

The Problematics of Realization as a Basis for Dialogue in Shinshū and Zen

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It is my contention that *shinjin* may be understood as a form of realization. "Realization," in common English usage, carries the force of coming to know a fact beyond any inclination to doubt it. Thus *shinjin* may be said to involve the realization that the enacting of Amida Buddha's Vow of universal liberation is present as the voicing of the Name, "Namo Amida Butsu" (and cognates). For the Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist, realization of, or direct encountering of, the most profound object of his or her religious commitment.

Understanding *shinjin* in this way can provide a basis for dialogue with other schools of Buddhism. All schools can probably be shown to contain a concern with realization, in the sense in which I am using the term. In particular, I will discuss parallel problems in the matter of realization in Jōdo Shinshū and in Zen. If this investigation proves fruitful, then within Zen and within Shinshū the problematics of realization may be indicated as a basis for future dialogue with a variety of other schools of Buddhism.

In the first section of this paper I will discuss *shinjin*, understood as a form of realization or direct encounter with Amida Buddha. Some parallels with the matter of encountering *tathata/suchness* in Zen will emerge in this section.

The second section will outline shared problems in the denial of or minimizing of the role of mediation in Shinshū and Zen. This section and the third will show indebtedness to Bernard Faure's *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*.¹

The third section will claim that the doctrinal content of certain descriptions of realization is inseparable from an ideological content which defends a power basis of an elite while serving to disempower those who do not affirm the same position.

The concluding section will treat the *two truths* of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the ultimate and the provisional, as properly held in

unreconciled opposition. This point in particular will show the influence of Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota.² Discussions with Dennis Hirota have been invaluable in helping me to clarify my concerns with the matters elaborated here. It will be suggested in the final section that the problematics of realization arise from the univocal identity and non-identity of the Ultimate and the relative. Authentic Buddhist living must persevere amidst the unreconciled tension between the two truths. Tracing some of the contours of that tension may nurture renewal within Shinshū and Zen. It may also, in both sects, encourage dialogue with the many other schools of Buddhism.

REALIZATION AS DIRECT ENCOUNTER

The central concern in the religious life of the Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist is usually understood to be the realization of *shinjin*. As to the question "What is *shinjin*?", I have little contribution to make to the centuries-long discussion. I find Dennis Hirota's elaboration of the concept to be quite satisfactory.³ In brief summary of that view I will say that *shinjin* is the taking of the believer into the Vow-Mind of Amida in such a way that he or she is deeply one with the Buddha while at the same time being diametrically opposed to the Vow in his/her passion-driven humanness.

My interest here will be to look briefly at how *Shinjin* occurs. The clearest explanation of the receipt of *shinjin* is that it occurs when one hears the Vow:

"Hear" means to hear the Primal Vow and be free of doubt. Further, it indicates *shinjin*.⁴

The "Primal Vow" referred to is the eighteenth amongst the forty-eight vows attributed to Amida Buddha in the "Sūtra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life."⁵ This Vow promises birth in a pure land of great happiness for the purpose of awakening to Buddhahood to those who take refuge in Amida through reflecting upon or saying the Name. This vow, in making awakening available under minimal conditions of worthiness is seen as the most fundamental of Amida's Vows by Shinran.

Shinjin is explained as hearing the Primal Vow. Such a hearing of the Vow is a direct encountering, not a process of conceptualization or endeavoring in a practice. This direct experiencing of the most profound object of one's religious concern is precisely what I intend to mean by "realization."⁶

Whereas such a direct encounter with the object of religious concern is common to most, and perhaps all, schools of Buddhism, the degree to which its immediacy is stressed varies. The contemplative

schools such as Zen are inclined to put great stress on the immediacy of the encounter as well as upon the absoluteness of the object of realization may even be said to be a mere artifact of language. A contemplative may claim that in the pure experience itself there is no distinguishing of subject and object of realization. Note the following statement of the non-objectified nature of the object of realization by the Zen-influenced philosopher Keiji Nishitani:

Emptiness lies absolutely on the near side more so than what we normally regard as our own self.... It defies objective representation.⁷

By contrast, the realization of *shinjin* occurs in the encountering of an object, even though that encounter is direct. For the realization of *shinjin*, the object is not an absolutely non-objectifiable Emptiness, but rather a quite concrete auditory object, "Namo Amida Butsu"/"I rely on Amida Buddha" (or any cognate thereof). In the religious perspective of Shinran, which informs the various schools which refer to themselves as Jōdo Shinshū, the object of spiritual concern has already taken the objective form of the Name for the sake of deluded suffering beings. This doctrine is expressed in Japanese through the simple use of the possessive, "no." The Name is the name of the Vow; it is the Vow's Name. This use of the possessive ("no") does not translate into English smoothly and is rendered by Hirota and Ueda with the term "embodies":

