

# Bunyu Nanjio: His Life and Work<sup>1</sup>

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## I.

BY THE LAMENTED DEATH of Dr. Bunyu Nanjio,<sup>2</sup> Japan has lost not only a great scholar but one of the most influential leaders and preachers Buddhist Japan has produced in modern times. For a space of over forty years he has occupied in our Buddhist world a position which it will not be easy for a long time to fill adequately.

Born a third son to the abbot of the Sei-unji Temple of the Higashi Hongwanji branch of the Shinshū sect at Ogaki on July 1, 1849, Bunyu early developed a keen thirst for knowledge and a wonderful power of memory which marked the most distinctive traits of his character all through his fairly long life. In his *Reminiscences (Kwaikyū Roku)*, published shortly before his death and to which I am indebted for most of the biographical material made use of in this article, he tells us in a tone of affectionate remembrance of the torments he had to suffer at the hand of his immediate elder brother, four years his senior, on account of his too rapid progress in the study of Chinese classics. The two brothers used to go together to the same tutor, Kaiō Hishida, a well-known Chinese scholar in the same town. It was anything but pleasing to the elder boy to see his younger brother reading more pages with the tutor than he was permitted himself, thus threatening to catch up with him in a very short time. So on the way home, when they were going through a lonely spot, the envious brother would run ahead of Bunyu and frighten him by suddenly coming upon him from behind a bush, or when the barley was ripening the poor young pupil often had to run home crying to his mother with his face blackened with smuts from the roadside farm. His suffering from this quarter was over when he was eleven, as his brother was adopted into the family of the abbot of another temple of the same sect in that district.

When he was about fifteen an incident happened which is worth recording as it reveals a peculiarity of his physical nature which showed itself repeatedly through his long life. On one occasion he was sent by his father on an important mission to a temple some twenty miles away. It was imperatively necessary that he should be back within about two days. Although the journey was done by a river boat, it was rather a strenuous job for a boy of his age, but he successfully carried it out. When, however,

he returned to his temple on the morning of the third day he was so tired that he at once went to bed. When he woke up it was early morning, so he naturally thought that he had slept for twenty-four hours. But the truth was he had slept for just two full days. "This," he says, "is a strange habit but all through my life I have very often slept at a stretch for an almost interminable length of time."

It goes without saying that Bunyiu's training in religious subjects was by no means neglected. On the contrary he was so well equipped in this respect that we find him at the age of sixteen already accompanying one of his religious masters on ministering tours as assistant preacher. As a matter of fact he was now entering upon a more serious study of the deeper aspects of Buddhist philosophy and literature. For this purpose he had to go to Kyōto and enroll himself at the academy of his sect, where there were lectures by competent authorities on all sorts of subjects. But unfortunately his peaceful studies were now broken by a sudden call to a field of activities for which young priests are not usually trained. It was a call to arms.

Mighty events were now stirring the country. By the end of 1866 it was clear that the revolutionary movement for overthrowing the Tokugawa shogunate which had been agitating the nation for nearly half a century reached a stage where there was no possible room for a peaceful settlement. All the clans were getting ready for the fight which was now inevitable. The Clan of Ogaki, which was far from Kyōto, and which everybody knew was to be the scene of the first act in the approaching tragedy, took immediate steps in strengthening its fighting forces by enlisting volunteer farmers and Buddhist priests within its territory. Bunyiu was one of the youngest recruits in an infantry contingent of one hundred twenty priests all belonging to the Higashi Hongwanji branch of the Shinshū sect—a modern resurrection of the old soldier monks whose military feats in the defense of their faith against the onslaughts of Nobunaga's troops forms a picturesque chapter in the history of feudal Japan. In enlisting these priest recruits, the clan authorities of Ogaki procured in advance the assent of the headquarters of the sect in Kyōto, an assent which was given on the condition that the force thus raised would be put at the disposal of the Higashi Hongwanji Temple in case of need.

