the teaching that is



heard sinks down without our awareness into the subconscious. The dichotomy between the teaching and oneself begins to close, but the understanding is still on the conceptual plane.

3) Repeated application and testing: this accords with the original spirit of Śākyamuni Buddha's injunction: "Just as the experts test gold by burning it, cutting it and applying it on a touchstone, my statements should be accepted only after critical examination and not out of respect for me."<sup>17</sup> At this stage a dialectical relationship between oneself and the teaching, between the conscious and subconscious, occurs, such that the true self begins to emerge through the teaching (realization of *ki-no-jinshin*) and the teaching gradually realizes itself, attains fruition, in the person (realization of *hō-no-jinshin*). The discursive mode of thought is broken through.

4) Hearing equals shinjin (*mon-soku-shin*): everything that is heard, the truth of dharma (hearing), defines the totality of a person (awakening). The mind/heart of the Buddha covers the mind/heart of the foolish, evil being, transforming a person into a truly awakened person. This awakening is boundless and limitless, experienced through the dynamic union of Amida Buddha and foolish being, a union which retains the dichotomy, while affirming a nondichotomous oneness. Nondichotomous oneness means that the wisdom and compassion of Amida, having become part of one's life, enables a person to see the dichotomy within it: the ever growing realization of the self — vain, false, and untrue — in vivid contrast to that which is true, real and sincere. But a transformation occurs such that the false self is made into a true self. To describe this inner transformation Shinran has some favorite metaphors: the ice of blind passion melting to become the water of enlightenment and the bits of rubble being changed into gold.

This final point is also at the crux of the so-called "transformation through the three vows," developed by Shinran, neither as a necessary sequential progression nor as a typology of religious experience but as the contents of the awakening to shinjin. The three vows are the aesthetic-ethical life of the 19th vow, the self-generated good life of the 20th vow, and the life of shinjin awakened by the 18th vow. Various interpretations have been given, regarding the progression through the three vows — religious, philosophical, and historical — but what is essential is the awareness that in spite of the deep-rooted self-attachment, hidden in the clinging to the practices of the 19th and 20th vows, true compassion permeates all three vows, guiding all beings to the ultimate transformation that is Buddhahood.<sup>18</sup>

Let us take a couple of examples to clarify the dynamics of these four stages. First, we will analyze the parable of the mustard seed from Early Buddhism and see how the teaching of impermanence can radically change a person; and second, we will look at a *myōkōnin* story from the Shin tradition to see how a foolish, evil being is transformed by true compassion.

The parable of the mustard seed involves Kisa Gotamī, who loses her beloved child, and out of deep grief goes to the Buddha, asking for a medicine to bring her little boy back to life. The Buddha assents to her wish and tells her, "You did well, Gotamī, in coming hither for medicine. Go enter the city, make the rounds of the entire city, beginning at the beginning, and in whatever house no one has ever died, from that house fetch tiny grains of mustard seed."<sup>19</sup> Gotamī makes the rounds, but there is not a single family that can give her a handful of mustard seed, for everyone has known death in some form. She is deeply struck by the universal truth of impermanence, death is realized as being part of life, the son is given the proper funeral rites. And she proclaims:



No village law, no law of market town,  
 No law of a single house is this —  
 Of all the worlds and all the worlds of gods,  
 This only is the Law, that all things are  
 impermanent.

The mother returns to the Buddha, takes refuge in the Sangha, becomes a nun, and eventually achieves fame as Kisa Gotamī the Great Compassionate One.

Here we see that Kisa Gotamī's awakening is due to an internal process, following the general pattern of hearing, reflecting, cultivating, and hearing/awakening. She had heard the teaching of impermanence, but it was taken objectively; she saw change and flux as part of the external world but not really touching her. Yet the teaching of impermanence sank deep down into her subconscious, and as she reflected and thought about it, she began to realize that she herself — body, mind, all the senses — also constantly undergoes change. But it was still on the intellectual plane, for when she is confronted with her own son's death, she does not accept the truth of impermanence; in fact, she stubbornly demands that her child be brought back to life.

When Kisa Gotamī goes to see the Buddha, he does not sermonize about impermanence or the Four Noble Truths; he makes her go out into the city, confront the reality of death everywhere, and grapple with it as a universal fact. The repetitive confrontation with death in every household confirms for Kisa Gotamī the truth of impermanence. The overwhelming evidence of loss makes her realize the teaching of impermanence not only in the death of her son but in her own fragility and mortality, but her vision of life is completely transformed from egoistic self-concern to egoless concern for others. Now, her appreciation for the brevity of human life and the need to cherish every living moment becomes a boundless empathy for all beings in pain and sorrow. For Kisa Gotamī every word of the Buddha she now hears is not only true and real but becomes a saving grace,

affirming all forms of life as precious in the midst of old age, illness, and death. She has become truly awakened, an awakening which expands the horizon of her life to embrace the sufferings of all beings.

Let us analyze another episode, revolving around an incident concerning the *myōkōnin* Kichibei, who had a bed-ridden wife whom he had taken care of for two years, day in and day out.<sup>20</sup> Once when a villager remarked how tiring it must be, he replied, "I don't know what fatigue is, because caring for my wife everyday is always both a first experience and a last experience." How did Kichibei reach this enlightened awareness — "always both a first experience and a last experience," an existential realization of impermanence, flux, and change? He did not attain this immediately but only through a long struggle, a process analyzed below. Even if the exact process described did not take place in this particular case, a similar one must have occurred somewhere in Kichibei's past to bring about his spiritual maturity.

Kichibei had heard the Shin teaching all his life, centered on the importance of awakening to shinjin, the dynamic unity of the foolish self and true compassion. But what he heard initially was not for himself; it had nothing to do with his own life. Foolish being meant other people, and true compassion or Amida had no immediate relevance to his own life. Kichibei, of course had some intimation of his foolish nature; as an itinerant merchant, he experienced moments of frustration, anger, greed, joy at success, and dejection at failure, but was not that the common lot of humanity?

But one day his wife suffered a stroke and became bed-ridden. Kichibei had to give up his work, attend to his wife day in and day out — feeding, bathing, and taking care of her every personal need. The teaching never entered his mind; he was just too busy with the chores that came one after another. What were the thoughts that might have come to him during the course of

two years? He had both good days and bad days, but as the pressures increased with the passing of time, more and more he could not but think: Why did this happen to me? Why must I suffer so? Why should I alone have to take care of her? Why doesn't her sister come and help? Can't the doctor do something? Will she ever get better? And in moments of despair: I wish she would die!

When these thoughts occurred, all coming from massive self-concern, words from even a deeper source — accumulated in years of hearing — welled forth from within:

All this the Buddha already knew and called us foolish beings filled with blind passion; thus, when we realize that the compassionate vow of Other Power is for beings like ourselves, the Vow becomes even more reliable and dependable. (*Tannishō* IX)<sup>21</sup>

Now, the teaching which he had heard over the years came back to life everytime he became unhappy or disgruntled, and the compelling message of dharma affirmed his whole being: foolish and evil, thinking only about his own well being and not really considering his wife's difficult plight, yet such a person is the primary concern of the Primal Vow. Thus, illuminated by "the wisdom granted by Amida," he clearly saw that his wife did not choose to become bed-ridden, nor did he himself choose to devote his life to her care, yet the reality was that both were living out their karmic destinies within the boundless compassion of Amida, embraced and sustained by that which "grasps never to abandon."<sup>22</sup> Humbled, Kichibei struggled to embrace every difficulty in his life as a confirmation of the working of true compassion, and grateful, he accepted every word of the dharma as defining and clarifying his existence. No longer was there need to look for life's fulfillment; he had arrived. Now, he could identify with Shinran:

When I ponder on the compassionate vow of Amida, established through five kalpas of profound thought, it is for myself, Kichibei alone. Because I am a being bound by so much karmic evil, I feel even more grateful to the Primal Vow which is directed to save me. (*Tannishō* Epilogue)<sup>23</sup>

Parallel to Kisa Gotamī, who progressively felt the full impact of the truth of impermanence, Kichibei went through the cycle of hearing the Shin teaching objectively, letting the words sink down into the subconscious, grappling with their compelling truth, applying them to life's contradictions, and finally assenting totally to everything heard. His life was thus authenticated by the teaching.

We have delineated the process of Shin awakening, beginning with hearing and culminating in shinjin. Ultimately hearing and shinjin are self-identical; and this hearing/awakening is both bottomless and fathomless. Yui-en, the author of *Tannishō*, affirms this when he states: "How grateful I am that Shinran expressed this in his own person to make us *deeply realize* that we do not know the depth of karmic evil and that we do not know the height of Tathāgata's benevolence, all of which cause us to live in utter confusion"<sup>24</sup> (emphasis added). The perilous journey of self-realization in Shin Buddhism which is endless cannot be fully appreciated by conventional thinking.

### III

Shin religious practice, however, does not end here, for the person of shinjin is committed to the life of hearing/awakening until the very end, living with a profound sense of humility, gratitude, and awareness which continually broadens and deepens. The practical course of such a life, subsequent to awakening, has remained uncharted; it has been vaguely referred to as the life of

gratitude which has never been considered to be religious practice as such. Yet it is supremely important that Shin Buddhists embrace it as an extension of interior practice, so that awareness will continue to grow and deepen.

If we should apply the basic definition of practice to include everything thus described, we can say that the thrust of Shin practice now involves an expanded goal which is not just personal salvation but universal deliverance, and this goal is to be realized through "the wisdom granted by Amida," enabling a person to act with true compassion. All this is nothing but true reality realizing itself in and through humanity. In sum, the interior practice of Shin Buddhism is living the life of hearing/awakening which knows no limits, such that positive changes for good result by virtue of the critical faculty acquired as the gift of shinjin (wisdom) and translated into action for the welfare of all beings (compassion).

The problem that faces Shin Buddhism is one that also faces Buddhism in general. The teaching of impermanence, for example, has universal validity, yet its bearing upon the life of an average person must not only be taught as the cherishing of this life, the importance of effort and cultivation, the sense of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all life, and the need to awaken universal compassion, as did Kisa Gotamī, but it must carry this out in relation to concrete issues of universal concern: human and personal rights, the equality of all races, the non-discrimination between sexes, the very survival of the earth.

In the case of Shin Buddhism the interior practice integral to hearing/awakening compels us to address these issues also as mediators of great compassion, not because we who are foolish and evil are capable of it, but because it is the most natural thing to do within the working of the Primal Vow. Although space does not allow us to develop this thesis fully at this time, the classical formulation for it can be found in Shinran's contrast

between the Path of Sages and the Path of Pure Land concerning love and compassion. In contrast to the Path of Sages wherein compassion may be inconsistent and limited, "The compassion in the Path of Pure Land is to quickly attain Buddhahood, saying the nembutsu, and with the true heart of compassion and love save all beings as we desire."<sup>25</sup> "To quickly attain Buddhahood, saying the nembutsu" means to enter here and now the ocean of the Primal Vow, such that each of us is made to give up reliance on self-power and made to become mediators in the on-going work of true compassion. We can say that Kichibei took care of his wife not only because he was a devoted, understanding husband, but because, having entered the ocean of the Primal Vow, he sought to do his utmost, with humility and gratitude, to reduce his wife's suffering. A contemporary formulation of this approach is given by Tanabe Hajime in his *Philosophy as Metanoetics* as follows:

In our gratitude the self is led to cooperate in a mediating function in the absolute's work of saving other relative beings. It is here that the Great Compassion of the absolute, which receives the relative self by its transcendent power, realizes its quality of absolute predication: it makes independent relative beings a skilful means (upaya) to serve the workings of its Great Nay, and yet allows them their relative existence as an 'other' to serve as mediators of absolute Other Power. (p. 256)<sup>26</sup>

In conclusion, Shin practice must concretely and practically "respond with gratitude for the benevolence (of Amida Buddha) and should hope for peace in the world and the spread of BuddhaDharma."<sup>27</sup> The deepening and broadening of shinjin occurs only in so far as we relentlessly pursue the life of hearing/awakening in this world. The interior practice of Shin naturally and spontaneously helps us change systems of oppression wherever they occur into systems of compas-

sion. We thus are made to become humble and grateful participants in the ongoing drama of universal deliverance.<sup>28</sup>

The interior practice which has been clarified by no means should bind a person to a rigid framework; in fact, what has been described is a process of awakening which is frequently overlooked but found at the core of Shin Buddhism. Ultimately, of course, each of us must find our own way through the journey of life and discover for our individual selves the boundless universe of Immeasurable Life and Light. This is the moral of the famous story about the art of thievery which cannot really be taught to another; ultimately, it must be learned through one's own experiences.

In order to teach the art of thievery to his son the father, a professional thief, one day took him to a big house, broke in, opened one of the large chests and told him to jump in. The father immediately closed the lid and locked it, and returning to the courtyard, pounded on the door, making a loud noise. The people, hearing the ruckus, came jumping out and began to search for the culprit. The son, locked in the chest, became frightened and froze, until he thought up of a way to get out. He scratched on the lid, making the noise of a rat gnawing, and when someone opened the lid, he jumped out and ran away. He was pursued, but when he came to a well he threw a big rock into the water. The pursuers thought the burglar had jumped into the water and began searching for him. When the son safely returned home, he was very upset with the father, but when the father asked him how he got free, he explained how he did it. Thereupon, the father said, "Now you have mastered the art!"<sup>29</sup>

The saying of nembutsu, "Namu-amida-butsu," is Amida Buddha's grand confirmation, affirming that each of us has truly arrived: "Now you have mastered the art!"

## FOOTNOTES

1. This paper was originally presented at the Third Conference of the International Association for Shin Buddhist Studies held in Honolulu, Hawaii, in August, 1988. A version of this article appeared in *The Link* (Newsletter of Nen-butsu Followers in Europe: Les Editions de la Voie Simple), No. 15 (December 1988).

2. *Jōdo-wasan* 20, *Shinshū-shōgyō-zensho* (hereafter SSZ), II, 494. English tr., *The Jōdo Wasan* (Ryukoku Translation Series, 1965), 102. See also the statement, "the going is easy but no one is there," found in *Daimuryōjūkyō*, SSZ I, 31.

3. *Kyōgyōshinshō*, Chapter Shin, SSZ II, 48. English tr., *The True Teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way* (hereafter TPR) (Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1983), Vol. II, 204.

4. Tetsuo Unno, *Jodoshinshu Buddhism* (San Francisco: Buddhist Churches of America, 1980), 113.

5. T 33.715b.17-18.

6. See, for example, "Dhyana for Beginners," in *A Buddhist Bible*, ed. Dwight Goddard (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), 437-496.

7. *Tannishō: A Shin Buddhist Classic*, tr. Taitetsu Unno (Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center, 1984), XVI, 30.

8. See my "Bits of Rubble Change into Gold: The Transformation of Self in Pure Land Buddhism," *Indo tetsugaku to bukkyō* (Indian Philosophy and Buddhism: Fujita Kōtatsu Festschrift) (Kyoto: Heirakuji, 1989), 27-47.

9. *Kyōgyōshinshō*, Chapter Gyo, SSZ II, 5. English tr., TPR I, 71.

10. See Yoshifumi Ueda, "How is Shinjin to be Realized?", *The Pacific World*, New Series, No. 1 (Fall, 1985).

11. *Goshōsokushū*, SSZ II, 697.

12. Sasaki Shoten, "Shinshu and Folk Religion," *Bulletin of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture* (1988) 33.
13. For this term, see *Daimuryōjūkyō*, SSZ I, 11, 16, 21, 23, and 29.
14. See *The Kyōgyōshinshō: The Collection of Passages Expounding the True Teaching, Living, Faith, and Realizing in the Pure Land* (Kyoto: Ohtaniha Shumusho, 1968).
15. "Dry Salvages," *T.S. Eliot: The Complete Poems and Plays 1909-1950* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1952), 136.
16. A helpful guide for this purpose is *Shinran: An Introduction to His Thought* by Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota (Kyoto: Honpa Honwanji Center, 1989).
17. *Tattvasamgraha*, v. 3588.
18. For an interpretation relating the three vows to the historical situation, see Takeuchi Yoshinori, *The Heart of Buddhism* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 48-68.
19. From *The Teaching of the Compassionate Buddha*, ed. Edwin Burt (New York: New American Library, 1982), 45.
20. From Soetsu Yanagi, *The Unknown Craftsman* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1978), 155.
21. *Tannisho*, 14.
22. For a pertinent discussion, see *Tannisho* XIII, 22-25.
23. *Tannisho*, 35.
24. *Tannisho* Epilogue, 36.
25. *Tannisho* III, 9.
26. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986, 256. For criticism of Tanabe's interpretation of Shinran, see the articles by Yoshifumi Ueda and myself in *The Religious Philosophy of Tanabe Hajime: Philosophy as Metanoetics* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1990), eds. Taitetsu Unno and James W. Heisig.
27. *Goshōsokushū*, SSZ II, 967.
28. For further discussion, see my "Personal Rights and Contemporary Buddhism," *Human Rights and the World's Religions*, ed. LeRoy Rouner (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 129-147.
29. From D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 10.



## Nature's Jeweled Net: Kūkai's Ecological Buddhism

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Most significant and profound is the teaching of the ultimate path of Mahayana.

It teaches salvation of oneself and of others.

It does not exclude even animals or birds

The flowers in the spring fall beneath its branches;

Dew in autumn vanishes before the withered grass.

*Sangō shiki* (Indications of the Goals of the Three Teachings)<sup>1</sup>

Contemporary ecological research makes it plain that we are enfolded in a living, terrestrial environment in which all things are mutually implicated and implied. This conclusion is also a claim about the nature of reality.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, ecology necessarily alters our understanding of ourselves, individually, and of human nature, generally. In this essay I abstract several metaphysical implications from contemporary ecological research in order to show how, in J. Baird Callicott's words, "ecology and contemporary physics complement one another conceptually and converge toward the same metaphysical notions."<sup>3</sup>

What follows is based on four assumptions:

(1) there now exists an ecological crisis that threatens the planet-wide extinction of all species of life; (2) engineering and technology alone cannot prevent the extinction of life on this planet; (3) neither mainstream Christian views of nature nor modern Western secularism provides relevant responses to the ecological crisis; and (4) only a major paradigm shift toward an organic world view is capable of providing resources for resolving the biological, ethical, and religious issues posed by the contemporary ecological crisis. Accordingly, since environmental destruction is planet-wide, my thesis is that Eastern religious traditions, so rich in metaphor and symbol, can help the West transform the untraditional scientific-philosophical abstractions of its own emerg-

ing organic paradigm shift into a world view applicable to both Eastern and Western experience of environmental damage and destruction.

It is necessary to begin with a typological characterization of the central elements of mainstream Christian and classical scientific views of nature, showing how both views coalesce in modern secularism and why neither is a competent response to the ecological crisis. This will be followed by a descriptive analysis of what I call the "ecological" Buddhist world view of Kūkai, the ninth century establisher of Japanese Shingon ("True Word") Buddhism. Here, I will summarize the differences between mainstream Christian and Western secular views of nature and Kūkai's, showing also the similarities between Kūkai's Buddhist world view and that emerging in contemporary Western ecological studies. Finally, I conclude with an analysis of the major religious-philosophical issues brought to light by this essay.

### MAINSTREAM CHRISTIANITY, MODERN SECULARISM, AND NATURE

In 1967, Lynn White, Jr.'s controversial essay, "The Modern Roots of our Ecological Crisis,"<sup>4</sup> started a debate that raged through the 70's among theologians, philosophers, and scientists. At the time, Christian theologians and scientists and philosophers hostile to Christian tradition



read his essay as a wholesale indictment of Christianity as the primary cause of the ecological crisis. However, in his conclusion, "An Alternative Christian View,"<sup>4</sup> White recommended a way to reform the Christian Way so that it can lead humanity out of the ecological shadow of death which it originally created. Specifically, he recommended that "mainstream Christianity" endorse a "Franciscan world view" and "panpsychism" in order to deliberately reconstruct a modern, and *a fortiori*, Western environmental ethic. In arguing for this recommendation, he raised the possibility — and rejected it — of appropriating Eastern views upon which to reconstruct an environmental ethic. He says:

More science and technology are not going to get us out of the present ecologic crisis until we find a new religion, or rethink the old one. The beatniks, who are the revolutionaries of our time, show a sound instinct in their affinity for Zen Buddhism, which conceives of the man-nature relationship as very nearly the mirror image of the Christian view. Zen, however, is as deeply conditioned by Asian history as Christianity is by the experience of the West, and I am dubious of its viability among us.<sup>6</sup>

While these sentences may seem harmless now, they had a powerful effect on Western intellectuals concerned with the historical, religious, and philosophical sources of the environmental crisis. White's assertion is an either/or: we must *either* "find a new religion" or "rethink the old one." He rejected the first alternative.

The initial reaction to White's essay — mostly by intellectual historians, philosophers, and process theologians<sup>7</sup> — focused specifically on "mainstream Christianity's world view." Surprisingly enough, there was little "Christian bashing;" even more surprising, most Christian discussions agreed with White's characterization of the mainstream Christian world view. But there was

little agreement about how to reconstruct a distinctively Christian view of nature, or indeed whether an authentically Christian view of nature could or should be reconstructed.

Recently, the structure of this "mainstream" Christian view of nature roughly described by White was formulated into a typology by Callicott and Ames:<sup>8</sup> (1) God — the locus of the Sacred — transcends nature; (2) nature is a creation, an artifact, of a divine craftsman-like male creator; (3) human beings are exclusively created in the image of God, and therefore segregated, essentially, from the rest of nature; (4) human beings are given dominion by God over nature; (5) God commands humanity to subdue nature and multiply the human species; (6) nature is viewed politically and hierarchically — God over humanity, humanity over nature, male over female — which establishes an exploitive ethical-political pecking order and power structure; (7) the biblical image-of-God in humanity is the ground of humanity's *intrinsic* value, but nonhuman entities lack the divine image and are religiously and morally disenfranchised and have at best instrumental value for God and human beings; (8) the biblical grounding of nature's instrumentality is compounded in mainline Christian theology by an Aristotelian-Thomistic teleology that represents nature as a support system for rational human beings.

The upshot of this seems clear. The great monotheistic traditions of the West are the major sources of Western moral and political attitudes. Christianity especially has doctrinally focused on humanity's uniqueness as a species. But the problem is the Biblical creation myth — as read and applied by mainstream Christian teaching — corresponds to neither scientific description nor human experience. Not only that, its insistence upon human domination and subjection of nature has encouraged centuries of destructive exploitation of the environment. Indeed, if one wants a theological license to increase radioactivity without constraint, to consent to the bulldozer mental-

ity of urban developers, or to encourage unbridled harvest of old growth forests, historically there has been no better scriptural source than Genesis 1-2. The mythological sanctions and injunctions to conquer nature, the enemy of Yahweh, are here.

However, placing the blame for the environmental crisis solely upon the altar of Christian tradition is far too simple and easy. Historically, biblical tradition was read through the sensitivities of Greco-Roman philosophy; in fact, the legacy of Greco-Roman contributions to the ecological crisis may be more powerfully influential, if less understood, than distinctively biblical contributions. Once more, Genesis 1-2 is capable of other more organic Christian interpretations.

The first Greek philosophers taught natural philosophy, and many included ecologically adaptable and environmentally useful ideas. But the natural philosophy that has survived from the Greeks to bequeath its imprint on modern Western culture is atomism. Atomism pictures nature as particulate, reductive, material, inert, quantitative, and mechanical. It became institutionalized in early modern science and philosophy with Descartes, and still remains the fundamental model of nature assumed by Western technology.

Greek philosophical anthropology also assumed an atomistic view of nature. This was paradigmatically expressed by Plato and given its modern version by Descartes. Human nature is dualistic, composed of body and soul. The body, especially in Descartes' version, was like any natural entity, exhaustively describable in atomistic-mechanistic terms. However, the human soul resides temporarily in the body — the ghost in the machine — and is otherworldly in nature and destiny. Thus human beings are both essentially and morally segregated from God, nature, and from each other. Accordingly, the natural environment can and should be engineered to human specifications, no matter what the environmental consequences, without either human responsibility or penalty.

Here we have it in a nutshell. The contemporary ecological crisis represents a failure of prevailing Western ideas and attitudes: a male-oriented culture in which it is believed that reality exists only because human beings perceive it (Berkeley); whose structure is a hierarchy erected to support humanity at its apex (Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes); to whom God has given exclusive dominance over all life forms and inorganic entities (Genesis 1-2); and in which God has been transformed into humanity's image by modern secularism (Genesis inverted). It seems unlikely that mainstream Christian tradition, married as it is to the traditions of Greco-Roman philosophy that constitute modern secularism, is capable of resolving the ecological crisis. Christian reading of Genesis 1-2 through the eyes Greco-Roman philosophy in large part created.

## THE ECOLOGICAL VISION OF KŪKAI

Much important literature in the philosophy and history of science seems to point to the gradual emergence among scientists themselves of theoretical organic explanations of the interconnectedness of humanity with nature.<sup>9</sup> Recent theological discussion, most notably in process theology, has also focused on the same organic scientific paradigms in recognition of the inadequacies of mainstream Christian and secular views of nature.<sup>10</sup> Finally, a number of working scientists have attempted to link the metaphysical implications of contemporary ecology with the ontologies of East Asian religions traditions, especially Buddhism and Taoism.<sup>11</sup> Of course, there are a number of Western versions of this organic paradigm, and in fact no two of them seem to be alike in their technical details and explanatory categories. However, it is possible to abstract three principles these paradigms share.

The first principle is holistic unity. That is, nature is a system whose constituent elements exist

in constantly changing interdependent casual relationships. Whatever an entity is or becomes is a direct function of how it interrelates with every other entity in the universe at every moment of space-time.

Second is the principle of internal life movements. By this I mean that all living entities possess a life force intrinsic to their own natures that is not imposed from other things or from God, but derived from life itself. Life is the energizing force supporting the networks of interrelationship and interdependency ceaselessly occurring in all things in the universe. Or to invert traditional Christian images, God does not impose or give life; God is the chief exemplar of life.

Finally, the third principle, that of organic balance, means that all things and events at every moment of space-time are interrelated bipolar processes that proceed toward balance and harmony between opposites.

Similar principles have always been structural elements of the Buddhist world view; the Shingon (Ch., *chen-yen* or "True Word") "esoteric" (Jpn., *mikkyō* or "secret teaching") transmission established by Kūkai in Japan in the ninth century<sup>12</sup> particularly embraces these elements. Since Kūkai's Buddhist teachings are an "esoteric" version of the Mahayana Buddhist Way, a preliminary description of the meaning of this term is necessary.

Kūkai's Buddhism is rooted in forms of Tantric Buddhism<sup>13</sup> that originated in Northern India in the second century B.C.E., spread to China by the fourth century, and later into Tibet in the seventh century. Tantric Buddhism underwent decline in China shortly after Kūkai returned from his studies there with Hui-kuo, the seventh patriarch, in the early part of the ninth century. Accordingly, Shingon Buddhism represents a different tradition of Buddhist tantra than that found in Tibet and Nepal, even though both evolved from shared "esoteric" beginnings.

The term "esoteric" has three meanings in Shingon thought. First, it denotes the "secret" oral

instruction of the practice of Shingon rituals and forms of meditation transmitted from teacher to disciple only after the disciple has undergone the proper stages of ritual initiation. Such teachings and practices are not meant for public consumption by untrained persons. The specific doctrines of Shingon Buddhism, however, are not regarded as esoteric, but exoteric "skillful means" (Skt., *upāya*) that gradually lead seekers at their own level of development into esoteric disciplines that lead to enlightenment. My description of Kūkai's view of nature will be based on his public "exoteric" teachings.

Second, Shingon classifies esoteric Buddhist teachings as "pure" (*shōjun*) and "miscellaneous" (*zōbu*) Mikkyō. The "pure" teachings are those based on the *Dainichi-kyō* (Skt., *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* or "Great Luminous One Sutra") and the *Kongō-chō-gyō* (Skt., *Sarvathāgatattvasaṃgraha-sūtra* or "Diamond Wisdom Sutra").<sup>14</sup> "Miscellaneous teachings" comprise esoteric Buddhist texts and practices predating these two sutras.

Third, Shingon teachings and practices are categorized this way to avoid misunderstanding by noninitiates. Shingon esoteric practices simply cannot be exoterically revealed, as can ordinary secrets, because the greatest mysteries, said to be direct manifestations of Buddhahood, can be known only by enlightened minds.

A two-stanza Chinese poem in *Attaining Enlightenment in This Very Existence* (*Sokushin jōbutsu gi*), conveniently summarizes all of Kūkai's teachings. In the first stanza, Kūkai condensed the essential features of his exoteric Buddhist thought, and in the second stanza his views of esoteric practice. The remainder of this section will focus on the first stanza, since it provides the essentials of his world view, and therefore, his conception of nature. Yoshito S. Hakeda translates the entire poem as follows:

The Six Great Elements are interfused  
and are in a state of eternal harmony;

The Four Mandalas are inseparably related  
to one another.

When the grace of the Three Mysteries  
is retained, (our inborn three mysteries will)  
quickly be manifested.

Infinitely interrelated like the meshes of  
Indra's net are those which we call  
existences.

There is the One who is naturally equipped  
with all-embracing wisdom.

More numerous than particles of sand  
are those who have the King of Mind  
and the consciousnesses;

Each of them is endowed with  
the Fivefold Wisdom, with infinite wisdom.

