Development of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism (Part I)

by Shinko Mochizuki

translated by Leo Pruden

ABOUT THE AUTHOR,
PROFESSOR SHINKŌ MOCHIZUKI
(1869-1948)

Born in Niigata Prefecture on October 28th, 1869 as Shōjiro Matsubara, the scholar later known as Professor Shinkō Mochizuki received his first ordination in 1880 and at that time received the religious name of Shinkō ("Blessed with Faith"). In 1883, he entered the Jōdo-shū daigakkō in Kyoto, and in September of 1886, he entered the Jōdo-shū honkō, in Tokyo. He graduated from this latter school in July of 1895.

In 1893, the young Shinkō Matsubara was adopted, through marriage, into the family of one Arinari Mochizuki, and henceforth was known, until his death, as Shinkō Mochizuki.

In 1899 Mochizuki completed a ten-year private study of the Tendai teachings, conducted in the city of Kyoto and on Mt. Hiei. In this same year Mochizuki began his teaching career at the Jōdo-shū kōtō-gakkō, in Kyoto.

Shinkō Mochizuki first came to the notice of the Buddhist academic world with the publication, in 1906, of his edition of the Hōnen-shōnin zenshū (The Complete Works of St. Hōnen). *This was followed by his editing and publishing the* Jōdo-shū zenshō (The Complete Works of the Pure Land Tradition), *which appeared in the period 1911 to 1914. He then began his work on the monumental* Bukkyō-daijiten (Encyclopaedia of Buddhism) *whose seven volumes spanned the period from 1906 to 1937: a work that took approximately thirty years to complete!*

In 1909 Mochizuki published the Bukkyō-dainempyō (A Buddhist Yearbook), *and this was followed by his editing of the* Dai-Nippon Bukkyō zenshō (The Complete Works of Japanese Buddhism) *whose 150 volumes appeared in the period 1912 to 1922.*

In addition to his editing and publishing these major reference works, Professor Shinkō Mochizuki was also reknown for his work in Pure Land Buddhism. A collection of some sixty-six of his articles dealing with Pure Land Buddhism appeared in 1922 under the title Jōdo-kyō no kenkyū (Studies in Pure Land Teachings). *This was followed in 1930 by his* Jōdo-kyō no kigen narabi hattatsu (The Origins and the Development of the Pure Land Teachings), *and in 1942, by his* Shina Jōdo-kyōri-shi (A Doctrinal History of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism); *this work was reprinted in 1964 with the revised Japanese title* Chūgoku Jōdo-kyōri-shi).

In his later years, Professor Mochizuki was elected to membership in the Japan Academy (Nippon gakushi'in), *and was also eventually elected to the abbotship of the Chion'in monastery, Kyoto, and thus became the chief abbot* (kanchō) *of Jodo-shu.*

Professor Shinkō Mochizuki died at the age of eighty on the 13th of July, 1948.

The following is a partial translation of Mochizuki's Preface to his Chūgoku Jōdo-kyōri-shi.

This present book is the systematization of the notes of lectures that I gave on numerous occasions at Taishō University. As these notes are now being printed in book form, this book will be entitled *Shina Jōdo-kyōri shi (A Doctrinal History of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism)*, which title points to the fact that the major concern of this work is the development and the changes that the Pure Land doctrines have undergone in China.

However, religious doctrines are accompanied by faith, and this in turn carries within itself an impetus to dissemination and expansion, so while we are relating the changes and the developments that the Pure Land doctrines have undergone, we are at the same time narrating the historical facts of the faith's growth and expansion.

