

Pure Land Buddhist View of *Duḥkha*¹

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ALTHOUGH THE SANSKRIT TERM *duḥkha* is generally considered the English equivalent of 'suffering', two major Sanskrit–English dictionaries, Monier and Apte, do not include 'suffering' in their definitions.² Apte gives 'sorrow', 'grief', 'unhappiness', 'distress', 'pain', 'agony', 'trouble', and 'difficulty', and Monier 'uneasiness', 'pain', 'sorrow', 'trouble', and 'difficulty'.³ This exclusion of 'suffering' (παθημα)⁴ is not to be lightly dismissed, for surely it is deliberate, intending to avoid the strong Christian implications of 'suffering'. A comparison of the two notions, Buddhist and Christian, is beyond the scope of this paper, although I hope the essential difference—particularly in terms of the *cause* of *duḥkha* rather than in terms of the religious experience of *duḥkha*—will become clear through this discussion. I feel that 'suffering' as an equivalent for *duḥkha* is omitted not only because it is misleading, but further because of a great divergence between Christianity and Buddhism in their approaches to the reality of this world. Therefore, I shall try to use the Sanskrit term *duḥkha* as often as I can, although it may be something of an obstacle for the reader who is unfamiliar with Sanskrit, and 'pain' or 'distress' will only be adopted as the English equivalent out of necessity.

In the general context of Hindi *duḥkha* simply means 'to have hardship in doing' or 'difficult to do', being used as an indeclinable.⁵ Its basic connotation is the agony and distress caused by a situation which goes counter to one's own wishes and desires, hence, more precisely, *duḥkha* indicates the 'unsatisfactory' feeling that results from confrontation with the gulf between one's wishes and desires on the one hand and the real facts on the other. This root meaning of *duḥkha* underlies various usages of the term in different schools of Indian thought, including Buddhism.

This paper is constituted of four sections. Section One surveys the Buddhist realization of *duḥkha*. It shows how *duḥkha* has come to be taken as the intrinsic mode of human existence. Section Two treats the scriptural teaching of *duḥkha* expounded in the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra*, which provides the foundational witness for the whole structure of Pure Land Buddhist salvation. In this section I will argue that, rather than the general

Buddhist mode of Gautama's teachings, which aims at the attainment of enlightenment through 'self-power', it is the Buddhist mode of the teaching of Amida, which leads us to enlightenment through Amida's vow-power, namely, 'other-power', that has fathomed the depth of human *duḥkha* and carried the Buddhist doctrine of *duḥkha* to its ultimate development. Section Three focuses upon the bodhisattva's compassionate practice of vicarious *duḥkha*, which is the ground upon which Amida's salvation of all sentient beings is made possible. The concluding section clarifies the Pure Land Buddhist way to emancipation from *duḥkha*. I will argue here that it is the only way possible for *all* sentient beings to be able to attain *nirvāṇa*, the goal of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

I. DUḤKHA AS THE MODE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

Ordinarily our sense experience can be either pleasant or painful, or they can be neither. But Buddhism considers all ordinary experiences as being ultimately distressing; whatever may be felt, either internally or externally, must be realized as entailing *duḥkha*. This Buddhist awareness of *duḥkha* even behind the pleasure felt in daily life reflects the Buddhist refusal to limit the reality of *duḥkha* merely to the domain of the senses and emotions. *Duḥkha* is more deep-rooted.

Buddhism analyses *duḥkha* into three or eight qualities to show the truth that everything is *duḥkha*. The three forms of *duḥkha* are 'painful sensation caused by bodily pain', 'pain having its origin in the *saṃskāras* which are impermanent', and 'pain caused by perishing'.⁶ Based upon these three forms of pain, Vasubandhu maintains in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* that all outflowing existents are pain.⁷ His reasoning is that all outflowing existents, pleasant, unpleasant, and neither pleasant nor unpleasant, are characterized by *duḥkha* because they are tied to one of the three forms of pain. Namely, pleasant flux is bound with 'pain caused by perishing', unpleasant flux with 'painful sensation caused by bodily pain', and flux that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant with 'pain having its origin in the *saṃskāras*, which are impermanent'. Here the point to be noted lies in the first and the third propositions, which form the foundation for the universal nature of *duḥkha*. What is common to these propositions is the fact that *duḥkha* is rooted in that which is *anitya*, or impermanent and incessantly flowing. According to Vasubandhu, even pleasantly felt existents turn out to be painful when they are perishing; they are experienced as pleasant only when they come into being and as long as they are enduring. Flux that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant is by nature painful insofar as the *saṃskāras* constituting the flux are impermanent. In the end, the Buddhist doctrine that all outflowing existents are *duḥkha* is based on the factual reality that nothing remains imperishable.

It must be noted, however, that an outflowing existent in itself has nothing of pain; it is entirely transcendent of pain or non-pain; it is flowing just as it is.⁸ *Duḥkha* is the result of human conception, which grasps everything as permanent and immutable. It originates from the unconscious intent of appropriating whatever is perceived as one's own, which is the essence of human conception. This intrinsic mode of 'possessiveness' in the function of human conception is what Buddhists mean by 'attachment', for the act of conceiving is the act of holding what is owned to endure everlastingly. 'Possessiveness' is essential to ordinary conception in the sense that whatever is conceived is possessed as the conceiver's own. Hence, human conception is inherently blind to the perishing reality, including the human conception itself, and thus is illusive. This blindness, termed *avidyā* (unenlightenment), engenders attachment. The whole of ordinary human conception is so naturally bound up with this *avidyā* that one is disposed to conceive everything he perceives as fixed, enduring substances to which he feels attachment. This blind attachment of 'possessiveness' is the root of *duḥkha*.