It is interesting to remark that incidentally it is made clear by the *Reminiscences* that that branch of the Shinshū sect, in consideration of past favor and patronage, intended to place its fighting forces organized in Ogaki and other districts throughout the country under the command of the shogunate government in the event of war. As a matter of fact early in 1867, when the outbreak of hostilities was imminent, the Higashi Hongwanji sent a special messenger to Ogaki ordering the Shinshū contingent to hurry up to Kyōto. And our young soldier tells us of a sleepless night when the thought of going to war kept him excited. But he was not destined to go to

war, for the next morning a second messenger arrived from Kyōto calling off the first order. Events had moved faster than had been expected. After short but sharp encounters in the outskirts of Kyōto, the Imperialist forces at once made themselves the master of the situation in the whole country round about, and moreover the shogun who had voluntarily deposed himself issued a command to all his followers not to offer any resistance to the Imperialist troops. This order was not respected by all of his followers, and a sanguinary civil war had to be fought before the Restoration of 1868 was completed. But so far as the Higashi Hongwanji was concerned it saw no excuse to throw its lot with the clans which continued the fight against the wishes of their former chief. So after a little over a year of soldiering, Bunyiu was again free to resume his studies.

Referring to this period of novel experience, Bunyiu says that he has to confess to his shame that he learned to drink and even remembers having had a quarrel with some of his fellow soldiers. But the rough life of a soldier was not altogether without benefits. For one thing, constant physical exercise did him much good in developing his body. "It made me," he says, "strong enough to undertake constant journeys, sometimes to distant parts of the earth, and to live to the age of nearly four scores." He was a few months over seventy-eight when he died.

Late in the spring of 1868, Bunyiu went up to Kyōto to finish his education at the Takakura Gakuryo, the highest seat of learning open to the young priests of his sect. He was at once admitted because his name had been registered there by his father some time in advance. He was doubly welcome because he was provided with a letter of introduction by the Reverend Dokwan Inaba, a widely known priest and scholar then resident in Ogaki. He was evidently a man of strong and magnetic personality. In his early youth before his soldier days, Bunyiu was trained under him in the art of preaching. "He was," says the admiring pupil, "a man of most scrupulous prohibity and purity. He practiced what he preached, and was in every way fit to be a teacher of men. I owe him a deep debt of gratitude, for it is owing to the beneficial influence of his teaching and examples that I have been able until today to adhere to the path of right living."

Instruction was given in the form of lectures upon the scriptures and metaphysical treatises. These lectures were classified according to their relative importance as main and subsidiary, attendance at the former being apparently compulsory and at the latter elective. Some of these subsidiary lectures are stated to have been very popular among the students.

Shortly after Bunyiu's matriculation at the academy, there was opened an institute as an adjunct to it for the purpose of conducting research into the teachings of other religions. The subject of study that attracted the widest attention at the institute was Christianity. The students of the academy were of course free to attend any of the lectures or take part in the debates

which were constantly carried on. Bunyiu remembers having participated in a discussion on the relative merits of Buddhism and Christianity. The study of Christianity became so popular at the Institute that it seems to have created considerable uneasiness among some teachers at the academy. One of them made a pointed reference to the undesirableness of wasting time over this foreign religion, for which he got into hot waters, as the students took the matter up and made a public question of it. Ultimately he had to offer an apology and submit to degradation to an inferior position. This incident is interesting as an indication of the spirit of toleration characterizing Buddhism and its followers.

The expense at the academy was incredibly moderate. Two *bu*, or fifty *sen* in modern currency, we are told, were more than sufficient for tuition and boarding. But Bunyiu's father, being poor, had to supplement his expenses by copying documents, a drudgery for which he was paid at the rate of a *sen* for every three sheets or six pages.