Buddhism in China has almost two thousand years of history behind it; moreover, China is vast in geographic extent, and the religious phenomena that have arisen within it from the time of its origins to the present-day are numberless. Needless to say, it would be almost impossible to study these phenomena one by one, and I believe that it would not be an easy task even to bring together the data involved in such a history, regardless of the criteria adopted. In the present work, I have attempted to bring together as much relevant historical data as possible, and have tried, to the best of my abilities, to delineate the antecedents and the later ramifications of any given doctrinal theory in my exposition of that theory. However, when the final editing of this work was finished, I discovered several places where further revision was called for, and I am filled with remorse that in this respect the work remains incomplete. I sincerely

look to the corrections and the amendations which later generations of scholars will provide.

Shinkō Mochizuki

March 1942

This work now begins with the First Chapter, A General Survey, *in which Mochizuki reviews the subject matter of this work, discusses the first introduction of the Buddha-dharma to Chinese soil (omitted here), and then gives a general survey of the high points of the Pure Land faith over the centuries, from its first appearance in China up to the 20th century.*

CHAPTER I
A General Survey

The Pure Land teachings *(ching-t'u chiao)* form a separate tradition within Mahāyāna Buddhism. In these teachings, the devotee believes in the existence of a large number of various Buddhas, and in their heavens, or Pure Lands; through this faith the devotee obtains, in this life, the protection of these Buddhas and, he desires to be reborn into one of these Pure Lands after his death. All of the various Mahāyāna scriptures and commentaries speak of Buddhas "in all of the ten directions, as numberless as the grains of sand in the Ganges River," and each one of these Buddhas lives in his own individual Pure Land, and here he continues to preach and to teach to a multitude of the faithful who have obtained rebirth in this land. However, there are very few scriptures which speak of any other of these Buddhas or of their Pure Lands in great detail. It is only the Buddhas Amitābha (O-mi-t'o Fo), Akṣobhya (O-shu Fo), and Bhaiṣajyaguru (Yao-shih Fo) who have separate, independent scriptures devoted to describing them and their Pure Lands.

And, of these Buddhas, an extremely large number of scriptures are devoted exclusively to Amitābha, either in describing in fine detail his making of vows and his cultivation of religious practices while he was yet a Bodhisattva, or in describing the adornments and the physical features of his Pure Land, the Western Land of Sukhāvatī (*chi-lo,* "possessing extreme happiness"). The large number of scriptural texts devoted to Amitābha and Sukhāvatī attest to the fact that, from the very earliest period, the Pure Land of the Buddha Amitābha was regarded as the best of all the Pure Lands of the Buddhas. As a result, then, the belief in Amitābha's Pure Land grew in India, and in such Indian works as Nāgārjuna's *Daśabhūmi-vibhāsa (Shih-chu pi-p'o-she),* in Sthiramati's *Ratna-gotra vibhaga (Chiu-ching i-ch'eng Pao-hsing lun),* and in Vasubandhu's *Amitāyus Sūtra Upadeśa (Wu-liang-shou ching Yü-p'o-t'i-she),* the authors expressed their vows to be reborn into Sukhāvatī; and such scriptural texts as the *Ta-p'ei-ching* (volume two), the first volume of the *Ta-fa k'u ching,* the *Wen-chu shih-li fa-yuan ching,* and the sixth volume of the *Ta fang-teng Wu-hsiang ching* record that a variety of personages, such as the bhikṣu Jivaka (Chi-p'o-chia), the young man Leṣya (Li-ch'e) "whom all the world delights in seeing," the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, and "Queen Increase" *(ts'eng-ch'ang nü-wang)* all vowed to be reborn in Amitābha's Pure Land. When the Pure Land faith spread to China, it attracted many tens of millions of devotees, both clerics and laity, and the faith eventually spread to all the countries of the Far East, where it became the major faith of a vast majority of the populations of these lands. It is for this reason, then, that when we speak of the Pure Land teachings, this phrase can refer to the teaching that every Buddha has a Pure Land, but, in light of the above, we shall employ this phrase in the sense of belief in the Buddha Amitābha, and the rest of this work will concern itself with narrating the history of the dissemination of belief in Amitābha.