Another well-known theory of *duḥkha* is concerned with eight forms of pain; birth, aging, disease, death, the pain of meeting people in hatred and hostility, of parting from loved ones, of the impossibility of acquiring what one desires, and that arising from the five aggregates constituting a human being. The eighth notion of pain is that the five aggregates are considered as the essential cause of the others. The five aggregates, which constitute the essential pain, are none other than the factors of attachment. The five are (a) 'material qualities' (*rūpa*), (b) 'sensation' (*vedanā*), (c) 'perception' (*saṃjñā*), (d) 'complexes of consciousness' (*saṃskāras*), and (e) 'soul' (*vijñāna*).⁹ It is repeatedly enunciated in scriptures of primitive Buddhism that these five aggregates are severally and collectively impermanent and non-substantial, as there is no *ātman* in them; that which is impermanent is *duḥkha*; that which is *duḥkha* is non-*ātman*; non-*ātman* is not mine; this is not I; this is not *ātman*; this truth must be precisely observed with true wisdom.¹⁰ In those scriptures it is quite likely that 'impermanence', '*duḥkha*', and 'non-*ātman*' are considered synonymous. The root cause of *duḥkha* is seen in relation to the impermanent nature of reality. It is precisely because each constituent is in itself impermanent that a human being, a provisional unity of five aggregates, is distressed by *duḥkha*. It must be kept in mind, however, that no impermanent nature of reality as such can be characterized as the nature of *duḥkha*. Whether the constituents turn out to be the cause of *duḥkha* is not due to their own impermanence but to the attachment that a human being falls into through them. Here we can recognize that the Buddhist doctrine of regarding the five aggregates as *duḥkha* reveals the view that the existential mode of human life is *duḥkha*.

II. THE CONCEPT OF *DUḤKHA* IN THE *LARGER SUKHĀVATĪVYŪHA SŪTRA*

The *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra*, the central scripture in the Pure Land tradition, which is said to be compiled around in the first or second century C.E., gives testimony to the reality of Amida's salvation as the reason for Gautama's appearance in this world. Shinran, the exponent of the latest evolution of Pure Land Buddhism, *Jōdo Shinshū*, states:

The central purport of this sutra is that Amida, by establishing his Vow, has opened wide the storehouse of the dharma, and full of compassion for foolish, small beings, he selects and bestows his treasure of virtues. Further, the sutra reveals that Gautama appeared in this world and illuminated the teaching of the Buddha-way to save the multitudes of living beings, that is, to bless them with the benefit that is true and real. Thus, to teach the Tathagata's Primal Vow is the true intent of this sutra; the Buddha's Name is its core.¹¹

Shinran's words focus on the object of Amida's salvation and the disclosing of the dharma. It is for 'foolish, small beings', the 'multitudes of living beings', that Amida has revealed the storehouse of the dharma through his Vow and Name. The *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* is solely for the sake of people who are existentially aware of the 'foolishness' rooted in their defilement and evil passions, which leads them to ceaseless transmigration and thus causes their *duḥkha*. Whoever lacks awareness of the depth of 'foolishness' in human existence cannot grasp and rejoice in the true purport of Amida's compassion.

While the awareness of 'foolishness' must be called a kind of 'religious' realization, what Shinran means by 'foolishness' itself is most deeply embedded in lay life. He defines 'foolish being' as:

full of ignorance and blind passion, in which desires are countless, and anger, wrath, jealousy, and envy are overwhelming, arising without pause; to the very last moment of life they do not cease, or disappear, or exhaust themselves.¹²

Shinran is aware that such a 'foolish being' is none other than ourselves.

The *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* shows the 'foolishness' ingrained in the depth of our existence in this defiled world as the cause of *duḥkha*. It sets forth three fundamental "poisons" of our everyday life that ceaselessly cause *duḥkha*: greed, anger, and ignorance.

Regarding the pain caused by greed, the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* states:

However, people are shallow and strive for non-urgent things; in the midst of severe evil and pain, they perform tasks to support themselves; whether noble or humble, rich or poor, young or old, man or woman, they worry about wealth. Whether they have or have not, their worries are the same; wandering in sorrow and pain, accumulating various worries, and driven by their own minds, they find no peace.¹³

The *Sūtra* sees the cause of pain not only in deprivation but also in the state of possessing, however much one may have. Greed is so boundless and bottomless that worries continually press one and apprehensive thoughts follow one after another until the final moment of death. The *Sūtra* teaches:

Living thus, they wear themselves out and ruin their lives; they never try to do good, practice the way or strive for virtue. When they perish, alone they must go far away. Although there is a destination, no one knows if the path leads to good or evil.¹⁴

Two ways of emancipation from the pain caused by greed can be considered; one is an endless effort to seek some means to satisfy one's greed, and the other is a decision to keep oneself completely aloof from greed and to own nothing whatsoever. The latter is a traditional Buddhist way. The former is incongruous with the actual life of this world, where greed can never be quenched. The latter also, however, seems impracticable for most people, for can a layperson really seclude himself or herself from the unfathomable, insatiable avarice that has dominated his or her existence since the beginningless past? Certainly one can understand *intellectually* that pain will vanish if greed can be cast off, but for laymen greed is so firmly ingrained in their existence that its eradication would make life itself impossible. This deep reflection is characteristic of the Pure Land view of a human being.

It is also to be noted here that Pure Land Buddhism is the only path by which laymen, or 'foolish' people, can awaken to Buddhahood. This places it in sharp antithesis to Zen Buddhism and other schools relying on 'self-power'. Shinran grieves over his unquenchable greed, confessing that "the universal Vow difficult to fathom is indeed a great vessel bearing all across the ocean difficult to cross."¹⁵ The 'ocean difficult to cross' is the world in which laymen carry on their lives.

Then, what will be the next step such laymen can take after realizing the impossibility of completely keeping aloof from greed? To them the *Larger*

Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra gives the following words:

People of the world! Parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, family members and relatives, all should respect and love one another, and never hate or be jealous. The rich as well as the poor should never be stingy or greedy. Be gentle in speech and manner, and never contrary to one another.¹⁶

Harmony is a way by which for lay people can moderate the pain of anxiety, which afflicts both those that have and those that do not. The recognition of this sameness in the nature of pain is the basis for making possible the harmonizing between people, affluent or destitute. Indeed, one must "help each other by providing what one person lacks with what another has." But laymen will soon become aware that their endeavor to harmonize is restrained by obdurate anger. Hence, Gautama's message follows:

When beings quarrel and harbor anger in their minds, even slight dislike or jealousy from resentment will magnify and become a greater grudge. Why? Because even if mutual insults are not serious at present, poison and anger accumulate, and indignation is carved naturally and unforgettably in the mind; subsequently beings become opposed to and retaliate against one another.¹⁷