His stay at the academy did not last long, for in the summer of 1879 we find him back at home for good. So his stay was altogether a little over a year. Whether it was the difficulty of procuring the modest sum of two *bu* a month or whether he thought to prosecute further studies to better advantage at home by his own unaided efforts, we are not told. Whatever may have been the reason of his early withdrawal from the academy, it is quite clear from various circumstances that his academic record was highly creditable. It is equally plain that his singularly attractive personality gained for him high esteem and confidence among both teachers and students. One of the former, the abbot of the Okunenji Temple in the province of Fukui, entertained such a high opinion of his scholarship and character that he expressed an earnest desire to adopt him into his family. The young man seemed to have liked the teacher sufficiently to express his willingness to accept the proposal subject to approval by his father and eldest brother. On going home he took the first opportunity to broach the matter to them. His brother was not averse to it, but his father made no hesitation in brushing it aside as unthinkable, his assistance being absolutely necessary at home as his brother was rather weak in health and incapable of active efforts. So for the next two years he stayed at his father's temple, assisting him in religious duties as well as in the side business of giving instruction in Chinese classics to boys of the neighborhood. He also did a great deal of reading in religious texts and general literature, so much so, indeed, that he was now recognized as a highly accomplished scholar. One of the books that he devoured with particular ardor was a Chinese biography of the Buddha. There is a phrase in it which made an indelible impression upon his mind and which has been a source of unflinching inspiration to him during his whole life. And that is, "for the sake of the Law and not of self" 爲法不爲身, which restated in modern phraseology is the doctrine of service to others.

## II.

It has been stated that one of his instructors at the Takakura Academy at Kyōto desired to adopt Bunyiu into his family, a proposal which was flatly refused by the boy's father. If the latter thought that this ended the matter, he was entirely mistaken, for he was dealing with a man of unusual persistence and dogged determination. This man was abbot of the Okunenji Temple in the province of Echizen, highly respected in Shinshū circles for his ability and attainments. He was so favorably impressed with the intelligence and personality of his young pupil that, in spite of the rather peremptory manner in which his first proposal was turned down by Bunyiu's father, he kept at it for over two years constantly returning to the charge through all sorts of avenues until at last he won his prize. This was in the beginning of 1871, when Bunyiu was about twenty-two. The Okunenji, of which Bunyiu was now the prospective heir, seems to have been in a far better position financially than his father's temple. Moreover, the head of that temple having for two successive generations been noted for scholarly accomplishments, it possessed a library of works on Buddhist and Confucian philosophies quite unusual in a provincial center. We can easily imagine with what ardent joy our scholar at once buried himself among these rare books.

Scarcely had he time to settle down at his new home when we find him going up to Kyōto for the rite of tonsure or *tokudo* as it is called in Japanese. This is a preparatory initiation into the priesthood, the full ordination, *gusoku*, being usually performed a few years later. At the tonsure the novice receives a new name by which he will be known until later in life he gets some title of distinction. We have by anticipation called the subject of this sketch by the name which was conferred upon him on the occasion of this ceremony, because that was the name by which he was known to the outside world. But for the sake of historical accuracy we may as well mention here once and for all that in his boyhood he was called Kaku-maru, while in his student days at Kyōto he rejoiced in the name of Sōkaku. While on this topic I may say a word as to how he came by his family name of Nanjio, though by so doing I anticipate the story by a year and a half. In feudal times, none but the two-sworded *samurai* and a few privileged members of the landed and commercial classes were permitted the use of family names. The privilege was also denied to the priesthood, in whose case, however, the name of the temple, particularly where its possession was hereditary as with the Shin sect, was generally used in the same way. Our young novice, for instance, was at the time spoken of as Bunyiu of Okunenji, while his adopted father was called the Reverend Okunenji. But in the autumn of 1872, an Imperial edict was issued abolishing this time-honored system of class discrimination and granting everybody the privilege of using his

family name. With many families, it simply meant the removal of the ban for the public use of its hereditary name, but in the case of many others, boasting of no hereditary *uji*, names had to be coined afresh, and many an interesting story is recorded of the queer things that happened in this connection. Bunyiu's case is one among many. When the edict in question was issued, Bunyiu lived in Kyōto where he occupied a prominent clerical position at the headquarters, while his adopted father was traveling on an extended preaching tour in the northeast. The edict required that the new names should be registered within a week, and in the imperfect condition of the means of communication at that time, it was impossible for the father and son to communicate with each other. So they had to register each a separate name for their family, the father taking the name of Kanagasu after the village in which the family temple is located and the son that of Nanjio after the county. Some time afterward on his way home from the north the father visited his son at Kyōto, and learning of the name the latter had adopted, he at once expressed his preference for it as being much prettier than his own choice. So Nanjio is the name by which the family has since been called.