... the Name that embodies the Primal Vow⁸

The liberating activity of Amida Buddha as fulfillment of his Primal Vow is the ultimate level of religious concern for the Buddhist of the Pure Land stream of Mahāyāna tradition. It might be said that emptiness compassionately take the form of Amida Buddha who then makes his vows in order to enact his salvific intent.⁹ Shinran does not quite say this and there is an unfortunate tendency in scholarship which is impatient with multiple ideational frameworks referring to what is assumedly the same Ultimate Truth.

All schools of Buddhism are directed toward the attainment of Buddhahood. Certainly all Buddhas realize emptiness. Even so, realizing the reality of Amida's Vow at work in the name, the realization of *shinjin*, is not the same matter as the realization of emptiness through practice. *Shinjin* is realized by a person will enmeshed in the passions and unable to realize the emptiness of all things. The family resemblance running through all schools of Buddhism should not tempt us to reduce all its explanatory frameworks to some one grand but empty of

any fixed form Shinran comments on the literal meaning of "Amida" "without measure:"

The supreme Buddha is formless,...in order to make us realize that the true Buddha is formless, it is expressly called Amida Buddha.¹⁰

The Ultimate Reality in Mahāyāna thinking is formless, as Shinran emphasizes. But to be truly formless, truly unlimited by any form, is also to be capable of taking form. Amida Buddha invests himself in his Vows and embodies his most fundamental Vow in his Name. In this way the Ultimate truth becomes the possible object of realization through hearing. In another place I have compared the hearing of the Vow to the discerning of a musical theme being tapped out on a hard surface.¹¹ This analogy may allow us to see the discernment of the Name as the Vow, the realization of *shinjin* as a matter of *hearing-as*: the person who realizes *shinjin* hears the Name as the Vow.

I have borrowed the phrase *hearing-as* from the philosopher Wittgenstein. He refers to the matter of suddenly discerning as aspect of an object of experience as the *dawning of an aspect*:

I contemplate a face and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I see that it has not changed and yet I see it differently. I call this experience "noticing an aspect" ... And I must distinguish between the continuous seeing of an aspect and the "dawning of an aspect." ... Here it occurs to me that in conversation on aesthetic matters we use the words: "You have to see it like this, this is how it is meant." "You have to hear this bar as an introduction."¹²

One aspect of "Namo Amida Butsu," and all of its cognates, is that it is the embodiment of the Primal Vow. When that aspect dawns upon a person while hearing the Name, that person realizes *shinjin*. The problematics of coming to such a realization are closely related to the problematics of realization in other Buddhist approaches to directly encountering the Ultimate Truth. In the next section we will investigate some difficulties with regard to the matter of mediation in Jōdo Shinshū and Zen Buddhism.

MEDIATION VS. ULTIMACY

The project of directly realizing the Ultimate Truth tends to raise a concern with the immediacy of that encounter. In Zen Buddhism this concern often leads to a demand that the object of realization be entirely one with the subject—that no objectification be involved.

This tends to absolutize the subject as was seen in Nishitani's view that emptiness is nearer (vis. more the subject) than what we ordinarily consider ourselves as subject to be. A similar perspective can be seen in the practice instructions of Zen Roshi Koun Yamada: "The consciousness of pure and clear essential nature is the inside of the whole universe."¹³

By contrast, the Jōdo Shinshū approach involves encountering the pure subjectivity which is the mind of Amida as the object of hearing. While the rejection of mediation in Zen is generally a denial of the objectifiability of the Ultimate truth, in Shinshū it is commonly the rejection of a practice or process of theorizing. Thus Shinran stressed that the realization of *shinjin* takes place in one thought-moment, which he explained as being of the utmost temporal brevity: "one thought-moment" is time at its ultimate limit, where the realization of Shinjin takes place."¹⁴