Amplification and accumulation characterize the nature of anger. The reason for such ceaseless intensification is the fact that things in this world inflict pain one after another without end. Even a matter of little significance for oneself may grow and cause serious pain for others, which is so pernicious as to engrave itself deep in their subconsciousness. The pain caused by anger is agony concerned with human relationships. Behind hatred and anger there is deep-rooted affectionate attachment. Pain is caused by the tension between hatred and affection, anger and attachment. The *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* exposition of desolation experienced as threatened attachment is impressive:

In the midst of attachment and desire, beings are born alone, die alone, come alone and go alone; when they depart, they go to a realm of either pain or pleasure; they themselves go, and no one can go for them.¹⁸

Our experience of solitariness in our birth and death arises because of subliminal attachment of affection. Painful desolation is caused by the chasm between detachment in actual reality and attachment in human conception.

The *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* urges people to become aware of such dreadful desolation:

Why do you not abandon worldly matters, make every effort to practice good and solely aspire to transcend the world while you are still strong and healthy? You will thereby gain infinite life. Why not seek the way? Why delay? What other pleasure do you want?¹⁹

However, 'foolish' people in fact do not know, as the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* discloses, that "good is gained through doing it, and the way through treading it"; they do not believe in "rebirth" and that "happiness is gained through sharing"; they do not believe "anything concerning good and evil"; thus "they affirm nothing and also take pride in such views."²⁰ This 'ignorance' of 'foolish' people is thus the third message following in the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra*, which regards it as a cause of *duḥkha* in this world.

This message teaches three forms of ignorance that compel 'foolish' people to descend into the dark of transmigration. First is failure to realize that "good is gained through doing it, and the way through treading it," which is ignorance of the law of causality in which cause and effect are identical by nature.

Second is failure to realize that "rebirth," which is ignorance of our existence before and after our present life. Our life must take into account all that has occurred before birth and all that will result after death; its meaning cannot be known only by the span of ranging from birth to death in this world.

Third is failure to realize that "happiness is gained through sharing," which points to the ignorance of the law of causality in which a cause is progressively transformed into an effect. The state of happiness is not identical with the act of sharing, but the latter actually brings about the former. Everything in the past causally proceeds to become happenings in the present, characterized by pleasure or pain and creating further pleasure or pain in the future.

Common to these three forms of ignorance is the lack of recognition that everything is causally inter-related. We should not overlook, however, that causality here is by no means logical or abstract causality, but rather is temporal or actual causality. The acknowledgement of this causal reality in its temporal sense sharply distinguishes the whole structure of Pure Land thought from those of the other traditions, especially Zen; Pure Land tradition is religiously aware of the necessity of considering such notions as historical reality, historicity of human existence, historical perspective of degenerating dharma, and so on. Without this discernment of history, secular or salvific, Pure Land Buddhism loses its foundation, which pro-

vides 'foolish' people with the certitude of attaining birth in the Pure Land for the sake of them.²¹

The *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* reveals that these three forms of ignorance are not confined to one person, but are handed down from generation to generation; they endure throughout the history of human beings. This idea of transference is not a mere fatalism, but rather shows the precariousness of everyday human life, which is destined to fall into delusion and attachment.

Further, on the basis of the second form of ignorance, the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* defines the reverse of one's place in the scale of being as the reason for our painful experience of the impermanence of our life. When life proceeds in ordinarily expected order, the older person is expected to die first; this is our judgment based on a standard span ranging from birth to death. Our actual experience, however, is often different. Pain arises from the gulf between the fact of reality and the expectations we cherish in our attachment to life. A direct cause of pain is not the impermanence of life in itself, but our expectation, which is blind to the contingency of life.

In conclusion, according to the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra*, the fundamental cause of pain is 'ignorance' (*avidyā*), the blindness to the causal reality of the whole universe, in which our appearance is but a small part. The main concern of the *Sūtra*, however, is not with a metaphysical analysis of causal reality (although metaphysical speculation is required for a task of constructing its coherent, philosophical scheme), but rather with an endeavor to guide 'foolish' people to the awareness of causal reality by demanding their sentive reflection upon the distress and agony they confront in daily life. Pure Land Buddhism is indeed the Way for the sake of such 'foolish' lay people.

III. BODHISATTVA'S COMPASSIONATE PRACTICE OF VICARIOUS *DUḤKHA*

The Mahāyāna Buddhist movement adopted the concept of the 'bodhisattva' as the center of its doctrines, focusing especially on the practice of vicarious *duḥkha* for the sake of 'benefiting others'. For all Mahāyāna Buddhists of whatever sects or schools, there is no genuine enlightenment apart from fulfillment of 'self-benefit and benefiting others'. Benefit for oneself refers to the bodhisattva's own enlightenment, and benefiting others refers leading others to enlightenment; for the bodhisattva, the content of 'self-benefit' is in essence none other than 'benefiting others'. Since the bodhisattva represents the ideal mode of existence in Mahāyāna Buddhism, it is important to emphasize that the Mahāyāna notion of *nirvāṇa* is not fulfilled without benefiting unenlightened beings who

constitute the realm of *samsāra*. This Mahāyāna understanding of the reciprocal working of *nirvāṇa* and *samsāra* has been developed in Pure Land Buddhism into its unique doctrine that “*nirvāṇa* is attained without severing blind passions of *samsāra*.” It is this doctrine that Pure Land Buddhist salvation finds as its distinctive characteristic. The doctrine of salvation will come up for further discussion in the next section.

It is the essential nature of bodhisattvas to be concerned with whether others can assuredly attain *nirvāṇa*. Bodhisattvas vow, “If, when I attain Buddhahood, sentient beings throughout the ten quarters do not attain enlightenment, may I not attain the supreme enlightenment.” This deep concern of bodhisattvas for others is echoed in the doctrine of ‘six *pāramitās*’, which require firm resolution to lead people unflinchingly to enlightenment; particularly *dāna* (giving) and *kṣānti* (forbearance) hold this significance. Although the six *pāramitās* are related to several basic concepts of early Buddhism, Mahāyānists attach the greatest importance to these two *pāramitās*, which are understood as distinguishing bodhisattvas from inferior arhats and pratyekabuddhas, who pursue the ascetic ideals of a meditative monk.²² The early Mahāyānists considered the practices of giving and forbearance as of equal importance with the higher stages of concentration and wisdom. In fact, these practices are indispensable to the bodhisattva’s lofty aspiration for the enlightenment of lay people who are absorbed in worldly social life.