After his initiation into the novitiate, Bunyiu remained a few months at the research institute of the academy where the principal subject of study was Chinese classics. Being already a past master of the subject, he at once rose to the top of the class and shortly after went home to his adopted temple in Echizen. His fame for eloquence and scholarship extending widely throughout the province, he was in constant demand for lectures and sermons. When he was not called away from home on these errands he divided his time between the routine work of looking after the parish and giving lessons in Buddhist lore and Chinese literature to students, some of whom came from the Research Institute of Kyōto.

About this time an incident occurred which enhanced his reputation very much. Lord Matsudaira of Fukui, the most powerful feudal prince in that region, being a devout upholder of Buddhism, there was established at his castle a school where the priests of the different denominations used to be brought together occasionally for mutual improvement in religious and philosophical subjects. Bunyiu's adopted father happened to be vice-chancellor of this institution and being a man of a dominating temperament, he seems to have created among the priesthood generally a certain amount of antagonistic sentiment against him. To make it worse, his immoderate boasting about his accomplished adopted son certainly did not tend to assuage the feelings of his friends and colleagues. So one day they laid a trap for Bunyiu in the form of a request for a public exposition of the famous dedicatory preface to the *History of Japan* by San-yō. That preface in Chinese is full of quotations and other passages only decipherable by men well versed in classics. Bunyiu did not happen to have a copy of the work by him at the

time, so he applied for a loan of it to the authorities of the institution, but it was not forthcoming until he actually took the platform to undergo the ordeal. The hall was filled to the limit by the instructors and the priestly students of the higher standing. The anxiety of his father and friends was, we are told, intense beyond description. But they were soon relieved by the ease and fluency with which our young scholar expounded sentence after sentence. When the exposition was over, he was assailed from every quarter of the hall with all sorts of questions, some serious and well-meant but mostly with an obvious intent to embroil him in difficulty. But he kept his temper under perfect control, and with praiseworthy patience and generosity he answered each and every question in so lucid and convincing a way, that the whole audience had to go away without a single point scored against him. From that moment, none question his supremacy in scholarship, and he was honored as the acknowledged prodigy of learning in that part of the country.

In the spring of 1872, Bunyiu went up to Kyōto where he was appointed at the headquarters. From that time until the late spring of 1876, when he left for England to study Sanskrit, he was constantly employed in important positions, except for one whole year (1874) when he had to stay at home in Echizen to look after his ailing adopted mother, his father being away on an important public mission.

Nanjio—as we must now call him, for that is the name by which he has since been known to the public here and abroad—on one occasion during this period accompanied the Archbishop of Higashi Hongwanji on his official visit to Tōkyō. From his account of this journey, it is interesting to recall the princely style in which His Holiness traveled. In feudal times he was accorded like a *daimyo* the privilege of exacting the prostration on the ground of everybody along the route of his progress. On the present occasion such custom was no longer observed, but his closed palanquin (*kago*) as it was carried along attended on foot by Nanjio and other retainers was the object of deep, spontaneous reverence by crowds of devout Shinshū believers, especially in Mino and Owari. At Nagoya, one of the greatest strongholds of that sect, the offering of small coins which the devotees, lining deeply both sides of the streets, threw at the palanquin was so great that many of the pieces penetrated through the loose bamboo lattice and struck His Holiness' person with sufficient force to cause him considerable pain. So he called out to Nanjio to devise some means of relief from the pelting rains of metallic offerings. Nanjio was equal to the occasion, and taking his hat he held it out to the enthusiastic worshippers, at the same time calling on the attendant on the other side of the palanquin to follow his example. When the hats were full, the contents were emptied into the palanquin. The process was repeated so frequently that the carriers began to complain of the increasing weight of the burden which they insisted was

more than they could bear. It required all the resources of sweet persuasion possessed by Nanjio—and he had a large store of it—to keep the rebellious carriers from dropping the holy fare on the road.