All beings can truly attain enlightenment  
because of the force of mirrorlike wisdom.<sup>15</sup>

In the first line of stanza one, "The Six Great Elements are fused and in a state of eternal harmony," Kūkai stated the two propositions upon which the teachings rest: (1) the Buddha Dainichi Nyorai ("Great Sun"; Skt., *Mahāvairocana Tathāgata*) and the Six Great Elements are inter-fused, and (2) Dainichi exists in a state of eternal harmony with the universe.

Kūkai's conception of Dainichi, and subsequent Shingon doctrinal formulation, is based on standard Mahayana "three-body theory" Buddhology (Skt., *trikaya*; Jpn., *sanshin*). Prior to Kūkai's teacher, Hui-kuo, Dainichi was regarded as one of a number of *sambhogakāya* ("body of bliss") forms of the eternal reality called *Dharmakāya* ("Dharma" or "Teaching Body") that all Buddhas comprehend when they become "enlightened ones." But in exoteric Buddhist teaching and esoteric Buddhist tantra prior to Hui-kuo and Kūkai, the *Dharmakāya* is ultimate reality, beyond names and forms, utterly beyond verbal capture by doctrines and teachings, while yet the foundation of all Buddhist thought and practice. *Sambhogakāya* forms of Buddhas are not "historical Buddhas" (*nirmāṇakāya*), of whom the histori-

cal Shakyamuni is an example; they exist in nonhistorical realms of existence, forever enjoying their enlightened existence, as objects of human veneration and devotion. Normally, all Bodhisattvas and nonhistorical Buddhas, including Dainichi, were represented as *Sambhogakāya* forms of the eternal *Dharmakāya*.

It was probably Hui-kuo who first identified Dainichi as the *Dharmakāya* Buddha and who taught that the *Dainichi-kyō* and the *Kongōchō-kyō* were not preached by the historical Shakyamuni, as Buddhists had always believed and exoteric schools still maintain, but by Dainichi.<sup>16</sup> By following Hui-kuo's teachings, Kūkai transformed Dainichi into a personified, un-created, imperishable, beginningless and endless personified Ultimate Reality. He reasoned that as the sun is the source of light and warmth, Dainichi is the "Great Luminous One" at the source of enlightenment and the unity underlying the diversity of the phenomenal world. And since the Buddha Nature is within all things and events in space-time, a traditional Mahayana notion Kūkai accepted, the implication is that Dainichi is the Ultimate Reality "originally" within all sentient beings and nonsentient natural phenomena. As Kūkai explained it:

Where is the *Dharmakāya*? It is not far away;  
it is in our own bodies. The source of wisdom?  
In our mind. Indeed, it is close to us.<sup>17</sup>

In other words, not only is Dainichi the *Dharmakāya* immanent within all phenomena; every thing, entity, and event is a manifestation of Dainichi. Kūkai described the interconnectedness of Dainichi and natural phenomena according to his theory of the Six Great Elements.

As a Buddhist, Kūkai accepted the doctrine of "interdependent co-origin ation" (Skt., *pratītyasamutpāda*), but he interpreted this teaching according to his notion that reality is constituted by Six Great Elements in ceaselessly interdependent and interpenetrating interaction: earth,

water, fire, wind, space, and consciousness or "mind" (Skt., *citta*; Jpn., *shin*). The adjective "great" signifies the universality of each element. The first five elements stand for all material realities, and the last, "consciousness," for the Body and Mind of Dainichi.

All Buddhas and unenlightened beings, all sentient and nonsentient beings, all material worlds are "created" by the ceaseless interaction of the Six Great Elements. Thus as Ultimate Reality, Dainichi too must embody the Six Great Elements and therefore the totality of all existences and moments of time in the universe. This means that all phenomena are identical in their constituent self-identity; all are in a state of constant transformation; and there are no absolute differences between human nature and the natural order, body and mind, male and female, enlightenment and ignorance. In short, reality — the way things really are — is nondual. In Kūkai's words:

Differences exist between matter and mind, but in their essential nature they remain the same. Matter is no other than mind; mind no other than matter. Without any obstruction, they are interrelated. The subject is the object; the object the subject. The seeing is the seen; the seen the seeing. Nothing differentiates them. Although we speak of the creating and the created, there is in reality neither the creating nor the created.<sup>18</sup>

Since Dainichi is in a state of "eternal harmony" with the universe, it followed for Kūkai that any microcosmic entity homogeneous in its embodiment of the six elements — human beings as well as other entities — is not outside the harmony of the macrocosm, that is, Dainichi. The problem for human beings, then, is *how* to become aware of this eternal cosmic harmony and attune ourselves to it as it occurs.

This "how" is expressed in the second line of the first stanza, "The Four Mandalas are inseparably related to one another." Involved here is the

practice of meditation, which in Shingon tradition is regarded as a method of reintegrating one's body, speech, and mind (the "three mysteries" or *sanmitsu*) with the eternal harmony of Dainichi's Body, Speech, and Mind. Consequently, Shingon meditative practice is a process of imitation of Dainichi's harmony with nature through ritual performance of mudras (Body), mantras (speech) and meditative visualization techniques involving mandalas (mind).

Shingon religious training involves a number of mandalas, but Kūkai's poem specifically mentions four.<sup>19</sup> The first is the "Mahā-mandala" (Jpn., *daimandara*), meaning "Great Mandala." Representations of Great Mandalas are circular portrayals of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and deities as anthropomorphic figures painted in the five Buddhist colors: yellow, white, red, black, and blue or blue-green. The colors correspond to five of the Six Great Elements: earth is yellow; water is white; fire is red; wind is black; space is blue. Because consciousness is nonmaterial, it is colorless and cannot be depicted in the mandala. But since, as Kūkai taught, there is perfect interpenetration of the Six Great Elements, consciousness is present in each of the five colors and prevades the painting.<sup>20</sup> Thus the Mahā-mandalas symbolize the universe as the physical extension of Dainichi.

The second mandala, the Samaya-mandala, represents the universe as viewed from the omnipresence of Dainichi Nyorai's "intention" (*samaya*). All things and events in the universe interpenetrate in their suchness, and therefore constitute the Dharma Body (Skt., *dharmakāya*; Jpn., *hosshin*) of Dainichi Nyorai. "Samaya" is a Sanskrit word meaning "a coming together, and agreement," and expresses the ontological unity underlying the diversity of all things in space-time as forms of Dainichi's "dharma body." Accordingly, every thing and event in the universe is a *samaya* or "symbol" that signifies this ontological unity — all things and events are forms of Dainichi Nyorai — experienced from the perspective of Dainichi, as well as all Buddhas.



Representations of Samaya Mandalas portray each of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and deities in some *samaya* or symbolic form, such as a sword, a lotus, or jewel, that embodies the special virtue or quality of the individual Buddha or Bodhisattva portrayed.<sup>21</sup>

The third mandala, the Dharma Mandala, is the same circle as the Maha-mandala and the Samaya Mandala, but viewed as the sphere where revelation of absolute truth (Dharma) continually takes place. Thus Dharma Mandalas portray Dainichi Nyorai's continual communication of absolute truth. More specifically, since according to Kūkai, all forms of the universe interpenetrate the Dharma Body of Dainichi Nyorai, every sound in the universe is the "sound-Body" of Dainichi Nyorai. Dharma Mandalas represent the totality of the sound of the Dharma as Dainichi Nyorai continually discloses or "preaches" it throughout the universe. Representations of Dharma Mandalas symbolize the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and deities in the form of "seed syllables" (Skt., *bīja*; Jpn., *shuji*) written with Sanskrit letters.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, the Karma Mandala is the same circle viewed from the perspective of action in the realm of samsara. Since the action of all things and events, all actions of the body and mind, all the transformations and flux of nature, interpenetrate the actions of the Dainichi's Dharma Body, every change in any form or entity in the universe is simultaneously an action of Dainichi Nyorai. Conversely, every action of Dainichi Nyorai is simultaneously an action of all things and events in the universe.

Representations of Karma Mandalas portray the "actions of awe-inspiring deportment" (*rijiyō*) of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, each of which embodies the qualities and virtues of Dainichi Nyorai. This "action" is depicted in the form of three-dimensional figures representing each particular Buddha or Bodhisattva painted in the five colors of the Great Mandala.<sup>23</sup>

To summarize, the Four Mandalas symbolize Dainichi Nyorai's "extension, intention, com-

munication, and action."<sup>24</sup> His "extension" is compassionate wisdom; his "communication" is the "revelation" of himself as the "preaching of Dharmakāya" in all things and events in space-time; and his "action" is all movement in the universe.

The third line of the first stanza, "When the grace of the Three Mysteries is retained (our inborn three mysteries will) quickly be manifested," summarizes Kūkai's conception of esoteric Buddhist practice. In relation to Dainichi Nyorai, the Three Mysteries stand for the suprarational activities or macrocosmic functions of Dainichi's Body, Speech, and Mind at work in all things. Through the Mystery of Body, Dainichi Nyorai's suchness is incarnate within the physical forms and patterns of natural phenomena; the Mystery of Speech refers to Dainichi Nyorai's continual "preaching" or "revelation" of the Dharma through every thing and event in space-time; the Mystery of Mind is Dainichi Nyorai's own enlightened experience of the "suchness" of all natural phenomena as interdependent forms of the Dharmakāya.<sup>25</sup> In this way, Kūkai personified the Three Mysteries as interrelated forms of Dainichi Nyorai's enlightened compassion toward all sentient and nonsentient beings. In his words:

The Three Mysteries of the Dharmakāya Buddha are so profound and subtle that the Bodhisattvas who are in the Ten Stages of Bodhisattvahood, or even those who are nearly equal to the Buddha, fail to see or hear them; this is the reason the term "mystery" is used. Each of His manifestations is equally endowed with the boundless Three Mysteries and is related and interfused with others so that they embrace and sustain each other. It is the same with respect to the three mysteries of all sentient beings.<sup>26</sup>

Accordingly, Kūkai held the achievement of enlightenment requires "faith" or "trust" in the Three Mysteries as mental attitudes undergirding



the seeker's practice. However, Kūkai also taught that "faith" is not an act of an individual's will to believe, but a disposition or attitude of trust in the Dharmakāya that is established in the mind of the individual through Dainichi Nyorai's "grace" (*kaji*). So to the question of how an individual is capable of having faith, Kūkai answered that the Three Mysteries are inborn (*honnu sammitsu*) in all sentient and nonsentient beings — his way of reinterpreting the Mahayana notion that the Buddha Nature is omnipresent in all things. In other words, "faith" preexists in all things and events as finite expressions of Dainichi Nyorai's Three Mysteries. Or stated in terms of the human quest for enlightenment, the fundamental homogeneity between human beings and the Three Mysteries originates faith in persons, not an individual's effort to believe. Because of Kūkai's emphasis upon grace, his Buddhism is frequently referred to as a religion of "the three mysteries and grace" (*sammitsu kaji*).<sup>27</sup>

Finally, the fourth line of the first stanza, "Infinitely interrelated like the meshes of Indra's net are those which we call existences," means that existence *is* Dainichi Nyorai, that seemingly discrete entities are forms of Dainichi Nyorai, the one ultimate reality unifying the real diversity of all phenomena. Kūkai employed the well-known simile of Indra's net to illustrate this aspect of his conception of nature.<sup>28</sup>

In the heavenly abode of the great Indian god, Indra, there is a wonderful net hung in such a manner that it stretches out in all directions. The clever weaver of the net has hung a single jewel in each eye, and since the net is infinite in dimension, the jewels are infinite in number. If we look closely at a single jewel, we discover that its polished surface reflects all the other jewels in the net. Not only that, each of the jewels reflected in the one we are looking at is simultaneously reflecting all the other jewels, so that there occurs an infinite reflecting process. Kūkai was particularly fond of this image for the way it symbolizes the cosmos as an infinitely repeating series of interrelationships

simultaneously occurring among all particular entities. It illustrates, in other words, his interpretation of "interdependent causation:" the relationship between all things and events in the universe at every moment of space-time is one of simultaneously mutual identity and intercausality.<sup>29</sup> In his words:

Existence is my existence, the existence of the Buddhas, and the existence of all sentient beings. . . . All these existences are related horizontally and vertically without end, like images in mirrors, or like the rays of lamps. This existence is in that one, and that one in this. The existence of the Buddha (*Mahāvairocana*) is the existences of sentient beings and *viceversa*. They are not identical; they are not different but are nevertheless different.<sup>30</sup>

That Kūkai's Buddhist world view, indeed, asserts an ecological conception of nature unfamiliar to most Western people is quite evident. Mainstream Judaeo-Christian tradition as mated to Greek philosophical tradition has bequeathed modernity a view of existence profoundly different from his — in several respects. First, the universe must be understood and explained in terms of a divine plan with respect to its creation and final end. Kūkai's universe is completely nonteleological. For him, there is no theory of a beginning time, no concept of a creator, no question of purpose in nature. The universe just is, to be taken as a given, a marvelous fact which can be understood only in terms of its own inner dynamism.

Second, mainstream Christian teaching and our Greek philosophical heritage have taught the West that our familiar world is one in which relationships are limited and special. We have family relationships, marital relationships, relationships with a limited number of animal species, occasional relationships with inanimate objects.

But it is hard for us to imagine how anything is related to everything. How, for example, are we related to a star in Orion? How are we who are Caucasian related to Eskimos in Alaska? How are plants and animals related to us, other than as objects of exploitation? How are men related to women, and women to men? In short, Westerners generally find it much easier to think of isolated beings and insulated minds, rather than of one Reality ontologically interconnecting all things. For us, being is just that, a unity of existence in which numerically separated entities are autonomous, isolated within their own skins, independent from other entities. Kūkai's universe, by contrast, is a universe of identity in difference in which there is total intercausality: what affects one item in the cosmos affects every other individual, whether it is death, ignorance, enlightenment, or sin.

Finally, the main stream Christian view of existence is one of rigid hierarchy, in which a male creator-god occupies the top link in the chain of being, human beings in middle, and nature — animals, plants, and rocks — the bottom. Even with the steady erosion of interest in traditional Christianity (and Judaism) in the West, where the top link has for many become empty, the explicit assumption still exists that humanity is the measure of all things, that somehow the history of the universe is human history. In contrast, Kūkai's universe has no hierarchy. Nor does it have a center, or if it does, it is everywhere. In short, Kūkai's universe leaves no room for the anthropocentric bias endemic to Hebraic and Christian tradition, as well as to those modern movements of philosophy having roots in a Cartesian affirmation of human consciousness divorced from dead nature.

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The work of earlier physicists such as Faraday and Maxwell, and later physicists such as Einstein and Bohr, as well as Whitehead in his process philosophy, has laid significant ground-

work for an entirely new Western ecological paradigm shift that views nature more as an "aesthetic order" than a "logical order." In common with South and East Asian religious traditions generally, Kūkai's Esoteric Buddhist world view also represents nature as an "aesthetic order" that cognitively resonates with contemporary Western ecological and environmental ideas.

An "aesthetic order," according to Roger Ames, is a paradigm that: (1) proposes plurality to be prior to unity and disjunction to conjunction, so that all particulars possess real and unique individuality; (2) focuses on the unique perspective of concrete particulars as the source of emergent harmony and unity in all interrelationships; (3) entails movement away from any universal characteristic to concrete particular detail; (4) apprehends movement and change in the natural order as an act of "disclosure" — the achieved coordination of concrete details in novel patterns that are unique — and hence describable in qualitative language; (5) perceives that nothing is predetermined by preassigned principles, so that creativity is apprehended in the natural order, in contrast to being determined by God or chance; and (6) understands "rightness" to mean the degree to which a thing or event expresses, in its emergence toward novelty as this is in tension with the unity of nature, an aesthetically pleasing order.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to the aesthetic order implicit in Kūkai's view of nature and contemporary ecology, the "logical order" of mainline Christianity and contemporary secularism characterized by Ames assumes: (1) preassigned patterns of relatedness, a "blueprint" wherein unity is prior to plurality, and plurality is a "fall" from unity; (2) values concrete particularity only to the degree it mirrors this preassigned pattern of relatedness; (3) reduces particulars to only those aspects needed to illustrate the given pattern, which necessarily entails moving away from the concrete particular toward the universal; (4) interprets nature as a closed system of predetermined specifications, and therefore describable in quantitative terminology; (5)

characterizes being as necessity, creativity as conformity, and novelty as defect; and (6) views "rightness" as the degree of conformity to preassigned patterns.<sup>32</sup>

A number of examples of logical order come to mind. Plato's realm of Ideas, for instance, constitutes a preassigned pattern that charts particular things and events as "real" or "good" only to the extent they conform to these preexistent Ideas. In his philosophy, movement is away from concrete particulars to abstract universals, and novelty is defect because it is a deviation from the preestablished perfection of "real" Ideas.

But an aesthetic order such as Kūkai's view of nature is easily distinguishable from a logical order. There are no preassigned patterns in things and events in nature. Organization and order work themselves out through the spontaneous arrangement and relationships of the particular constituents in the natural order. Nature is a "work of art," in which its "rightness" is defined by the comprehension of the particular details that constitute it as a work of art.

But the question is, "So what?" The answer is, because what people *do* to the natural environment corresponds to what they *think* about themselves in relation to things around them. The way people actually live in their environment is deeply conditioned by perceptions and beliefs about human nature and destiny. This may seem obvious to philosophers, scientists, and theologians. But it is not so obvious if we shift from theoretical issues to empirical confirmation of our world views in actual human practice. Three facts require brief consideration.

First, the brute fact of world wide environmental degradation seems to imply that what people think *does not* substantially affect what they do and how they live in relation to the environment. Second, in a world reduced to a global village by communication and transportation technologies, multinational corporations, and nuclear weapons, appeals to Asian views of nature as possible sources for resolving the ecological

crisis may not even be an option for any but the most geographically isolated people. As the world now exists, "development" and "progress" mean industrialization; and industrialization, even if pursued in a climate of anti-Western ideology, means Westernization nevertheless. Third, technology is neither culture-neutral nor value-neutral. To adopt modern technology is simultaneously to adopt the value presuppositions in which that technology is immersed, as the modernization experience of the Japanese amply demonstrates. Modern technology is embedded in the Bacon-Newton complex of ideas — science as manipulative power over inert, material, lumps of dead matter — and mainline Christianity is the religious foundation of this view.

But as brutish as these facts are, we must also note that the present environmental crisis is also less a unique, unprecedented Western-Christian event than the continuation of events as old as Occidental and Oriental civilization. All forms of life, plants as well as animals, modify the environment. Human beings are not exceptional in this regard. What is exceptional about the human species is that its stratagem for survival and adaptation — culture — has not only amplified the environmental impact of our species in extent and intensity, it has to a large degree placed us in charge of our own evolution.

Therefore even at the level of empirical confirmation of theory, it seems evident that "the ruination of the natural world is directly related to the psychological health of the human race since our practices follow from our perceptions."<sup>33</sup> Culture and world view merge in language and indicate perceptions whether in a person or in a society. When we refer to processes as things, we state our separation from these processes. This is a sign of illness. The ecological nightmare which we are now living is the direct result of the greed and avarice that such separation engenders. The Christian term for this is "original sin," the Buddhist word "desire" (*taṇha*).

The environmental destructiveness of Western rationalism's hyper-*yang* world view of its own culture has to a large degree been delayed. But the ecological limits of the Earth are now stretched and, in some cases, broken. Dialogue with Kūkai's view of nature is one of a number of alternatives from Asia that can foster the process of Western self-critical "consciousness-raising" by providing an alternative place to stand and imagine new possibilities. In doing so, we might discern deeper organic strata within our own inherited cultural biases and assumptions, and apprehend that we neither stand against nor dominate nature.

Therefore, quite apart from the problems of cultural redirection, our immediate goal should be to preserve whatever biological diversity we can. It is not necessary for the human community to be a burden on other life forms. On the contrary, as Kūkai's teachings show and modern ecology confirms, human beings can actually enhance the diversity, integrity, stability, and beauty of life on this planet. An irresponsible, technologically exploitive civilization informed by a scientifically obsolete, rationalist, mechanistic world view is not the only one possible, provided we give this planet a chance and cease rushing headlong towards global destruction.

#### AN AESTHETIC POSTSCRIPT

According to both the logical order of Western rationalism and materialism and the traditional view of nature in mainline Christian teaching, reality is a system of objects separated by space. Thus we may have mansions of petroleum companies' wealth in Dallas and killing oil spills on the Gulf of Alaska. But in an aesthetic world view of interdependent and interpenetrating relationships grounded in awareness of the Buddha Nature in, with, and under all things, reality leaves no dualistic space for anthropocentric samsaric delusions. If we are all involved in the originally

co-dependent origins of our life together, then we can no longer afford the luxurious illusions of mainline Christian and Western secular views of nature. For to experience nature dualistically as an external object "out there" which humanity must subdue is to create an artificial barrier that obstructs our vision and undermines our ability to confront the ecological dangers facing all life on this planet.

Until we train ourselves to apprehend nature as our nature and cooperate with this apprehension, until our ecological consciousness is raised to religious depths rarely found in Westernized secular societies, there is little hope of heading off planet-wide death. We need, in Kūkai's words, to collectively "achieve enlightenment in this very body." Our future is not closed — yet. Human decisions are still extremely important, and these can be influenced by new thought processes and forms of consciousness.

The meaning of Kūkai's understanding of nature was experientially confirmed for me while hiking alone on the northern coast of the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State. I followed a game trail through opaque, self-concealing forest that broke onto a boulder and driftwood covered beach. It was an old trail, mostly taken over by deer on their way to a near-by creek that emptied onto the beach. Hemlock and red cedar loomed overhead from a floor matted with feathery moss, as if pulled up by invisible wires into the coast fog. In this rain forest it is always dark and wet, even in summer.

I walked onto the beach into a setting sun that painted everything orange — waves breaking hard on the rocks, forest crowding the beach in an unbroken line running northwest to southeast, fog covering the three tops like a shroud, light rain dimpling the creek losing itself in the breakers. Sharp sounds popped across the rocks on my left, and I saw two elk — a bull and cow — run as if on cue over a small tree-lined hill.

My thoughts drifted away from the forest, the earth, the sea, the light, the elk, and focused inside myself. I became sharply conscious of my



own breathing — a cool, fresh sensation of energy rushing from the life of the forest into my chest, and then warm, moist air brushing against my face soft as a kiss as I exhaled. And suddenly I knew: Every breath I take draws the flesh of the earth into myself. I breathe in soft, saturated exhalations of red cedar and salmon berry bush, fire weed and wood fern, osprey and black bear, marten and black tail deer, salmon and raven. I breathe the same particles of air that form songs in the territorial calls of thrushes and give voice to humpback whales, lift the wings of bald eagles, and buzz in the hum of insects. I breathe in the earth, pass it on, share it in equal measure with billions of other living things. I drink from the creek, and it becomes me; and like the elk and the gulls hovering in the westerly wind, I bring the earth inside myself as food.

The croaking of a raven brought me out of myself. I looked around and knew: The earth *is* us; We *are* this earth — looking at itself. To damage the earth is to damage ourselves; to damage ourselves is to damage the earth.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Yoshihito S. Hakeda, trans. *Kūkai: Major Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), p. 139. All citations from Kūkai's works in this essay are from Hakeda's translation, although I have checked them against the original Chinese texts in Yoshitake Inage, ed., *Kōbō Daishi Zenshū* (The Complete Works of Kōbō Daishi), 3rd edition revised (Tokyo: Mikkyō Bunka Kenkyū-sho, 1965). Although Hakeda's work is not a translation of Kūkai's complete works, it is the best English translation of the most influential of Kūkai's writings in print. Since I cannot improve on his translations, I have used his with gratitude.

2. See J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames, "Introduction: The Asian Traditions as a Conceptual Resource for Environmental Philosophy," *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*, edited by

J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), pp. 1-21.

3. J. Brian Callicott. "The Metaphysical Implications of Ecology." *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*, p. 51.

4. Lynn White, Jr. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis." *Science*, (155): 1203 - 1207.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 1206-1207.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 1206.

7. See John B. Cobb, Jr., *Is It Too Late?: Toward A Theology of Ecology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972). Cobb argues that engineering and technology alone will not solve the environmental crisis, and, citing Lynn White, that Christianity is largely responsible for the crisis as it developed in the West. He contends that Eastern world views have limited possibilities for solving the environmental crisis. Although he is more open to Eastern contributions for developing an environmental ethic than Cobb, Holms Tolston, III agrees that environmental ethics is not fundamentally a technological issue, but a matter of how human beings understand and feel their place in the natural order. See "Is There An Environmental Ethic?," *Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy*, 85 (1975): 93-109.

8. "Introduction: The Asian Traditions as a Conceptual Resource for Environmental Philosophy," *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*, pp. 3-4.

9. See E. A. Burt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1954). Also see Alfred North Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971) and two more recent studies by Kenneth E. Boulding, *The World As A Total System* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1985) and *Ecodynamics: A New Theory of Social Evolution* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1981).

10. I have already cited John Cobb's *Is It Too Late?: Toward A Theology of Ecology* in this



regard in note 7. Also see Charles Birch and John B. Cobb, Jr., *The Liberation of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Richard H. Overman, *Evolution and the Christian Doctrine of Creation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967); W. H. Thorpe, *Animal Nature and Human Nature* (New York: Doubleday, 1974); and a series of wonderful essays in Ian G. Barbour, ed., *Earth Might be Fair: Reflections on Ethics, Religion, and Ecology* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972), especially Huston Smith's essay, "Tao Now: An Ecological Testament," pp. 66-69.

11. See Harold Morowitz, "Biology as a Cosmological Science," *Main Currents in Modern Thought*, 28 (1972): 151-157, cited by Callicott and Ames, "Introduction," pp. 2-3; Nolan P. Jacobson, *Buddhism and the Contemporary World: Change and Self-correction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 151-163; David Edward Shaner, "The Body-Mind Experience in Dogen's *Shōbōgenzō*: A Phenomenological Perspective," *Philosophy East and West* 35 (1985): 17-35 and *The Bodymind Experience of Japanese Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985); Yuasa, Yasuo, *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory*, trans. T. P. Kasulis and Shigenori Nagatomo (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); Roger T. Ames, "Putting the Tao Back into Taoism," *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*, pp. 113-144; William R. La Fleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature," *ibid.*, pp. 183-209; and Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels Between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1975).

12. Kūkai (774-835), "Empty Sea," is commonly known as Kōbō Daishi, an honorific title posthumously awarded to him by the Heian Court. Kōbō means "to widely spread the Buddhist teachings," and daishi "great teacher." Widely revered in his own time, Kūkai remains a figure of profound reverence in Japan today, both as a Buddhist master and a culture hero. In 804 Kūkai

traveled to China to study Buddhism, and while there he visited many eminent teachers, among whom was the esoteric master Hui-kuo (746-805). He became Hui-kuo's favorite disciple. Presumably, Kūkai's understanding of Hui-kuo's teachings was so impressive that Hui-kuo declared Kūkai his dharma-heir shortly before he died. Kūkai's study in China lasted thirty months, and he returned to Japan at age thirty-three as the eighth patriarch of the Shingon School. For a short biography of Kūkai, see Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, pp. 1-75.

13. From Sanskrit *tantra*, meaning "warp." In Buddhist literature, this term refers to texts dealing primarily with ritual practice. See Taikō Yamasaki, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism* (Boston: Shambhala, 1988), pp. 10-15.

14. For Kūkai's classification of the Buddhist Canon and the teachings of other schools of Buddhism that existed in his day as preparatory to Shingon esoteric teachings and practices, which he regarded as the final development of Buddhist Dharma, see *Benkenmitsu nikyō ron* (The Difference Between Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism), Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, pp. 151-157. However, in a recent essay Charles D. Orzech has conclusively demonstrated that orthodox Shingon distinctions between "pure" and "miscellaneous teachings" are Shingon misrepresentations of the historical facts of the instruction Kūkai received from Hui-kuo and of the historical realities of Chinese Chen-yen. See "Seeing Chen-yen Buddhism: Traditional Scholarship and the Vajrayana in China," *History of Religions*, 29: 87-101.

15. Hakeda, *Kūkai*, p. 227.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82. Also see Yamasaki, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, pp. 62-64.

17. Quoted by Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, p. 82.

18. See *Sokushin jōbutsu gi* (Attaining Enlightenment in This Very Existence), Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, pp. 229-230.

19. For pictures and a descriptive account of these four mandalas, plus the "Womb" and "Dia-

mond Mandalas," see Hisatoyo Ishida, *Esoteric Buddhist Painting* (Tokyo: Kōdansha International, 1978), pp. 33-63.

20. Snodgrass, "The Shingon Buddhist Doctrine of Interpenetration," p. 63.

21. *Ibid.* pp. 63-64

22. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

24. See Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, p. 91.

25. See Snodgrass, "The Shingon Buddhist Doctrine of Interpenetration," pp. 66-68. Also see Yamasaki, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, p. 106.

26. *Sokushin jōbutsu gi*, Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, p. 230.

27. Hakeda, "Thought of Kūkai", *ibid.*, p. 92.

28. This image is found in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (Jpn., *Kegon-kyō*; Ch., *Hua-yen-ch'ing*) or "Flower Wreath Sutra." This text was especially emphasized by the Japanese version Yogacara ("Way of Yoga") known as the Hossō School. Kūkai regarded *Avatamsaka-sūtra* as the highest development of exoteric Buddhist tradition, second in importance to his own Esoteric Shingon teachings. See *Hizō hōyaku* (The Precious Key to the Secret Treasury), Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, pp. 211-217.

29. For an interesting discussion of Hui-yen cosmology, essentially the cosmology of Kūkai, see Francis H. Cook, "The Jewel Net of Indra," *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*, pp. 213-229.

30. *Hizō hōyaku*, Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works*, p. 232.

