

# Celebrating our Fifty-Fifth and Thirty-Fifth Anniversaries

**Richard K. Payne**

Dean, The Institute of Buddhist Studies,  
Graduate Theological Union

IN 1949, THE BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA (BCA, affiliated with the Honpa Hongwanji tradition of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism) initiated a project celebrating its own fiftieth anniversary—the establishment of what came to be called the Buddhist Study Center (BSC). Originally located in the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, the Buddhist Study Center was an expansion of the earlier educational program that had been initiated in the 1930s, and which had been operated out of the headquarters of the BCA in San Francisco.

In the mid-1960s the BCA committed to developing the BSC into a full-scale seminary and graduate school. At this time a building was acquired to house what in 1969 came to be incorporated as the Institute of Buddhist Studies. In the mid-1980s the Institute moved into a second, much larger facility and became an affiliate of both Ryukoku University, Kyoto, and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley. Through the generous support of the Society for the Promotion of Buddhism (Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai), the Institute has the privilege of publishing the *Pacific World*, which was originally published by Rev. Yehan Numata while he was a student at the University of California, Berkeley, in the 1930s.

Throughout its history, the Buddhist Study Center and the Institute of Buddhist Studies have been important to the development of Berkeley as a center of Buddhism in the United States. For example, in the late 1950s and 1960s many of the figures of the Beat Generation who were interested in Buddhism attended lectures and participated in various of the activities offered by the Center and Institute. Miriam Levering's essay on Jack Kerouac as a Buddhist author points toward this period of the Institute's history. In 1994 Carl Bielefeldt of Stanford University gave the graduation speech, and recalls the role of the Institute of Buddhist Studies in the ongoing development of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley during the 1970s and 1980s.

Taigen Leighton, a member of the IBS's faculty, writes on Dōgen Zenji's conceptions of time and space. Dōgen was not only a contemporary of Shinran, but also like Shinran was originally trained in the Tendai school

of Japanese Buddhism. Formerly a member of the IBS faculty and administrative staff, Kenneth Tanaka examines the Pure Land thought of Wōnhyo, a Korean Buddhist master. Although we commonly think of Japanese Pure Land as deriving from Chinese sources, Tanaka demonstrates the importance of Wōnhyo for the history of Japanese Pure Land. Mark Blum, a long-time affiliate of the IBS, examines the thought of Kōsai, a disciple of Hōnen. Kōsai has come to be associated with an understanding of Pure Land soteriology in which a single thought, *ichinen*, is sufficient for birth in Sukhāvātī. The late Allan Andrews was also affiliated with the IBS, and presented this paper as part of a symposium on Pure Land thought organized by Kenneth Tanaka at the IBS in 1995. The late Rev. Philip Karl Eidmann was for many years one of the main faculty members of the IBS. He studied Pure Land thought in Kyoto in the 1950s, and during that time produced the translation that is reprinted here. He gave his translation the English title, *The Sutra of the Teachings Left by the Buddha*. The last two items are reprints of articles that appeared in the first *Pacific World*, published by Yehan Numata between 1925 and 1928, during his years as a student at the University of California, Berkeley. The first of these is a biographical study of Bunyiu Nanjio, one of the most important Higashi Honganji scholars of the early twentieth century. Nanjio's catalogue of the Buddhist canon is still used by Buddhist scholars. The second is a collection of three essays by Nyogen Senzaki, a pioneer in the introduction of Zen Buddhism to the United States. Senzaki propagated Zen in San Francisco, and we assume that he and Yehan Numata knew each other well.

We wish to express our deep appreciation for the membership of the Buddhist Churches of America for their visionary commitment to the establishment of a seminary and graduate school dedicated to the promotion of Shin Buddhism and the study of the entirety of the Buddhist tradition, and for their ongoing support over the last fifty-five/thirty-five years. We also wish to express our deep gratitude to the Society for the Promotion of Buddhism for their support of the Institute and of this journal.