The bodhisattva’s aspiration for enlightenment naturally actualizes itself in *duḥkha* with others. According to Mahāyāna sutras, the bodhisattva’s *duḥkha* manifests the virtue of the great compassion that is inherent in his or her nature. This compassion arises from his or her infinite sensitivity in seeing the pain of all sentient beings as he or she does of his or her own children. Hence his or her devotional mind is characterized by a ‘great compassionate heart of one taste’. This spiritual insight into oneness with all living beings encourages him or her to remain in hell and to suffer therein with them and for their sake.

“He becomes sick when they are sick and is cured when they are cured.”²³ This is the reason for the sickness of Vimalakīrti, the great exponent in proclaiming the essence of Mahāyāna imagery of the bodhisattva. This paradoxical identity in which Buddhist compassion is rooted is none other than the practical mode of the ceaseless ‘de-substantializing’ dynamism (*śūnyatā*) that is itself true, universal reality. Such paradoxical identification of dichotomies can be fulfilled only through the realization that all actualities constituting the universe are co-dependent in origination. This notion, which negates a substantialistic view of reality, is therefore concerned with neither ‘being’ nor ‘non-being’;²⁴ the dichotomy is still tinged with substantialistic parlance.

The Mahāyāna bodhisattva’s compassion, manifesting itself as experiencing the pain of other beings, is nothing but his or her untiring actualiza-

tion of 'de-substantializing' dynamism of the universal reality. Apart from the bodhisattva's actualization as ingressing his or her will into the actual existence of each being, the 'de-substantializing' reality turns out to be so abstract that any sort of reference to it falls into delusive attachment to that reality itself, which is none other than its dogmatic substantialization. In this respect, our understanding of the bodhisattva's compassion must be in itself non-substantialistic, and, moreover, we should not consider the compassion as if there were anything more ultimate or real behind and in addition to that bodhisattva's compassionate actualization, which is itself 'de-substantializing'. Nothing can be added to or subtracted from that compassionate activity.

The non-substantialistic articulation of the bodhisattva's 'de-substantializing' activity, which is compassion, is after all a thoroughgoing endeavor to elucidate the dynamic character of that activity in the midst of the actual, temporal, and historical world of sentient beings. This dynamism of the bodhisattva's ceaseless 'de-substantializing' is embodied as the universal creativity of Dharmākara Bodhisattva's Primal Vow, whose fulfillment is Amida Buddha's untiring dynamism of saving all sentient beings. The uniqueness of Amida's compassion, which is the ultimate form of bodhisattva's vicarious *duḥkha*, will be discussed in some detail in the next section.

Finally, as a special mode of bodhisattva's vicarious *duḥkha*, a short reference must be made to the 'Icchantika Bodhisattva', who appears in the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*.²⁵ The *icchantikas*, who are considered the fifth order of beings in the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, are those who have forsaken all roots of merit. This class of beings has no aspiration at all for emancipation, and due to the lack of religious concern they abuse the right dharma of Buddhism. They are the most evil people, destined for hell, and can never attain enlightenment by any means.

What is here called 'Icchantika Bodhisattva', however, may be distinguished from the so-called *icchantikas* mentioned above. Although he belongs to the order of *icchantika*, he is a bodhisattva in the sense that "he vowed in the beginning of his religious career that until every one of his fellow-beings is led to enjoy the eternal happiness of *nirvāṇa* he himself would not leave this world of *duḥkha*, but must strenuously and with every possible means (*upāya*) work towards the completion of his mission."²⁶ Among his fellow-beings there are the *icchantikas* also, who can never reach *nirvāṇa*. Hence, as long as the *icchantikas* exist, the bodhisattva can never complete his activity of leading all beings to *nirvāṇa*; in this sense he also can never attain enlightenment. Nevertheless, "as for the bodhisattva, he never enters into *nirvāṇa*, for he has a deep insight into the nature of things, which are already in *nirvāṇa* even as they are."²⁷

The profound religious implications of this relationship between the *icchantikas* and the Icchantika Bodhisattva correspond remarkably to

Amida's untiring and universal compassion.²⁸ Shinran, in his awareness of himself as *icchantika* and of Amida's Vow resolutely 'grasping even the *icchantika* without forsaking' him, speaks of Amida as 'grasping those who seek to escape from Amida'.²⁹

The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, also well known for the doctrine of *icchantikas* and its treatment of the question of their buddha-nature, profoundly influenced Shinran's soteriology.³⁰ In this sutra the metaphor of an aching parental heart dying when it confronts the death of the child is used to evoke the heart of a bodhisattva: "Seeing an *icchantika* fall into hell, he himself desires to be born there, too."³¹

IV. PURE LAND EMANCIPATION FROM *DUḤKHA*.

Since the main object of this paper is to bring to light some of the implications of the Pure Land doctrine of *duḥkha*, the subject of this section leads us a bit afield. But, as I mentioned in the last section, deliverance from pain and *duḥkha* as taught in the Pure Land tradition reflects the core of the Mahāyāna view of *duḥkha*.

Three factors must be taken into account as presuppositions for dealing with Mahāyāna teachings of *duḥkha*. First, the *existential* mode of human beings is *duḥkha*; all beings without exception suffer pain; everything is *duḥkha*. Second, *all* beings attain enlightenment; no one is excluded from the possibility of entering into *nirvāṇa*. Third, all doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought must be philosophically penetrated by the perspective of 'de-substantializing' dynamism of reality (*śūnyatā*). Just as the very doctrine of *śūnyatā* must be in itself de-substantial, so the reality of *duḥkha* is not to be taken as something substantial; Nāgārjuna in fact argues that *duḥkha* is de-substantial.³²

My thesis is that these three factors are all present in their most radical form in the Pure Land soteriological process of emancipation from *duḥkha*. My understanding of the Pure Land view of emancipation is based upon Shinran's buddhology of Amida Buddha, which is of course a small but highly developed part of the whole body of different interpretations of Pure Land doctrines. In Shinran's view, the only path to emancipation from the universal *duḥkha* caused by the ignorance ingrained in the depth of all sentient beings, whether the wise of the Mahāyāna or the Theravāda, or the ignorant, good, or evil, is to attain *faith*. This *faith* is fulfilled by Amida's giving her virtue to them out of her pure Vow-mind. *Faith* is the right cause bringing all sentient beings to the great *nirvāṇa*.³³ Hence, the Pure Land view of emancipation from *duḥkha* focuses on the attainment of *faith* and on what takes place in sentient beings who realize that attainment.