31. Roger Ames, "Putting the Tao Back Into Taoism," *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought*, p. 117.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

33. Jay C. Rochelle, "Letting Go: Buddhism and Christian Models," *The Eastern Buddhist*, (Autumn 1989): 45.

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## Buddhism in Ecological Perspective

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Up to the present time, one of the most difficult problems for genuine mutual understanding in trans-cultural religious dialogue has been that of proper context. Each tradition, while remaining faithful to its own unique articulation of reality has, at the same time, to exercise sensitive care against a distorted reception of the other's equally unique world view. Undoubtedly, it is neither possible nor desirable to assume the stance of the *tabularasa* (the mind as a clean slate) and to simply bracket one's own intellectual and spiritual heritage. The history of the transmission of ideas from one culture to another attests to the marvelously creative syntheses which have evolved from the active translation and assimilation of novel thought into a native consciousness.

While the twentieth century has clearly witnessed a dramatic mutual interest in and dialogue among global religious traditions, and while enormous strides have been made to distance the age of reciprocal indifference and/or open hostility among adherents of different beliefs, and while on the academic level there has been a prodigious energy in linguistic analysis and translation of religious texts, there are, however, equally clear indications of popular retrenchment in a fundamentalistic and literal interpretation of, and devotion to, one's own sectarian persuasion. In the face of increasing secularity and base materialism, the value of such a trend might be defended with forceful conviction. Nevertheless, a return to rigid denominationalism threatens not only a regressive fragmentation at the heart of human global discourse, but signals the eclipse of those very religious traditions that revert to such narrow parochialism.

In the earlier stages of earth history, the multiple expressions of human spirituality, dra-

matically determining entire cultural patterns, developed and flourished as the effulgent manifestations of the earth's own interiority, its multiple responses to the Mystery that called it into being as one organism. Their distinctive doctrines and scholastic elaborations, their ritual enactments and symbolic representations were the differentiating phases of the earth's own groping self-identity as a planetary recognition of the Absolute. Should any one of these religious traditions fail now to accept such an interpretation, rejecting this properly global context for itself, it would signify a critical failure to understand the essential nature of the earth as a living psychic process and, thus, as the profound subjectivity animating and sustaining that tradition's more articulately conscious expressions. Any insistence, therefore, by any of the earth's religious traditions to entrench itself within the limited context of its own geographic-cultural origins and sphere of influence will have tragic consequences.

It will severely hamper the future status of dialogue with other religious traditions; it will vitiate the very tradition itself through a self-alienation from the very ground of its revelatory experience of the sacred; also, more devastatingly and, thus, much more culpably, it will surrender the earth, that planetary recognition of the Absolute. It will surrender it to the destructive pragmatism of the same secular materialism which such a religious tradition would profess to abhor.

If, in the earlier stages of their history it was, as indicated above, a natural and spontaneous process of development for human religious traditions to explicate their own unique understanding of reality, it is no less natural, though much more imperative, for them now to enter the next phase of their growth, again correlative to the evolutionary

dynamics of the earth. To assume a genuinely planetary context from the inner resources of their own unique intuition, every tradition needs to discover a common global concern that will creatively sustain a forum for their future mutual dialogue. They need to evoke, again from their own distinctive heritages, symbolic expressions of, and revelatory encounters with the sacred that would lead to a renewal of psychic-spiritual energy. Finally, to adopt a planetary context will be a faithful response to the organic biosphere that is earth, presently imperiled for want of adequate defense from the very religious witnesses that should be testifying to its inherent sacrality. For, undoubtedly, one of the crucial factors in the planet's contemporary degradation by technological profiteering is the failure of human religious traditions to have elaborated an ecological philosophy, spirituality, and ethic that would not only forcefully convict such behavior, but would have persuasively educated human consciousness against its very conception.

A notable exception to this critical appraisal is the tradition of the Buddha, which, from its earliest inception to its later highly sophisticated refinements, demonstrates a singular concern for the processes and significance of the phenomenal world. The following study will identify and elucidate a continuous pattern of Buddhist reflection out of which emerges an ecological cosmology in which the reality of each thing mutually participates in and depends upon every other thing. The intuition which creatively sustained the consistent focus for the development of so comprehensive a vision across the diversity of Buddhist thought and practice has been succinctly phrased in the original Pali term, *paṭiccasamuppāda*. Often translated as "conditioned co-production" or "dependent origination," a more literal rendition, "the-together-rising-up-of-things" better conveys the notion that the appearing and standing forth into being, the existence, of any particular thing is a dynamic collaborative process of many other things. No thing exists in and of itself, but only as

a context of relations, a nexus of factors whose peculiar concatenation alone determines the origin, perpetuation or cessation of that thing. A line from the Pali canon, revered by all the schools of the Buddhist tradition as an original statement of the Enlightened Founder himself, pithily formulates the fluid contingency which is the very nature of the phenomenal world:

imaṣmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti;  
imassa uppādā idaṃ uppajjati;  
imaṣmiṃ asati, idaṃ na hoti;  
imassa nirodhā, idaṃ nirujjhati.

This being, that becomes;  
from the arising of this, that arises;  
this not becoming, that does not become;  
from the ceasing of this, that ceases.<sup>1</sup>

In such a universe, any element is the combined shape and apparent form of a specific number of other elements; its unique nature is to have none; its identity can only be defined as the expressive manifestation, the conditioned representation of those other elements. The phenomenal world of persons and things is here interpreted as so many clusters, groupings, or literally "heaps" (*P. khandhā*; Skt., *skandhas*) of five basic psycho-physical elements. *Rūpa* or material form, is the first and includes the four primary elements of earth, water, fire, and air, as well as the five sense organs and their respective sense objects. The second is *vedanā* representing feelings, while the third *saññā* (Skt., *saṃjñā*) refers to all possibilities of perceptual experience. The fourth cluster, *sankhāra* (Skt., *saṃskāra*) includes all good, bad, or indifferent dispositions, tendencies, volitions, strivings, impulses and emotions. Finally, the fifth basic element is *viññāṇa* (Skt., *viññāna*) or consciousness, as either pure awareness or the process of ideation and thought.

In the light of our purpose to delineate the value of Buddhist thought to contemporary ecological concerns, two points might be noted thus



far. First, there is the insistence by the Buddha himself and the *Abhidharma* schools of his followers that existence is a thoroughly contextual process: No person or thing is an independent, self-subsisting reality, but comes into being, persists, and ceases as a given function of other factors. The failure to understand that life perdures only as a complex aggregation of multiple conditions, is a decisive indictment of modern technological-industrial pragmatism. The *dictum* of the Buddha, "... from the arising of this, that arises . . . from the ceasing of this, that ceases," assumes a dire cogency when applied to a mentality entranced by technical power, and heedless of consequence in a biospheric context where the destruction of one life form is the impoverishment that spells the destruction of all.

The second value in this phase of Buddhist thought is its exacting critique of the notion of ego as the discrete, self-consistent, self-individuating and self-directing center and end of all human activity. In reality, this belief in one's own unique and abiding personal identity is a conceptual trick, an ignorant superimposition upon what is only a composite derivative of those five "heaps": bodily form, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness. The Buddhist analysis into the subtleties of their interrelationships represents one of the most profound moments in the history of human psychology and epistemology. But the central issue in the excoriation of the belief in one's personal autonomy, one's ego, lay in the Buddhist conviction of it as the origin of all misery and sorrow.

The very act of accepting one's self as a center of ultimate significance initiates a process of differentiation; the self-identity as this unique "I" is only possible by setting oneself over and against all other persons and things. Once entrenched, the ego identity maintains a twofold momentum *vis-à-vis* those persons and things from which it considers itself essentially distinct. On the one hand, perpetual self-aggrandizement through the possession of, and control over, its

world becomes a thirst that suffers with every frustration, and which craves more with every satisfaction. On the other, the ego's inherent desire for self-perpetuation drives it further from a recognition and acceptance of the organic processes out of which its composite nature is derived, sustained and will return.

A contemporary Buddhist assessment of human domination and manipulation of the environment rests upon this notion of the ego. The human collectivity in its awesome application of rational thought to technical expertise, has realized a new phase of self-differentiation. If, on the individual level, the human being identifies itself as an autonomous center of self-given reality, which is essentially different from all others, a more profound alienation has recently taken place on the level of species. For, in the process of self-definition, one not only perceives oneself as an autonomous personality but implicitly as a human personality. Scientific rationale, functioning through ever more refined delineations and distinctions, has so informed the modern mentality that inherent to every ego image is the notion of one's identity as *homo erectus*, *homo sapiens*, *homo faber* (the human as upright, the human as knower, the human as maker). With each qualification the human species has increasingly determined itself as a distinct entity, transcendent to, rather than shaped by and participating in the planetary processes of the biosphere.

If the Buddhist tradition traced a direct causal link between human sorrow and suffering to the failure to recognize oneself as a dynamic process of many contributing factors, a conditional composite of the five *khandha*, the analysis is no less trenchant when applied to contemporary humanity as a whole. Allured by its technological achievements, the human species has been seduced by its own power of craft into a belief of self-autonomy: in an idealized future it would perceive itself and its security as completely independent of what it deems the uncertainties of merely organic processes, capable of subsisting in artificially

constructed space colonies or at the least, in vast urban centers, protected from the ambiguities of nature by finally asserting a total control over it.

Indifferent to the insight of *paṭiccasamuppāda*, that it "rises up" with the collaborative effort of the entire biosphere, the human species has no independent center unto itself, has no *sabhāva* (Skt., *svabhāva*) or self-subsistent nature of its own, and while it is unique, that uniqueness is entirely derivative from the planet. The species, enamored of itself, has forgotten its true nature as a peculiar configuration of the earth which shaped and sustains it, that, as a collectivity, it can be analyzed and reduced to a mere aggregation of the skandhic components of matter, feelings, perceptions and consciousness. It is this forgetting of its own conditionality that accounts, on the one hand, for the devastating drive of humanity to dominate, possess, and manipulate the natural world and, on the other, is the root cause of a malaise pervasive in modern society — an unfocused anxiety, loss of enthusiasm, and general experience of life as a weary process of woeful struggle, an updated social version of the classical Buddhist concept of *dukkha* (Skt., *duḥkha*). With every accomplishment of its applied techniques, the human species repudiated the organic conditions that had determined its evolutionary emergence and arrogated an entrepreneurial stance towards the natural world as an entity essentially distinct from itself. And if this pretense allowed an objectivity which further promoted the advance of technique, it simultaneously aggravated the alienation that sickens the modern spirit.

If there be a cogency to this Buddhist diagnosis of contemporary humanity's estranged disaffection from, and despoliation of, the planetary environment, its prescribed treatment may be no less appropriate. The Buddha's antidote to the disease of craving desire and its attendant sufferings evoked by a belief in the autonomy of one's ego, was the Noble Eightfold Path consisting of right views, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mind-

fulness, and right concentration. Central to all of them and explicit in three of them (right views, mindfulness, and concentration) is the concern for correct perception: to see reality as it is.

One of the most influential scholastic commentaries, exhaustively detailing the types and methods of meditational *praxis* through which the Buddhist tradition realized that perceptual goal is the *Visuddhimagga* or *Path of Purification* by the fifth century monk, Bhaddantācariya Buddhaghosa. From any perspective, it remains a classic of human psychology, but viewed from the present interest in the development of a Buddhist ecological philosophy and spirituality, those teachings from it that might appear only as exotic and bizarre elements of a foreign culture, assume a new dimension.

Specifically, there are innumerable references to, and precise instructions for, meditations on the inevitability and experience of old age, sickness and death; on the sub-division of the human body into 32 parts, each with a specific function and relationship to the others; meditation on varieties of physical decomposition and decay; on the minute details of breathing and eating; and a comprehensive correlation of each of the 32 parts of the body (both human and non-human) with one of the four primary elements of air, earth, fire and water. But whether the meditations involve the macabre concentration upon a bloated and festering corpse or the more refined attention to the inflow and out-flow of breath, all such exercises share a common purpose: to see reality as it is, namely, as a realm in which nothing arises and stands forth into being of its own power, but whose origin and persistence is a function of conditions, factors which are themselves products of other factors. To smash the illusion of a world populated by autonomous entities, extraneous and unrelated, the Buddhist tradition relentlessly focused the contextual nature of reality, exposing the component parts, the heap of relations that alone give a thing its identity.

As indicated in our opening remarks, Buddhism, as all other religious traditions, must be interpreted as the self-articulation of a planetary consciousness, the earth as a sacred recognition of the Absolute. If that is so, then the intensive psychic energy of *Theravāda* Buddhism, which percolated through history and spread and rooted itself throughout the countries of Southeast Asia, will assume new significance. It is the self-reflective revelation of the earth itself which, through the centuries-long sustained attention of the Buddhist community, addresses itself to the whole of the human population and its message is two-fold. While the exact style of those meditations may be totally inappropriate for the modern mentality, the subject of their concern is not. The basis which forms the common feature to all of them is organic process. Whether it be the process of breathing, the process of old age, disease and dying, or the processes of decomposition and decay, the basis is organicity. While the *Theravāda* tradition took the insight only so far, and curtailed its interpretation to the confines of its soteriology, its unremitting exposure of the phenomenal world as an organic aggregation of parts bespeaks the earth's own initial self-understanding and concern that it be accepted as such. The electron microscope of molecular biology and the equations of quantum and particle physics are merely the instruments through which the earth has extended and clarified the exact nature of its organicity to a final self-identity as one living biosphere, one organ.

The second message to contemporary human society which emerges in the earth's self-understanding through *Theravāda* Buddhist thought and *praxis* is the earth's cautionary warning of its own fragility. Repeatedly, the Buddhist tradition, having exposed the composite nature of phenomena, emphasized its correspondent impermanence. If things are not self-subsisting entities, but dependently originated and maintained by a complex of conditions, they are by that very fact, liable to disarray and cessation. The heedless extinction of its flora and fauna at the hands of

human craving is ample confirmation for the transitory reality that is earth. But in the light of *paṭiccasamuppāda* where the being of one is dependent on the being of others, and the termination of one spells the termination of others, the voice of the earth in the Buddhist insistence on the impermanence of all composite organisms, assumes dread implications that need no elaboration.

As Buddhism continued to reflect on the original intuition of *paṭiccasamuppāda*, it realized in the Mahayana phase of its development a more positive and synthetic interpretation of the formula. Paradoxically, the reductive analysis of the sensory world into a series of component elements was intended by the *Theravāda* tradition to induce a profound detachment from it. In destroying the illusion of the personal ego, it simultaneously devalued phenomenal reality as an object of possessive human desire. But having successfully done so, the *Theravāda* was unable to re-invigorate its world with a new, more creative interpretation of it.

Yet, a brief qualification is in order. For, if the *Theravāda* emphasized a reductive-analytic methodology to achieve its goal, there is evidence of a corresponding affective plane, the central intuition of which would only realize its comprehensive implications in the later *bodhisattva* ideal of cosmic compassion. Its roots however, may plainly be seen in that group of *Theravāda* meditations known as the Divine Abidings (*brahmavihāra*).

Consisting of lovingkindness, compassion, gladness and equanimity, they testify to an order of coherence and mutual resonance operative within the very composite texture of phenomena which the *Theravāda* so thoroughly identified. The object of this group of meditations is "the breaking down of the barriers" which hatred, resentment, envy, indifference, greed, and cruelty erect between oneself and all other beings. In the 52nd verse of the ninth chapter of his text, Buddhaghosa indicates the universal extensions and idealized ramifications of those four virtues, transforming one-

self even while actively projected towards, and efficaciously pervading all beings, of every category in all directions throughout the cosmos. Thus, while *Theravāda* analysis exhaustively revealed and emphasized the composite nature of phenomenal reality, it simultaneously demonstrated a vital connexity and ideal reciprocity which contained within it, as the following passage indicates, the organic spirituality which the Mahayana tradition would so powerfully elaborate.

May all beings in the eastern direction be free from enmity, affliction and anxiety, and live happily. May all beings in the western direction ... northern ... tern intermediate ... northern intermediate ... southern intermediate ... downward direction ... upward ... be free from enmity, affliction and anxiety, and live happily. May all breathing things ... May all creatures ... May all persons ... May all who have a personality ... May all women ... May all men ... May all Noble Ones ... May all not Noble Ones ... May all deities ... May all human beings ... May all those in states of loss ... be free from enmity, affliction and anxiety, and live happily.<sup>2</sup>

Although explicit to it, such a view was not sufficiently fostered, and *Theravāda* thought eventually entertained a belief in a reality of ultimate value, a nirvana totally transcendent to an earthly existence of conditional processes, referred to as *saṃsāra*.

It was this cleft between nirvana and *saṃsāra*, between an unconditional nominal reality and the world of finite contingent phenomena that became the axis for a new development in Buddhist history and the final emergence of its ecological cosmology. Mahayana thought picked up where *Theravāda* analysis left off and continued to ponder the significance and the affective implications of "the together rising up of things." But before it would reach its most sublime articulation of that mystery, three advances in the areas of

Buddhist symbolism and metaphysics would contribute fresh insight, thus facilitating its final expression. Space permits only the briefest mention of each.

In his *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* or "Fundamentals on the Middle Way,"<sup>3</sup> Nāgārjuna (c. 150-250) laid the seminal foundations for all the future schools of Mahayana Buddhism and presented human intellectual history with one of its major classics. Noting in his first chapter that the supreme teaching of the Buddha was that of *prāṭīyasaṃutpāda* (now in its Sanskrit form), he assumes that as the basic point of reference and the touchstone for his reasoning throughout the following 26 chapters. With incisive logic, he reveals the untenability of any invidiously polarizing position which would assert one extreme viewpoint over against its opposite. What concerns us here is his extension of earlier *Theravāda* analysis that had reduced phenomena to groupings of the five elementary constituents of matter, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness.

Nāgārjuna merely applied the logic of dependent origination to its full implications to demonstrate that not even these elemental *skandhas* were ultimate; they too were without independent reality, they too were products of multiple contributing factors. While not strikingly apparent at first, such a deduction had crucial ramifications. According to the *Theravāda*, there were five basic "building blocks," and "the together rising up of things" was circumscribed to them. In other words, it was their innumerable combinations which lent shape and consistency to the phenomenal world, which was thus said to rise up through them. However, they themselves (the five *skandhas*) were irreducible and thus not subject to the law of *prāṭīyasaṃutpāda*; all other things were conditionally originated by them, but as ultimate facts they subsisted as independent entities. Nāgārjuna exposed the logical inconsistency of such a position, clearly implicating the contingent status of the *skandhas* themselves. But if things could no longer be traced to just five elements to explain



their existence, how and by what was their "rising up" sustained? Nāgārjuna's inference was as clear as his logic was acute: The universe comes into being and persists as a totality in which each and every thing in it mutually conditions and depends upon every other thing; the entire universe rises up through the mutual influence and active participation of all its parts. While this was not made explicit by Nāgārjuna himself, it was a critical advance in the theory of *pratītyasamutpāda*, extending the logic of its implications and expanding the *Theravāda* concern with organic processes to a logically grounded appreciation of the phenomenal universe as one integral organic reality.

Now, inherent to the principle of universal mutuality, of everything dependent on every other thing, is the principle of co-relativity: not only is the physical appearance and abiding presence of a thing dependently constituted by a universe of other things, but its intrinsic value and meaningful significance is likewise bestowed relative to them. Therefore, to speak of a transcendent reality without reference to the mundane is meaningless, to refer to an infinite without regard to what is finite is an empty statement; each polarity collapses since the two terms are correlative to and derivative of each other; they are dependently originated with each other. In one of the most revolutionary statements in the history of human religious thought, Nāgārjuna seized upon the *Theravāda* dichotomy between nirvana and *saṃsāra*. To oppose the former as a state of unconditional, transcendent reality to the latter as the sphere of contingent finite existence is to posit a contradiction. The notion of nirvana as an Absolute, independent of and different from *saṃsāra* as the realm of the phenomenal universe, is a logical absurdity. Since nirvana is inconceivable without *saṃsāra*, since its very notion is conditioned by and relative to it, then, according to the logic of *pratītyasamutpāda*, the Absolute "rises up with" and finds value in the phenomenal universe. Nāgārjuna presses their logical identity even further when he states in the 25th chapter of his treatise:

*Saṃsāra* is nothing essentially different from nirvana. Nirvana is nothing essentially different from *saṃsāra*. The realm of nirvana is the realm of *saṃsāra*. Between the two, also, there is not the slightest difference whatsoever.<sup>4</sup>

Never before, nor since, has such a straightforward equivalence been drawn between the infinite and the finite. Its role in the development of a Buddhist ecological philosophy and spirituality is paramount. The forthright assertion of the earth's sacrality as fully coincident with the Absolute is a singular refutation of those religious traditions that have surrendered the same earth to the savageries of technological exploitation as a mere footstool of the Almighty.

Complementing this insight of Buddhist logic was a correspondent symbolization of the universe as an embryonic reality, the *tathāgatagarbha* maturing to a full awareness of itself as the Absolute Reality or the Cosmic Body of the Buddha, the *dharmakāya*. Having asserted the identity of nirvana and *saṃsāra* through rational analysis, the Mahayana tradition assumed the imagery of an organic growth process to explain the inherent coherence between the two, despite an only apparent disparity. The representation of the universe as an active self-emergence, a self-awakening to itself as an interdependent totality, not only allowed for the possibility of different levels or stages of insight in that self-recognitive process, but it further consolidated the value of the universe not only as an organic whole, but as an integral consciousness.

This last point was metaphysically grounded and elaborated upon by the *Vijñānavādin* or "Consciousness Only" school of the Mahayana tradition. While the theory of *pratītyasamutpāda* was central to its systematic presentation, its interpretation of it was peculiarly nuanced by its thorough-going idealism. Abbreviated to its barest form, the school argued the existence of only one reality: consciousness. In its absolute mode it was referred to as *Ālayavijñāna*



or "Storehouse Consciousness" out of which it actively and continuously projects the sensible shapes and features of the empirical universe and the individual human consciousnesses which perceive that universe. Persons and things then "rise up together with" one another, are mutually influenced and conditioned by each other, and share a fundamental dependence upon the ultimate "storehouse consciousness" from which they co-originate and through which they co-exist. But while it is the primordial source and grounding principle of phenomenal existence, the *Ālayavijñāna* is itself circumscribed by it, and in a most direct way is dependent upon human consciousness. For it is only through human perception that the Absolute contemplates the richness of its own self-manifesting diversity and comes to a full self-understanding in the totality of its universal contours and forms.

Transposed to an ecological perspective, the human assumes its proper dimension, and undoubtedly it is pre-eminent. But not because of any self-derived innate superiority as *erectus*, *sapiens*, or *faber*. Its distinction rests not in any physical, rational or technological prowess over the universe, but as the faculty through which the universe in all its variety is self-disclosed as the cosmic extension of the Absolute, which, in that same process, realizes its most determinate and concrete self-awareness as the originate source and ultimate nature of that very universe. In such a cosmology, the value of the human lies in being the psychic coincidence of the phenomenal as Absolute, the Absolute as phenomenal. In the experience of enlightenment, human consciousness is the median realization in which each, the Absolute and the phenomenal, knows itself as the inherent modality of the other.

While the type of perception that has given rise to the technological consciousness of the present age is the single vision of pragmatic intentionality, Buddhism fostered a multiple-perspective awareness of reality as "the together rising up" of the Absolute, and the mutual interde-

pendencies of the phenomenal. Rather than the constricted focus of applying means to self-willed ends, and the intrusive manipulation of persons and things to attain those purposes, Buddhism assumed for human consciousness, a universal context and open horizon for the self-disclosure of the real in the totality of its relations. The school of *Hua-yen* indicated the scope and intricacies of those relations, and represents the final phase in the present development of a Buddhist ecology.

In his, *Treatise on the Golden Lion*,<sup>5</sup> the seventh century Chinese patriarch, Fa-tsang (643-712) cryptically enumerated the "Six Characters" which together express the central intuition of the school. These six universality, specialty, similarity, diversity, integration and differentiation apply to every existent particularity. While preserving their individual unique identity, they reveal the reciprocal disposability of each to all the others and the dynamics of their mutual coherence as one universe. While Fa-tsang employed one of the golden lions that adorned the imperial palace where he originally lectured to exemplify these laws of differentiating identity, it is fitting in the light of our topic to call forth the earth itself as their living exemplar.

Through the character of universality, all of the elements of the planet, from the molecules and the atoms of its fiery center to the animate communities of its flora and fauna are viewed as one organic biosphere, itself a member in the innumerable galaxies that constitute the cosmos. Under the aspect of speciality, each biospheric element assumes its own proper dimension as contributing a peculiar function, an individual energy to the common life throb of the whole. Yet, this very uniqueness of each, points to a similarity: Though different with respect to function, every element shares with every other, a final denomination as the countless organs of one earth body. Slightly nuancing the aspect of speciality, the fact that every element is inimitable by all the others establishes a new level of diversity. That each member of the biosphere has a uniquely unrepeatable contribu-

tion to the health of the whole earth, again evokes the haunting implications of the Buddha's original phrase "... this not becoming, that does not become; from the ceasing of this, that ceases." To the technological mentality, confident in its ability to compensate for any loss in the natural environment by its own artificial manipulations, this assertion of the singular enrichment of each to the whole is a glaring, refutation. The fifth character of integration defines each element of the planet as an active tending-towards and leaning-upon all other elements to rise up together and maintain the one biosphere through a mutual, simultaneous collaboration which is possible precisely because each element reacts spontaneously out of its own particular frame of reference within the whole. This differentiated context out of, and within which, each element contributes to the biosphere is the sixth characteristic of phenomena, and again questions the contemporary disregard for regional integrity as the source of a variegated richness for the physical and psychic health of the planet in the face of the rapidly assimilative homogeneity of artificially contrived technological environments.

By attributing these six characteristics to every individual element within the biosphere, *Hua Yen* would encourage the modern mentality to

pierce the myopic stare of the one track vision of purposive consciousness that sees things only as means to specified ends. The reality of things interrelating with things, of things contributing to the emergence of a planetary body, sacred as the manifesting presence to and of the Absolute, that reality is infinitely more complex and whose contemplation is infinitely more transfiguring than any mere manipulatory process could ever aspire

#### FOOTNOTES

1. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, II.32; *Samyutta-Nikāya*, II..28.
2. Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, *The Path of Purification* (Berkeley, California: Shambhala Press, 1976), 1:335.
3. Kenneth K. Inada, ed. and trans., Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*, (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1970).
4. *Ibid.*, 158.
5. Fa-tsang, "Treatise on the Golden Lion" in Wing-Tsit Chan, ed. and trans., <sup>7</sup> (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), 409-414.

## Human Rights and the Buddha's Teachings: A Soteriological Perspective

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### INTRODUCTION

Human rights violations, such as racial discrimination in South Africa, radical transgression of religious and political freedom by the Chinese government in Tibet, forced labor in various parts of the world, subjugation of women by men in even the most civilized Western countries, child abuse in homes and schools, and many other unjust activities are taking place in the world. Numerous people suffer desperately from injustice, prejudice and discrimination in the political, economic, religious, sexual, social, cultural and ideological arena. Violent infringements of human rights have come to light in every sphere of human existence. With greater awareness of and concern for these violations, serious attention is now being focused on the meaning of human rights from the sociological as well as from theological perspectives.

### THE DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The expression "human rights" in the West is a relatively recent development, its earliest usage being traced back only to the last decades of the 18th century.<sup>1</sup> The *Virginia Bill of Rights* of 1776 and the *French Declaration of the Rights of Man* of 1789 are pioneer statements in its modern understanding; they affirm freedom and the equality of each individual as the most basic rights of human beings. After World War II, a keen and urgent concern for the fundamental rights of individuals was raised to a universal level for the first time in history. Thus, in 1948, a world-wide

statement on human rights in the form of *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* strongly affirmed human dignity, freedom, equality, justice, equity, mutual respect, and the responsibility to establish universal peace and welfare for all human beings.

The concept of "human rights" is not easy to define. Even the above internationally sanctioned official document of human rights does not clearly define the concept. Just as the idea of "freedom," a major character of human rights, cannot be easily defined, so is the idea of "human rights" difficult to elucidate. The first reason for this is rooted in the disparate definitions of "freedom" in the various ideologies pertaining to human welfare. The freedom of speech, for example, is treated differently in the *American Bill of Rights* than in the *Soviet Constitution*.<sup>2</sup> It is not easy to arrive at a universal agreement that is free of political and ideological differences regarding this concept.

Secondly, the term "human rights" can be given an extensive range of meanings. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* proclaims not only the traditional political and civil rights and freedoms but also economic, social and cultural rights. After the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, a number of other declarations regarding human rights, such as, the *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* (1959), the *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (1963), even the *Declarations on Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space*

(1963), were formulated.<sup>3</sup> The difficulty is further compounded due to the theological and religious perspectives that are brought to bear on the subject.

In this paper, however, adopting some ideas used in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *Preamble to the Covenant of Political and Civil Rights*, I define the term "human rights" as "the basic foundation of freedom, justice and peace in human relationship, which recognizes the dignity, equality, and inalienability of every human individual, without discrimination of any kind, for the purpose of human welfare and happiness."