As in Zen we see in Shinran's thought a tendency to identify the Ultimacy of one's religious concern with its immediacy. However, the absolute rejection of a mediating process leads to an abstract elevation of one's object of reverence and eventually, to its trivialization. One must, for example, have some knowledge of the sacred story regarding Dharmakara becoming Amida and some grasp of the teaching that the compassionate activity of the Vow, the very presence of the Buddha is embodied in the Name, in order to hear the Name as the Vow. To reject the mediating process of learning the teaching would be to trivialize the Fundamental Vow under the guise of elevating it. Indeed, in order to hear the Name as the Vow in the one moment of the dawning of *shinjin*, one must (say and or) listen to the Name being voiced. In cautioning against contrived utterance, Shinran often repeated a motto of his teacher, Hōnen: "In Other Power, no selfworking is true working."¹⁵

In Shinran's teaching this saying is strongly paradoxical!¹⁶ With Hōnen, the paradoxicality of the statement was balanced by repeated urgings to say the Name often. Thus the motto had the significance of a guide to proper practice. We might paraphrase Hōnen's message as "When you allow the voicing to emerge in a natural and unselfconscious way it is the Buddha's working. Just say the Name and in time any conniving or manipulative intention on your part will fade away and the Buddha's presence will shine forth through the Name—when selfworking stops the true working of Other Power will illumine your utterance." If we read Hōnen's meaning as some such guidance for proper practice there is nothing fundamentally paradoxical about the phrase.

With Shinran the same statement takes on a thoroughly paradoxical character. This is because the rejection of mediating practice on the devotees' part, "no selfworking is true working," is not balanced by frequent urgings to engage in the saying of the Buddha's Name, as was

done by Hōnen. For Shinran the phrase is not advice as to how to practice, but dismissal of practice as being utterly without value. Shinran uses his teacher's motto not to guide practice, but to describe realization.

Having looked at *shinjin* as a form of realization we have seen a similar problematic in Jōdo Shinshū and Zen. Both schools are suspicious of mediation. Mediation by practice toward realization, or conceptualization of the Ultimate truth is suspected of relativizing that Truth. Shinshū is not opposed in principle to finding its Ultimate concern in an object. If the Buddha has mediated his presence in the compassionate giving of his Name, then the encounter of the name is still a direct access to the primal Vow, albeit in a mediated form.¹⁷ However, Shinshū is also concerned with the pristine nature of its lauded realization—*shinjin*. This must occur in the brevity of one thought-moment, where there is no room for contrivance or selfworking. This one thought-moment is said not to be an act of the devotee's mind ("hi i-gō"). Yet this denial of mediation has a tendency to produce the opposite of its intended effect. Instead of safeguarding the absoluteness of *shinjin*, there is an inevitable thrust toward its trivialization in the denial of mediation. Is it really an absolute and universally compassionate activity which is only encountered by those who see the irrelevance of selfworking and are will moved to utter the Buddha's Name?¹⁸

DOCTRINE AND IDEOLOGY

We have been discussing the problematic nature of realization in Buddhism with special attention to the Jōdo Shinshū and Zen schools. A related problem is that any statement regarding the status of mediation is likely to have both doctrinal and ideological force.¹⁹ Ideology, properly so called, is exercise of power which appears to be something else; e.g., an expression of philosophical truth. Such a lateral enforcing of power may take place no matter how sincerely the parties involved engage in the primary, e.g. doctrinal discourse.

"No selfworking is true working," for example, elaborates an ineliminable aspect of Shinshū doctrine while also stating an ideology which empowers an elite. Those who can grasp, or who are willing to feign grasping, what this rather cryptic phrase means, constitute an elite. Those who really understand the doctrine are liberated from a requirement to practice. At the same time, the lack of practice whereby to encounter the Ultimate Truth is an alienating factor for others. Those still wondering what to do are disempowered by this ideology. Whether they are called heretics, or merely considered ones of little understanding, they are subordinated.

The ideological thrust to the denial of selfworking is prior to and independent of any religious organization. Since the no-selfworking

doctrine sets up an elite as against a subordinated group, it would be a danger to any Shinshū institution which failed to embrace it firmly. An ecclesiastic hierarchy whose officers allowed that self-power practice is efficacious would be subordinated as itself heretical by members who establish themselves as the true Other-power only elite.