The first appearance of what was to develop into Pure Land teachings was the translation in 179, during the reign of the Later Han Dynasty Emperor Ling, of the *Pratyutpanna-samādhi sūtra* (Ch: *P'an-shou san-mei ching*) by Lokakṣema. This translation was soon followed by the work of Wu Chih-ch'ien and the Western Chin Dynasty monk Chu Fa-huo, who translated the *Ta O-mi-t'o ching* and the *Ping-teng-ch'üeh ching;* by Kumārajīva (of the Yao-Ch'in Dynasty) and Pao-yun (of the Liu-Sung Dynasty) and Punyayaśas (Liu-Sung Dynasty), who translated the *O-mi-t'o ching,* the *Shih-chu pi-p'o-she lun,* the *Wu-liang-shou ching,* and the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching.* In this way, different texts appeared one after the other, and found greater numbers of devotees within the ranks of both the clergy and the laity.

The first person recorded to be seeking rebirth in the Western Pure Land was Ts'e, Duke of Ch'ueh (Ch'ueh Kung-ts'e, a person of the Western Chin Dynasty), and from this time onward larger and larger numbers of persons are described as longing for rebirth. The most renowned of such persons was the Eastern Chin Dynasty scholar-monk, Hui-yuan. With Hui-yuan, the Pure Land doctrines found their first eminent master, and the later Pure Land lineages in China regarded him as their first patriarchal master. It is with him that the Pure Land movement begins to be a significant religious movement.

Hui-yuan founded the White Lotus Society *(Pai-lien she)* on the southern Chinese mountain, Mt. Lu (Lu-shan). This society was a meditation group whose members would meditate on the form of the Buddha Amitābha in an attempt to realize the Nien-fo san-mei (the Buddha-anusmrti-samādhi), a samādhi based primarily on the above-mentioned *P'an-shou san-mei ching.* If a devotee was able to see the form of the Buddha, this was a guarantee that he would eventually be reborn in the Pure Land. It is this meditational emphasis that came to be normative in Chinese Buddhism and, until the Kamakura period in Japan, that form of the Pure Land teachings which was stressed in Japanese Tendai.

From the period of the Liu-Sung Dynasty onward, the Pure Land faith spread widely throughout China: lectures on the *Wu-liang-shou ching* came to be frequently offered, and many images of the Buddha Amitābha were constructed. Bodhiruci translated Vasubandhu's *Amitāyus sūtra Upadeśa*

in the reign of the Emperor Hsuan-wu of the Northern Wei Dynasty. Soon thereafter, T'an-luan composed a commentary on it, and in this commentary adopted the theory of the division of the Buddhadharma into an easy path and a difficult path (first taught in the *Daśabhūmi-vibhāṣa).* T'an-luan also stressed the power of Amitābha's fundamental or original vows (the so-called "other-power"), a teaching which came to be stressed by subsequent writers in the "exclusivist" tradition of Pure Land thought. In northern China, in the area of Ping-chou, many followers of the Pure Land doctrines are likewise recorded.

Serious textual studies of the various Pure Land scriptures began in the Chou and Sui Dynasties, and this period also saw the composition of many commentaries on both the *Wu-liang-shou ching* and the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching* by such famous monks of other Buddhist traditions as Ching-ying Hui-yuan, Ling-yu, Chi-tsang, and Fa-ch'ang. Other masters composed works or essays on various problems of Pure Land teachings, masters such as Chih-i (the founder of the T'ien-t'ai Tradition), Tai-chi, Chih-yen (of the Hua-yen Tradition), and Chia-ts'ai, works in which the precise nature of the Buddha's body *(kāya)* and the nature of his Pure Land were discussed. At this time, too, the *Tī-lun* (the *Daśabhūmi-vyākhyā*) was a popular object of study, and many scholar-monks whose primary orientation was this text appear to have been deeply interested in Pure Land doctrines, and to have counted themselves as Pure Land followers.