The concept of "rights" in the West can be characterized as powers or privileges to which individuals have a just claim such that they can demand that, in order to retain their inherent dignity as a human person, their rights should not be infringed or suspended.<sup>4</sup> This kind of approach to human rights is characterized as "adversarial."<sup>5</sup> Underlying the Western approach to claiming and demanding human rights is a strong belief that every human being must not be denied powers and privileges of rights that would uphold the individual's inherent human dignity. In contrast, the East Asiatic approach to human rights, such as that of China, Korea and Japan, is characterized as "consensual" (in the sense of "consensus" building), which evaluates more wholeness, non-confrontational consultation and group-oriented unity, rather than demanding individualistic powers or privileges.<sup>6</sup> Political scientists attribute the origin of this "consensual" approach in the East Asiatic countries to Confucianism.<sup>7</sup>

My view is that the Buddhist approach to the issue of human rights is apparently different from the Western or Confucian way, that is, neither "adversarial" nor merely "consensual." This paper is a small attempt to discuss the issue of human rights from a Buddhist perspective utilizing the teaching of the Buddha contained in the Pāli canonical texts. Though in Buddhist literature, there is no technical term as such, the concept and teachings of human rights by the Buddha clearly

exist. In my estimation, the Buddha, indeed, promulgated human rights — not only the rights of humans but also of all sentient beings.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND BUDDHISM

Let us take the recent example of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, "the man who almost single-handedly earned respect for millions of the socially oppressed groups,"<sup>8</sup> who were deprived of their basic human rights. Ambedkar, an "Untouchable," rejected by Hindus, became Law Minister and chief architect of the *Indian Constitution*. He became a Buddhist in 1956, after finding that neither Hinduism, Sikhism, nor Christianity fought for human rights and that they all accepted social injustice and the caste system.<sup>9</sup> He turned to Buddhism where he found his philosophy of justice in three words: liberty, equality and fraternity. He found his social philosophy and spirit of human rights neither in political science nor in the French Revolution, but in the 25-century-old teachings of the Buddha.<sup>10</sup> Through his neo-Buddhist movement, it is estimated that 4,000,000 people embraced Buddhism<sup>11</sup> simply because they found that Buddhism promotes non-discrimination.

Human rights, as previously defined, characterizes the basic teaching expounded by the Buddha. Through Buddhist practice, one develops three major areas of life: *sīla* or moral virtues, *samādhi* or concentration/meditation, and *paññā* or insight/wisdom; these constitute "The Three Learnings." These three are always organically linked up with each other. Without moral restraint, the mind will never be able to concentrate and be calm enough for insight/wisdom to arise. Without the concentrated calmness in the body and mind, which is embodied by clearer insight/wisdom, one cannot have good conduct or make proper decisions moment by moment in one's daily activity.<sup>12</sup> To practice *sīla* one is required to recognize and observe justice, freedom, equality, mutual respect and human dignity in one's human relationship.

Since such recognition is required as the basis of human rights, it may be correct to state that *sīla*, as one of the Three Learnings of the Buddha's teachings is directed toward the right practice of human rights; thus, it can be said that those who recognize and observe human rights are those who recognize and practice the Dharma.

Despite the fact that Buddhism and the idea of human rights are inseparable, some Westerners seem to believe that Buddhists are not willing to acknowledge human rights issue as being essential to Buddhism. For example, the arguments by Masao Abe<sup>13</sup> and Kenneth Inada<sup>14</sup> led Robert Traer to conclude that "[m]any Buddhists are reluctant to identify the Dharma with human rights."<sup>15</sup> Although the Dharma cannot be totally identified with human rights, for it encompasses far greater areas of life than just human rights, the issue of human rights occupies an important and undeniable dimension of Dharma. It is unfortunate that Buddhists are labeled as reluctant to engage seriously in the discussion of human rights.

The other view of the Buddhist attitude towards the issue is stated by Perry Ottenberg:

Buddhism places little emphasis on the individual, self, or social activism. A 2,500 year history reinforces the acceptance of a rigid social structure. Self-contemplation after extraordinary training can lead to a feeling of transcendence and cosmic union, which can avoid human rights issues. Buddhism can be seen as emphasizing ritualistic withdrawal from social reality to the self. This state of contemplation is similar to many altered states of consciousness, all of which share massive passivity and diminished concern for the complexity of human-rights issues.<sup>16</sup>

It is apparent that Ottenberg is not referring to the Buddha's original teaching when he uses "Buddhism" here. Part of the reason for this kind of critique of the Buddhist approach to human rights seems to be due to some recent writings on

the issue of human rights by Buddhists themselves.<sup>17</sup> One of the common characteristics of such writings by some contemporary Buddhists is their adoption of the Buddhist theory of *anātman*, or "non-self," "no-self," or "not-self." Masao Abe, for example, states as follows:

... although we have self-identity in a relative sense, we do not have it in the absolute sense. I am I in the relative sense, but I am not I in the absolute sense ... Once we awaken to our own no-selfhood, we also awaken to the no-selfhood of everything and everyone in the universe. In other words, we awaken to the fact that, just like ourselves, nothing in the universe has any fixed, substantial selfhood, even while maintaining relative selfhood.<sup>18</sup>

Abe's conclusion is simple but probably too profound for this world of relativity, which declares "I am not I, and you are not you; thereby, I am you, and you are me."<sup>19</sup>

The Buddhist theory of *anātman* is a theory which denies the existence of any permanent substantial entity either mental or physical in the absolute sense of reality. It is based on the theory of the five aggregates, which analyzes the so-called individual being as composed of a psycho-physical unit. The Buddhist expression of the five aggregates is analogous to the scientific expression of H<sub>2</sub>O for "water." For scientists, there is no "water" as such, but only H<sub>2</sub>O. Likewise, when the Buddha says that living beings are composed of the five aggregates, what he denies is a permanent and unchanging entity from the theoretical point of view but not the absence of an individual personality in an empirical sense in the conventional use of the language. The theory does not negate personality or individuality of self in the conventional sense. On the contrary, the Buddha affirmed the importance of individual autonomy.<sup>20</sup>

Since human rights is primarily an issue for human relations in a relative world, the Buddhist concept of *anātman* or "non-self" in the absolute



sense is not directly applicable. As a guide in the daily lives of its followers, Buddhism is a highly practical and empirical teaching. In this paper, therefore, instead of referring to the Buddha's doctrine of absolute reality, I will focus on the ethical and practical teachings of the Buddha which can be applied to the social life of the relative world, yet from a so-teriological perspective.

## RIGHTS AFFIRMED IN BUDDHISM

### A. Affirmation of Rights of All Life Forms

The Western concept of rights concerns only humans, while the Buddhist idea of rights is confined not only to the sphere of humans but is opened to all life forms. Buddhists believe that all living beings on this earth have an equal right to existence and welfare.

It is said that the first action performed by the Buddha after a week of meditation in the bliss of Enlightenment was to gaze at the Bodhi tree with motionless eyes for one week.<sup>21</sup> The Buddha thus expressed his thankfulness and respect to the tree that gave him shelter during his struggle for Buddhahood. In this action of the Buddha, we witness a lesson in acknowledging the importance of ecological care for the natural environment not simply as a physical object but as part of the same living world of which humans are also a part.

Interest in ecological concerns has been on the increase; however, the Western approach to ecology seems to differ from the Buddhist. The Western approach values the importance of ecology for the purpose of human survival as a species, or for the purpose of global health as an investment required for access to future resources.<sup>22</sup> From a Buddhist viewpoint, this kind of approach may be regarded as anthropocentric. The Buddhist approach is to share the right to exist with all life forms as joint members of the universe, not as hierarchically dominating beings intent upon conquering the universe.

The Buddha prohibited the practice of animal sacrifice, opposing the prevailing non-Buddhist ritual ceremony in northeast India. Animals are not to be treated as inferior to human beings, and humans have no rights over them because of a supposed status of superiority. In India, Sri Lanka, and China, Buddhists established the first hospitals for the medical treatment not only of human beings but of animals as well.<sup>23</sup> In Buddhism, the issue of human rights is but one fraction of the whole issue of rights since it aims for the emancipation of all sentient beings, not only of human beings. As the Dalai Lama declares, Buddhism teaches that "we all have an equal right to be happy."<sup>24</sup>

### B. Affirmation of Rights of Humans

During the time of the Buddha, in India, there was an entrenched caste system that classified human beings into hierarchical social structures. But the Buddha and his disciples "ignored caste and racial discrimination both within the Sangha and in their relationships with the laity and openly preached and practiced the doctrine of the equality of man."<sup>25</sup> The Buddhist Sangha, as one of the oldest international societies in history<sup>26</sup> as well as a community which aimed for universal good embracing the whole of humankind,<sup>27</sup> did not grant any special privileges or immunities to a favored class. The Buddha's teaching of human equality, which advocated the abolishment of the caste system, was a revolutionary concept in this historical period.

From the teachings of the Buddha, Jayatilake summarizes the following seven arguments by the Buddha which support the idea of human equality: (1) *Biological Argument*: Biologically speaking, only humanity is a single species called *homo sapiens*, unlike any other animals and plants.<sup>28</sup> As modern scientists regard the concept of race only as "a classification device," the Buddha regarded the apparent divisions among human beings as not being due to biological

factors of absolute categories, but due to "conventional classifications" (*samaññā*).<sup>29</sup> In this way, the Buddha asserts that human beings are all biologically equal. (2) *Anthropological Argument*: Anthropologically, all humans are equal, for class, caste or slave systems are mere historical products of divisions of labor and occupational distinctions and have no intrinsic relation to anthropological distinctions. (3) *Sociological Argument*: Class structure is not universal but only exists in a sociological sphere, for some states may have four classes and others may have two, such as "the lords" and "the serfs." And the class structure itself is not rigid since "the lords sometimes became the serfs and the serfs lords."<sup>30</sup> It always undergoes change and is not absolute or permanent. Therefore, all humans are sociologically equal. (4) *Legal Argument*: Legally, all humans can be equally punished for an infringement of the criminal law with the same type and degree of punishment.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, legally all humans should be equal. (5) *Moral Argument*: Morally, all humans are equally liable under causal law in an ethical realm. Therefore, all human beings are totally equal in the moral dimension.<sup>32</sup> (6) *Ethical Argument*: Ethically, we are all capable of doing good or evil.<sup>33</sup> No one is always completely good or evil. All human beings ethically fall somewhere in the same general range, only to minimally differing degrees. (7) *Religious Argument*: And lastly, religiously and spiritually, all are capable of attaining salvation or spiritual development despite individual differences of capacity and regardless of their social status, race, or color.<sup>34</sup>

In this way, human equality is strongly emphasized by the Buddha not only in political, social or legal realms but in all possible dimensions. We also find human nature to be the same, though individuals may appear different in their capabilities and potentialities. Given equal opportunities and freedom, each individual can develop his/her basic human potentiality, since the implementation of human rights serves as a founda-

tion for the development of human potential and dignity.

### C. Affirmation of Rights of Women

Historically, women have been marked for discrimination in virtually all societies. The worst kind of human qualities are attributed to women. In some traditions, they have been regarded as the source of all the sins of the world. These prejudices and discriminations have perpetuated the practice of denigrating women and seeing them as mere objects of possession.

The issue of women's rights as a subject of discussion is a very recent development in the history of humankind. Down through the ages in various cultures, women had little or no rights as individuals. The *Code of Manu*, a prominent law book in Vedic literature, states: "No act is to be done according to her own will by a young girl, a young woman, or even by an old woman, though in their own houses. In her childhood a girl should be under the will of her father; in her youth, of her husband; her husband being dead, of her sons; a woman should never enjoy her own will."<sup>35</sup> Chinese ethical codes also revealed a similar kind of attitude toward women.<sup>36</sup> The society was male-oriented and there was a strong belief that only a male child could succeed in the continuance of the family line; thus, the quality of a married woman's life depended upon whether she could produce a son or not.<sup>37</sup> If she had no child, or if she had failed to produce a son, she could be superseded by a second or third wife, or even be chased out of the house.

In Hinduism, after losing one's husband, "the widow ... was considered not only unfortunate but also inauspicious."<sup>38</sup> Women had two options: to perform self-immolation on the funeral pyre of one's husband or to pass into widowhood.<sup>39</sup> Widows could not remarry. Since all death was regarded as resulting in pollution for the members of the dead person's family, "[if] there is a widow,

this death pollution is focused on her and is [considered to be] removed from the human world by her immolation."<sup>40</sup> Marriage was considered a holy sacrament. A young girl who did not marry was despised by society and held as an object of their criticism.<sup>41</sup> The wife was prohibited from owning her own property.<sup>42</sup> In the field of religious practices, spirituality of women was also denied. Unlike the *Rig Veda* period of ancient India, women in the Brahmanic period were deprived of their religious rights and spiritual life. Śūdras (lowest of the four Hindu castes, mainly farmers and laboring people) and women were prohibited from reading the *Vedas*. It was believed that a woman was capable of reaching heaven not through her own merits but only through unquestioning obedience to her husband.<sup>43</sup> She could not even worship God by herself.

In Judaism, the position of women has been also low. It is only in this century that "the essential claim that women are equal to men in spiritual and intellectual potential has become an accepted axiom."<sup>44</sup> Under Jewish law, "women ... do not form a congregation, even when ten of them come together,"<sup>45</sup> for women are viewed as private persons. Like Hindu women, Jewish women are exempt from worship,<sup>46</sup> and "Women, slaves, and minors are exempt from reciting the *Shema* [verses from the Old Testament] and from putting on phylacteries ..."<sup>47</sup> A woman cannot divorce her husband,<sup>48</sup> thus cannot remarry. The widow whose husband died childless and was survived by a brother is bound to the brother.<sup>49</sup>

The position of women in Buddhist doctrine is remarkably different from the above. The Buddha's teaching of human rights based on the total equality of human beings naturally supported women's rights based on equality of men and women. The Buddha had neither discrimination against women nor bias toward women.

The Buddha opposed practices centered on the male offspring;<sup>50</sup> consequently, Buddhist women did not feel forced to produce male children. In Buddhism, unlike in Christianity or in

Hinduism, marriage is not regarded as a sacrament or sacred event but as a secular, or private civil affair, though it has its social sanctity.<sup>51</sup> Although the union of two individuals is meaningful, a marriage can be dissolved by mutual agreement.<sup>52</sup> Both husband and wife have coparcenary rights of common property. The wife is not required to change her maiden name after her marriage. "The husband and wife exercised co-equal outlook in all affairs. Women are able to hold property in kind or in money, independently of their male relatives."<sup>53</sup> Remarriage of women is accepted.<sup>54</sup> In widowhood, she suffered no moral degradation as a consequence of her husband's death. There was no change in the social status of a widow. She inherited her husband's property and managed it. "She was considered as a rational human being with a right to maintain her recognized position in the social structure and was even branded by no stigma."<sup>55</sup>

Not only in the domestic or social realm, but also in the religious and spiritual realm, women were not treated as being basically inferior or subservient to men. The Buddha affirmed that intellectually and spiritually a woman had the same potentiality as a man and was capable of attaining Enlightenment.<sup>56</sup> In the Buddhist text, the Buddha says as follows:

And it be woman, be it man for whom such chariot doth want, by that same can enter Nirvana's shall they come.<sup>57</sup>

The Buddha established the Order of monks as well as nuns.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the women were not left out of any sphere of religious activity. "To allow women to spend the homeless life required a great many precautions and protections,"<sup>59</sup> but the Buddha thought that they could be overcome and thus gave his consent for the establishment of nunneries. The Buddhist communion consisted of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen. "The highest spiritual states were within the reach of both men and women and the latter needed no masculine assis-

tance or priestly intermediary to achieve them."<sup>60</sup> Both monastery and nunnery had equally autonomous status as an organization.<sup>61</sup> The Buddha described the defects and vices of women as well as men equally.<sup>62</sup> The Buddha chose some pre-eminent disciples and followers from thousands of them; they totalled 42 monks, 13 nuns, 10 male and 10 female lay-followers respectively.<sup>63</sup> One of the early canonical texts called *Therīgāthā* (Psalms of the Sisters) is full of stories of women who attained the highest stage of spiritual cultivation. They were women from various classes, ranging from members of royal families to slaves. They were mothers, wives, widows, daughters, courtesans, merchants or farmers.

The status of women in contemporary Indian society was extremely low and degraded, being subjugated to men. On the other hand, the Buddha affirmed the highly advanced teaching of total equality of women and men. In the tension between these two views, many rules for nuns were necessary for their protection. These rules sheltered them from possible danger or harm from contemporary society and allowed them to practice the Dharma freely. The ultimate purpose of the *Vinaya*, or rules for monks and nuns, should be understood in the context of *sīla*, whose ultimate value is protection from suffering.<sup>64</sup> For those who live within a broader fence of protection, "there is more space," and they "live out in the open, in the air."<sup>65</sup> Also, since nuns as women had the potential for pregnancy, the Buddha assigned more rules to nuns than to monks.<sup>66</sup> Because of these rules, nuns were doubly protected.<sup>67</sup>

*Gurudhammas*, or Eight Important Rules, were laid down for nuns with the acceptance of women into the Order. Although by their appearance they are often interpreted as degrading nuns and forcing them to submissive roles in the Order, a careful study shows that the total value of *Gurudhammas* lies in the concern for the well being and protection of the nuns.<sup>68</sup> *Gurudhamma* 1, the lower standing of nuns to well-behaved

monks (misbehaved monks were excluded), for example, represents the Buddha's practical approach towards the existing strong and rigid social structure of discrimination against women plus his compassionate concern, so that nuns would not create unnecessary and meaningless conflicts in society simply by not standing low to monks. When we consider the historical situation where the *Code of Manu* dominated the entire society, this kind of social manner which was assigned to nuns must have been regarded as a minor and superficial thing related only to the institutional organization, when compared to the Buddha's radical affirmation of the equality of spirituality and intellect between men and women, an essential necessity for the final goal of Buddhism, *Nibbāna*, here and now.<sup>69</sup> Passages in early Buddhist texts that display gender bias have to be understood within "blatantly male-dominated cultural and social context" rather than too "exhaustively."<sup>70</sup>

It is easily imaginable that there were monks who were not comfortable with the Buddha's decision of accepting women into the Order, especially among those who were previously of high castes and never allowed women any status of their own. Indeed, after the death of the Buddha, Ānanda was blamed at the first Council for being the chief cause for the establishment of the nunnery. Nuns were sometimes ill-treated by the monks, and they had to render various services to the monks, such as, washing and dyeing robes and cleaning up the hall. But the Buddha was careful and concerned about the well being of the nuns and set rules to protect them, forbidding the monks of such abusive practices. For example, to prevent the monks' taking advantage of the nuns, the Buddha decided that things offered to both Orders should be divided equally between the Orders even if the monks actually outnumbered the nuns. Thus, many rules were laid down to check the negative attitudes displayed by the monks. As long as the Buddha was alive, the nuns were well protected.<sup>71</sup>

Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity have a history of inequality, such as admitting caste or slave systems as well as animal sacrifices into their theological doctrines.<sup>72</sup> In contrast, the Buddha taught, affirmed, observed, and put into practice the equal rights of men and women, of all human beings and even of all life forms. On this standpoint, it may be concluded that among the world's major religious teachings, Buddhism is the only teaching which affirms equal rights of all those three sphere of existence.

### BUDDHIST RATIONALE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In the Western discussion of the issue, there is a belief that each individual inherently possesses human rights. Leroy S. Rouser says, "If it is not entirely clear what these rights are, or which of them is fundamental, it is nevertheless widely believed that we do indeed have them."<sup>73</sup> This belief reminds me of the Kantian antinomy for the concept of freedom. In his *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, Kant does not rationalize why an individual has freedom. He simply believes that human beings have freedom. A theistic religion, such as Christianity, may attribute its rationale to religious belief and conviction. How, then, does Buddhism rationalize human rights and the rights of all life forms? This issue is closely related to Buddhist anthropology or theory of personality.

If each individual requires human rights for protection from the common human need of freedom from fear, pain, harm, suffering, unhappiness, hurt or other forms of problems, then the Buddhist ethical principle and the basic rationale for human rights seem to converge. In Buddhist ethics, mental, physical, or verbal actions that are harmful either to oneself, to others, or to both are always discouraged.<sup>74</sup> Why? Because harmful action always brings pain, suffering, hurt and sorrow, which each individual wants to avoid. The Buddha was aware of the reality of the strong attachment

to one's own self possessed by all ordinary living beings. Because of this attachment to one's own self, all ordinary beings seek freedom from fear, pain, hurt, harm, and suffering. The Buddha states that as basic ordinary human nature, each individual loves oneself the most.

The whole wide world  
we traverse with our thought,  
And nothing find to man  
more dear than self.  
Since aye so dear the self to others is,  
Let the self-lover harm no other man.<sup>75</sup>

The above quotation includes the three steps of awareness: (1) "I" is the dearest to the self; (2) for you, you are the dearest; (3) therefore, I do not harm you. The first step is to have awareness of myself that "I love myself best of all." Then this awareness becomes the second step for the recognition of this feeling in others as well. And finally both awareness leads to the undeniable conclusion of "I do not harm you." Putting it into the context of human rights, it can be restated: "I have the right to be peaceful, happy, and unharmed; and so does the other person. Therefore, I cannot violate the other's right to be peaceful, happy and unharmed." The Buddhist way is supported by one's awareness embodied with insight/wisdom, or *paññā*, and compassion, or *karuṇā*. What is important is that the sense of self-love exists as common nature in all living beings.

The Buddha also remarks as follows:

Let him not destroy life nor cause others to destroy life, and, also, not approve of others' killing. Let him refrain from oppressing all living beings in the world, whether strong or weak.<sup>76</sup>

In Buddhism, human rights is but one part of the whole. The message in the famous story of the court trial brought by prince Siddhartha and Devadatta over the possession of a wounded swan,



which was shot by Devadatta and discovered and taken care of by Siddhartha, is that life belongs to someone who cares for it best. Every living being has a right to protect not only oneself but also the other. In other words, one can become involved in another's life by protecting the other's life; however, one cannot interfere in another's life by killing or harming it. If one does not have this reverence towards others, it could mean that one acknowledges that others have the right to retaliate with harm. The implication here is that one, indeed, does not have the right to harm others.

The Buddhist Five Precepts<sup>77</sup> are also rationalized in the same manner and all of them naturally uphold the concept of human rights at its basis. The Buddha states as follows:

A state that is not pleasant or delightful to me, it must be so to him too. Then how could I inflict that upon him? As a result of such reflection, he himself abstains from taking the life of creatures and he encourages others so to abstain, and speaks in praise of so abstaining.<sup>78</sup>

The fundamental principle of the precepts is: "I don't want to be harmed. I have a right not to be harmed. So does the other person." The second precept,<sup>79</sup> for example, will be understood as follows: since it is not pleasant or delightful to me that he/she takes what is not given to him/her, it must be so to him/her, also. Then how could I inflict that upon him/her? Buddhist precepts are for the purpose of protecting the rights of oneself as well as others. The Buddhist moral justification for human rights is based on empathy for others rooted in one's acute awareness of one's own wishes and fears.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS, BUDDHIST ETHICS, AND DHARMA: WHAT DOES SELF-CARE MEAN IN BUDDHISM?

Human rights are affirmed and observed for

the purpose of human welfare and happiness. Since the Buddhist ethical teaching is also directed toward the same aim, the Buddhist approach to the attainment of human welfare and happiness can be a tool to address the issue of human rights.

Buddhism being a non-theistic religion, it has no concept of a divine will or divine authority that punishes or rewards. The destiny of a human being is not controlled by a creator but by one's mental, verbal, and physical actions in accordance with the law of causality. That is, happiness and welfare as well as unhappiness and misery are nothing but a result generated from pertinent causes and conditions.

As is clear from the non-theistic nature of the teaching, Buddhist ethics is prescribed not as divine commandment, but in the form of self-awareness, self-motivation and self-effort in their interrelationship with causal law. The principle of causality is utilized to explain the principle of righteousness and justice. The principle of righteousness and justice is called *Dharma* in Buddhism.

The ethical realm based upon the Buddhist theory of cause and effect can be explained as follows: Any action done with "wholesome" (*kusala*, meaning skilful, or morally good) *motive* ... a *motive* free from anger, ignorance, and greed ... and with the proper *means*, is harmless to oneself, to others, or to both. This action necessarily brings a "good" result, which is happiness. On the other hand, any action done with "unwholesome" (*akusala* which means "unskilful") *motive* ... a *motive* rooted in anger, ignorance, and greed ... and with improper *means*, is harmful to oneself, to others, or to both. This action necessarily brings a "bad" result, unhappiness and pain.

As is clear from the above, in Buddhism, anger, ignorance, and greed are regarded as always harmful to oneself, to others or to both and result in unhappiness and pain; thus, they are called the three roots of evil. According to Buddhist psychology, anger, hatred, greed, and ignorance are regarded as the causes of unwholesome action

which is harmful to oneself and never justifiable or righteous. The one who really cares for oneself is the one who tries to be free from anger, ignorance and greed. The Buddha's teaching is directed to the path of how to gradually eliminate "self-love" as attachment and how to cultivate and develop the mind of "self-care" that is free from unwholesome action. In Buddhism, "caring for oneself" as the solid foundation for human welfare and happiness connotes a much wider and broader realm of ethical teaching than "care for oneself" in the ordinary sense; for when I care for myself, I am free from anger, greed and ignorance. When I am free from anger, greed, and ignorance, it means that at the same time I care for others as well. Although in the Western/Christian tradition, anger is regarded as justifiable when it is raised for the right reason,<sup>80</sup> in Buddhism, such is not the case, for anger is always harmful and is so firstly to oneself.

The Western concept of justice is discussed primarily in terms of its relationship to others.<sup>81</sup> In Buddhism, justice and righteousness as Dharma is always in relation either to oneself, to others, or to both. Without righteousness and justice to oneself, there can be neither righteousness nor justice to others. The Buddhist rationalization of human rights necessarily requires righteousness and justice to oneself as its basis.

In the next section, I will attempt to explore the crucial difference between the Western and the Buddhist approaches to justice and righteousness in relation to the concept of "self-care." Suicide will be the tool for this argument.

#### IS SUICIDE A PART OF HUMAN RIGHTS?

According to Aristotle, suicide is unjust to the state but not unjust to oneself. In the last chapter of Book V of *Nicomachean Ethics*, he states:

One class of just acts is that which is ordained by the law in conformity with virtue as a

whole. For example, the law does not enjoin suicide, and what it does not enjoin it forbids. Moreover, when a man voluntarily — that is to say in full knowledge of the person affected and the instrument used — harms another, not in retaliation, in violation of the law, he acts unjustly. Now when a person kills himself in a fit of anger, he acts voluntarily in violation of right reason; and that the law does not permit. Consequently, he acts unjustly. But toward whom? Surely toward the state, not toward himself. For he suffers voluntarily, but no one voluntarily accepts unjust treatment.<sup>82</sup>

Aristotle's above argument can be reconstructed by dividing it into two parts: (1) suicide is unjust to the state, and (2) suicide is not unjust to oneself, for no one voluntarily accepts unjust treatment.

Since human beings are social beings, it is obvious that the impact upon society made by a suicide is quite deleterious. Although Aristotle does not remark on this point specifically, it is clear that the "pollution of the city caused by suicide was probably regarded as the chief part of the injury inflicted by his act."<sup>83</sup> Therefore, suicide is unjust to the state. The tautology of "what the law does not enjoin it forbids" can be correctly understood by reading "law" as "custom and fashion," but not a narrow and positive law. Since common law forbids suicide, it is a violation of the law. Therefore, the state exacts a penalty.

Aristotle continues to say that suicide is not unjust to oneself. The syllogism used here is: (A) No voluntary action is unjust to oneself. (B) Suicide is a voluntary action, (C) Therefore, suicide is not unjust to oneself. The question is, however, whether, in truth, the two premises (A) and (B) he uses are valid. First of all, Buddhism sees the clear difference between logical validity and reality (facts). The Buddha explains how logic is not a fully satisfactory method of knowledge in finding the truth. Logical validity is dependent solely on the premises one chooses. If the premises

do not carry solid credit in reality, then the conclusion itself may lose its value.

Firstly, is a voluntary action not unjust to oneself in all cases? We do not have to depend on the knowledge of modern human psychology to recognize the fact that a person who is confused can always harm and hurt oneself physically as well as mentally with awareness of one's actions. The problematic nature of "voluntariness" is radically important when one discusses ethical meaning of action. Though Aristotle regards that voluntariness itself justify an action, in Buddhism, voluntariness does not necessarily justify an action simply because the action is voluntary. The Buddha repeatedly taught that one of the three roots of unwholesome actions is ignorance or ignoring facts (with awareness). In this context, voluntariness with ignorance is unjust. Then, the first premise, "No voluntary action is unjust to oneself," can be wrong.

Secondly, is suicide a voluntary action? As we discuss later, in most people committing suicide, confusion and delusion are so profound that it is questionable if they really want to kill themselves voluntarily or not. If so, their actions may not be categorized as "voluntary." Then, the second premise may also lose its validity.

Aristotle regards ethics as being directed towards human happiness.<sup>84</sup> If so, the same one action cannot be unjust to the one and just to another. Suicide is an ethical issue of justice to others as well as to oneself. Aristotle's contradiction seems a necessary result from his approach to justice, which is discussed only in terms of others.<sup>85</sup> Naturally some critical questions may be raised. Isn't oneself part of the state? If one is part of the state, isn't suicide also unjust to oneself? Cannot justice function in a wholesome way both towards oneself and the state?

Aristotle divides action into two types: that which affects one or more than one person, and that which affects the community.<sup>86</sup> The Western concept of action is basically physical behavior as an expression of physical energy directed towards

others. In this regard, there is an emphasis on physicalism, as opposed to the Buddhist tradition, which emphasizes mental action as the most important criterion of the ethical realm. "Physical action" in this context is rejected by the Buddha as "wrong view" or *micchā-diṭṭhi*.<sup>87</sup>

Suicide, from a Buddhist point of view, may be regarded basically as an unjust and wrong action. The action of taking life, whether the life be one's own or another's, is usually rooted in anger, hatred, fear, attachment, ignorance, confusion, prejudice, jealousy, or dogmatism. For any one who loves oneself best, such an action of taking life cannot be carried out without having an "unwholesome" motive — anger, ignorance, and greed. The action is harmful to oneself, to others, or to both, and thus it necessarily results in unhappiness.