In fact, there are passages in Shinran's writing which encourage the saying of the Name in a spirit of aspiration which closely resembles an endeavoring in practice. But for the reasons discussed above, anyone who wishes to appropriate Shinran's teaching from a position of power must de-emphasize such aspects of his thought. Consider, for example, this passage: "People who feel that their birth in the Pure Land is not yet settled should say the Nembutsu aspiring for birth."²⁰

This is one of many passages in which Shinran encourages the utterance of *nembutsu* prior to realization of and in hopes of receiving *shinjin*. But to avoid emphasizing this side of his teaching does not merely serve ideological interest. That the Name embodying the Primal Vow dawns upon one suddenly is an essential aspect of Shinran's insight. No amount of repetition of the Name nor any rigorous study of Buddhist philosophy will ensure that the aspect of the Name which is that it is the very working of the Vow will dawn upon one. The Ultimate Truth of the Buddha's compassionate working is in agnostic tension with the relative mode of its realization—saying and hearing the Buddha's Name.

The fact that doctrinal discourse also has an ideological side does not invalidate it. Faure's critique of the Zen rhetoric of immediacy includes the following caution:

(Scholarship) cannot totally reject the possibility of a heterology—of an irruption of the "Other" into the tautological discourse of metaphysics, the shining through of some kind of transcendence into the most flagrantly ideological discourse.²¹

In Mahāyāna Buddhism the Ultimate Truth is always discovered in contradictory tension with our access to it through relative truths. In the concluding section I will suggest that the paradoxically which we've seen in the stance on mediation and also the elusive role of ideology in Jōdo Shinshū derive from a vision of the two truths which no school of Mahāyāna Buddhism can avoid.

IN CONCLUSION: TWO TRUTHS

We have seen that the project of realizing the Ultimate Truth leads to the question of how it is relativized in the necessary mediation which it must undergo in being understood. The classic statement of

the mutual dependence of the Ultimate Truth (*paramārtha-satya/shintai*) and the conventional truth (*samvṛti-satya/zokutai*) was made by Nagarjuna:

The ultimate truth is not shown except on the basis of the conventional truth. Without gaining the ultimate truth nirvana is not to be obtained.²²

There are a variety of possible interpretations of what relation actually obtains between these two truths. Also, there are numerous different sorts of perspectives from which this question has been approached by various Buddhists teachers and writers. My approach here is certainly not that of a logician, a historian of ideas or a practitioner of sectarian hermeneutics. My comments will be quite non-technical and my concern pastoral. The question of the relation of the two truths arises for me at a level which a Zen Buddhist would call practice-level. The view which I am taking here is that the Ultimate Truth is utterly incommensurable with those conventional expressions upon which Buddhists monks, nuns and laity depend for its understanding. At the same time, and in the same sense, the Ultimate truth and the conventional truth in no way differ from one another. The non-identity of the conventional and Ultimate truths is in no way canceled by the univocal affirmation of their identity.

Taking this perspective, let us look back briefly at some of the concerns raised earlier in this paper. The fact that the Ultimate Truth and the conventional truth must be held in simultaneous unreconciled opposition underlies the problematic of mediation which we have seen to be present in both Jōdo Shinshū and Zen. Even saying "Namo Amida Butsu" is suspected of cheapening one's relation to Amida's Vow if that utterance is a sort of technique. Shinran's teacher, Hōnen, suggested the paradoxical nature of the *nembutsu* way in the following statement as well.

The way to say the nembutsu lies in having no "way." If you just say it earnestly, without taking account of your conduct or the good and evil of your heart, you will attain birth.²³

The paradox of having "no way" is mitigated by the encouragement to say the Name. Hōnen encouraged his followers to repeat the *nembutsu* tens of thousands of times a day. Shinshū aficionados have often tried to find a way out of the incommensurability of the Vow and any deliberate action on our part—an escape of the paradox for Shinran. Factions within Shinshū have urged some special way of saying the Name, e.g., in a spirit of gratitude, or spontaneously.²⁴ In fact there is no way out. Shinran's teaching squarely confronts the unstable tension

in which the Ultimate truth and our conventional understanding present themselves. There is no way to go about bridging the gap between our self-centered relativity and the Ultimate truth—not by being grateful, not by being spontaneous—no way at all.

Although conventional formulations must fail to adequately express the Ultimate Truth, there is no other way to reach it. This necessary use of relative formulations leads to the problem of implicit ideological force attending expressions of doctrinal positions. Individuals always have a stake in the power structures which enmesh their lives, a personal agenda, a political orientation. For example, there is a strategy of condescension underlying Shinran's claim to be merely repeating the instructions of his teacher, Hōnen.²⁵ That maneuver did nothing to cancel his authority as an independent leader, while accruing to him the added power due a humble and loyal student whose pronouncements carried all the authority of his great teacher.