There also developed an early Yogācāra Tradition centered around the study of the *She-lun* (Asaṅga's *Mahāyāna-saṁgraha*), and a number of masters from this tradition came to hold views that the Pure Land teaching of the *Kuan Wu-liang shou ching* that ordinary persons *(pṛthagjana)* could attain rebirth was a teaching "whose purport lay in a specific period of time" *(pieh-shih-i).* That is, the basic teachings of the Pure Land scriptures were an expedient teaching, designed to lead the simple to faith in the Buddha and to further development of their religious consciousness, which would lead them to Yogācāra philosophy or, in any case, out of purely Pure Land teachings. Because of the sophistication of this Yogācāra teaching, and because this school of thought placed the Pure Land teachings in a subservient, but still meaningful, relationship to the rest of Buddhism, the Pure Land movement underwent an intellectual decline for a number of decades.

In the T'ang Dynasty the Pure Land movement saw the appearance of the monks Tao-ch'o and Shan-tao. Both of these men became the inheritors of the tradition of T'an-luan, and in their writings stressed the power of the fundamental vows of Amitābha. These men were also the first to introduce the concept of *mo-fa* (Japanese: *mappō*) into Chinese Pure Land thought. The theory of *mo-fa* divides Buddhist religious history into two, or three, periods: the first period is that of the True Dharma, the second period is that of the Counterfeit Dharma, and these two are then followed by the period that sees the total Extinction *(mo)* of the Dharma *(fa).* In their writings they taught that the Pure Land teachings were the teachings specifically designed by the Buddha to fit these historical conditions. Shan-tao most especially spelled out the Pure Land doctrines in the mold originally set by T'an-luan and Tao-ch'o, and his exegesis, presented in his commentary on the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching* (his *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching Shu*), set a standard that was widely read and followed by many subsequent generations of Chinese Pure Land thinkers. In this work, Shan-tao refuted the theories of a number of other masters, and laid a firm foundation for subsequent Pure Land thought. In Japan, Shan-tao and his *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching Shu* became very popular, due to the emphasis placed on them by Hōnen and by Hōnen's disciples. To the Japanese, Shan-tao came to be by far the single most important Chinese Pure Land writer.

Contemporary with Shan-tao were such masters as Chih-shou, Ching-mai, Hui-ching, Yuan-ts'e, Tao-hui, Tao-yin, and Huai-kan, all of whom were active in the capital city of Ch'ang-an. Each of these masters wrote commentaries on the *O-mi-t'o ching* and the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching.* Also quite important were the Korean scholar-monks of Silla, the masters Chajang, Wŏnhyŏ, Ŭisang, Bŏpwi, Hyŏn'il, Kyŏnghŭng, Ŭijŏk, Taehyŏn, and Dunryun. Each of these masters wrote commentaries, or carried out studies in the various Pure Land scriptures. It was clearly at this period—the early years of the T'ang Dynasty—that Pure Land studies reached a high watermark in the Far East, due in large measure to the influence of the flourishing state of Buddhist studies in general.

The monk Hui-jih returned to China from his sojourn in India during the K'ai-yuan period (713-741) of the T'ang Dynasty, and at roughly this same time the emerging Ch'an school began an attack on the Pure Land teachings. They taught that the Pure Land teachings were fit only for the ignorant, for they were an *upāya,* or expedient teaching, designed to lead ignorant persons to something higher, and were ultimately "a lie and a delusion." This attack generated a furious counterattack from the ranks of the Pure Land followers, which led to the gradual formation of a separate sect of Pure Land teachings within China. Pure Land scholars became self-conscious of their tradition in the ensuing debate with the Ch'an school. The Pure Land polemic was continued by such monks as Ch'eng-yuan, Fa-chao, and Fei-hsi, who held theories which appeared to reconcile Ch'an with Pure Land thought. These masters held that the Nien-fo san-mei constituted an unsurpassed, most profound and marvelous meditation teaching *(ch'an-men)* but, in general, Pure Land masters heaped much abuse in their writings upon the heads of the followers of the Ch'an Tradition. Within the Ch'an ranks, too, there appeared monks who appear to have reconciled these two traditions.