If we put Aristotle's notion of suicide in the context of human rights, his logic would probably conclude in one of three ways, (1) each person has a right to commit suicide, (2) he cannot answer the question of whether suicide is part of human rights or not, and (3) suicide has nothing to do with human rights. But from a Buddhist point of view, to commit suicide may be regarded as a violation of human rights. If one cares for oneself, one is free from anger, ignorance and greed. In this regard, the Buddhist approach to human rights is not merely legal or social, but a profoundly ethical issue.

In *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant attempts to establish the fundamental and universal moral principle that can be adopted by anyone at any place. Kant tries to see if "self-love" can serve as "a universal law of nature,"<sup>88</sup> but he finds a dilemma, for in the case of suicide, "self-love" leads to self-destruction. "Self-love" and "self-destruction" are self-contradictory and self-inconsistent.

What Buddhism could suggest to the Kantian dilemma is to clarify the meaning of "self-love." From a Buddhist view, "self-love" and "self-care" (*mettā*) are regarded as two different things. Caring for oneself, as already mentioned, necessarily requires freedom from anger, greed

and ignorance; on the other hand, "self-love" does not. In Buddhist concept, "self-love" is another name for attachment (*taṇhā*). In each individual, "self-love" exists as basic human nature. This is what the Buddha stated in the text, that for each individual, the dearest is always oneself.<sup>89</sup>

"Self-love" which has roots in greed, anger or ignorance, at the extreme level can naturally result in self-destruction. Because of ignorance, one destroys one's own life, though what one actually attempts to destroy is not the life itself. What a suicidal person attempts to destroy is his/her pain, suffering, despair, torment, affliction, or other physical and mental pains which he/she is experiencing. One wants to live if one can remove all the pains. Research on suicide proves that "many likely suicides wish neither to die nor to kill themselves."<sup>90</sup> Because of one's delusion or ignorance of possible options other than committing suicide, one believes that taking one's own life is the only solution to the problem. In this regard, "self-love" and self-destruction are not self-contradictory or self-inconsistent, but these two are rather similar in one sense, though Kant did not view this as such.

From a Buddhist viewpoint, though "self-love" cannot serve as the universal law, "self-care" can be considered as the basic foundation for morality and ethics. In this regard also, we may know how crucial it is to recognize the importance of "action to oneself" in the discussion of justice and righteousness. Human rights, justice or righteousness can be fully realized only when it is understood in an ethical context which considers action — physical, verbal and mental — with respect to oneself and others as the basis for action to others.

### CONCLUSION

Infringement and resultant violation of rights are rooted in the activities of the human mind, such as hatred, antagonism, confusion,

prejudice, ideological dogmatism, fear, jealousy, and distorted views. In Buddhism, these are categorized as the three roots of evil, that is, ignorance, anger and greed. The Buddha was not simply a reformer of the social injustice but truly a radical transformer of the very roots of social injustice, which is the human mind.

Buddhism is a teaching designed not only to fight against rights violation but also to fight against the roots of rights violation. In Buddhism, justice and righteousness are considered not only in terms of human relationship, but also in regard to the mind of each individual. Without justice to oneself, social justice cannot exist. The starting point of the observance of rights is to be free from anger, greed and ignorance. In other words, to care for oneself is the very starting point of the observance of rights. Those who care for oneself naturally care for others. Those who care for one's own rights are those who also affirm and observe the rights of others. From a Buddhist point of view, this is the fundamental approach to rights of all beings as well as humans. In this regard, since the soteriological goal in Buddhism, nirvana, means the total liberation and freedom from one's own anger, greed and ignorance,<sup>91</sup> the Buddhist approach to the affirmation of human rights and rights of all beings lies not only in the social, legal, or ethical realm but also in a soteriological context.

### FOOTNOTES

1. From a broader historical view, the idea of human rights in the sense of legal rights as the mutual rights of the members of the society can be traced back to the Code of Hammurabi, the Babylonian King (about 2,130 to 2088 B.C.E.) the most ancient code of law known at present. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Science*, ed. David L. Sills, (N.Y., Macmillan), pp. 540.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 540-541. The American constitution prohibits abridgment of the right of freedom of speech to prevent interference with

fundamental rights by the public authorities, while the Soviet constitution promises all available technical facilities for the purpose of securing freedom of speech, but does not promise freedom of speech itself.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 542.

4. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, eds. James F. Childress and John Macquarrie (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986), p. 556.

5. James C. Hsiung, "Human Rights in an East Asian Perspective," in *Human Rights in East Asia*, ed. James C. Hsiung (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1986), pp. 3-7.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

8. *India Abroad* (CA: Los Angeles), Vol. XX No. 27, April 6, 1990, p. 12.

9. Sangharakshita, *Ambedkar and Buddhism* (Glasgow, Scotland: Windhorse Publications, 1986), p. 59 and p. 68.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163.

12. S. Tachibana, *The Ethics of Buddhism* (London: The Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 52.

13. Masao Abe, "Religious Tolerance and Human Rights: A Buddhist Perspective," in *Religious Liberty and Human Rights in Nations and in Religions*, ed. Leonard Swidler (Philadelphia: Ecumenical Press, Temple University, 1986).

14. Kenneth K. Inada, "The Buddhist Perspective on Human Rights," in *Human Rights in Religious Traditions*, ed. Arlene Swidler (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1982).

15. Robert Traer, "Buddhist Affirmations of Human Rights," *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, Volume 8, 1988, p. 14.

16. Perry Ottenberg, "Psychiatric Issues on Human Rights in Religion," *Human Rights in Religious Tradition*, ed. Arlene Swidler (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1982), p. 103.

17. E.g., Taitetsu Unno, "Personal Rights and Contemporary Buddhism," in *Human Rights*

*and the World's Religions*, ed. Leroy S. Rouser (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988); Kenneth Inada, "The Buddhist Perspective on Human Rights," in *Human Rights in Religious Traditions*, ed. Arlene Swidler (N.Y., The Pilgrim Press, 1982); Masao Abe, "Religious Tolerance and Human Rights: A Buddhist Perspective," in *Religious Liberty and Human Rights in Nations and in Religious*, ed. Leonard Swidler (Philadelphia: Ecumenical Press, Temple University, 1986).

18. Masao Abe, p. 204.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, II. 26.

21. Narada Thera. *The Life of the Buddha* (Malaysia: the Malayan Press, 1969), p. 16.

22. Perry Ottenberg, "Psychiatric Issues on Human Rights in Religion," *Human Rights in Religious Tradition*, ed. Arlene Swidler (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1982), p. 100.

23. A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (N.Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1954), p. 502. J. Jolly, *Medicine* (Strassburg: Verlag Von Karl J. Krubner, 1901), p. 16. Jayatilleke, *Buddhism and Peace* (Kandy: The Wheel Publication), p. 5.

24. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, "Hope for the Future," in *The Path of Compassion: Contemporary Writings on Engaged Buddhism*, eds. Fred Eppsteiner and Dennis Maloney (Berkeley, California: Buddhist Peace Fellowship, 1985), p. 2.

25. Malalasekera and Jayatilleke, *Buddhism and the Race Question* (UNESCO, 1958), pp. 55ff. Quoted in *The Principles of International Law in Buddhist Doctrine*, p. 517.

26. Jayatilleke, p. 451.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 493.

28. *Sutta Nipāta*, 601-611.

29. K. N. Jayatilleke, *Buddhism and the Race Question* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1974), pp. 7-8.

30. *Majjhima Nikāya*, II. 149. Quoted in Jayatilleke, *The Principles of International Law in Buddhist Doctrine*, pp. 516-517.



31. *Majjhima Nikāya*, II. 88. Quoted in Jayatilleke, *The Principles of International Law in Buddhist Doctrine*, p. 517.

32. *Majjhima Nikāya*, II. 86. Quoted in *The Principles of International Law in Buddhist Doctrine*, p. 517.

33. *Digha Nikāya*, II. 250-251. Quoted in *The Principles of International Law in Buddhist Doctrine*, p. 517.

34. *Majjhima Nikāya*, II. 147. Quoted in *The Principles of International Law in Buddhist Doctrine*, p. 517.

35. *The World's Great Religions*, ed. Edward K. Thompson (N.Y.: Time Inc., 1963), p. 42.

36. Shūrai's *Raiki*. Quoted in *Nyonin Ōjō* (Kyoto: Hongwanji Publication, 1988), p. 7.

37. *Atharva-Veda* III, 22. Quoted in *The World's Great Religions*, p. 44.

38. Harold G. Coward, "Purity in Hinduism: With Particular Reference to *Patañjali's Yoga Sūtras*," in *Hindu Ethics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 18.

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*

41. K. Sri Dhammananda, "Status of Women in Buddhism," in *Gems of Buddhist Wisdom* (Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1983), p. 312.

42. The Code of Manu, *The World's Great Religions*, p. 42.

43. L. S. Dewaraja, *The Position of Women in Buddhism* (Kandy: The Wheel Publication, No. 280, 1981), p. 6. *Gems of Buddhist Wisdom*, p. 312.

44. Rachel Biale, *Women and Jewish Law* (N.Y.: Schocken Books, 1984), p. 256.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

50. King Pasenadi, a non-Buddhist king, was deeply grieving that his queen Mallika gave

birth to a daughter. Seeing this, the Buddha said to him, "A female offspring, O King, may prove even better than a male." *Samyutta Nikāya*, III. 2.

51. Tilokasundari Kariyawasam, "Feminism in Theravada Buddhism," paper presented at the conference, "Buddhism and Christianity: Toward the Human Future," Berkeley, California, 8-15 August 1987, [Collected papers] p.8; *The Position of Women in Buddhism*, p. 9.

52. Hajime Nakamura, *Genshi Bukkyō No Seikatsu Rinri*, pp. 24-27.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

54. Tilokasundari Kariyawasam, p. 8.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

56. Though to attain enlightenment is assured to be possible for both men and women, in one Pāli text, we can find a passage which records that the Buddha is refuted to have said that an enlightened woman cannot become a fully self-awakened one, a wheel-turning king, a Sakka, a Mara and a Brahma. *Majjhima Nikāya*, III. 65-66.

57. *Samyutta Nikāya*, I. 33. See also I. 129. I. 89.

58. The Buddha's so-called reluctance for the establishment of a nunnery can be partly attributed to the contemporary social status of women in India, who were entirely subjugated to men. The Buddha must have been aware of the evils of sectarianism which might likely humiliate and harass women if they were provided separate accommodations.

59. Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, "The Future of Bhikkhuni Sangha in Thailand," paper presented at the conference, "Buddhism and Christianity: Toward the Human Future," Berkeley, California, 8-15 August 1987, [Collected papers] p. 3.

60. *The Position of Women in Buddhism*, p. 8.

61. Hajime Nakamura, pp. 122-127.

62. *Anguttara Nikāya*, IV. 196-197. Quoted in Masaharu Anesaki's *Buddhist Ethics and Morality*, 1912, p. 22. See also Hajime Nakamura's *Genshi Bukkyō no Seikatsu Rinri*, pp. 122-127. Karma Lekshe Tsomo interprets the greater num-

ber of precepts to nuns than to monks as follows: "When the order of nuns began five years later, it inherited the precepts that had already been laid down for the order of monks. The number of precepts formulated on the basis of a nun's misbehavior are only about half the number of precepts formulated on the basis of a monk's misbehavior." *Sakyaditā: Daughters of the Buddha*, ed. Tsomo. (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1988), p. 22.

63. *Anguttara Nikāya*, I. 14.

64. See the author's unpublished M.A. thesis, "A Study of Biomedical Ethics from a Buddhist Perspective," (The Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, 1987), pp. 56-58.

65. *Sutta Nipāta* 406

66. Z. Nagata, "Ritten No Joseikan," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, XXVII, no. 2 (March 1979), pp. 707-710.

67. *Ibid.*

68. Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, pp. 5-7.

69. *Anguttara Nikāya*, I. 54-55. *Samyutta Nikāya*, XXXVIII. IV. 1.

70. Tsomo, pp. 22-23.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

72. Cf. e.g., *Hindu Ethics*, p. 2, pp. 79-80. *Leviticus*, 14.2-32. *Matthew* 8.4. St. Augustine, *The City of God*, Bk. XIX. ch. 15. Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa of Theology*, Supplement (Posthumous Compilation, 1274). *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings under entry: slavery. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, pp. 28-33.

73. *Human Rights and the World's Religions*, p. 1. Italics mine.

74. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. 415-420.

75. *Samyutta Nikāya*, III. I. 8.

76. *Sutta Nipāta*, 394.

77. They are "I take upon myself the rule of training to refrain from, (1) harming living things, (2) taking what is not given, (3) sexual misconduct, (4) wrong speech, and (5) taking drugs or drinks which tend to cloud the mind.

78. *Samyutta Nikāya*, V. 353-355.

79. See note 77.

80. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. Martin Ostwald, (N.Y.: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 1135b 20-30. *New Testament*, Mark 3.5; 10.13-15. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, p. 22.

81. See *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1130b 1-2.

82. *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1138a 5-13.

83. J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), p. 534.

84. *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1099b 26, 1101b 15-17.

85. *Ibid.*, 1130b 1-2.

86. *Rhetoric*, 1373b 25-35.

87. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I.373

88. Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 53-54. tr. H. J. Paton (N.Y.: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 89.

89. See note 75.

90. *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*, ed. Warren Reich (N.Y.: Free Press, 1978), Vol. 4. p. 1619.

91. *Anguttara Nikāya*, I. 54-55. *Samyutta Nikāya*, XXXVIII. 1.

## The *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*: The Comedy of Paradox

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During the last two decades there has been a growing recognition among Buddhologists of the importance of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra* for Mahayana Buddhism in East Asia. This work, known in Chinese as *Wei-mo-ching*, and in Japanese as *Yuima-kyō*, derives from a non-extant Sanskrit original probably written sometime after 100 B.C. but before 100 A.D. References to the work by Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu indicate that it was very influential in India before its transmission to China.

The Chinese, in turn, were so impressed with it that at least seven different translations were made, including one by the famous and prolific Kumārajīva and another by Hsüan-tsang.<sup>1</sup> The fact that subsequently it was chosen by Shōtoku Taishi as one of the first three sutras to receive commentary in Japanese not only indicates its stature among East Asian Buddhists in the 6th century but assured for it a pre-eminent place among the sutras in Japan.

The first translation into a Western language was made by Ōhara Kakichi into English in 1898-1899. Perhaps because the translation was serialized in the Japanese Journal, *Hanseikaisshū*<sup>2</sup> and thus was not readily available to many Western readers, the importance of the sutra was largely ignored. For instance, Sir Charles Eliot scarcely mentioned it in his definitive *Hinduism and Buddhism* of 1921, though he did pay slightly more notice to it in *Japanese Buddhism* in 1935. Despite the voluminous nature of *A History of Indian Philosophy* in five volumes, Surendranath Dasgupta provided, in 1922, only the briefest reference to the sutra. Karl Reichelt, in *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism* of 1927 says only:

Finally, we may mention *Wei-mo-ching* which gives the spiritual reflections of a pious monk on the deep teachings of the Buddha,<sup>3</sup>

The brevity of this statement is matched only by its inaccuracy.

It is to D. T. Suzuki's credit that he was keenly aware of the significance of the sutra and quoted it at some length in *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism* in 1963.<sup>4</sup> His treatment, however, gives little sense of the significance or contents of the work as a whole. Indeed, it would be very difficult to gain a gist of the work from the quotations offered. However, Suzuki's comments in several of his works alerted his readers to the significance of the *Wei-mo-ching* for Ch'an (and Zen) Buddhism and may have led to a greater appreciation of the sutra by students of Buddhism in general.

By 1972, less than a decade later, Kenneth Ch'en was able to write:

There is no question but that the *Vimalakīrti* is one of the most popular of Mahayana sutras. It is the sutra that inspired much of the sculpture in Lung-men and Yün-kang during the Northern Wei Dynasty. During the T'ang Dynasty episodes from the sutra were expanded into stories and ballads which were then recited before the multitudes gathered during the temple festivities.<sup>5</sup>

The following year, in 1973 at the XXIX Congrès International des Orientalistes in Paris, Hashimoto Hōkei read a paper on *The Philosophic Influence of the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra upon Chinese Culture*. Although the essay deals as much with Japan

as with China and really does not go far in assessing the philosophical import of the work, it is ground-breaking nonetheless, for it does more than any preceding work to assess properly the role of the sutra in Chinese Buddhism.

The influence of Hashimoto's essay was enhanced by two translations of the text into English — one by Charles Luk (Lu K'uan Yü) in 1972<sup>6</sup> and one by Robert Thurman (from the Tibetan) in 1976.<sup>7</sup> Both translations are accompanied by reasonably brief, non-technical introductions and notes. The availability of the Luk translation in paperback has made the sutra easily obtainable, particularly in America.

Despite all of these essays, books, and introductions, none truly prepares the reader for the work at hand. Kenneth Ch'en describes one episode as amusing but fails, like all the rest, to let the reader in on the secret — that the *Vimalakīrti* is, at times, a scandalously comic work which hardly seems the expression of ordinary, serious-minded Buddhism at all. The Buddha himself may not be dealt with irreverently by the sutra's good-natured humor but neither the Theravādin *bhikkhus* nor the Mahayanist bodhisattvas are left unscathed. As we shall see, on one level, at least, the book is irreverent in the extreme.

Even Luk, who provides us with the most comic of the translations, offers no interpretation of this aspect of the sutra in his introduction. Thurmond, in his turn, is so deadly serious that the work's irrepressible laughter is totally overlooked by him. His translation, to my mind, strains to be holy and hence misses the fun entirely. To be fair, however, this may be due as much to the Tibetan translation upon which he depends as to Thurmond himself.

The fact that religious interpreters have overlooked the comic element in the sutra should not be surprising to anyone acquainted with the history of exegesis. A similar example of a comic religious work being dealt with soberly can be found in the biblical *Book of Jonah*. Believers and skeptics have, for centuries, been so captured by

the apparent claim that a man lived in the belly of a fish, that they have, almost to a person, overlooked the fact that the book is enormously funny — and is intended to be. The same might be said of the parables of Jesus which feature such extraordinary images as a man with a log sticking out of his eye, a camel trying to get through the eye of a needle, and a person having difficulty swallowing a tiny gnat but taking a camel down easily. One could also cite any one of a number of ancient myths which feature divine hilarity, some of the more whimsical sayings of Master Kung, and, of course, the amusing writings of Chuang-tze and Lieh-tze.

The question is, of course: What is meant by the word "comic"? Far greater minds than mine have wrestled with this question, and I have no illusions about providing a universally acceptable definition. Indeed, the more what causes laughter is analyzed, the more difficult it is to say anything at all. Nevertheless, something must be proffered by way of a provisional definition if we are to proceed further.

What is it which makes us laugh? As I reflect upon the various laughter-generating ideas, sayings, and situations — from puns to slap-stick comedy to fantasy and romance — what strikes me as the constant throughout is unexpected incongruity. The pun begins with the right sound used in an unexpected and incongruous way. The Keystone Cops, Harold Lloyd, and, *mirabile dictu*, Burt Reynolds invariably get involved in situations where serious injury or death are to be the obvious result. What makes us laugh is that the disaster never occurs, for it is averted by a surprising conclusion which simply does not fit with the situation. The man falls twenty stories into a Kiddie Pool and, instead of dying, wipes off his face and walks away. Our laughter is an emotional release in response to a turn of events which is quite unexpected and incongruous.

I have already said that the *Book of Jonah* is funny. Why? A prophetic book is normally the expression of a holy man of God, a man who

suffers pain, humiliation, and perhaps, even death as a result of preaching God's Word. He is the prototype of the faithful believer. When the prophet turns out to be totally unwilling to serve God and, in fact, is far less pious than his pagan contemporaries, one either becomes angry or begins to laugh. When the same prophet begins to pout and lecture the Almighty about justice, it is difficult to suppress a smile.

The prophetic conventions lead us to expect one kind of book. There are few moments of amusement in the *Book of Amos*. When the stereotype is broken, we sense the incongruous and call it "funny". Or we refuse (for the sake of the Holiness of Scripture) to accept the possibility of such incongruity and argue about the historicity of life in a big fish instead. In the latter case it is the scholar, as much as the book, which should invoke laughter.

With this brief and certainly sketchy understanding of laughter, let us return to the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*. The quotations used shall be drawn from Luk's translation, not because it is more learned, but because it captures better, I think, the flavor of the Chinese.

The sutra begins seriously enough, setting the stage for the drama which is to follow. We find the Buddha surrounded by 8,000 *bhikṣus* and 32,000 bodhisattvas in Amra Park in Vaiśālī. The scene is one of near perfection since each of these worthies is depicted as a person of extraordinary wisdom and spirituality. These are the holiest of the holy, the flower of Buddhist piety. The reader is led to expect this to be the typical sutra in which enlightenment is the commonplace.

Chapter three, however, introduces the incongruous in the form of the hero of the story Vimalakīrti himself. Vimalakīrti is by no means the typical Buddhist paragon of virtue. He is a layman, with wife and household, hardly a monastic recluse at all. Although his purposes are always the very best, he is said, nevertheless, to visit taverns, houses of prostitution, and gambling halls.

He wears jewelry, realizes a profit at his business, and frequents government offices. In other words, what the normal Buddhist monk abstains from for fear of pollution, Vimalakīrti is regularly in contact with.

What is even more unexpected — even implausible — is that none of the great *bhikṣus* or bodhisattvas so lauded in chapters one and two holds a spiritual candle to our lay hero. When Vimalakīrti becomes ill (he induces this sickness himself for pedagogical purposes), the Buddha is hard-pressed to find anyone from his followers who feels competent to go to comfort him. The first disciple to be asked to visit Vimalakīrti is the famous Śāriputra who figures so importantly in earlier sutra literature:

Vimalakīrti wondered why the great compassionate Buddha did not take pity on him as he was confined to bed suffering from an indisposition. The Buddha knew of his thought and said to Śāriputra: "Go to Vimalakīrti to enquire after his health on my behalf."

Śāriputra said: "World Honoured One, I am not qualified to call on him and enquire after his health. The reason is that once, as I was sitting in meditation under a tree in a grove, Vimalakīrti came and said: 'Śāriputra, meditation is not necessarily sitting. For meditation means the non-appearance of body and mind in the three worlds (of desire, form and no-form); giving no thought to inactivity when in nirvana while appearing (in the world) with respect-inspiring deportment; not straying from the Truth while attending to worldly affairs; the mind abiding neither within nor without; being imperturbable to wrong views during the practice of the thirty-seven contributory stages leading to enlightenment; and not wiping out troubles (*kleśa*) while entering the state of nirvana. If you can thus sit and meditate, you will win the Buddha's seal.'



"World Honoured One, when I heard his speech I was dumbfounded and found no word to answer him. Therefore I am not qualified to call on him and enquire after his health."<sup>8</sup>

This passage evokes laughter in two ways. First, the notion that the great Śāriputra would hesitate to call upon a mere layman is preposterous, by definition. Second, the idea of anyone telling the eminent *bhikṣu*, who has devoted endless hours to meditation, that meditation in the usual sense is unnecessary is wholly incongruous. It would be as though Menuhin counselled Stern about the uselessness of violin practice.

After Śāriputra declines the Buddha's invitation, he turns to first Maudgalaputra and then to Mahākāśyapa, Subhūti, Pūṣamāyana, Mahākātyāyana, Aniruddha, Upāli, and Ānanda. Each presents essentially the same excuse: the last time I met Vimalakīrti he so amazed me with his extraordinary teaching that I am unworthy to comfort him now.

Such protestations are ludicrous enough, coming as they do from the holiest of the holy arhats, but the story does not end there. The Buddha, in Chapter four, turns to the bodhisattvas for help with very much the same result. Neither Maitreya, nor the Bodhisattva Glorious Light, nor Ruler of the World, nor Excellent Virtue is willing to help, for even the bodhisattvas are overwhelmed by the wisdom and piety of the layman Vimalakīrti. Finally, Mañjuśrī reluctantly agrees to go and even he finds himself, as it were, sitting at the feet of Vimalakīrti, attending to his devastating paradoxical message.

If the comic incongruity of a layman lecturing to one of the great bodhisattvas does not draw a smile, certainly what he teaches ought to produce, at the very least, a nervous laugh. Mahayana Buddhism, of course, frequently suggests man's paradoxical situation, but Vimalakīrti carries the paradox to its absolute extreme, utterly confound-

ing secular and sacred, righteousness and depravity, ego and egolessness.

Primary example of this emphasis is found in his conversation with Subhūti, which, for reason of brevity, I shall shorten slightly:

The Buddha then said to Subhūti: "You call on Vimalakīrti to enquire after his health on my behalf."

Subhūti said: "World Honoured One, I am not qualified to call on him and enquire after his health. The reason is that once I went to his house begging for food, he took my bowl and filled it with rice, saying: 'Subhūti, if your mind set on eating is in the same state as when confronting all (other) things, and if this uniformity as regards all things equally applies to (the act of) eating, you can then beg for food and eat it. Subhūti, if without cutting off carnality, anger and stupidity you can keep from these (three) evils; if you do not wait for the death of your body to achieve the oneness of all things; if you do not wipe out stupidity and love in our quest of enlightenment and liberation; if you give rise to neither the Four Noble Truths nor their opposites; if you do not hold both the concept of winning and not winning the holy fruit; if you do not regard yourself as a worldly or unworldly man, as a saint or not as a saint; if you perfect all Dharmas while keeping away from the concept of Dharmas, then can you receive and eat the food. Subhūti, if you neither see the Buddha nor hear the Dharma; if the six heterodox teachers, are regarded impartially as your own teachers and if, when they induce leavers of home into heterodoxy, you also fall with the latter; then you can take away the food and eat it. If you are (unprejudiced about) falling into heresy and regard yourself as not reaching the other shore (of enlightenment); if you (are unprejudiced about) defilements and

relinquish the concept of pure living; if when you realize *samādhi* in which there is absence of debate or disputation, all living beings also achieve it; if your donors of food are not regarded (with partiality) as (cultivating) the field of blessedness; if those making offerings to you (are impartially looked on as also) falling into the three evil realms of existence; if you (impartially) regard demons as your companions without differentiating between them as well as between other forms of defilement; if you are discontented with all living beings, defame the Buddha, break the law (Dharma), do not attain the holy rank, and fail to win liberation; then you can take away the food and eat it.'

"World Honoured One, I was dumbfounded when I heard his words which were beyond my reach and to which I found no answer. Then I left the bowl of rice and intended to leave his house but Vimalakīrti said: 'Hey, Subhūti, take the bowl of rice without fear. Are you frightened when the Tathāgata makes an illusory man ask you questions?' I replied: 'No.' He then continued: 'All things are illusory and you should not fear anything. Why? Because words and speech have no independent nature of their own, and when they are no more, you are liberated. This liberation will free you from all bondage.'" 9

Such a statement may not strike the modern reader as exactly proper material for a stand-up comedian, but it plays upon the same themes of incongruity and improbability which have always been the comic's stock-in-trade. If we do not laugh, it is either because we have never taken classical Buddhism seriously or because this sutra holds no authority for us.

The comedy does not end with the initial reticence of the disciples and bodhisattvas to visit Vimalakīrti. Eventually, Mañjuśrī does go and a

host gathers to hear the enlightened layman. Finally, Śāriputra arrives:

Śāriputra saw no seats in the room and thought: "Where do the Bodhisattvas and chief disciples sit?" Vimalakīrti knew of Śāriputra's thought and asked him: "Virtuous One, do you come here for a seat or for the Dharma?" Śāriputra replied: "I come here for the Dharma and not for a seat."

Vimalakīrti said: "Hey Śāriputra, he who searches for the Dharma does not even cling to his body and life, still less to a seat." 10

Vimalakīrti, who seems to like to make fun of Śāriputra in particular, isn't finished with him yet. A little later he says to Mañjuśrī:

"Please take a lion throne and be seated amongst the great Bodhisattvas by enlarging the size of your body to that of the seat." Those Bodhisattvas who had acquired supernatural powers, enlarged their bodies to the size of the thrones on which they sat (without difficulty). But the newly initiated Bodhisattvas and chief disciples of the Buddha could not mount the high thrones.

Vimalakīrti then said to Śāriputra: "Please be seated on the lion throne." Śāriputra replied: "Venerable Upasaka, these thrones are large and high; we cannot mount them." Vimalakīrti said: "Śāriputra, you should first pay reverence to the Tathāgata Merukalpa and will then be able to sit on one of them." 11

The idea of Śāriputra, the great disciple, struggling like a three year old to climb up into a chair is an example of marvelously overstated humor. The writer, though obviously serious in intent, takes great delight in making fun of these venerable saints of old.

Still another episode in which Śāriputra is the goat is found in Chapter seven. An enlightened goddess has stepped forward to teach, and Śāriputra is a bit surprised (and skeptical) that a female could be so enlightened. Therefore he asks:

Why do not you change your female bodily form?

The goddess said: "All phenomena (including forms) are also unreal. So why have you asked me to change my unreal female body?"

Thereat, she used her supernatural powers to change Śāriputra into a heavenly goddess and herself into a man similar to Śāriputra, and asked him: "Why do not you change your female form?"

Śāriputra replied: "I do not know why I have turned into a goddess."

The goddess said: "Śāriputra, if you can change your female body, all women should also be able to turn into men. Like Śāriputra who is not a woman but appears in female bodily form, all women are the same and though they appear in female form, they are fundamentally not women."