It is in keeping with the spirit of Shinran's teaching to note the problem of ideological force connected with even the most sincere statements of doctrine. Shinran's teaching truly endeavors to be the way of no way in all its radical transcendence of linear reasoning and in all its depths of faith. Amida's presence as his name (pastorally speaking, the Ultimate truth) is in unreconciled tension with the relative mode of its actualization—we simply say and hear the Name. This vision has commonalties with the necessary holding of inconsistent views which is urged repeatedly in the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature. For example:

...as far as nay conceivable form of beings is conceived: all these I must lead to Nirvana, into that realm of Nirvana which leaves nothing behind. And yet, although innumerable beings have thus been led to Nirvana, no being at all has been led to Nirvana. And why? If in a Bodhisattva the notion of a "being" should take place, he could not be called a "Bodhi-being."²⁶

The only genuine approach to living a life informed by the relation between the Ultimate and the relative is to hold them in unreconciled tension—whether simultaneously or dialectically.²⁷ So far as the actual project of living one's life as a Buddhist goes, the only alternatives would be a hierarchical or an immanentist-reductionist view. The former betrays the non-dualist insight fundamental to the Buddha-way, and leads toward something like theism. The latter, referred to as "the naturalist fallacy" in Zen tradition, abandons the hope for transformation of human suffering, which is the source for all Buddhist thought, practice and devotion.

The sense in which the Ultimate may be said to be identical to the relative in Mahāyāna Buddhism does not cancel the fact that they are diametrically opposed to one another. There is no way for anyone to

have the last word on this matter. The fact that the relative is fundamentally opposed to the Ultimate leads to a critique of mediation (e.g., "no selfworking is true"). This liberates some from contrived detours, but enslaves others to an ideal which they have no means to approach (e.g., *shinjin*, *kenshō*). The embracing of mediation (e.g., "just say the Name in an unselfconscious way and the fact that it is the embodiment of the Vow will dawn upon you one day.") liberates some from alienation from an Ultimate which they are not in touch with; but it enslaves others to a calculative approach which itself becomes a barrier.

The problematics of realization which we have considered here cannot be solved. Sincere seekers of the Buddha-way must live amongst their tension. Whole-heartedly adopting both the Ultimate and the relative perspectives sometimes opens out into an unsynthesized panoramic vision. Those who experience the Truth from such a perspective give its realization various names: *shinjin*, *kenshō*, etc. Without blurring the uniqueness of the discrete Buddhist pathways and the distinctiveness of their fruits, there may still be helpful dialogue on our shared problems in the matter of realization.

NOTES

¹ Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992).

² For a clear account of the two truths which is consistent with the intent of this paper see Yoshifumi Ueda and Dennis Hirota, *Shinran, An Introduction to His Thought*, (Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1989), pp. 81-82.

³ On the nature of *shinjin* I have nothing to add to the explanation of Ueda and Hirota, *Shinran*, Chapter 4, especially pp. 130-154. For an elaboration of Shinjin as contrastive to faith see *Notes on the Inscriptions on Sacred Scrolls*, Shin Buddhism Translation Series, (Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1981), pp. 77-82. On the realization of *shinjin* in one thought-moment see Dennis Hirota, "Breaking the Darkness: Images of Reality in the Shin Buddhist Path" in *Japanese Religions*, vol. 16, no. 3 (January 1991), especially p. 36.

⁴ *Shinran*, p. 195, with the Japanese text on page 364 or see *Shinshō Shōgyō Zensho*, vol. 2, (Kyoto: 1941) 604. 13-605. 2.

⁵ *The True Teaching Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way, Volume II* (Kyoto: Shin Buddhism Translation Series, Hongwanji International Center, 1983), p. 205.

⁶ A reference to *shinjin* in terms of "realizing" can also be seen in the work of Takamaro Shigaraki: "My interpretations of Shinjin as it was used by Shinran is that its meaning has two aspects: that of 'realizing' or 'knowing' as well as the implicit aspect of truth or reality."

(*The Buddhist World of Awakening* tr. William Masuda, [Honolulu: Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, 1982], p. 8). In the section from which this quotation is taken, Shigaraki tends to minimize the distinction between realizing *shinjin* and realizing *satori*. Acknowledging that *shinjin* is a realization does not tie one to such a project. I have elsewhere stressed the distinction between *shinjin* and *satori* using the analysis of *shinjin* as a realization (see footnote 11). What I am drawing out of the concept "realization" is a recognition of significance which, outside the context of direct experience, would be elaborated by means of a conceptual structure such as a philosophical theory. The implications I am drawing out of the term "realization" are also present in the English-language notions of "discernment," "appreciation" and "recognition". Locating *shinjin* in terms of more traditional levels on the path toward *satori* has proved a confusing matter in Shin dogmatics.