This period (1873–1876) of Nanjio's secretarial and administrative activities at the Shinshū headquarters derives special interest from the fact that it coincides with one of the most humiliating chapters in the history of the Buddhist cause in Japan. All through the Tokugawa regime Buddhism monopolized official patronage and protection, Shintō being kept in a state of inferiority and subjection. The revolution of 1868, which abolished the shogunate government and restored the Imperial House to actual supremacy in government from which it had for centuries been deprived, naturally brought about a radical change in the relative position of Shintō and Buddhism. The former was now the favored creed and it was by no means modest in paying its old score against Buddhism. Through their influence over the higher functionaries of the newly established Imperial government, many of whom were rabid Shintō believers, the priests of the national cult succeeded in getting it recognized as the dominant official faith. A proclamation was issued requiring Buddhist priests to conduct all religious rites according to Shintō rituals and fashion their preachings within the limits of the following "Three Principles," namely (1) respect the gods and love the country, (2) elucidate the principles of nature and humanity, and (3) pay reverence to the Emperor and obey all Imperial commands.

This was tantamount to a sudden disownment of Buddhism as a national religion and a command to it to accept a position of abject subordination to Shintō. It was a severe blow and an intolerable insult to a great religion which had for centuries enjoyed a position of unchallenged supremacy. It might have been expected that the Buddhist leaders would stoutly refuse to submit to such humiliation. But to their shame it must be stated that not only no show of resistance was attempted but they vied each other in complying with the humiliating terms imposed upon them by the militant Shintōists. Nanjio narrates with evident disgust that great luminaries of the Buddhist world went so far as actually to join in Shintō rites performed at the Zojo-ji Temple in Shiba, clad like Shintō priests and bearing offerings of fresh fish! It is true that they were not long to suffer from such degradation. But their emancipation was the result not of their own exertions but of the revolt of the general sentiment of the people at large.

### III.

We now come to the most important period in the life of Nanjio, namely, his sojourn of eight years in England devoted to the study of Sanskrit and research in the Buddhist scriptures in that language.



When Archbishop Gennyō of East Hongwanji made a tour of Europe in the early years of Meiji, he was surprised to find that great progress had been made in the study of Sanskrit and Indian thought at the principal seats of learning there. This was a revelation to him. He was so impressed with the need of introducing this subject of study into Japan where it had been so shamefully neglected that he caused a member of his retinue, Mr. Shuntai Ishikawa, to begin at once the study of the sacred language of ancient India. This was while the party was staying at Paris, then the leading center of Oriental learning in Europe. Ishikawa lost no time in applying himself to the study of that difficult tongue, but before he made much progress the party had to come home, and through want of a proper teacher and probably more through his stronger inclination for activities of a nonacademic character, the study was dropped by him never to be taken up again.

But neither Ishikawa, who soon became a power in the denomination, nor his spiritual head gave up the idea of reviving the study of Sanskrit in Japan. So it was decided in September, 1884, to send two promising young priests to England to take up this important study, and the choice fell upon Nanjio and a friend and colleague of his, Kenju Kasahara. But this was kept a secret until the happy young men left Tōkyō eight months later, because it was feared that an early announcement of the fact might occasion unexpected obstacles in the way of carrying out the project. The secret was, indeed, so well guarded that when on the day of their departure for Yokohama to board their steamer they paid a farewell visit to the senior officiating priest at the Tōkyō headquarters, the latter on learning the object of their visit was dumbfounded with surprise and wounded pride, and without saying a word he abruptly left his guests and went to the chapel, where he probably tried to appease his agitated mind by repeating "Namu Amida-Butsu." How much success he may have had in this pious exercise his visitors did not stay to ascertain.

Two months after he received the order to go abroad, Nanjio obtained a fortnight's leave to visit his people at the Okunenji Temple in Echizen, where he was also joined by his real parents from Ogaki. That was the last time he spent with his father in this life, the latter dying a year before his return from England. Early in 1885, he was transferred to the headquarters in Tōkyō to facilitate his secret preparations for his journey and that of his fellow traveler. In this task he was very efficiently assisted by Mr. Taichi Tanabe, a well-known official in the Foreign Office, who not only supplied him with necessary official letters but gave him all sorts of useful hints and suggestions, even taking him to the Seiyoken Restaurant at Uyeno to give him an object lesson in table manners.