Hence, the Buddha said: "All things are neither male nor female."

Thereat, the goddess again used her supernatural powers to change Śāriputra back to his (original) male body, and asked: "Where is your female body now?"<sup>12</sup>

So much for male chauvinism, even on the part of the great *bhikṣu*. In the Buddha there is neither male nor female, and those who think otherwise are very much a laughing matter.

I hope by now that I have at least established my reasons for responding to the *Vimalakīrti* with

laughter. The ultimate intent of the sutra is surely serious, of that there can be little doubt, but that seriousness is cloaked in a garment of laughter, as a divine comedy. Why? Why does the author take such pains to make Buddhism's ultimate message appear comic? What has the medium to do with the message?

My own belief is: everything. The philosophy of the sutra is one of absolute paradox. The rather straight-forward, literal philosophy of the Southern School of Buddhism is shattered as the old distinctions between good and evil, secular and sacred, *samsāra* and nirvana, enlightenment and ignorance are exploded.

Because this is so, it is no longer possible legitimately to tell stories in which monks are better than laymen or the sacred is better than the secular. *Vimalakīrti* is himself the message, for in him all distinctions are overcome. At the same time, however, there is another sense in which distinctions are preserved — must be preserved — if Buddhism is to mean anything at all. From one point of view, sitting in meditation is just an illusory action in an illusory world; yet from another it remains a path toward the goal. If it did not, Buddhism would devolve into meaninglessness.

The destruction of distinctions found in the *Vimalakīrti* comes perilously close to absolute anarchism and meaninglessness. How is it possible for an enlightened human being to counsel defaming the Buddha, breaking the law, and failing to win liberation? How is it possible for a true follower of the Buddha to say that the home-leaving path goes nowhere?

What prevents the sutra from becoming a counsel of despair is that ever-present comic sense of incongruity. Our laughter expresses that awareness of absolute tension between a counsel to defame the Buddha and the Buddha-mind which does such counselling; between an irreverent spoof of the great arhats and bodhisattvas and supreme reverence for the heroes of the faith. In a word, the comedy of *Vimalakīrti* rests upon and

points to the Great Paradox, the Ultimate Incongruity upon which Mahayana in its most sophisticated form rests.

It is true that not all Mahayanists have seen Buddhism as an expression of the comic spirit. There has been much somber earnestness in East as well as South Asia. Still, one must not overlook the popularity of the *Lotus Sutra*, another comic

work born of the Great Paradox, nor the Ch'an *kung-an* (*koan*) which are often full of comic mirth. Ultimately *wu* (*mu*), that bolt of sudden enlightenment, is a laughing matter. The Chinese are correct, and they may have learned this truth from *Vimalakīrti*: there must be a smile on the face of Mi-lo-fu (popularly referred to as the "Laughing Buddha").

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## Stress as Suffering

by Gordon L. Fung, *School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco*  
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It is the fundamental role of the physician to care for people in distress. On the one hand is the physical reality of the distress as expressed in a specific diagnosis like cancer or heart disease, as confirmed by objective testing like blood tests and x-rays, as treated by specific therapies like medicine or surgery, and as followed up over time with repeat visits and studies. On the other hand is the resulting patient's personal and emotional toll that can ultimately affect the severity, course, and prognosis of that condition. The interaction of patient, disease manifestations, and the patient's response to the sum of the manifestations and the therapies contribute to an alteration in well-being that is called illness. Investigating these changes and being able to restore well-being is at the core of the physician's responsibility. Upon reflection, the practice of medicine becomes a foundation for understanding the stress of the human condition, which has been the subject of philosophical and religious investigation for thousands of years.

Stress is defined in *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*<sup>1</sup> as (a) "a physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation," and (b) "a state resulting from a stress: especially one of bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existent equilibrium." This definition delineates the four components of stress: (1) the causal factors, (2) the existing equilibrium, (3) the interaction between the causal factors and the existing equilibrium, and (4) the resultant imbalance. In medicine the causal factors are the etiologic agents, *i.e.*, viruses, bacteria, excess or lack of hormones, or malfunctions in normal body activities. The existing equilibrium

represents the state of health at that particular time. A patient can be in good health or already critically ill. The interaction is the process by which the factor dynamically affects a living organism to change the body from the existing state to a new and different state. Finally, the resultant imbalance is the manifestation of the disease within the specific individual. How each person manifests the disease, either overtly or subclinically, is directly related to the nature of the factors, the existing equilibrium of the patient, and the process of the various interactions.

In a recent edition of *New Dimensions*, stress was called "The Health Crisis of the '90s."<sup>2</sup> In this special report the basic components of stress leading to "stress-related illness" were described in detail. The new category of stress-related illness was defined as "disease directly or indirectly resulting from stress." Examples of these were mental illness, personality disorders, coronary heart disease with recurring chest pain, hay fever, and ulcers. But the reaction of the individual to the causal factors is at the source of stress, and it is here where our concerns should be directed. The Buddhist literature directly parallels this analysis of the elements of stress and its resolution.

A general perusal of Buddhist literature<sup>3-12</sup> finds fundamental discussions on each of these four components of stress. In this article we hope to look at the modern medical phenomena of stress through the looking glass of the Buddhist teachings of 2500 years ago. Just as physicians try to help all patients get well and stay well, the Buddha directed his energies towards freeing everyone from the "illness" of the human condition. The Buddha taught that causal factors are the feelings,



thoughts, and actions that arise from desire and attachment. The existing equilibrium is one's present state of suffering inclusive of the constant production of new causal factors from the continuing state of desires and attachments. Most people do not recognize this condition and therefore believe it to be an acceptable condition. This complacent acceptance of suffering, the Buddha taught, was in fact, the active clinging to one's desires and insatiable cravings. The Buddha further explained that delusions were the methods by which one hid the true nature of reality from oneself. The resultant imbalance is one's new state of suffering after having suffered once again as a consequence of one's own actions. Finally, the Buddha taught that birth, life, disease, and death is the cycle of suffering. The solution, i.e., the treatment, is the awareness of this condition and the seeking of equanimity that is nirvana, Void, or *sūnyatā*.

From a medical standpoint the existing equilibrium is the homeostatic condition termed health. Rather than being a well defined entity, good health is more a description of the lack of measurable abnormalities. To incorporate the wide range of individual variations, all normal values are expressed in ranges. These apply to the important parameters of vital signs and to the specific blood tests of kidney or liver function. Physiologists teach us of the balance between the renewing processes of cell division and cell maintenance versus the ongoing damage that occurs because of wear and tear. This dynamic ongoing process is the steady state of change that is called the delicate balance of health. Given the dynamic nature of the human body, the existing equilibrium is only a moment in time.

In the First Noble Truth, the Buddha explains that the existing equilibrium is in fact a state of suffering:

Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation

from the pleasant; and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful.<sup>13</sup>

Included within this is the sum total of human experience inclusive of physical pain and mental anguish. The point is also made that pleasure, too, is painful because of its inherently transient nature.<sup>14</sup>

In medicine the causal factors arise from the external and internal environment. Infectious agents, noxious exposures, genetic predispositions, and personal interactions are a partial listing of these factors. Buddhism specifies that these factors come from desire. The Second Noble Truth states:

Verily, it is that thirst (or craving), causing the renewal of existence, accompanied by sensual delight, seeking satisfaction now here, now there — that is to say, the craving for the gratification of the passions, or the craving for (a future) life or the craving for success (in this present life).<sup>15</sup>

This truth explains that the origin of suffering is a consequence of the Law of Karma — also known as the law of causation and fruition. From the fountainhead of craving comes the motivations, thoughts, and actions that lead to further suffering. This endless cycle is then created whereby the actions to satisfy desire lead to suffering which leads to greater desire and consequently greater acts of desire that lead to more suffering.

In medicine the interaction between these causal factors and the existing equilibrium determines the ultimate manifestation of the disease. This complex relationship has previously been alluded to. It is the process of the continuing interplay between the unique characteristics of one's own existing equilibrium with the multiplicity of components that make up the causal factors. For example, the interaction may be between an explosive causal factor like a head on collision and

the otherwise healthy young man. The medical assessment of this trauma tries to determine the effect upon all of the body's systems, *i.e.*, head trauma, bone and joint damage, internal injuries. Or the interaction between a slowly progressive cancer that insinuates itself into every organ of the body, *i.e.*, brain, bone, liver. In each case the exact interaction between the causal factor and the existing equilibrium determines the nature of the individual's suffering. In Buddhism this is reflected in the Law of Karma<sup>16</sup> — or the law of causations and fruitions. The specific nature of the feelings, thoughts, and actions that one uses to satisfy one's cravings will determine one's karma. This karma then returns as the determinant for suffering in the present existing equilibrium. Therefore one's present suffering must be a reflection of past misdeeds. This interaction in Buddhism is the interplay between past actions causing present suffering.

The final component in this model of stress is the resultant imbalance that arises from this interaction between causal factors and existing equilibrium. In medicine it is the new delicate balance after the patient has stabilized. This stabilization may be over time as the patient must adjust to taking blood pressure medicines on a daily basis, or relatively rapid as the patient recovers from surgery. In the larger context it may include the physical, mental, emotional, social, and lifestyle adjustments that are made after a major heart attack. The Buddha taught that this resultant imbalance is a continuation on the cycle of constant suffering. Whether it coincides with the time frame of medicine, *i.e.*, after a specific disease, or is seen in the context of a rebirth, one constantly produces and responds to causal factors that result in a new imbalance — the existing equilibrium for the next causal factor.

With so many similarities between the medical interpretation of stress and the Buddhist view of the human condition there remains a fundamental difference. It is that the existing equilibrium in medicine is the current health of the

individual while in Buddhism it is suffering. Buddhism would carry this further to state that because the *status quo* is suffering, it is the source of further suffering. Upon reflection there are echoes of this point of view in medicine as well. Through birth, growth, development, disease, and death the human body is constantly changing until it can no longer continue to respond to the "wear and tear" of everyday living. In this context disease becomes a simple reflection of the inability of the body to maintain even a semblance of equilibrium any longer. As these physiologic and psychologic control and maintenance systems break down the façade that was health breaks down to reveal the true nature of the human body — that it is unstable and an eminent source of personal pain and suffering. Health in the Buddhist sense becomes the degree of denial that one has about the true nature of his own being.

Using this model to understand stress demonstrates striking concordance with the Buddha's description of the human condition. It strongly suggests that the Buddha's teachings concerning freeing oneself from the cycle of suffering may be applicable to patient care. The first lesson is to cultivate the awareness that life — this existing equilibrium, is suffering in one of its many guises. The second lesson is to destroy those desires that lead to the production of more karmic causal factors. In the Third Noble Truth the Buddha states:

Verily, it is the destruction, in which no passion remains, of this very thirst; the laying aside of, the getting rid of, the being free from, the harbouring no longer of this thirst.<sup>17</sup>

Without discussing the methods presented by the Buddha to resolve suffering (*i.e.*, The Eightfold Path), the goal of its practice was to seek the bliss of Nirvana, the Void between attachment and detachment, and the equanimity of *sūnyatā*. This he described as the permanent state of happiness and joy. We as physicians, in managing stress,

must then be aware that addressing only the causal factors is insufficient. We must find ways to address each of the components of stress — eliminating causal factors such as worry and anxiety by education; analyzing with intent to correct destructive patterns of response and interaction; altering the resultant imbalance through encouraging determined effort towards personal improvement; and most importantly to make people constantly aware that the existing equilibrium requires careful scrutiny of habits and behaviours to prevent the production of new causal factors. In this way our overall efforts will reduce stress through promoting the calm, quiet serenity of equanimity .

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## The Emergence of American Buddhism

by David Ross Komito, *John F. Kennedy University, Orinda, CA*

I can hardly imagine speaking on any topic either more ambiguous or more exciting than the emergence of American Buddhism. Of course, some of you may even wonder if there is an American Buddhism, or if there are not instead several traditions of Asian Buddhism in America. That is the key question, and I hope that it will be answered in the course of my remarks today.

I've been following the development of Buddhist thought and practice in this country since the middle 1960's when, as a college student, I took a course on Chinese and Japanese art. My interest in Buddhism began with that course and has grown to encompass more and more of my life in the succeeding twenty-five years. I've watched what began as a tradition of Asian immigrants take root in California among non-Asians and begin to develop its own forms. I've wondered about some of those forms and have over the years taken my concerns to various authorities in the Buddhist tradition for discussion.

In 1983, while interviewing His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I asked him for his thoughts on the development of American Buddhism. I asked, "Where will the Western Buddhism come from? How long will [it] take to grow?" Would it "... evolve out of the hearts of the practitioners in conjunction with the [teachers] that come to the West?"

He said, "... we may need Western Buddhism, European Buddhism or American Buddhism ...," and he said that he thought "... the effort of combination is necessary. From the Tibetan side, there is the teaching, sharing experiences. Then from the Western side, mixing together the teaching or the Tibetan experience and their own experience, and putting them together.

... it might need some of their own experimenting ... these things will not come as a revolution, but come as an evolution ... without sort of a pre-plan; nobody can make a plan, ... . Of course, we need sincere effort, sincere motivation. Then I think that some kind of shape will come." (*J. Transpersonal Psych.* 1984, vol. 16, no. 1)

His Holiness' thoughts validated some of my observations over the years. I thought it important that he, in fact, did suggest that there might be a unique American Buddhism developing. This suggests an answer to the long-term question of whether there will be an American Buddhism, or whether, as an alternative, there might be some Asian forms of Buddhism in the United States. On the other hand, it does not mean that there might not be both! In fact, I suspect that this will be the case, and I will explore some of what the interconnections of the two might be during my remarks today. I will, however, primarily be focusing on the development of something new, "American Buddhism," rather than on Asian forms of Buddhism taking root in America.

I also thought it important that His Holiness saw the process of development of American Buddhism as a gradual one, combining elements of American culture in the process of the unfoldment and development of this American Dharma. I had been wondering if perhaps some sort of tremendously charismatic teacher would be required, but His Holiness instead suggested that a natural development coming out of the intersection of cultures would be expected.

Beginning from the perspective of His Holiness' comments, I would like to pursue these kinds of ideas today, first reflecting on my own observations of some aspects of the American

encounter with Buddhism and finally giving a brief consideration to a possible role for the Pure Land traditions of Buddhism in the unfoldment of American Buddhism.

As I mentioned a few minutes ago, my initial interest in Buddhism developed out of my experience in a class on Chinese and Japanese art. I took the class because I was fascinated with Zen style landscape paintings, and this fascination developed out of my experiences traveling in the Sierra Mountains and Rocky Mountains. But the key point here was not my experience *per se*, but that it was by no means unique for the times. The late 1950's and early 1960's were a time when many Americans were gaining a broader intimation of the depths of Japanese culture. The conclusion of the second World War had created a situation in which differing cultures were directly exposed to each other. Thus, as the early countercultural movement of the "beatniks" arose in the U.S., it had cultural models other than European to engage. The arising of "beat Zen," as Alan Watts termed it, whatever its distortions of Japanese Zen, did, at any rate, bring an awareness of some kind of Buddhism into the general American mind.

If we look at "beat Zen," we find some clues to the initial influences on the emerging American Buddhism. Now you may consider it rash to refer to "beat Zen" as an early form of American Buddhism, but I believe that it was. I say this because the phenomenon was uniquely American, and because it was a style or type of interpretation of Dharma unlike anything to be found in Asia. In particular, it stressed the unconventional and "spontaneous," and looked to ancient Zen masters for support of modes of anti-establishmentarian behavior and in reaction to the norms of American life which were considered oppressive.

The general outlines of what followed in the American interest in Asian religions is known to us all and need not be repeated here in depth. However, I would like to highlight some specific points which I believe will have lasting importance for the development of American Buddhism.

As you know, a key issue in the 1960's was a seeking for alternatives to the excesses of American culture. This was a continuation of the tone set by the beat counterculture. College educated Americans at the time were exploring alternatives to their culture which were stimulated by a revulsion for American imperialism and racism both in the Southern United States and in Viet Nam. The general revulsion was not merely negative, however, because people were influenced by a sense of alternative possibilities. College courses in anthropology and psychology (especially the human potential movement) created this sense of alternate possibilities both for society and for the person. In particular, the broad teaching of cultural anthropology to college students eroded notions of American superiority by exposing students to other cultural ways of "being in the world" which were taught as being neither better nor worse than our own, merely different. This created an intellectual base which would be fertile soil for new social movements. Add to this the experimentation with drugs, and alternative American culture exploded in a variety of directions.

Buddhism was drawn into this explosion of experimentation. Interest was generally pragmatic, focusing on practice more than theory. The forms of Buddhism implicated were broad, including Zen and Tibetan Buddhism, as well as Theravada and Pure Land forms. Though many Americans began to practice various types of meditation, an important additional factor entered the process, and that was the great number of Americans who began to travel abroad "seeking" teachings and teachers. Among this group were a number with sufficient dedication to enter monasteries and nunneries.

This general countercultural social phenomenon attracted the interest of psychologists, and during the 1980's a new factor entered the process of developing American Buddhism: the psychologists. As the human potential movement embraced meditation, a growing number of psychologists began to practice meditation. Journals



were founded to disseminate studies about meditation and altered states of mind to psychologists, and as a result, a new kind of perspective on Buddhism began to arise among professional segments of American society. This is an important, and I believe, overlooked point. When some numbers of psychologists began to validate meditation as not being merely self-induced trance, and validated Buddhist psychology as being a system of considerable profundity, the country generally could no longer dismiss Buddhism as simply a strange foreign religion. In fact, the concern expressed by fundamentalist Christians is an indication of the fact that the Dharma had gained not only some popularity, but a kind of respectability in sections of the academic establishment, making it a real threat, of a sort, to fundamentalist Christians.

This brings us to 1990. Again, I would like to highlight some key elements affecting the current picture. One is the emergence from the monasteries and nunneries of Americans who have been practicing for 10 to 20 years. These people are sophisticated about the Dharma, and can teach it in America in a language and context which is accessible to Americans and free of many of the problems of speaking across cultures, problems which have hampered Asian teachers. Unlike the situation in past decades, these people are now met by more mature lay American practitioners. There is now a body of students who have been practicing and studying Buddhist thought for twenty to thirty years. Many of these lay practitioners have become relatively sophisticated in their understanding, if not always their practice, because of the burgeoning numbers of English translations of Buddhist sutras and commentaries by professors of Buddhism in the universities. This is another key development, for many of the classics are now available in readable English, with excellent commentaries in English by American professors of considerable understanding and experience with practice. And finally, there is the ecological crisis which is now upon us, and there is evidence

of an emerging movement which could be called "Green Buddhism."

Here, with Green Buddhism, for me, the story folds back upon itself, and I believe, suggests to us the next significant development in the emergence of American Buddhism. With the publication of books such as *Dharma Gaia* I find the circle completing itself. What was the appeal of a new aesthetic (for me, of landscape painting) is now becoming insight into a whole new mode of relation to the environment. Where the excesses of American culture were, in the 60's, seen in the domain of politics and imperialism, I believe that in the 1990's they will be seen in the domain of ecology. Where in the 60's and 70's individual interest was very inwardly turned toward the self (often narcissistically), in the 90's I believe that it will, of necessity, be outwardly turned as a diseased environment presses for attention.

What will be the key features of Green Buddhism as it emerges in the next decade and intertwines with past developments?

Where previous American interest in Buddhism was on emptiness and meditation, in the 90's I believe it will focus on the flip-side of emptiness, that is, on dependent origination or interconnectedness. And I believe that with the American sense of social conscience and idealism, this will have implications for social action. Where in the past few decades attention was focused on freeing the individual through meditation, I believe that in the 90's attention will expand to healing the environment and our fellow beings. If I am correct in this assessment, then a general reconsideration of the Bodhisattva Vow within the context of teachings on interconnectedness will of necessity supplant a practice of meditation which merely seeks individual salvation. And here is where Shin Buddhism may have a special contribution to make. To explore this contribution requires that I magnify my focus on a certain element of the vision of the future I have proposed. This element is time; in fact, a new sense of time.

A reading of American history indicates that Americans have rarely thought about much more than the immediate future. For the most part, people think about the limits of their own lifetimes; occasionally they think about their children's lifetimes. However, our government and corporations rarely think far into the future. In many corporations five years is considered long-range planning. But the ecological crisis is forcing us to think in much longer periods of time. Whether it is chemical pollution that we fear, or nuclear waste pollution with a lethal life of a quarter of a million years, Americans must more and more consider the effects of their actions on the unborn generations which will be the grandchildren of their grandchildren's grandchildren. And even this is too short a span. Be that as it may, it is more and more recognized and supported by the scientific establishment that unless we act in the present with future generations in mind, there will be no future generations.

This is a radical shift in perspective. It highlights the fact of our interconnectedness, that we must think about future beings each time we drink from a plastic bottle, each time we dump a plastic bag, and each time we consume a kilowatt of nuclear-generated electricity. In fact, what is *pratīyasamutpāda* but a recognition of this kind of interconnectedness?

Now, as each of us takes a breath, we must consider how much less healthful that breath is because of our auto exhausts, and thus we cannot hide from the fact that each of us is polluting the air each of us needs for our life each time we drive a car. What is this if not *pratīyasamutpāda*?

Those of you familiar with the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh are familiar with this form of Dharma. Joanna Macy has linked this teaching with a perspective she calls "deep time," a sort of non-Buddhist language for Thich Nhat Hanh's teaching. By this language we would say that not only do our actions affect our fellows of today, but they affect our fellows of tomorrow. Thus, by this

route, it is seen that socially responsible action must take future beings into account. How does this differ from the Bodhisattva Vow?

Though each of us may not vow to save all beings from samsara, yet, as we act in an ecologically responsible manner within the context of deep time, we are in fact acting for the benefit of unborn generations. This sort of action, as it becomes more widespread, even outside Buddhist communities, will set the stage for people to have a deeper capacity to understand the Bodhisattva Vow. For it is a mere split hair between beginning with actions for the ecological benefit of future generations and ending with a realization that the source of ecological problems is not chemicals or radiation; those are the symptoms. Rather, the source of the problems is the ignorance and hubris which builds nuclear generating stations without worrying about how to dispose of the nuclear waste. When ignorance is seen as the source of the danger to future generations, then the ending of ignorance will be seen as the source of security for future generations. Then the split hair dividing the way of the bodhisattva from the way of the socially and ecologically responsible citizen will disappear, and the Mahayana way will be seen as the quintessentially socially responsible way.

When we see our current dilemma as caused by ignorance and seek to save both ourselves and future generations from the products of that ignorance, then we will develop a new appreciation for the vows our ancestors took to save us from our own ignorance. And here will be fertile ground for Shin Buddhism, and indeed all the Mahayana schools, for I believe that only our faith in the power of the great bodhisattvas and their concern for us as the unborn generations of their future will sustain us in our time as we effectuate our concern for those as yet unborn generations of our future.

(Commencement address, Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, CA, May 26, 1990.)

## Book Reviews

*Dōgen's Manuals of Zen Meditation*

by Carl Bielefeldt. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. viii + 259 pp.; paper, \$35

Today we see an emerging breed of scholars who are linguistically and philosophically prepared to begin a new cycle in our understanding of Zen, and of Buddhism in general. The pious reworkings over the past few decades of the splendid pioneering effort of Daisetz Suzuki (1870-1966), whose introduction of Zen to the West began at the turn of the century, are finally giving way to an appreciative but unblinking review of Buddhist theory and practice. Professor Bielefeldt stands prominently at the leading edge of this new movement, which is sufficiently prepared and confident to challenge not only traditional sectarian dogma, but often even the conclusions of contemporary Japanese scholarship.

Dōgen (1200-1253) is traditionally considered to have begun promulgating the Sōtō (Ts'ao-tung) methods of his mentor, Ju-ching (J., Nyojō, 1163-1228) in 1227, immediately upon his return from China, with the composition of a short statement on meditation practice known as the *Fukan zazen gi* (Universal Promotion of the Principles of Seated Meditation). However, the text widely known under this name (the *rufubon*, which Bielefeldt calls the "vulgate"), appears for the first time as part of the *Eihei kōroku* (Extensive Records of the Eihei [Master, Dōgen]), a compilation by his disciples, ca. 1242-46, and perhaps partly edited by Dōgen himself late in life. In any case, this standard version as we know it today, referred to as the *Kōroku Fukan zazen gi* and deriving from a further edited printing which appeared as late as 1673, is "vintage Dōgen" (p. 133), and not to be confused with his early stance.

In 1922 scholars discovered an autographed manuscript dated 1233 (Tempuku 1), significantly

different from the vulgate, and probably representative of Dōgen's early teachings. It may even be identical with the original Kōroku version presumed to have been written during that time period (1225-27) when Dōgen had just returned to Japan. Needless to say, we cannot arrive at definitive conclusions about Dōgen's views on meditation, especially as they may have changed over the following quarter century of his ministry, until we have a clear understanding of the origin of the texts on which we must rely to support our conclusions. Bielefeldt carefully leads us through the morass of contemporary speculation on the textual and theoretical issues to a sense of Dōgen's place in the historical continuum of Kamakura Buddhism. Then, in a separate section on "Documents" (pp. 174-205), he painstakingly illustrates the similarities and differences between the Kōroku vulgate, and the Tempuku version of the *Principles*, further comparing the texts to passages in Dōgen's *Bendō hō* (ca. 1245) and *Shōbō genzō zazen gi* (ca. 1243), as well as in the Tso-ch'an-i (J., *Zazengi*, "Principles of Seated Meditation," 1103) of the Sung Ch'an monk, Ch'ang-lu Tsung-tse (J., *Chōro Sōsaku*).

In spite of widespread interest in Zen in the West during the past several decades, few are likely to recognize Tsung-tse's name, even though his Tso-ch'an-i has the distinction of being first manual of Chinese Ch'an meditation practice in the sect which is preeminently the "meditation" sect. Chapters Three and Four of *Dōgen's Manuals* are a revised expansion of Bielefeldt's article, "Ch'ang-lu Tsung-tse's Tso-ch'an-i and the 'Secret' of Zen Meditation" (Peter Gregory, ed. *Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism*

[1986], 129-61), to which the reader is referred for further details. Here he takes us back to Dōgen's antecedents in China — not only to Tsung-tse's "Zazengi," but ultimately to the popular and long-influential Hsiao chih-kuan (*Shōshikan*, "Lesser Treatise on Cessation and Insight") by T'ient'ai's Chih-i (Chigi, 538-97).

For some, these will be the most fascinating chapters in the book because they provide detail and structure to our generally amorphous understanding of Chinese Buddhism and its meditation practices, an "understanding" engendered by centuries of disinterest and neglect by the Confucian academic establishment and its Western heirs. If I have one reservation about Professor Bielefeldt's book, it is that the title is much too narrow to do justice to its contents, and that *Dōgen's Manuals* may fail to attract some who may quickly assume that it is an arcane study of interest to a small coterie of Japanese Buddhologists. In fact, this is a landmark contribution not only to Dōgen studies, but to our understanding of differing postures toward meditation during periods of critical importance in the development of both Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. Moreover, Bielefeldt says what he has to say clearly, economically, and without a hint of the obfuscating jargon that all too often tempts academics of every age. His is a relatively short book, but every sentence is carefully weighed and not to be skimmed lightly. The text and appendix of "Documents" are supported by a Glossary of Chinese and Japanese Names and Terms (pp. 207-228), a rich bibliography (pp. 229-244), and a thorough index (pp. 245-259).

Readers might also note several other outstanding articles by our author which have been partly incorporated into his book, but which can be read with profit in their original form: "Recarving the Dragon: History and Dogma in the Study of Dōgen," *Dōgen Studies* (ed., LaFleur, 1985); and "Ennin's Treatise on Seated Zen," *Ten Directions* (Spring 1988). There is also a recent review of Professor Bielefeldt's book by Heinrich Dumoulin in *Monumenta Nipponica* (Autumn 1989), 377-

380. After decades of study into the history of Zen and its antecedents, Professor Dumoulin's appreciative evaluation of Bielefeldt's research deserves our attention as do few others.

Today we often find it convenient to characterize Rinzai and Sōtō meditation as the difference between practice employing the *kōan* and Dōgen's "just sitting" (*shikan taza*). But Bielefeldt points out that "... not only in his discussions of Ta-hui but throughout the ten fascicles of his recorded sayings and the entire corpus of more than one hundred works, we do not read any criticism of the popular technique of *kanna* (p. 154). ... His basic position no doubt simply makes explicit what was surely the actual assumption of almost all Ch'an and Zen teachers of whatever persuasion: that *kōan* study, whether by monk or layman, was to be carried out within the larger context of Buddhist spiritual life — a life that included contact with a master, moral cultivation, ritual observances, and some form of the mental discipline of meditation that Dōgen took to be the key to the religion. When thus integrated into the larger religious life, the *kōan* stories clearly had a central role to play in what Dōgen saw as the Patriarchal path (pp. 155-56)."

The question of meditation techniques and their underlying rationale is important not only for Buddhologists, but for those of us in related areas of Japanese studies. Professor Konishi Jinichi's early article (*Bungaku* 1952) on the influence of Tendai's *chih-kuan* meditation and the poetic practice of Fujiwara Shunzei (1114-1204) is well known by name. But students of literature have yet to come to terms with the ideological underpinnings of the aesthetics of the *Shinkokinshū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times, ca. 1206), and such central critical terms as *yūgen* ("mystery and depth"), also later prominent in the *Nō* theory of Zeami (ca. 1364 - ca. 1443), who practiced Sōtō meditation. Students of Japanese literature isolate such basic "literary" notions as *yūgen* from their ideological contexts at their own peril, especially when dealing with those who

consciously identified their literary with their religious practice (*kadō sunawachi butsudō*, "the Way of Poetry is the Way of Buddha.")