For procrustean reasons it is sometimes identified with the seventh or eighth level of Bodhisattva development of Bhumi. Shinran himself stated it was equivalent to the (rather preliminary) Streamwinner stage of Śrāvakayāna progress and to (the much higher but non-Ultimate) first Bhumi; see *Kyōgyōshinshō*, (Kyoto, Ryukoku Translation Center, 1966) p. 54; or SSZ. 2. 33. 10013. On the distinction between *shinjin* and the realization of nirvana see discussions of "Shōjo Metsudo" in, e.g., *Anjinrondai Kōyō*, Jodoshinshu Hongwanjiha Shuppanbu, Kyoto, 1987.

⁷ Kenji Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) p. 98.

⁸ Ibid, p. 195.

⁹ It is my decision not use sexually inclusive language in reference to the sutras and classic commentaries to the Pure Land tradition. It cannot be reasonably argued that the sutras do not refer to Amida as specifically male. I do not think that reducing all such references to "mere symbols" is a solution. I do not think that disguising the sexually discriminatory intent of the Pure Land scriptures by substitution of inclusive language in embarrassing passages is an adequate solution. My preference is to leave the scriptural tradition with its sexually discriminatory language intact when reference is made to it. On the basis of honestly confronting such errors imbedded in Pure Land tradition, future renewal may be possible. Further remarks on this problem are outside the range of this, or any, paper by a male writer.

¹⁰ *Letters of Shinran, Volume One*, edited by Yoshifumi Ueda, (Kyoto: Shin Buddhism translation Series, Hongwanji International Center, 1978), p. 30.

¹¹ Gregory G. Gibbs, "Concepts of Faith in Three Categories, Their Ap-

- plicability to the Texts of Shinran and Their relation to Shinjin," M.A. thesis, Graduate Theological Union and Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, 1990, p. 59.
- ¹² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, tr. G. E. M. Anscombe, (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1968) pp. 193e-206e.
 - ¹³ Koun Yamada, *Gateless Gate*, (Tucson, Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1990), pp. 63-4.
 - ¹⁴ *Shinran*, p. 196.
 - ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219.
 - ¹⁶ For an explanation of the paradox implied in this statement see *Shinran*, pp. 221-2.
 - ¹⁷ If I walk down the stairs to go out the door, I am using the stairs to mediate my exit. Nonetheless, I am leaving directly. The question of whether there is "mediation" in an activity tends to lead to an abstract debate. "Directness" is often a concept more to the point in discussions of religious experience. On the problem of the mystification of the concern for direct knowledge see "Other Minds," in *Philosophical Papers*, 3rd ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).
 - ¹⁸ Whether the Name is audibly voiced or silently reflected upon, the question of its being volitionally presented to and for oneself is here the key question. Also, what I have said regarding *shinjin* being the hearing of the name as the Vow would be equally applicable to encountering it as the Vow in one's silent reflection.
 - ¹⁹ I hope that my use of the term "mediation" has been reasonably clear. In fact, it is a complex concept which occurs in multifaceted contexts of discussion. For me to try to give the term a fixed definition here might obscure more than it clarifies. A classic source for the problem of mediation in philosophical and religious theory is the Preface to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. See *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, translation by A. V. Miller, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), see especially p. 6.
 - ²⁰ *Shinran*, p. 232.
 - ²¹ Faure, p. 318.
 - ²² Quoted in Gibbs, p. 82.
 - ²³ *Plain Words on the Pure Land Way*, translated by Dennis Hirota, (Kyoto: Ryukoku University, 1989), p. 50.
 - ²⁴ See Minor L. and Ann T. Rogers, *Rennyū* Asian Humanities Press, Berkeley, 1991. On p. 292, they point out that the emphasis on believers maintaining an attitude of gratefulness "is vulnerable to coercion by the leaders of a religious order enjoining conformity, submissiveness, and obedience.
 - ²⁵ See Faure, p. 20, on the strategy of adding to one's power base the additional authority accruing from its symbolic denial.

²⁶ *Buddhist Wisdom Books* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1988), p. 25.

²⁷ I am distinguishing the simultaneous holding of the radically opposed two truths from taking them together in a unified temporal progression which also refuses to feign a synthesis. This dialectical view was characteristic of Madhyamaka. For a brief analysis see Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1970), pp. 242–9.