Kasahara joined him at the end of May, by which time everything was ready for their departure. The French mail boat on which they had secured berths was to sail from Yokohama early on the morning of May 14, so they left Tōkyō on the previous afternoon. Archbishop Gennyō, who took almost

fatherly interest in Nanjio and who had come up to Tōkyō a short while before, kindly accompanied them to Yokohama, where he gave them a farewell dinner at the Oriental Hotel. After dinner, they boarded their ship and felt for the first time the pleasure of a complete release from the tension imposed upon them by the necessity of making preparations for their voyage without letting anybody into their confidence. That night, according to Nanjio, they talked for a long time on all sorts of topics, rehearsing their past experiences and discussing their future plans. It may also be taken for granted that no small contribution was made to their merriment by the little incident that happened when they paid their farewell visit to the head officiating priest of their denomination in Tōkyō.

Nanjio was in his twenty-seventh year, while Kasahara was three years younger. Nanjio was an accomplished Chinese scholar but knew no European tongue; Kasahara had studied French and could read a little, but could not speak. They were however, fortunate in having as their fellow passenger a young diplomat, Mr. Seitoku Okoshi, who was going to London to take up the post of chancellor at our legation there, and who, being a graduate of the French Department in the Foreign Language School of Tōkyō, spoke French fluently. During the seventy-five days that they spent on board they had to rely upon this gentlemen's assistance whenever they had anything to do with the ship's officers or men. The *Reminiscences* is replete with Chinese poems depicting in vivid local colors scenes and customs Nanjio observed at various ports the steamer touched. If these were rendered into English by a competent hand, they would certainly form a most pleasant and interesting reading. Nanjio was a poor sailor and loved his cabin best, though he confesses he rarely failed to do full justice to the excellent cuisine. Apart from writing poetry, his chief source of pleasure was reading records of travels, especially one by the late Oshu Nakai describing his trip to Europe.

Arrived at Marseilles on August 1, Nanjio and his friends traveled over land to London with a ten days' stay in Paris. He had heard of the Grand Opera and went there one night, but he did not stay there long because he could not enter into the spirit of the music. But he is lavish in the praise of beautiful views along the Seine which made a strong appeal to his poetic imagination.

At London where Nanjio and Kasahara arrived on August 11, they found rooms secured for them by kind friends in a quiet hotel near Kensington Park. There on the first night Nanjio made a blunder which nearly cost him his life. He was tired and went to bed early, after putting out the gas light with a puff. During the night he was awakened by noises outside his room, when the strong and suffocating smell of gas which filled the room made him at once realize the situation. The anxious people in the passage came in and stopped the gas, thus saving a life that meant so much for the advancement of Buddhist learning in Japan.

Through the kind offices of the late Mr. Magoichiro Yokoyama, representing Okura & Co. in London, Nanjio and his friend Kasahara were taken as paying guests in the family of Mrs. Robson, a widow whose husband had been professor of Latin in the University of London. There they had an excellent opportunity to learn English as they were treated as members of the family and came into constant touch with the landlady and her two grown-up girls. But like most their compatriots they were afraid of talking lest they should make mistakes. Their natural reserve was strengthened by the readiness of the young ladies to laugh at their strange manners. The upshot was, says Nanjio, that they learned very little English while they lodged with this family.

A few weeks after they moved to Mrs. Robson's house, they were locked out and had to walk about in the streets of London the whole night through their failure to let her know where they were going. Nanjio heard of Henry Irving playing Shakespeare's *Henry the Eighth*, and as he was fond of plays, he prevailed upon Kasahara, who did not care much for the theatre, to go and have a glance at how English actors compared with their confreres in Japan. Nanjio did not expect to understand the play nor to enjoy it properly, so he did not suppose they would stay long at the theatre. But to their surprise, from the very outset the play held them spellbound; they understood and enjoyed it thoroughly. They were so absorbed in it that when the curtain dropped for the last time they could hardly realize that they had sat to the end of the play. When they got home it was past midnight, and hard and repeatedly as they knocked, the door was not opened for them. So they wandered through the streets and tried to snatch naps on benches in the park until the long weary night at last retreated before the tardy light of welcome day. Safely back in their room, their trouble was not ended, for unable to offer any oral explanation to the landlady, they had to write out a bare statement of facts by constant reference to dictionaries.