In spite of his obvious admiration for Dōgen, Bielefeldt does not gloss over those aspects of his character and teaching which some of us today find unappealing. One such issue is the exclusivity, sectarianism, and ultimately the intolerance which he shared with other Kamakura dissidents (pp. 164-69). In one way or another these attitudes arose either from the outright rejection, or the reinterpretation, of the doctrine of expedient/skillful means (*upāya*, *hōben*), which had characterized the Tendai philosophy against which the new movements defined themselves. For Nichiren and Shinran, *upāya* plus the doctrine of the Latter Days of the Law (*mappō*) led each to the conviction that there could be only one possible route to salvation — his own, of course. If a method actually worked for him, did it not follow that this must be the one and only possible method for everyone else? For the Kamakura dissidents, "their selection of the one practice was not merely a decision to specialize in a particular religious

exercise but a commitment to the highest vehicle alone and a rejection of all other teachings as incompatible with it (p. 166) ... . When Dōgen summons us to slough off body and mind and just sit, he is, in effect, calling on us to abandon other readings of Buddhist tradition and commit ourselves to his (p. 169)." We all admire the passionate single-mindedness of the zealot — or is it perhaps no more than arrogant self-absorption?

Whatever our personal judgments about Dōgen may be, no one can doubt the far-reaching influence of his thought and character on Japanese Zen, as well as the respect which he continues to inspire among modern Japanese thinkers. Professor Bielefeldt has given us a first-rate, carefully reasoned analysis not only of Dōgen's views on Sōtō meditation, but an insightful overview of Buddhist meditation practice during its flowering in China and Japan. For students of Buddhism or classical Japanese literature, it is required reading.

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*The Emptiness of Emptiness: An Introduction to Early Indian Mādhyamika*

by C.W. Huntington, Jr., with Geshe Namgyal Wangchen. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989. xvi + 288 pp.; cloth, \$35.

Huntington has written the kind of book which will mark a watershed in the study of the Madhyamaka system of thought. It is an extremely important book, both in terms of its proposals and its data. Huntington has offered us a perspective on the Madhyamaka which will at once prove to be classic and, I believe, fraught with sufficient difficulties as to be very controversial. *The Emptiness of Emptiness* is in two separate parts: Part I is an extensive discussion of Huntington's understanding of the Madhyamaka system as a whole, while Part II translates the verse text of the extremely important *Madhyamakāvatāra* of Candrakīrti, the most influential Madhyamaka author after Nāgārjuna.

Turning first to the translation, the author has given us a fairly felicitous rendering of a very difficult work. Much of what we understand by the term "Madhyamaka" has come through the lense of Candrakīrti's corpus of materials, being the clearest exponent of the radical reductionistic (*prāsaṅgika*) school. Candrakīrti's personal statement in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* is often problematic and survives only in Tibetan translation. Geshe Namgyal Wangchen's contribution to the volume is primarily that he worked with Huntington on the translation, and the happy collaboration of the two has given us a readable text with copious notes explaining difficult points and drawing extensively from Candrakīrti's autocommentary, also available only in Tibetan. Huntington has not made the error of some recent translators, however, and has consulted Poussin's partial French translation to assist verification of the traditional Tibetan understanding. The result is an excellent mature rendering which will withstand scrutiny. The specialist's only wish might be that the

translation of the autocommentary be eventually completed, placed in context with the verses, and the notes be dedicated to elucidation of difficult points elaborated elsewhere in Madhyamaka literature.

Part I will prove to be far more controversial. Huntington has provided us with his assessment of current scholarly models of Buddhist studies and their difficulties in light of his reading of the texts. As far as I understand him, Huntington's major arguments are as follows:

1. Buddhist publications have primarily been either proselytic or historico-philological in nature. Few, if any, works discuss the philosophical import of the texts as valid philosophy, relegating Buddhist thought to an intellectual backwater through the insularity of the authors' methods.

2. Madhyamaka is valid philosophically because it anticipates modern deconstructionist ideas and applies them to all categories of experience so that metaphysical language will be abandoned. Commonly used language, as opposed to metaphysical language, is sufficient to describe those few operations that are essential to daily functioning.

3. Metaphysical language invariably is either produced by or in turn produces clinging and is unskillful in the soteriological context; the collapse of categories with the abandonment of such language deconstructs clinging and leads to nirvana.

My assessment of these basic propositions, as one who is not a specialist in the Madhyamaka, must reflect something of my perplexity to the system as a whole and Huntington's text in particular. With respect to the first proposition, it is clear from a careful reading of the work that

Huntington's text is an apologia for the Madhyamaka. Certainly there are clear parallels between Wittgenstein and Candrakīrti, but it is equally clear that deconstructionists have little sense of transcendence, a point Huntington freely admits. Not as obvious in the text, however, is the simple fact that, if philosophy is not religion, so too, religion can seldom be converted to philosophy. Candrakīrti is not a rigorous exponent of a philosophical perspective, and there are multiple contradictions within the Madhyamaka as a whole, as well as gaps and holes in the system, treated as philosophy or as religion.

Two examples will suffice to demonstrate this problem. Both Huntington and Candrakīrti agree that Nāgārjuna's basic proposition is that of not proposing anything outside of common parlance — such a radical nonproposition does not entail the necessary acceptance of a substratum of being or metaphysical entity (*cum* Kant) about which nothing can be said. However, Huntington has not discussed the difficult verse *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* 18.9:

Independent, peaceful, without intellectual or ontological differentiation, nonconceptual, devoid of multiplicity — *such is the character of reality* [emphasis mine].

Candrakīrti's comment on this verse in the *Prasānapadā* sidesteps the entire issue by quoting from the *Satyadvayāvatāra-sūtra*, a text which does not abide by the Madhyamaka dictum and freely discusses propositions concerning the nonarisen nature of all dharmas, although Candrakīrti obviously means the text to support his position.

Equally clear is that Candrakīrti wishes to tacitly accept specific presuppositions — such as the levels of the bodhisattva, the powers of the buddha, etc. — which are certainly metaphysical in nature and have little to do with common linguistic structures. Yet by the criteria developed in Huntington's argument, such structures would also develop from or lead to clinging and would be

unskillful. Clearly what has happened historically is that the Madhyamaka authors were forced to accept some of the soteriological technology and terminology developed by meditative traditions such as those of the Yogācāras, while wanting to distance themselves from other facets of these systems. Candrakīrti could do this precisely because he was not a rigorous philosopher, such individuals (*contra* Huntington) being little given to the acceptance of any system outside of the dialogue network established by their intellectual community. Thus Huntington has not pursued those areas in the Madhyamaka of Candrakīrti where either (a) intellectual rigor would see difficulties (contradictory statements, philosophical problems) or, alternatively, (b) the Buddhist presuppositions would provide answers to questions not yet raised by deconstructionists (the soteriological problem of the self, the maturation of prior ethical action).

Thus Huntington's laudable wish for Buddhist thought to be given thorough consideration on its own merits is hampered by the fact that Madhyamaka authors and deconstructionist philosophers speak to different communities, each with its different agenda, despite the similarity in many of their methods and concerns. Most modern philosophers will not consider religious thought of any variety as a valid challenge to their axioms, whether or not there are similarities in method or conclusions. Furthermore, even should Madhyamaka be accepted as deconstructionist in nature, it would stand in jeopardy of being abandoned along with the thrusts of its representative authors when the focus of philosophy moves on to an exciting new prospect, as it did from structuralism to deconstructionism some years ago.

Certainly, the nature of the polemic will have much to do with this process, since we may question that the claims made for either system — deconstructionist or Madhyamaka — are fulfilled in reality. As a historian, for example, I await the "new historical method" that postmodernist authors have been about to reveal for two decades.

History continues to speak of the ideas of authors, of data from sources, and must still be judged on the basis of accuracy and balance. As a historian of meditative systems and a dedicated user of meditation, I have some questions as to whether the simple abandonment of linguistic categories offered by Candrakīrti as the Madhyamaka technique can affect the psycho-physical system in as efficient and profound a manner as mainstream Buddhist technologies, all of which make use of "unskillful" language and many of which have withstood the test of time. No historical meditative tradition, in fact, has made simple linguistic/conceptual deconstruction the mainstay of its praxis (*bhāvanā*), despite its importance for initial perspective (*darśana*). The continual recurrence of emotionally charged cognition has led most meditative traditions to implement a variety of techniques, involving visualization, emotional manipulation, physical positions, as well as a variety of intellectual approaches. Certainly the sense of a self is ingrained deeply into the entire psycho-physical system and deconstruction is a necessary but not sufficient antidote to the problem.

Thus, the extraordinary importance of Huntington's work is that he has taken the most seemingly "modern" of the Buddhist authors (Candrakīrti), constructing around him an apologia for accepting Madhyamaka as a valid philosophical method *a la* deconstructionism. In his pursuit he clearly follows in the footsteps of Stcherbatskoi and Murti, among others, who have interpreted various facets of Buddhist thought as representing dimensions similar to philosophers such as Bergson, Kant, *etc.* The clarity with which Huntington pursues this allows us to see whether modern Buddhists wish to be seduced into accepting modern paradigms (philosophical, psychological, scientific, *etc.*) as guides for the comprehension of their traditions, or whether the traditions need to be apprehended in a religious subculture where both set and setting stand as primary guidelines.

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*The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea — The Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra, A Buddhist Apocryphon*

by Robert E. Buswell, Jr. Princeton Library of Asian Translations.  
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989. xviii + 315 pp.; \$39.50.

Professor Buswell has seemingly done the impossible, providing us with a model of historical, textual, and doctrinal scholarship, all in one handy volume. Buswell's text is dedicated to the problems surrounding the genesis and dissemination of the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, a Buddhist scripture written outside of India and extraordinarily influential in the development of the meditative traditions of East Asia. The work is divided into two sections, Part One being a study of the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* in context and comprising four chapters — 1. "The *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* as an Apocryphal Scripture," 2. "The Hagiographies of the Korean Scholiast Wŏnhyo: The Dating and Provenance of the *Vajrasamādhi*," 3. "The Doctrinal Teachings of the *Vajrasamādhi*," and 4. "Ch'an Elements in the *Vajrasamādhi*: Evidence for the Authorship of the Sūtra." Part Two consists of the translation of the scripture into lucid English. The text is complemented by excellent bibliographies and a fine index.

Part One is the section where Buswell's fine scholarship truly shines. He attempts to put the *Vajrasamādhi* in its historical and religious setting by examining the provenance of its putative rescuing from the realm of the Dragons after its initial disappearance from the realm of humans. The examination of the origin of the *Vajrasamādhi* is made all the more difficult by the appearance in Tao-An's early Chinese canonical catalogue of an unrelated *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, which quickly passed out of circulation. When the *Vajrasamādhi* was actually composed, towards the end of the seventh century, the cataloguers naturally sup-

posed that it was the appearance of a long-lost work, rescued from the subterranean dragon world in the same manner that the *Perfection of Wisdom* scriptures had been by Nāgārjuna.

Buswell's treatment of the legendary career of the text draws from his extensive knowledge of the earliest commentator and a profound understanding of the Korean Zen (Sŏn) tradition during the sixth and seventh centuries. Buswell shows that the *Vajrasamādhi* quite clearly presupposes certain doctrinal and literary developments within China and Korea, synthesizing in a manner peculiar to the Korean church the attitudes towards such structures as the "embryo of the Tathāgata", "original enlightenment", and the "guarding the one" teachings of the "East Mountain School" of Chinese Ch'an. The *Vajrasamādhi* also presupposed the existence of the independent treatise ascribed to Bodhidharma, the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, a work which apparently has no direct Indic precedent.

These influences combine to make the first commentary, that of the Korean scholar and visionary, Wŏnhyo, all the more important for understanding the thrust of the Korean contribution to seventh century East Asian Buddhism, particularly since Wŏnhyo plays a part in the hagiographical narrative, being commanded by the Dragon King to comment on the scripture. Wŏnhyo is a figure fascinating to the non-specialist in Korean Buddhism, and makes the reader wish for a fuller account of his activities than space allows Buswell to present. Nonetheless, Buswell's account of Wŏnhyo's commentary clearly demon-

strates the importance of this figure to the intellectual community, as well as the syncretic nature of the *Vajrasamādhi's* doctrinal underpinnings.

Accordingly, Buswell provides a straightforward description of the East Asian contribution to Buddhist thought, particularly in the area of theories of the "embryo of the Tathāgata" (*tathāgatagarbha*). Perhaps the most radical suggestion of thinkers of the day was their identification of a description of *tathāgatagarbha* which incorporated the impulse to transcendence. Extant Indian documentation on *tathāgatagarbha* indicated that it was quite clearly considered immovable and wholly lacking of activity, being in fact the form of suchness enclosed in the defiled receptacle of sentient existence. As such, this East Asian development of the *tathāgatagarbha* theory includes overtones derived from the proposition on "stainless consciousness" (*amalavijñāna*), which is normally understood to have been Paramārtha's contribution to Buddhist gnoseology. Buswell's account is succinct and, in many ways to the point: none of these Mahayana based models of reality truly solve the central difficulty of theodicy, any more than wholly monistic or dualistic models of theism solve similar difficulties, *mutatis mutandis*. To divorce the activity of ignorance from suchness is merely to multiply entities gratuitously — a difficult proposition in the notoriously nondualistic atmosphere of the Mahayana. At some point the relationship between suchness and ignorance must be confronted, a confrontation Buddhist thinkers have been shy of ever since the authorship of the sutras. Propositions such as "we are all truly awakened but do not recognize our true nature" beg the question by being internally contradictory, the conditions of "awakened" and "non-recognition" being, presumably, mutually exclusive.

It is only in Chapter Three — Doctrinal Teachings — that I have certain reservations on Buswell's descriptions of his sources. His chart on p. 80 displaying the difference between the two Mahayana philosophies of mind is perhaps an

accurate description of the Sinic perception of the sources, but is not the testimony of the sources themselves, being more a reflection of Hsüan-tsang's reading of the Nālandā school of seventh century Magadhā. In particular, any exclusive definition of the underlying consciousness (*alayavijñāna*) as entirely impure and the source of defilement is faulty from an Indic perspective. The *Yogācārabhūmi* section known as the *Viniścaya-saṃgrahani* discusses this topic in some detail with the basic assumption of the innate purity of all forms of consciousness, an idea based on the *Ekottara-Āgama's* statement concerning the basic purity of the root of mentality. Thus, Indic models of the underlying consciousness prior to the seventh century were polyvalent and not highly structured in the manner codified by either their Madhyamaka opponents or their scholastic apologists. Buswell's schematic therefore is not entirely in error, merely reductionistic, and is still useful as a heuristic device representing the East Asian view.

With respect to the translation, the felicity of expression is excellent for Buddhist scriptural translation, always a potential problem. Mahayana scriptures can try the patience of the reader, with their penchant for long-winded expression and endless sentences. Being composed in the Sinic intellectual framework clearly reduces this liability for the *Vajrasamādhi*, but it decidedly retains the diction of many of its source scriptures. Buswell has elected to give to some of the phraseology a voice emphasizing the Korean locus rather than the broader overtones of the Mahayana. Such decisions need to be made, and sometimes the reader wonders if some resonances are not lost because of it. A good example is Buswell's translation of [chiao] hua (孝化) with the English "proselyte" (transitive verb), "proselytism" (noun), and so forth. The context of the translation Buswell has made clear on p. 152:

... textual forgery may have been a common artifice for disseminating early Ch'an doctrine. Indeed, proselytization was one of the reasons



Tao-hsüan cited in his *Ta T'ang nei tien lu* (The Great T'ang Catalogue of Buddhist Scriptures) for the composition of apocryphal scriptures.

Thus, Buswell reads the sentences denoting the process of teaching as indicating the vociferous activity of the Ch'an exponent spreading the "good word" in the face of indifference and even hostility. The *Vajrasamādhi* possibly picked up the term from the well-known translation of the *Lankāvatāra-sūtra* completed in 51 A.D. by Bodhiruci. There, *chiao-hua* translates the Sanskrit *paripācana*, to mature or to bring to fruition. Consequently, the *Lankāvatāra* translation denotes the normative activity of the Indic master, interacting with a sympathetic audience in the monastic setting, not at all the context of proselytism as

evident in Korea. Translating terms such as these, which have changed their linguistic charge with the change of target audience, is perhaps the most challenging task of the translator of non-Indic materials. In this instance, the translation of "proselyte" is definitely a judgement call, but the informed reader may wonder if indeed the aggressive stance implied in the translation was truly the case in Wŏnhyo's Korea.

All in all, Buswell's work is excellent, well researched, and well written. His procedure represents a model to us all, and we may only hope for his next contribution to the rapidly growing corpus of material on Ch'an.

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*Meditation as an Intervention in Stress Reactivity*

by Amarjit S. Sethi. New York, NY: AMS Press, 1989. 137 pp. This book is number 12 in a series on Stress in Modern Society.

Mr. Sethi has undertaken an extensive review of stress factors in modern life, theories and research on stress responses, meditation practices from a variety of traditions, and research on the use of meditation as an intervention in stress reactivity. The work is ambitious for a small volume and succeeds in some but not all of its aims.

Of great value is the chapter on meditation research. Mr. Sethi has catalogued in a concise and useful way a multitude of research studies taking place from 1961 to 1986. This chapter is a valuable resource for those interested in controlled experiments related to meditation. Of primary interest is Mr. Sethi's distinction between studies which have demonstrated physiological changes as a result of meditation and more complex studies that look at immune system improvement, speed of recovery from anxiety-producing circumstances, Type A behavior, and work stress. Mr. Sethi's discussion of these studies and the state of contemporary research in meditation is comprehensive. We discover, for example, that meditators seem to have a more rapid recovery from anxiety-producing stimuli, although meditation is no more effective than several other strategies such as systematic desensitization or progressive relaxation. Although he points out that research has not demonstrated a direct link between meditation and the effects on the immune system, Mr. Sethi states:

The basic premise of psycho-neuro-immunology is that 'neither the brain nor the immune system can be excluded from any scheme that proposes to account for the onset and course of human disease' (Hall & Goldstein 1986: 40)\*. In the future impact of psycho-neuro-immunology and in its evolution in disease prevention a number of behavioral therapies are recommended. In this broad

approach to manage stress, meditation can play a key role in studying the relationship between behavior and biochemistry of immunity. (p. 41)

In my opinion, Mr. Sethi down plays the possible physiologically related effects of meditation as a factor in stress reactivity. His primary descriptions of meditation point to the cognitive effects of meditation and its capacity to assist meditators to "notice things and events, and yet not be affected by them" (p. 28). Mr. Sethi points to the importance of looking at the cognitive factors in stress. What is perceived as a threat or unmanageable produces anxiety leading to potentially debilitating stress factors. In his discussion of meditation research, however, I did not find Mr. Sethi acknowledging that the positive benefits of meditation for stress intervention may be very directly, indeed primarily, linked to the well documented physiological changes, such as reduced metabolism rate. Such documented effects allow the body a deeper relaxation than can be achieved through sleep. This potential oversight does not diminish the general quality of this chapter. Of particular interest is his discovery of research that points to different brain wave functions associated with different meditation practices and to a certain pattern of total brain activity associated with higher states of meditative practice.

Mr. Sethi's purpose, of course, is not limited to a discussion of meditation research. He has also provided a thorough catalogue of meditation practices from a variety of religious traditions. His discussion of yoga is the most comprehensive. As a general overview, this chapter is interesting as an introduction. It will be of interest to individuals, who have not been exposed in any substantive way to meditation practices in a variety of traditions.

Yet, with the possible exception of the discussion on yoga, there is no new information here beyond what is discussed in somewhat more detail elsewhere, for example in Daniel Goleman's *The Meditative Mind*.

The most important criticism of the work for me is that I would have enjoyed a more thorough discussion of Mr. Sethi's primary contribution, his development of a non-sectarian mode of meditation that he calls Strategic Meditation (SM). It appears to be a beneficial way to enter into meditation, identifying and then letting go of physical awareness, emotional awareness, conceptual ruminations of past and future, and finally of goals and purposes. Each of these levels of awareness is accompanied by a number, counting backward from 4 to 0. At the zero level, Mr. Sethi recommends using a mantra of one's choice to assist in the release from concern over past or future or even meditational technique. I regretted that this practice was not given a more prominent place in the text and a more thorough discussion.

Mr. Sethi has pointed towards the importance of analysing internal and external stressors, both one's own thought habits as well as factors in one's work place or life circumstances that can receive active attention and be changed. What I did not find clearly stated was the method of working at both the external and internal stressors in an active way, and the connection between that kind of stress management and the stress management of Strategic Meditation. I think there is potentially a very powerful model in Mr. Sethi's book for such a synthesis of active attention to circumstances and attitudes that are stressful or anxiety producing and more passive forms of stress intervention such as meditation. Mr. Sethi discusses a variety of active approaches to stress management including Medi-

tation on Inner Power, Meditation on Problems, Meditation on Decisions, and Meditation on Self (pp. 91-21). However, he does not describe in any detail the actual practices he has in mind for such meditations. I would have thoroughly enjoyed such a discussion. Such active subjects for meditation would, I surmise, be used along with the Strategic Meditation that leads to a more formless subject. Mr. Sethi, I believe, seeks to lay these aims out in his section on "strategic choice," however, I did not find a clear enough step by step process for meditation on active subjects to grasp the full potential to which Mr. Sethi is pointing.

I did not find a final synthesis of these active meditation forms and Strategic Meditation as a method of stress intervention in Mr. Sethi's work. For example, it seems to me that he has the makings for a method of creative problem solving, for both short- and long-term circumstances, that would be very exciting to develop. The seeds of this are in a chart he has prepared that includes meditation among factors for strategic choice in stress (p. 100). While Mr. Sethi does discuss this material, as relevant both to individuals and organizations, I found it needing and very worthy of a more thorough discussion. I hope that he will now go on with that discussion in another book. It would be quite worthwhile.

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\* N. R. Hall and A. L. Goldstein, "Thinking Well: the Chemical Links Between Emotions and Health," *The Sciences*, (1986, March/April), 34-41.

## *Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics*

by Gunapala Dharmasiri. Golden Leaves, 1989. 157 pp.

Paul and Hannah Tillich spent nine weeks in Japan in 1960. Writing about their encounters with Buddhist scholars, Hannah Tillich described a conversation about prayer that took place between her husband and Keiji Nishitani at Kyoto University. Both men agreed that according to St. Paul, when someone prays, God, as well as the person, is praying. "Who is praying, then?" Nishitani asked pointedly.

A peculiar silence arose after the question, and in this silence Paul Tillich bowed unexpectedly and in grand simplicity, placing the palms of his hands together and touching the tips of his fingers to his forehead, remaining for a short time concentrated in this gesture. ... Nishitani[']s face was lit from within a loving smile, which disappeared only when Paul Tillich, awakened from his absorption, nodded to Nishitani, who responded with an almost imperceptible nod ... \*

This bow, Hannah Tillich suggested, united her husband with everything Zen represented. He "could not have answered the question in a more genuine way than by this silent, true testimony."

Paul Tillich automatically bowed. The *kōan* presented to him by Nishitani pushed his mind beyond conceptual thinking. He acted at once with respect, humility, gratitude and awe. He acted morally. More precisely, his very nature at that moment, was moral. At that moment, wisdom and morality were one in him.

In the West, we have come closest to this tradition of the union of mind, moral action and feeling in the 19th century philosophy of identity of Friedrich Schleiermacher, recognized today as the father of modern hermeneutical theory and the father of modern Protestant theology. Neverthe-

less, the core of his vision, as masterfully delineated in his *Dialektik*, has not been adequately understood.

The East has been more fortunate. The core of its vision of reality as interrelated, interdependent and beyond the grasp of all conceptual schematization, is at the heart of Buddhist teaching. This vision has been vividly set forth anew in the small volume, *Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics*, by Gunapala Dharmasiri who is a professor in the Department of Philosophy at Peradeniya University in Sri Lanka.

In this work, which is based on his series of lectures given at Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges in 1981-2, Dharmasiri pushes to envision a "morality beyond morality." His lucid and loving explication of this vision, I believe, will make his readers bow in grateful testimony to its truth. Furthermore, Dharmasiri's skillful and multifaceted discussion of nirvana in the context of his delineation of Buddhist ethics, I suspect, will make this book a classic in the field.

Central to Dharmasiri's task in his book is the clarification of the two visions of reality formulated in Buddhist teaching. Two moralities, he tells us, stem from these two visions of reality. The first is conditioned, the second is unconditioned.

The first is the morality of the ordinary person. This person is moral through conditioning (*sīlavā hoti no ca sīlamayo*). This morality is based on a fundamental evolutionary principle embedded in all animals. The basic tenet of this morality is that the species must survive. Altruism, from within this context, is the "sacrifice" of the individual for the preservation of the other members of its community. Such a morality, Dharmasiri tells us, presupposes "personhood" and has meaning only for one who believes him/herself to be "a person."

Once one realizes that there is no person, this type of morality is gone beyond.

The other morality is that of an enlightened person, i.e., one who has gone beyond ordinary moral values without abrogating these values. Such a person is not conditioned by morality (*śīlamayo*) but is moral by "nature" (*śilava*) because the nature of nirvana is moral perfection. When such a person "performs an action, only the action is there (*kiriya-matta*). The enlightened person is not motivated by an expectation of an end result (i.e., a teleological ethic). Nor does such a person perform an action simply as a kind of Kantian duty for its own sake (i.e., a deontological ethic). The enlightened person has gone beyond both ethical spheres. "A buddha," Dharmasiri tells us, "need not and does not practice charity. Charity is his very nature. His acts can be characterized only as spontaneous happenings."

The unconditioned act of this second morality is what Dharmasiri means by the morality beyond morality. This is the morality at the heart of Buddhist teaching. To understand why this is the case, Dharmasiri explores the Buddhist doctrine of No-Self (*anatta*). This doctrine is at the core of the Buddha's altruistic commitment to others and transcends the ordinary motivation of species preservation. Dharmasiri tells us that "it is the *anatta* doctrine that involves one in altruistic actions."

The doctrine of interdependence rules out the possibility of a separate soul, because nothing can be independent in a world where everything is interrelated. I cannot think of myself as separate from the rest of the universe ... . Because my existence is dependent on the rest of the universe, I naturally owe a debt and an obligation to the rest of the universe. Therefore, my attitude to others and other objects should be one of respect and gratitude.

By itself, the above description of the doctrine of interdependence is merely a categorial

scheme useful in acquiring theoretical knowledge about Buddhist teachings. Missing from this explanation is the experiential component: nirvana, the experience of the extinction of the processes of conceptualization and of attachment. Dharmasiri's discussion of nirvana in this context extinguishes any tendency by the reader to leave the discussion at the level of mere ideas. Instead, Dharmasiri pushes us in a direction beyond the limits of our own carefully formulated views of morality.

Dharmasiri weaves together stories, analogies and scholarly discussions about nirvana from various Buddhist traditions in order to create a rich fabric of meaning for a proper understanding of ethical action. Of particular importance is his discussion of nirvana as the experience of voidness (*śūnyatā*). To clarify this experiential core of Buddhist ethics, Dharmasiri uses the implications inherent in some of the early Mahayana sutras which were explicitly drawn out and formulated by Nāgārjuna.

Akin to Kant's own theory of empirical knowledge, Dharmasiri affirms that our empirical world is constituted by our own mental activity. Concepts order and construct our world. These constructs are not a presentation of the world as it really is. Nirvana reveals the emptiness of these mental constructs. But unlike the Kantian paradigm, Buddhism does not posit "things-in-themselves" independent of our process of cognition. Rather, nirvana reveals an ontological backdrop of voidness. The mind is presented with neither existence nor non-existence, and thus, as Śāntideva notes, "through lack of any other possibility, that which is without support becomes tranquil." The mind is lucid and quiet.

"Ego-lessness" is this cessation of thinking. The unconscious mind has emerged out of its primeval cave. The conscious mind is now familiar with its unconscious side. There is no split within the mind between conscious and unconscious. The whole personality will at once totally accept what it sees or experiences and the mind can be directed to look at the world and see things as they really



are. This seeing leads to enlightenment. The full emptiness of the self is revealed.

Thinking, on the other hand, creates the ego. Thinking is the awareness that "I think." Here, "me" and "mine" are born. Clinging and craving arise. To expunge these desires, one must therefore strive to establish awareness without projecting thought. To clarify this point, Dharmasiri presents an analogy used in Buddhist texts:

Walking along on a hot day, a person sees a ripe mango fallen under a mango tree. He becomes excited and picks up the juicy fruit. As he is just about to bite into the mango with gusto, he sees a repellent worm in it and then drops the mango automatically. This is the

way one drops desires in Buddhism, and the way wisdom makes one automatically moral.

Paul Tillich spontaneously bowed in personal testimony to the truth of the Buddhist vision of reality. But only for a moment. Dharmasiri, on the other hand, gives us an extended vision of this reality. This is the gift of his book. In doing so, he presents both a lesson and a challenge to Western readers from which we should not turn away.

Thandeka,  
San Francisco State University,  
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\* Hannah Tillich, *From Place to Place*.  
Stein and Day, New York: 1976, pp. 119-120.

# SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought

By Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota. Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1989. 372 pp.; paper, \$16.90

**SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought** by Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota is an unusually well written, lucid, in-depth portrayal not only of the structure of Shinran's thought, but of the uniqueness of his interpretation and extension of Mahayana Pure Land Buddhism.