The monk Hsuan-shih, a disciple of the Fifth Patriarch of the Ch'an Tradition, proclaimed the existence of a new tradition, the Nan-shan Nien-fo-men Ch'an-tsung, "the South Mountain Meditation Tradition of the Nien-fo Teachings." One of the disciples of the Sixth Ch'an Patriarch, Hui-neng, one Nan-yang Hui-chung, also taught the simultaneous cultivation of "practice and understanding," practice being understood as Nien-fo recitation, and understanding being the insight gained through Ch'an.

A second-generation disciple of the Ch'an master Fa-yen, Yung-ming Yen-shou, taught the principle of the mutual perfection of the truth of emptiness (in Ch'an), and of existence (in the Pure Land teaching). He taught that only an understanding of these two could bring about awakening. These masters, coming largely out of Ch'an ranks but also having their counterparts within the ranks of Pure Land masters, were instrumental in teaching widely the necessity of the dual cultivation of both meditation (Ch'an) and the recitation of the Name of Amitābha (Pure Land practice). Eventually, this tradition of joint cultivation came to assume the proportions of a separate sectarian trend within the Far Eastern Mahāyāna.

The Sung Dynasty saw the appearance of a number of monks who were known for their cultivation of the Pure Land teachings, such monks as T'ien-i I-huai, Hui-lin Tsung-pen, Ku-su Shou-na, Ch'ang-lu Tsung-i, Huang-lang Ssu-hsin, and Chen-ko Ch'ing-liao. This period also saw, for the first time, the appearance of laymen who became renowned for their joint cultivation of Pure Land and Ch'an practices, laymen such as Yang Chieh, Wang Ku, Chiang-kung Wang, Wang Chen, and Wang Jih-hsiu. The fame of these laymen strengthened this tendency towards joint Ch'an-Pure Land cultivation.

The T'ien-t'ai Tradition also produced a number of believers in Pure Land teachings, as well as a number of scholarly monks who worked in exegesis, among whom were the Sung Dynasty monks Hsing-ching, Ch'eng-yü, I-t'ung, Yuan-ch'ing, Wen-pi, Tsun-shih, Chih-li, Chih-yuan, Jen-yueh, Ts'ung-i, Ts'e-ying, and Tsung-hsiao. All of these masters either composed commentaries on the *Kuan Wu liang shou ching* and/or the *O-mi-t'o ching*, or wrote works explaining various aspects of the Pure Land teachings. Chih-li's *Kuan-ching Shu Miao-tsung ch'ao* is the most famous of these works, and its salient doctrinal feature, the teaching of visualizing the Buddha Amitābha with respect to one's own mind, came to be emphasized within T'ien-t'ai circles, contributing much to the development of a doctrinal basis for the joint cultivation of Ch'an and Pure Land practices, and also contributing to the fusion of Ch'an and Pure Land theories within Chinese Buddhism as a whole.

Shortly thereafter, there appeared the monk Yuan-chao of Yü-k'ang, who was noted for his studies and writings on the Vinaya Tradition or Lü-tsung. Later in his life he devoted himself to propagating the Pure Land teachings. He composed a commentary on the *Kuan Wu-liang-shou ching*, and in his own way set up a variant lineage and school within the broader Pure Land Tradition. His disciples, Yung-ch'in and Chieh-tu, also wrote commentaries, and contributed to popularizing the philosophical views of their master. During the Southern Sung Dynasty, the Japanese monk Shunjō introduced the writings of Yuan-chao to Japan where, however, their circulation was initially limited. All of the above events contributed to the development of Pure Land thought in the Sung Dynasty.