The notion of *faith* is intricately analyzed and elaborated by Shinran. Throughout his writings his Pure Land doctrines center on Amida's

fulfillment of *faith* for the sake of all sentient beings. Since an exhaustive consideration of Shinran's analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, our discussion will focus only on the three factors mentioned above, viewing them as the key concepts that lay bare the meaning of the attainment of *faith*.

First of all, for Shinran *faith* is not a believing mind that arises through the self-power of sentient beings, but none other than Amida's own mind. Nothing of what we usually think of as our nature as human beings or of the self is to be found in the nature of *faith*. Since *faith* is the pure and true mind with which Amida established and fulfilled her Vow, all virtues, qualities, and powers that Amida has fulfilled by completing vigorous bodhisattva practices with untiring resolution are attributed to *faith*. Moreover, her fulfillment surpasses that of all other buddhas in that it embraces all their virtues, qualities, and powers. According to the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra*, after having searched into the causes of the pure lands of all buddhas and the qualities of those lands and of the beings and gods therein, Amida Buddha, in her causal stage as Bodhisattva Dharmākara, established the supreme, incomparable Vow by selecting the best cause of bringing all sentient beings to Buddhahood and qualities from among them, and she fulfilled it in such a way as to make it all-encompassing.

Therefore, Shinran sets forth the following twelve expressions clarifying the supreme qualities of *faith*, which he thus terms 'great faith'.

- a. The superlative means for attaining longevity and deathlessness.
- b. The wondrous way to awaken aspiration for the pure and rejection of the defiled.
- c. The straightforward mind of giving virtues in the selected Vow.
- d. The joyful faith of Amida's deep and vast concern to benefit others.
- e. True mind, diamond-like and indestructible.
- f. The pure faith that takes one easily to Amida's land, where no one can be born without faith.
- g. The single mind of grasping and protecting in Amida's spiritual light.
- h. Great faith, rare and unsurpassed.
- i. The short path difficult for the secular world to believe.
- j. The true cause of realizing great *nirvāṇa*.
- k. The white path of instantly fulfilling all virtues.
- l. The ocean-like faith of true suchness or one reality.³⁴

It is clear from these elucidations that the nature of *faith* is not Amida's mind separated from her concern about others, but her untiring commitment in ceaselessly giving her virtues to all sentient beings. Indeed, that indefatigable mindfulness of others is what makes Amida Amida; this boundless working of Amida's Vow to save all beings without excluding even a single one is the Pure Land mode of actualizing 'One Reality', which is 'de-substantial reality' (*śūnyatā*); hence Amida is none other than the *actualizing śūnyatā*. This form of the being of Amida, which may be more accurately termed 'formless form', characterizes the way in which Amida performs her activity of grasping all sentient beings and bringing them into her Pure Land, and further it characterizes the way in which 'great faith' exerts the decisive influence on their denied world rooted in 'ignorance'. This is concerned with the third of the aforementioned 'three factors' that the existential mode of human beings is *duḥkha*. We now come to discuss these factors in the hope that an observation of each can make clear the Pure Land emancipation from *duḥkha*.

In the light of the discussion of *faith*, it can be understood that Shinran's recognition that *faith* is the only way for all sentient beings to be saved by Amida is based upon his radical insight into the universal reality of *duḥkha*. The following quotation, which is just one of many similar passages, explicitly shows the radicalness of his deep reflection:

All the ocean-like multitudinous beings, from the beginningless past to this day and this moment, have been transmigrating in the sea of ignorance, drowning in the cycle of existences, bound to the cycle of *duḥkhas*, and having no pure, serene faith. They have, as a natural consequence, no true serene faith.³⁵

For all 'foolish' lay people thoughts of desire arise at all times constantly to defile any goodness of heart; the flames of anger and hatred in their minds consume the dharma-treasure. Even if they strive to the utmost with body and mind through the twelve periods of the day and night, and however importunate their actions and practices may be, as though sweeping fire away from their heads, they must all be called poisoned good acts, or transitory, and false practices. They cannot be called true, real, and sincere activities. Though they may direct the merit of such poisoned good toward entering into the Pure Land, it is of no avail.³⁶

The radicalness of Shinran's sensitivity lies in his total negation of every possible endeavor to attain Buddhahood by the *self-power* for all people, regardless of race, nationality, sex, ability, and social status, who have been fettered to the dark *duḥkha*-world of *samsāra*, having transmigrated since innumerable kalpas ago until this moment.

In Shinran's awareness we can see that the *Larger Sukhāvativyūha Sūtra* teaching in which the three root evil passions, 'desire, anger, and ignorance', are regarded as the fundamental causes of *duḥkha* is genuinely accepted. Shinran penetratingly discerns that ego which is so ingrained in the depth of human existence as to constantly poison good acts and destroy the treasure of dharma.

Shinran's judgment may seem but an arbitrary extension of his own personal awareness to all other people. His true intent, however, is to bring the very awareness of the depth of his own existence to its ultimate extremity. In the general Buddhist concept of cyclic transmigration, we can see a practical implication that, if there had been even a single person who was free from evil passion, Shinran would have been that person at a certain time in a certain world; this would mitigate his deep and thoroughgoing awareness of his sinful, foolish existence having been fettered to birth-and-death since innumerable kalpas ago. His absolute negation of any possible existence of such a person precisely discloses the deep-rootedness of human sinful and ignorant karma, which constantly brings about *duḥkha*.³⁷

This total negation necessarily leads Shinran to identification of himself as an *icchantika*. For Shinran the *icchantika* mode of existence is no longer one class of human beings among many, but has been taken as the universal existence, indicative of the intrinsic nature of all sentient beings. Here the question arises: How can such an *icchantika* that has entirely forsaken all roots of merit and thus withdrawn from emancipation be saved and enter into the great *nirvāṇa*? Here the notion of Buddha-nature must be introduced to answer the question, consisting of two elements, absolutely paradoxical to each other. But this theme is concerned with the third factor, which must follow our next discussion on the second factor dealing with the universality of salvation.