Yoshifumi Ueda, whose expertise is Indian Buddhism and whose personal commitment is Jodo Shinshu, has served for many years as chairman of the Hongwanji International Center Translation Committee. Rev. Dennis Hirota, a native Californian who has lived in Japan for many years, is a writer and Shin scholar of distinction, well known for his work as Chief Translator for the Hongwanji International Center's monumental project of publishing all of Shinran's works in modern English translations. In addition, Hirota's own two volumes *No Abode*, on Ippen, and *Plain Words on the Pure Land Way*, *Sayings of Wandering Monks of Medieval Japan* testify to the depth of his expertise in the Pure Land tradition.

The 1989 publication of *SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought* by the Hongwanji International Center in Kyoto offers a treasurehouse of insight and reference which should make it invaluable in library collections everywhere. The authors' linkage of specific points with specific passages from Shinran's writings is a plus both for readers familiar with and those new to Shinran's works. Passages are of course as translated in the Shin Buddhism Translation Series, which is nearing completion with the current project of translating Shinran's Wasan (Japanese hymns).

Of particular value to those who may wish to use this book as a classroom text in comparative religion or Buddhist studies is the authors' organi-

zation of their wealth of material. They have done far more than provide the introduction to Shinran's thought which the title implies. To inform those previously unacquainted with Shin Buddhism they begin with a chapter on Shinran's life and works.

One of the misimpressions many westerners have of Shinran's True Pure Land Way is cleanly and clearly corrected in the authors' statement that "Shinran's thought is often said to bear close resemblance to elements of certain Christian teachings: an emphasis on trust or faith, a concern with evil, and a concept of salvation as given through the compassionate activity of the Transcendent Other. Emphasis on such similarities can be misleading however, for Shinran's use of such general Mahayana terms as nirvana, dharma-body, suchness, wisdom and true reality reflect a clear awareness of basic Mahayana teachings as the foundation of the Pure Land path."

Yoshifumi Ueda's special background in early Indian Mahayana Buddhism and Dennis Hirota's expertise in Pure Land tradition are fused in Chapter Two, "The Mahayana Mode of Thought" and Chapter Three, "Emergence of the Pure Land Path." Like the first and fourth chapters on Shinran, these two middle chapters are virtually independent essays, complete in themselves. This is no accident. In their prefatory "Note to Readers," the authors express the hope that "each of the four chapters may be read independently."

In this reviewer's opinion, the most outstanding of the four chapters of Part I of *SHINRAN: An Introduction to His Thought* is chapter 4, "The Structure of Shinran's Thought." For ministers and lay people as well as students and scholars this particular chapter has the potential to

serve as an indispensable reference clarifying such uniquely Shin concepts as *shinjin*.

An index listing occurrences of major terms is rather short but the appendices are otherwise excellent, providing background and explanation of the major Pure Land sutras, the major Vows, and the Pure Land masters through whom Shinran derived his spiritual lineage. There is also a useful chronological list of Shinran's writings and a short bibliography of pertinent materials available in English.

The final forty pages are devoted to a reproduction of the Japanese text translated in Part Two, selected passages from Shinran's writings.

As a whole, the authors have given us a depth of insight and range of resources on Shinran's Pure Land teaching that has not previously been available to western readers.

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## *Jodo Shinshu: Shin Buddhism in Medieval Japan*

by James C. Dobbins. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989. 242 pp.; \$35.00

Professor Dobbins in this work illuminates a vital but neglected period in Western studies of the post-Shinran Shin Buddhist development. While scholarly English publications on the founder Shinran (1173-1263) and Rennyo (1415-1499), the eighth patriarch and the 'Restorer' of the Honganji branch, have steadily increased in number, virtually no such treatment saw print on the approximately 150 year period between Shinran and Rennyo.

This book, however, treats in Chapters 5 and 6 the development of early Shinshū community and the role played by Kakunyo (1270-1351, third Shin patriarch) in the creation of the Honganji Temple. Particularly noteworthy is Kakunyo's strained relationship with his own son Zonkaku (1290-1373) who advocated a vision of Honganji Temple that embraced a more inclusive attitude toward other Buddhist schools and 'popular' beliefs than Kakunyo's. This tension, in my view, has existed throughout the Honganji history, erupting in violent doctrinal controversies of the Tokugawa Period, and resurfacing in the 1980's in the advocacy by some liberal Honganji clergy for a broader application of the teaching in response to a more secularized and pluralistic world.

The book in Chapter 8 makes another important contribution by bringing out into the open the vital role played by the 'other' Shinshū branches ("factions" in the book). Dwarfed today in size and influence by the Honganji branch, these other nine branches receive little attention. But as Dobbins clarifies, Bukkōji, Kinshokuji and Senjūji branches, for example, were in fact more influential than the Honganji among the Shinshū factions, and they continue to be major players and formidable competitors to the Honganji through the early 15th century.

Though not the first scholarly treatment in English on the subject, the discussion of Shinran's life and his teachings in Chapter Two provides a well-written synoptic view with updated information on the recent scholarly findings and debates. Particularly helpful in understanding Shinran's thought is a section devoted to his 'magnus opus', the *Kyōgyōshinshō* (Selected Passages Revealing the True Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment of Pure Land Buddhism), the most extensive exposition on his thought. Prof. Dobbins summarizes both the textual issues related to this work as well as the main import of each of the six chapters.

The book's focus on the question of heresy provides an innovative, insightful approach to our understanding of Shin doctrine and its historical evolution. The question of heresy constituted a major concern for Shin Buddhist leaders as expressed in, for example, *Tannishō* (Notes Lamenting Deviations) attributed to Shinran's disciple Yuienbō, Kakunyo's *Gaijashō* (Notes Rectifying Heresy), Zonkaku's *Hajakenshōshō* (Notes Assailing Heresy and Revealing Truth) and Rennyo's *Ofumi* or *Gobunshō* (Pastoral Letters).

Prof. Dobbins cites three major reasons for the extra-ordinary concern for heresy in early Shinshū history: 1) the elusiveness of Shinran's teachings that differed greatly from the dominant form of Buddhism of his day, 2) the illiteracy of the majority of the followers who because of their lack of access to Shinran's writings were dependent on their local leaders for religious instruction, and 3) the influx of adherents from other religious groups who brought with them doctrines that Shinshū rejected. The Shinshū preoccupation with heresy and orthodoxy, Prof. Dobbins maintains, "was not a premeditated effort to build up a school of Buddhism, but rather an attempt over successive

generations to explicate the inner logic of faith." (pp. 9-10)

The author's concluding chapter, entitled "Shin Buddhism: An Appraisal" offers some insightful observations about the distinctiveness of Shin Buddhism. Perhaps the most interesting point made is the assessment that Shin Buddhism ("as the most fully developed form of lay Buddhism in existence") challenges the traditional assumption that clerical or monastic practices are the true path which all Buddhists must eventually undertake in some lifetime or another. The following paragraph best captures the import of Prof. Dobbins' views:

Shin Buddhism is none other than one specific form of this general lay Buddhist outlook. Its specific aspects are its Buddha, Amida; its path to enlightenment, via Pure Land; its sacred story of how Amida established that path; and its practices, the nembutsu and otherwise. But if Shin is demythologized — that is, if its specific aspects are stripped away — then the religious sensibilities and practices remaining are not significantly different from those found in lay Buddhism throughout Asia. They are faith-oriented and devotional.

Shin has not created a new form of Buddhism, but rather idealizes the lay dimension of the religion. *What is unique about Shin is not the beliefs and practices its propounds but its advocacy of the lay path over the clerical one. It maintains that lay Buddhism is the only practicable form surviving today.* (p. 160) (emphasis added)

The book is well-written and should prove uncumberous reading for even the non-specialists. The English renderings of technical Shin terms, in many cases, are innovative and preferable than the hackneyed traditional English translations. The extensive glossary of technical terms are highly helpful, but it was unfortunate that close to a hundred glossary entries were inadvertently omitted during the printing process. The book, nevertheless, is destined to become a standard work in Shin studies, and is recommended particularly for those interested in Pure Land Buddhism, medieval Japanese religion, and the role of lay Buddhism and its implications for the modern world.

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*The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhist Doctrine*  
 — *Ching-ying Hui-yüan's Commentary on the Visualization Sutra*  
 by Kenneth K. Tanaka. Albany, New York: State University of New  
 York Press, 1990. 304 pp.; \$54.50 hardcover, \$17.95 paperback.

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce to the readers of *The Pacific World* a new and outstanding piece of Buddhist scholarship, the publication of Prof. Ken Tanaka's *The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhist Doctrine*.

Prof Tanaka's work is divided into two parts: a study of early, Chinese Pure Land Buddhism, and a full translation of the *Commentary* mentioned in the above title.

The importance of the *Commentary* lies in the fact that it was (and is) the earliest commentary written in China, — indeed composed anywhere — on the so-called Meditation Sutra, the *Kam-muryōjakyō* (*Kangyō*). This is one of the Three Pure Land Sutra, and is the scripture with the least claim to authenticity, that is, the scripture that was not composed in India (and hence the true word of the Buddha) but was perhaps composed in early China as a meditational device for Chinese Pure Land devotees. Therefore, Hui-yüan's *Commentary* determined that the *Kangyō* became part of the Chinese (and Japanese) Pure Land Canon, the so-called *Jōdo-sambukyō*.

It may well be the case that the average American Shinshu follower has never heard of the *Commentary* or of the figure of its author Hui-yüan. There were three Hui-yüan's in Chinese Buddhist history: an earlier figure by the name of Hui-yüan (Lushan Hui-yüan, in Japanese Rozan Eon, 334-416), who became known for establishing a group of Pure Land lay followers. Lu-shan is regarded as the first seat of Pure Land Buddhism in China, and this master Hui-yüan is frequently regarded as the

first Pure Land patriarch of China. The second Hui-yüan was the author of the *Commentary* and is the subject of this book. To distinguish him from the earlier Hui-yüan, he is called by the name of his monastery, the Ching-ying ssu monastery in the capital city of Ch'ang-an. Ching-ying Hui-yüan's dates are 523-592. Due to Hui-yüan's popularity for Pure Land study and dissemination, the Ching-ying ssu monastery became a popular devotional center, and two generations later yet another Hui-yüan appeared (597-647).

The importance of Hui-yüan and his *Commentary* lay in his disciples, and in especially one, the master Shan-tao (Zendo-daishi, 613-681), who was in his turn heavily influenced by the writings of Hui-yüan. Shan-tao adopts Hui-yüan's classification of the *Kangyō's* role in general Buddhism, that is, that it was a purely Mahayana work of the sudden teaching; he adopted his division into meditative and non-meditative good actions; the ranking of nine grades of rebirth (*kubon-jōbutsu*); and his classification of the different levels of Amitabha's Pure Land, their differences, their religious characteristics, etc. It should be noted that almost all of Hui-yüan's doctrinal thought was taken over by Shan-tao in his *Commentary* to the *Kuan-ching*.

Why has so little been heard of Ching-ying Hui-yüan? Modern Japanese Buddhist scholars (Yuki Reimon, Mochizuki Shinko, etc.) — who are the foremost scholars in Far Eastern Buddhism — have not ignored Hui-yüan, and indeed, have written excellent essays on him and his *Commen-*

tary, but as Professor Tanaka argues in his book (page xv), — and correctly so, I believe, — the orthodoxy of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism, either that of the Jōdoshū or the Shinshū, looked to Shan-tao as a great patriarchal master, thus overshadowing the life and work of Hui-yūan, even though Shan-tao's work can best be said to be almost a total copy of Hui-yūan's writings and thought (one is reluctant to say plagiarism). Orthodox Japanese

Pure Land thought, encased within Jōdo and Hon-ganji circles, have directed generations, if not centuries, of serious scholars away from an objective analysis of Chinese Buddhism, and into a mold that reflects a Japanese orthodoxy. Prof Tanaka's book is therefore a work of importance in correcting centuries of ignoring this most important of Chinese Pure Land thinkers.

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## BUDDHA DHARMA KYOKAI (SOCIETY), INC. (BDK USA)

Perhaps the greatest patron of Buddhism in modern times is The Reverend Dr. Yehan Numata, a 93-year old industrialist turned philanthropist, who received an Honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from the University of Hawaii in December 1988. Yehan Numata though born into a temple family, became a businessman solely to obtain profits which could be diverted to the propagation of Buddhism. His belief was that the Buddha's teachings, which are based on the spirit of wisdom and compassion, would assist in bringing about lasting peace and happiness for all humanity. Embarking on his quest, he established a precision measuring instruments manufacturing company called Mitutoyo Corporation in 1934. Profits from the enterprise enabled him to found the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Buddhist Promoting Foundation) (acronym BDK) in 1965. Under his guidance, this organization began to sponsor various activities to share the teachings of the Buddha with as many people as possible. Late in life, Yehan Numata became a Buddhist priest.

***The Teaching of Buddha.*** The first and most significant project undertaken thus far has been the re-editing, re-publishing and dissemination of *The Teaching of Buddha*, a small book containing the essence of Buddha Dharma. The book was an abridged translation of the Japanese work, *Shinyaku Bukkyō Seiten* (The New Translation of the Buddhist Scriptures) compiled and published by the Bukkyō Kyōkai (The Buddhist Society) under the supervision of The Reverend Muan Kizu in 1925. It was believed that not only would *The Teaching of Buddha* be an authoritative introduction to Buddhism, but it could also become a daily source of inspiration and a guide for daily living. In order to make it understandable and available to the peoples of the world, the book has been translated into 35 different languages, printed, and nearly four million copies distributed free of charge in 47 countries.

***Tripitaka Translation Project.*** Another major undertaking was the translation and publication of the voluminous *Taishō Chinese Tripitaka* in English, first initiated in 1982 in Tokyo. It was the desire of Yehan Numata to introduce the still largely unexplored Chinese Mahayana Tripitaka throughout the English-speaking world. A 13-member group of leading Japanese Buddhist scholars, headed by Professor Shōyū Hanayama of the Musashino Women's College, was formed as the Tripitaka Editorial Committee, along with the Tripitaka Publications Committee chaired by Professor Shōjun Bandō of the Ōtani University. These two committees are responsible for administering the overall project of the translation and publication of approximately 10% of the Chinese Tripitaka by the year 2000 A.D. Dr. Gadjin Nagao, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, is currently the overall advisor of the entire project.

***Buddhist Studies Chairs.*** The third major project was the endowment of Buddhist Chairs at leading universities of the world. It was Yehan Numata's objective to make the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism available to the academic world on a day-to-day basis. Begun in 1984, the Numata Chairs in Buddhist Studies have been established at six institutions in the U.S., the University of California at Berkeley, Harvard University, University of Chicago, University of Hawaii, Smith College and the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, and one in Canada, the University of Calgary. Negotiations

are currently underway with some universities in Europe for similar chairs. Sufficient contributions to the endowed chairs are made annually for up to twenty years, by which time each chair is expected to have become self-perpetuating from the cumulative funds.

**Administrative Control.** In order to supervise the activities to promote Buddhism in overseas areas, Yehan Numata insisted that in each country concerned, a local organization should be formed to be financially and operationally responsible for all propagational activities undertaken. Toward this end, a number of affiliates of BDK Japan were organized in countries where branches of the Mitutoyo Corporation were located, such as in the United States, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, Taiwan, Singapore, West Germany and England. In the United States, the first such organization, called the Buddhist Educational Studies, Inc., was formed in 1982 in Springfield, Virginia, to publish Buddhist materials and conduct educational activities. In 1986, it was superseded by the Buddha Dharma Kyōkai (Society), Inc. (acronym BDK USA) in Emerson, New Jersey. Its first President is The Reverend Kenryū Tsuji, Minister, Ekōji Temple, Springfield, VA, and the former Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, and as Trustees, Shigeru Yamamoto, former Chairman of the Board, MTI Corporation, MITUTOYO U.S. & Canada Operations, Bishop Seigen Yamaoka, the current Head of the Buddhist Churches of America, and The Reverend Seishin Yamashita, Director of the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research. This organization serves as the headquarters and the umbrella for all of the propagational activities in the U.S. It retains control over the U.S. responsibilities for the Tripiṭaka Translation Project, the distribution of *The Teaching of Buddha*, and the administering of the Numata Chairs in Buddhist Studies, as well as miscellaneous projects, including publications.

**Numata Center.** The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research was established in November 1984 in Berkeley, CA. Its dedication and opening ceremonies were attended by the leaders of BDK Japan and by Dr. George Rupp, then Dean of the Divinity School at Harvard and Provost Leonard Kuhi of the University of California at Berkeley, along with many distinguished Buddhist scholars and guests. The principal role played by the Numata Center is to act as the agent of BDK Japan in the Tripiṭaka Translation and Publication Project and assist in the finalization of the translation manuscripts. It also assists the BDK USA and BDK Japan in the accomplishment of their respective missions. Key staff members include Dr. Nobuo Haneda and the Reverends Shōjō Oi and Seishin Yamashita.

**Distribution of The Teaching of Buddha.** For this function, two organizations were formed. The Sudatta Society was established in Hawaii in 1978. Its leadership has been in the hands of Mr. Ralph Honda, a prominent Honolulu businessman, from the very beginning. Through his diligent efforts, 190,000 copies of *The Teaching of Buddha* have been distributed to hotels, hospitals, prisons, and military units in the Hawaiian Islands. The other organization is the Society for Buddhist Understanding established in 1978 in the City of Industry, California. The head of this group is Mr. Tomohito Katsunuma. Thus far, Mr. Katsunuma has succeeded in the distribution and placement of 325,000 copies of *The Teaching of Buddha* in hotels, libraries, temples, and the military forces on the U.S. mainland.

**Tripiṭaka Translation and Publication.** The Tripiṭaka Editorial Committee in Japan selected 80 prominent Buddhist scholars, who were able to translate the Buddhist Scriptures from classical Chinese into English. These academicians were selected from ten different countries, with the U.S. and Japan

having 40% and 45% of the translators respectively. Among the American scholars chosen are Professors Stanley Weinstein of Yale University, Lewis Lancaster of University of California at Berkeley, David Chappell of University of Hawaii, Richard Gard of Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, Taitetsu Unno of Smith College, Minoru Kiyota of University of Wisconsin, Robert Gimello of University of Arizona, Francis Cook of University of California at Riverside, John Keenan of Middlebury College, Minor Rogers of Washington and Lee University, Leo Pruden of University of Oriental Studies, Paul Groner of University of Virginia, Allen Andrews of University of Vermont, Kenneth Tanaka of Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, and Drs. Diana Paul, J. C. and Thomas Cleary. Some of the Tripiṭaka texts being translated by these scholars are the *Diamond Sutra* (T-235), *Śrīmālā Sūtra* (T-353), *Avatamsaka Sūtra* (T-278), *Commentary on the Lotus Sutra* (T-1519), *Sūrangama Sūtra* (T-642), *Commentary on Vasubandhu's Tripiṭikā* (T-1585), *Profound Meaning of the "Three Treatises"* (T-1852), *Commentary on the Buddhahūmi Sūtra* (T-1530), *Compendium of the Mahayana* (T-1593), *Blue Cliff Record* (T-2003), *Gateless Barrier* (T-2005), *Bodaiśhinron* (T-1665), and *Rokusodangyō* (T-2008). For these and all other translations, the BDK USA makes payments worldwide through the Numata Translation Center in Berkeley, CA. The translation project is progressing smoothly with the first volume expected to appear in 1991. Among the first texts to be published are the *ŚrīmālāSūtra*, *The Golden Light Sutra*, *The Lotus Sutra*, *The Four-Part Vinaya*, and the *Commentary on the Lotus Sutra*.

**Visiting Professorships in Buddhism in USA.** During 1984, two Numata Chairs in Buddhist Studies were established, at the University of California, Berkeley, and at Harvard. Since its inception at the University of California, five Japanese professors have filled the chair: Professors Hisao Inagaki of Ryukoku University, Shōryu Katsura of Hiroshima University, Musashi Tachikawa of Nagoya University, and Professors Emeritus Akira Fujieda of Kyoto University, and Jikido Takasaki of Tokyo University. At Harvard, three professors have completed their assignments, Professor Yuichi Kajiyama of Kyoto University, Professor Michio Tokunaga of Kyoto Women's College, and Professor Jikido Takasaki. The University of Chicago was endowed with a chair in 1985. Three professors, Dr. Yoshiro Tamura of Rissho University, Dr. Masao Abe, Professor Emeritus of Nara University of Education, and Professor Thomas Kasulis of Northland College have taught in the program. The University of Hawaii received its chair in 1988, with the first Visiting Professor being Dr. Hisao Inagaki followed by Professor Shudo Ishii of Komazawa University. In 1986, a Numata Chair was established at the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, CA. Under a special teaching arrangement, the following professors have lectured at the Institute: Dr. Roger Corless of Duke University, Dr. Allan Andrews of University of Vermont, Dr. Whalen Lai of University of California at Davis, and Dr. John Carman of Harvard.

**Publication of Buddha Dharma.** Since the popular *The Teaching of Buddha* was a condensed version of a much longer text, the decision was made in 1982 to make available to the English reading public an unabridged edition of Muan Kizu's *The New Translation of Buddhist Scriptures*. This would provide the essence of Buddhist doctrines in considerable detail. The first edition of the complete translation, called *BuddhaDharma*, was translated by Buddhist scholars in America and published in 1984. The revised second edition, complete with a section on Scriptural Sources, a glossary, and index is due to be published in early 1991, again by the BDK USA. For both editions, Buddhist Churches of America Minister Emeritus Kyoshiro Tokunaga, as the editor-in-chief, devoted countless hours in bringing the project to fruition.



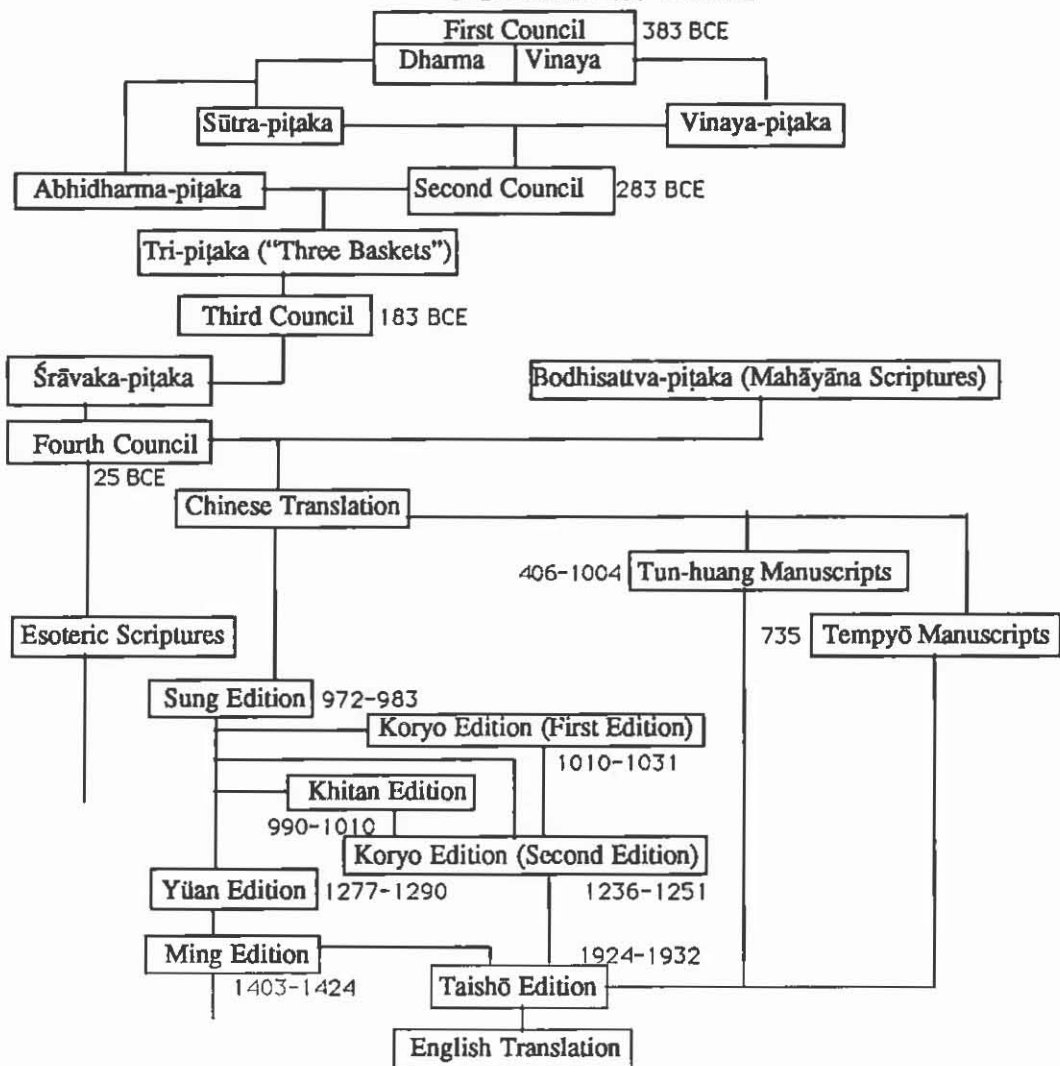
*Pacific World.* The first issue of the *PacificWorld* was published in June 1925 by Yehan Numata when he was still an undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley. As the editor-in-chief, he published it on a bi-monthly basis in 1925 and 1926, and then on a monthly basis in 1927 and 1928. Articles in the early issues concerned not only Buddhism, but also other cultural subjects such as art, poetry, and education, and then by 1928, the articles became predominantly Buddhistic. Included in the mailing list for the early issues were such addressees as the Cabinet members of the U.S. Government, Chambers of Commerce, political leaders, libraries, publishing houses, labor unions and foreign institutions. The publication of the *Pacific World* ceased after Yehan Numata returned to Japan following completion of his studies in 1928 and the receipt of a M.A. degree in statistics. The lack of funds also precluded further publication. In 1982, the publication of the *Pacific World* was again resumed, this time on an annual basis by the Institute of Buddhist Studies with funds provided by the foundation, BDK USA. The 1989 autumn issue of the journal was distributed to 6,500 addressees throughout the world. The journal is now devoted to the dissemination of articles on general and Jodo Shinshu Buddhism for both academic and lay readers.

*The officers of BDK USA are grateful for the encouragement and support received from the institutions with endowed chairs, the Buddhist clergy, and lay people in BDK USA efforts to disseminate the teachings of the Buddha throughout the United States and look forward to their continuing assistance.*

A Genealogical Chart of the Original Texts of  
the English Translation of the Buddhist Canon



**BUDDHA** 463-383 BCE



## Guidelines for Authors

Manuscripts (approximately 20 standard pages) should be typed double-spaced with 1-inch margins. Notes should be consecutively numbered at end of the main text, following specifications of *A Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all quotations and for supplying complete references. Clear, clean MS is required for electronic page scanning.

Foreign words should be underlined and marked with proper diacriticals, except for the following: arhat, bodhisattva, buddha/Buddha, dharma/Dharma, Hinayana, kalpa, karma, Mahayana, nembutsu, nirvana, samsara, sangha, shinjin, sutra, yoga. Romanized Chinese follows Wade-Giles system (except in special cases); romanized Japanese, the modified Hepburn system. Japanese/Chinese names are given surname first, omitting honorifics. Ideographs preferably should be restricted to notes.

Editing Committee reserves the right to standardize use or omission of diacriticals. Conventionalized English form of sutra title may be used if initially identified in original or full form in text or note.

Include institutional affiliation and position, or present status/occupation and place.

Editing Committee reserves the right to edit all submissions. MSS that have been edited will be returned to authors in "galleyproof" form for their review before publication, provided sufficient time is given.

All MSS submitted for publication become the property of *Pacific World*. Authors must obtain Editor's permission to publish them elsewhere before publication in *Pacific World*. Twenty complimentary reprints of their articles will be sent to the authors.

## **The Institute of Buddhist Studies Seminary and Graduate School**

- History:** Its predecessor, the Buddhist Studies Center, was started in 1949 in Berkeley, and in 1966 the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) was founded as a graduate school for Jodo Shinshu ministry and for Buddhist studies. The IBS was founded by the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), which is affiliated with the Hampa-Hongwanji branch of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, a school of Pure Land Buddhism.
- Affiliation:** In 1985, the IBS became an affiliate of the Graduate Theological Union. The GTU is the coordinating organization for one of the most inclusive concentrations of religious educational resources in the world. This marks the first time another major world religion has joined in a consortium with religious schools from the Judeo-Christian traditions. In addition to the IBS, the GTU includes six Protestant and three Roman Catholic seminaries, a Center for Jewish Studies and eleven other specialized centers and Institutes.
- Degrees:** Master of Arts specialized in Buddhist Studies, an accredited degree granted jointly by GTU and IBS. GRE exam required.
- Master in Jodo-Shinshu Studies (M.J.S.), a Professional degree for Jodo Shinshu ministry granted by IBS. GRE exam required.
- Deadline:** Admissions applications are due February 1 for fall semester and September 30 for spring semester.
- Resources:** Credits for the degrees can also be earned at the University of California, Berkeley. University of California students, in turn, can take courses at IBS and GTU for credit.
- Core Faculty:**
- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Alfred Bloom:    | Dean and Professor. S.T.M. Andover Newton Theological School; Ph.D., Harvard University.  |
| Kenneth Tanaka:  | Assistant Dean and Assistant Professor. B. A., Stanford University; M.A., Inst. of Buddhist Studies; M.A., Tokyo University; Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley. |
| Ronald Nakasone: | Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Assistant Professor. B.A., M.A., University of Hawaii; M.A., Ryukoku University; Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison.        |