At this same time, Chinese Buddhism also saw the rise of Pure Land lay societies *(chieh-she)*, or lay organizations established to promote Pure Land belief and practice among their members. Such groups became especially strong in South China, and the names of the major leaders of such groups are known to us; indeed, a large number of the most renowned scholar-monks of their day organized such groups, masters such as Hsing-ch'ang, Tsun-shih, Chih-li, Pen-ju, Ling-chao, Tsung-i, and Tao-shen. All of these masters organized laymen and clerics into societies for the purpose of cultivating Nien-fo practices. In almost all of these cases, the organizers considered themselves to be reviving the tradition of Hui-yuan's White Lotus Society on Mt. Lu, and also looked to the precedents of such societies in the life of Shan-tao and Fa-chao, who were also reputed to have formed such organizations.

At the beginning of the Southern Sung Dynasty, the master Tz'u-chao Tzu-yuan founded an organization now actually termed the White Lotus Tradition *(Pai-lien tsung)*. In its teachings and organization, the traditions to which this group hearkened back were written down by the monk P'u-tu of the same Mt. Lu in a major compendium of this sect's teachings, the *Lien-tsung pao-chien*. In this work we find large amounts of popular superstition and degenerate customs mixed with Buddhist doctrines. The work was banned on several occasions but, after each banning, the resentment of the masses became enflamed, leading to popular rebellions and local uprisings. The sect was often termed, in official documents, the *Pai-lien-chiao fei*, the White Lotus Teaching Rebels.

With the founding of the Yuan Dynasty, the tendency toward the joint cultivation of Ch'an and Pure Land became even more pronounced. Several renowned Ch'an masters became noted for their devotion to the Pure Land faith: such masters as Chung-feng Ming-pen, T'ien-ju Wei-ts'e, Ch'u-shih Fan-ch'i, and Tuan-yün Chih-ch'e. Within the T'ien-t'ai Tradition, a number of well-known monks wrote works in praise of the Pure Land teachings, such as Chan-t'ang Hsing-ch'eng, Yü-k'ang Meng-jun, Yin-chiang Miao-hsieh, and Yün-wo Shan-chu.

The Ming Dynasty (1368-1627) was a period characterized by large numbers of monks who taught the practice of the joint cultivation of Ch'an and the Pure Land teachings. Among such masters were Ch'u-shan Shao-ch'i, K'ung-ku Ching-lung, Ku-yin Ching-chin, I-yuan Tsung-pen, Yün-chi Chu-hung, Tz'u-po Chen-k'o, Han-shan Teh-ch'ing, Po-shan Yuan-lai, Chan-jan Yuan-ch'eng, Ku-shan Yuan-hsien, and Wei-hsiang Tao-p'ei. The most eminent of these was the master Chu-hung. During the Lung-ch'ing period (1567-1572), he went into retreat at an auspicious site in the Yun-chi Mountains in the area of Hang-chou, and there he cultivated the Nien-fo san-mei. He composed a commentary on the *O-mi-t'o ching*, and several works extolling the joint cultivation of Ch'an and Pure Land teachings. His influence spread widely and gradually influenced all of Chinese Buddhism.

At this time, the T'ien-t'ai Tradition also produced some eminent scholar-monks who wrote books elucidating Pure Land teachings from the standpoint of T'ien-t'ai thought. Among such masters were Wu-ai P'u-chih, Yen-ching

(continued on page 13)

passed away. The Benevolent Society still continues its functions and manages the cemetery to this day.