In surpassing all other buddhas and bodhisattvas, the uniqueness of Amida's Vow lies precisely in her patient and untiring aspiration for the emancipation of all sentient beings, particularly those who are completely deserted by other buddhas and bodhisattvas. For Shinran, such deserted people, called *icchantikas*, include all sentient beings. In the view of Shan-tao, father of Chinese Pure Land Buddhism, and Hōnen, who inherited his teaching in Japan—both of whose understandings were handed down to Shinran—ultimately only Amida's Vow can save the *icchantika* and emancipate all sentient beings from *duḥkha*.

Indeed, a multitude of practices have been expounded in the various Mahāyāna scriptures as the way to emancipation. Shan-tao classifies them into 'right practices' and 'sundry practices'. The former includes five types of practices—chanting, contemplation, worship, recitation, and praise—concentrated on Amida; the latter includes all practices not performed in focusing on Amida. Of the right practices, the recitation of Amida's Name

is singled out as that definitely selected in her Primal Vow as the true way to birth in the Pure Land, so that it is termed the 'true, definite practice', and the remaining four are labeled 'auxiliary practices'.³⁸

In order to disclose how the recitation of Amida's Name is in accord with the universality of Amida's true intent in the Vow, Hōnen shows some cases:

The recitation of Amida's Name, called *nembutsu*, is so easy that it is possible for *all* people; whereas, other practices are so difficult that they are not performed equally by all people. In order to lead *all* beings *equally* to be born in the Pure Land, Amida has made his Primal Vow by taking 'easy' and renouncing 'difficult'.

If sculpturing the images of buddhas and building pagodas had been chosen as the practice of the Primal Vow, the poverty-stricken people would have had to relinquish the hope of birth; in fact, the affluent are few and the destitute many. If sagacity and intelligence had been selected as the practice of the Primal Vow, the foolish and shallow would have had to relinquish the hope; in fact, the wise are few and the ignorant many. If a great amount of hearing and seeing had been required, those who hear and see less would have had no hope; in fact, those who hear much are few and those who hear little exceedingly many. If observance of precepts had been chosen as the practice of the Primal Vow, those who violate and those who are indifferent to them would have had their hopes cut off; in fact, those who observe precepts are few and those who violate them many.³⁹

Hōnen concludes that Amida, in her past as Dharmākara Bodhisattva, was so deeply moved by the compassion of equality that, for the purpose of universally grasping all sentient beings, she selected as the practice of the Primal Vow not such practices as sculpturing the images of buddhas and building pagodas and so on, but solely the single practice of *nembutsu*, the utterance of Amida's Name. Therefore, Amida's selection of that single practice is intended not to exclude anyone from her salvation, it is her activity of "grasping without forsaking any single being," originating from her absolute actualization of 'One Reality'.

Our next and final point concerns the structure of the Pure Land fulfillment of the *icchantika's* salvation; it will clarify the unique Pure Land Buddhist way of embodying the Mahāyāna philosophy of 'de-substantializing dynamic reality' (*śūnyatā*) in its unparalleled doctrine that "*nirvāṇa* can be attained without severing evil passion of *saṃsāra*."

According to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, the *icchantika* is defined as one who has entirely forsaken all roots of good from the beginningless past to this moment and hence in this respect is secluded from any possibility of entering into *nirvāṇa*. But at the same time the *Sūtra* states that there still

remains one path, which enables the *icchāntika* to attain Buddhahood, that is, by virtue of the 'Buddha-nature'. The concept of 'Buddha-nature' is therefore a key to the question of whether the *icchāntika* can become a buddha.

Two characteristics of Buddha-nature deserve our attention;⁴⁰ first, Buddha-nature transcends past, present, and future; and second, it will definitely reveal itself in the future. The former is often illustrated by the notion of 'space' or 'void'. This corresponds to the notion of *śūnyatā*. Therefore, 'Buddha-nature' is of the same efficacy as *śūnyatā* in the religious awakening of Pure Land Buddhists. The second characteristic of Buddha-nature provides a soteriological foundation for the basic Mahāyāna doctrine that all beings, including the *icchāntika*, have the Buddha-nature. It is the future that brings about the manifestation of Buddha-nature; moreover, it occurs with definite assurance. The future is frequently understood to be a realm that has yet to come into being and thus is unknown and ambiguous. With respect to Buddha-nature, however, the certainty of its future revelation indicates its everlasting potentiality for all beings at all times. In this sense, it transcends the temporal flux of transmigration, and yet it is always ingressing itself in such a way as to lead each being to *nirvāṇa*.

These two characteristics of Buddha-nature are remarkably embodied in Shinran's view of Pure Land salvation fulfilled by Amida's compassionate Vow *through faith alone*. For Shinran, Buddha-nature is *faith*.⁴¹ *Faith* is given by Amida to each being, and through this gift of *faith* the Buddha-nature ingresses itself into each being. *Faith* is Amida Buddha's mind, the eye of the Buddha, which can bring the depth of each being into light. The ingression of Buddha-nature into each being by virtue of Amida's gift of *faith* leads to twofold awareness: the awakening to the depth of evil passion ingrained in ignorance and the firm assurance of entering great *nirvāṇa*. This twofold awareness is reflected in Shinran's confession that the more awakened to evil passion one is, the more assured in the attainment of Buddhahood. This is precisely the awareness awakened in each being through the attainment of Amida's mind, which Shinran terms 'great faith'. This Pure Land awakening, which is itself the working of Amida's mind, is the realization that "*nirvāṇa* can be attained without severing evil passion of *saṃsāra*"; in fact, it is precisely in the midst of evil passion of *saṃsāra* that *nirvāṇa* is attained.⁴² In closing our discussion on the Pure Land view of *duḥkha*, the following three hymns composed by Shinran may be relevant:

Hindrance of evil becomes the substance of virtue.
 As with the example of ice and water:
 The greater the ice, the greater the water;
 The greater the hindrance, the greater the virtue.⁴³

The perfect, instantaneous 'One Vehicle' of the Primal Vow
Grasps the perverse and evil.
Be awakened to this, and immediately you will realize that
Evil passion and enlightenment are not two in essence.⁴⁴

Into the ocean of Amida's Wisdom-Vow
The rivers of *faith* in the Other Power have completely flowed,
Hence, evil passions have become one in taste with enlightenment
By virtue of the true recompensed land fulfilled by Amida.⁴⁵

NOTES

1. This article is a revised edition of Appendix I, "Pure Land Buddhist View of *Duḥkha*," in Ryūsei Takeda, *Shinran Jōdokyō to Nishida tetsugaku* (Shinran's Pure Land Buddhism and Nishida's Philosophy), (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1991), pp. 13–42. According to the author, "This article was originally read in the session of Theological Encounter on Suffering at the Second International Conference on East-West Religions in Encounter, 'Paradigm Shifts in Buddhism & Christianity: Cultural Systems and the Self,' January 3–11, 1984, Hawaii. The session was specially organized by Christian theologians and Buddhist thinkers. The Christian theologians who responded to my paper were Gordon Kaufman, Harvard University, and Seiichi Yagi, then of the Tokyo Institute of Technology. The original paper has been slightly revised for the present edition" (p. 13fn). Minor editorial changes and revisions have been made in the text and notes according to the journal's editorial guidelines with the permission of the author.
2. Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1899); and Vaman Shivram Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965).
3. Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 501; and Monier, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 483. Also Franklin Edgerton, in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, defines '*duḥkhata*' as "(state of) 'misery' and gives three kinds of misery referring to Mvy. 2228–31, SP 108.17f., and AbhidhK. LaV-P. vi.125ff.: 'state of misery qua misery' (what is grievous by its very nature, from the start, always painful), 'state of misery due to conditioning' (*saṃskāra*; acc. to Vism. 499.20f, this means particularly experience in itself not painful or pleasurable, but, because impermanent and so undependable, still a cause of misery), and 'state of misery due to alteration' (of what was pleasurable to begin with, but cannot last)" (Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, vol. 2: Dictionary [1953; reprint, Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1985], p. 265).
4. Nakamura Hajime makes the same inference in his article, "Ku no mondai" (The Problem of *duḥkha*), in *Ku: Bukkyō shisō*, vol. 5, edited by Bukkyō Shisō Kenkyūkai (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1980), p. 4. In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, an interpretation is given to Phil. 1:29 that "*παθεῖν* is not a privilege of the apostle or a select few but is of the very essence of Christianity as such. All the same, it is a privilege, a special grace which surpasses even the grace of being able to believe in Christ" (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by

Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich; translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley; abridged in one volume by Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985], p. 920). Also, in 2 Cor. 1; 5 Paul calls his suffering ‘Christ’s sufferings’ (παθηματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ).

5. Nakamura, “Ku no mondai,” p. 6.

6. Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature* (1932; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), p. 157.

7. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, edited by Prahlad Pradhan, in *The Abhidharmakośa of Vasubandhu with the Commentary* (Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1983), p. 328. See also *O-p’i-ta-mo-chu-she-lun*, vol. 22, in *Taishō*, vol.29, p. 114b.

8. To the best of my knowledge, a distinction between ontological and epistemological dimensions is seldom brought into a clear and self-conscious discussion, and one may hold that such a distinction itself is not of Indian character. Tamura Yoshirō raises the same question, pointing out that many references can be found in primitive Buddhist scriptures in which, on the one hand, outflowing and impermanent existents as such are regarded as painful and on the other hand attachment ingrained in ignorance is regarded as the cause of pain. While he leaves the problem open to further examination, he considers that an emphasis has been shifted from what he calls ‘existential reality’ to ‘delusive reality’ in the later phase of Mahāyāna Buddhist history in which one’s primary interest has been directed toward emancipation and salvation. His terminology of the two types of ‘reality’ corresponds respectively to mine of ‘ontological and epistemological dimensions.’ See, Tamura Yoshirō, “Daijuku: Bosatsu to ku” (Vicarious *duḥkha*: Bodhisattva and *duḥkha*), in *Ku: Bukkyō shisō*, vol. 5, pp. 327–328).

9. A number of renderings are presented by Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine*, p. 69 ff. I have selected those I find most suitable.

10. *Samyutta Nikāya*, PTS, III, pp. 42 and 45; *Taishō*, vol. 2, p. 2a.

11. Shinran, *Kyōgyōshinshō*, Chapter on Teaching, in *Shinshū shōgyō zensho* (hereinafter *SSZ*), vol. 2 (Kyoto: Ōyagi Kōbundō, 1941), pp. 2–3.

12. Shinran, *Ichinen tanen mon’i*, in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 618; *Notes on Once-calling and Many-calling*, Shin Buddhism Translation Series (Kyoto: Hongwanji International Center, 1980), p. 48.

13. *Wu-liang-shou ching*, in *Taishō*, vol.12, p. 274 b-c. Translated into English by Hiroshi Suzuki, *The Larger Sūtra* (unpublished manuscript).

14. Ibid.

15. Shinran, *Kyōgyōshinshō*, in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 1.

16. *Wu-liang-shou ching*, in *Taishō*, vol.12, p. 274c.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., p. 275 a.

20. Ibid.

21. My emphasis upon temporality, actuality, and historicity of co-dependently originating events of reality can be supported by Shinran's endeavor to show that the only way possible for all sentient beings aware of thoroughgoing 'foolishness' is 'to be able to attain *nirvāna* without severing evil passions of *samsāra*', which will be our thesis of the fourth section, and also treated to some extent in the third one.

22. *Dāna* and *kṣānti pāramitās*, which demand bodhisattvas' social concern and sensitivity, are, interestingly enough, absent from the thirty-seven *bodhipakṣyadharmas* (the comprehensive catalogue of a monk's duties), which are considered too monastic and antisocial in their scope and tendency from a Mahāyāna viewpoint. See, Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine*, p. 170.

23. *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, in *Taishō*, vol. 14, p. 544b. Translated into English by Robert A. F. Thurman, *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti: A Mahāyāna Scripture* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), p. 43.

24. D. T. Suzuki states: "By him [the possessor of 'wisdom-eye'] the world is perceived *yathābhūtam* stripped of all its logical predicates and also its so-called objective trappings; the world thus appearing in its nakedness has been designated empty (*śūnya*) by the Mahāyānists. It is in this sense, therefore, that it can be said there is nothing substantial in the world, nothing which has individuality (*ātman*), nothing which can be grasped; and that it slips through the hands, one predicate disappearing after another, so that it cannot be designated, as being (*sat*), nor by its opposite, not-being (*asat*)" (Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* [London: Routledge, 1930], P. 115).

25. *Ju-leng-ch'ieh-ching*, translated by Bodhiruci, ch. 3 (*Sarvadharma-samuccaya*), in *Taishō*, vol. 16, p. 527b.

26. D. T. Suzuki, *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 220.

27. Ibid. Suzuki cites the Sanskrit: "Bodhisattvecchantiko' tra mahāmate ādiparinirvṛitān sarvadharman viditvā'tyantato na parinirvāti."

28. In this connection, I propose that it is meaningful to recall what Paul designates the 'sufferings of Christ'. According to Rudolf Bultmann, "the 'sufferings of Christ' are neither sufferings *such as* Christ endured, nor are they simply sufferings endured for Christ's sake. Still less are they sufferings in 'imitation of Christ'." He goes on to say that "they are sufferings of

any kind, sufferings which may befall anyone, although they will come in special number upon the followers of Christ. But for the believer, because of his relation with Christ, they have gained a new meaning, since living and dying are encountered in his allegiance to the Lord" (Rudolf Bultmann, *Faith and Understanding I*, edited with an introduction by Robert W. Funk, translated by Louise Pettibone Smith [New York: Harper and Row, 1969], p. 201). Furthermore, in Reinhold Niebuhr's view, "the suffering Messiah became, in the eyes of faith, a clue to the mystery of the mercy and the justice of God, and the atonement became the real content of the revelation" (Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* [New York: Scribner, 1955], p. 91). Also Luther's theology of the cross may bring about a fruitful comparison: "God is known only in suffering"; "God meets us 'hidden in the sufferings' of Christ" (Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, translated by Robert C. Schultz [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966], pp. 25–34, and p. 291).

29. Shinran's unique characterization of Amida's saving activity appears in his marginal annotation to the term 'grasping' in one of his hymns on the three sutras: "Watching over the beings of the *nembutsu* in the worlds of the ten quarters, as numerous as dust-particles, She grasps them and does not forsake; Hence, She is called 'Amida'" (*Jōdo wasan*, in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 495. See also *SSZ*, vol. 5, p. 13).

30. Shinran quotes extensively from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* in the Chapter on the True Buddha and Land of *Kyōgyōshinshō*, adding his own revision to it in such a way as to lay bare Amida's true intent. See *SSZ*, vol. 2, pp. 123–132

31. *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, in *Taishō*, vol. 12, p. 701b. Translated into English by Kosho Yamamoto, *The Mahāparinirvāṇa-sutra* (Ube, Yamaguchi-ken: Karinbunko, 1975), p. 390.

32. *Duḥkharīkṣā nāma dvādaśamaṃ prakaraṇam*. See, *Mūla-madhyamakakārikās de Nāgārjuna, avec la Prasannapadā Commentaire de Candrakīrti*, ed. par L. de la Vailed Poussin, Bibliotheca Buddhica IV (St. Petersburg: Académie Imperiale des Sciences, 1913).

33. Shinran, *Kyōgyōshinshō*, in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 59.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

36. Shinran, *Jōdomonruijushō*, in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 451.

37. Kiritani Junnin, *Kyūsai no ronri* (Pure Land Soteriology), (Tokyo: Kyōiku Shinchōsha, 1982), pp. 39, 75, et seq. His profound speculation must be seriously taken for further examination of fundamental problems, which are common to any salvific religion.

38. Shan-tao, *Kuan-ching-ssu-t'ieh-shu*, *San-shan-i*, in *SSZ*, vol. 1, pp. 537–138.
39. Hōnen, *Senjaku hongwan nembutsu shū*, Ch. 3 (on Amida's Primal Vow), in *SSZ*, vol. 1, pp. 944–945.
40. What follows is elaborated on the basis of a paradoxical exposition of *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, particularly Ch. 33, in *Taishō*, vol. 12, p. 562a-c.
41. Shinran derives his understanding of *faith* as Buddha-nature from a passage in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* that states "great faith is buddha-nature; buddha-nature is suchness; buddha-nature is termed 'one-child-stage'" (*Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, Ch. 32, in *Taishō*, vol.12, p. 556 c). See also, *Kyōgyōshinshō*, Chapter on Faith, in *SSZ*, p. 63.
42. As far as my religious experience as a Pure Land Buddhist of *nembutsu* is concerned, I am deeply moved by Luther's christological statements which point in the direction of a *genus tapeinoticaon*. According to Paul Althaus, "Luther holds that the deity of Christ, because of the incarnation and of its personal unity with the humanity, enters into the uttermost depths of its suffering For it means nothing else than that God is at once completely above and completely below This man Jesus who bears the wrath of God, the sin of the world, all earthly trouble, yes, hell itself, is at the same time the highest God. The mystery of Christ cannot be expressed without these paradoxes. This is especially true of Christ's suffering on the cross. The deity itself is present with its power in the sufferings" (Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, pp. 197–198). In spite of entirely different terminology, what a remarkable congeniality there may underlie between Luther's awakening to the mystery of Christ and Shinran's realization of what he often calls the inconceivable virtue of Amida's Primal Vow!
43. Shinran, "Hymns on T'an-luan" in *Kōsō wasan* (The Hymns of the Pure Land Masters), in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 506.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 505.
45. Shinran, *Shōzōmatsu wasan* (The Hymns of the Dharma-Ages), in *SSZ*, vol. 2, p. 519.