As the above has indicated, it is clear now that in those days when the social security system and social welfare were not yet organized, the Buddhist temples were not facilities solely for religious rituals and activities. They had grown along with the growth of the Japanese community as effectual centers of social welfare and provided tranquility and peace of mind to the pioneering immigrants from Japan. Moreover, even after the members of the Japanese community changed from immigrants to Japanese-Americans, the Buddhist temples still remained as the center of communication for them, providing the ideal setting for getting together and exchanging ideas, and above all, serving as the place to hear and practice the Buddha-Dharma, and thus achieving community solidarity.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Nishimoto, Sosuke, "San Jose Buddhist Church and Rev. Jyoen Ashikaga," in Hojyo Ejitzu Kanreki Kinen Bunshū,* Hikari wo kiku, *1971. Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, p. 117.*

2. *Number of listed names represents the heads of families. Therefore, these 298 names represent 298 families. Also, this list does not include* nisei *families. Horinouchi, Isao,* Americanized Buddhism: A Sociological Analysis of a Protestantized Japanese Religion, *Ph.D. Dissertation at U.C. Davis, 1973, p. 407.*

DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE PURE LAND BUDDHISM

(Part I)

(continued from page 9)

Tao-yen, Chü-an Ta-yu, Yuan-hsi Ch'uan-teng, Ling-yueh Chih-hsü, and Ku-hsi Ch'eng-shih. The most eminent of these was the master Chih-hsü, who advocated the theory that "the Three Learnings have One [Common] Origin," and who also stressed the necessity of upholding all three traditions—Ch'an, Pure Land, and Vinaya—as an exclusive reliance on any one of them would lead to the decay of Buddhism as a whole. Nevertheless, Chih-hsü believed that the most essential of these Three Learnings was the Pure Land Tradition. Contemporary with these masters were the laymen Yuan Hung-tao and Chuang Kuang-huan, who also composed works extolling the Pure Land teachings.

During the Ch'ing Dynasty (1616-1911), the Pure Land teachings came to be advocated by an ever larger number of laymen. Active during the K'ang-hsi period were the laymen Chou K'o-fu, Yü Hsing-min, and Chou Meng-yen, who all wrote works encouraging the practice of Pure Land devotions. During the Ch'ien-lung period (1736-1795), the laymen P'eng Chao-sheng and P'eng Hsi-su compiled biographies of persons who had attained rebirth in Sukhāvāti. P'eng Chao-sheng composed an especially large number of works praising Pure Land teachings, and worked for the wider dissemination of these doctrines.

Toward the end of the K'ang-hsi period (1662-1722), the monk Shih-hsien Ssu-ch'i, emulating the work of Chu-hung, organized a Pure Land society *(lien-she)* in Hang-chou. The influence of this society spread widely, and Ssu-ch'i came to be called "Yen-shou come again" *(Yung-ming tsai-lai),* and became the object of much popular affection and veneration. This period also saw the activities of the monks Hsing-ts'e, Hsü-fa, Ming-heng, Ming-teh, Ch'i-neng, Fo-an, Shih-ch'eng, and Chi-hsing. These monks were active in the K'ang-hsi and Ch'ien-lung periods in their cultivation of the Pure Land teachings. At a slightly later period the monks Shui-chang and Hu-t'ing continued the compilation of biographies of persons who had attained rebirth in the Pure Land. At a slightly later date, the monks Ta-mo and Wu-k'ai, and the laymen Chang Shih-ch'eng and Chen i-Yuan, wrote works extolling Pure Land practices.

From the time of the Sung Dynasty onward, Pure Land teachings especially flourished in southern China. But with the founding of the Ch'ing Dynasty, the capital of China was moved to the north to the city of Yen-ching (renamed Pei-ching, "the northern capital"; present-day Peking). At this court, the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet and Mongolia was especially honored, and so it happened that during this dynasty Pure Land doctrines and practices were largely limited to southern China. From the Ming Dynasty onward, Chinese Buddhism appears to have lost some of its vitality and much of its originality and creative genius, and this was evident too in the case of Pure Land literature. Much of the published Pure Land literature consisted of nothing more than excerpts from the writings and thoughts of the great masters of the past.

With the establishment of the Republic, Chinese Buddhism underwent a slight revival, but with the advent of the Second World War and the subsequent socialist revolution on the Chinese mainland, much Buddhist work came to a halt, to be only slightly revived in the last two decades on the island of Taiwan, in Hong Kong, and in certain Southeast Asian centers.