In those days there existed in London an association of Japanese students which met occasionally for purposes of mutual instruction. At one of its meetings Nanjio spoke on the Buddhist doctrine of cause and effect and on the fundamental principles of the Shin sect, which seemed to have produced a deep impression upon those present. Among the principal members of the association, mention is made of the late Baron Hozumi (then known as Mr. Iriye), Dr. Joji Sakurai, Privy Councillor and President of the Imperial Academy of Japan, the late Dr. Baron K. Takagi, the late Mr. Baba Tatsui, a prominent figure in our political world some forty years ago, and the late Mr. Teruhiko Okamura, who made a great success at the bar.

Nanjio and his friend got allowances from the Eastern Hongwanji Temple, but the amount was moderate, and as neither of them had any other source of income, they had to pinch and economize. How hard up they sometimes were may be inferred from an incident narrated in the *Reminiscences*. Nanjio accidentally met the late Viscount Suyematsu, then a

junior member of the staff of our legation in London, and the acquaintance thus casually made soon ripened into a life long friendship, for they were men of congenial taste and habits. On one occasion Suyematsu gave Nanjio a light job which consisted in making a clean copy of some official document Suyematsu had drawn up. For this work Nanjio got an honorarium of a pound note, which gave him intense joy because he could now satisfy his long felt want of a Greco-English dictionary and a bath. Many years later when they met at a dinner in Tōkyō given to Nanjio by his friends and admirers in commemoration of the publication of a Sanskrit edition of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* which he had compiled, he recalled this incident and made a public recognition of the welcome help Suyematsu had given him at a time of need.

Through Suyematsu, Nanjio got acquainted with Marquis Tseng, the brilliant Chinese Minister at London, and the members of his staff. They used to meet now and then to try their skill at impromptu verse-making. With one of the Chinese secretaries, Mr. Yang Wenhuei, he formed a friendship which ended only with the latter's death. Yang, being an ardent believer in Buddhism, he had much in common with Nanjio. Yang shortly afterward returned to China, and retiring from the diplomatic service, lived at Nanking where he was for many years engaged in the publication of Buddhist works. Nanjio kept in touch with him, and in response to his request, supplied him from Japan with copies of a large number of standard books on the Buddhist doctrine that had been lost in China.

Nanjio and Kasahara stayed in London for about two years during which time they devoted their whole time and energy to the study of English. We are not told anything about their instructors except Mr. Magoichiro Yokoyama about whom mention has already been made and from whom they got their first lessons in English. But English was not the main object of their study; it was only a medium of approach to Sanskrit. For some however, the prospect of securing instruction in that ancient language seemed remote, nobody to whom they had applied for help or advice for this purpose being able to render them any service.

#### IV.

Facilities for the study of Sanskrit were at last secured for Nanjio and Kasahara by the Japanese Minister at London, the late Mr. K. Uyeno, early in 1879. Through a Rev. Brookes, a friend of his, a letter was obtained from Dean Stanley of Westminster Abbey to Professor Max Müller of Oxford. The latter received them at his home very warmly, and by his advice they put themselves under the care of a young student of his, Mr. Arthur A. Macdonnell, who later became Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford.

Nanjio tells us it was a hard task for him to master the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar, and he pays a grateful tribute to the kindly patience with which his instructor helped him along in his difficult study. He spent the summer in the Channel Islands where he kept up his study of Sanskrit. If he found his first acquaintance with that language rather forbidding, he evidently surmounted the initial difficulty without much loss of time, for in less than a year we find him sufficiently advanced in his study to be able, with the help of a dictionary, to feel his way intelligently through a sutra in the original text.

In January 1880 Nanjio and Kasahara began a systematic study of Sanskrit sutras under Prof. Max Müller himself. In September Max Müller left for Berlin to attend a meeting of the Congress of Orientalists. Thither, by his advice, they soon followed him, and there they were fortunate to make acquaintance of a number of prominent scholars. On their way home, they made a stay of thirty days at Paris, during which time they succeeded by diligent application in making copies of a number of important Sanskrit sutras which by Professor Max Müller's suggestion they were able to take out from the Paris Library. Nanjio says he never had in his life so busy a time as during this stay in the French capital. He and his comrade had to work almost incessantly day and night. In 1881, Nanjio went up to London and volunteered to put in order the manuscripts of the catalogue of the Chinese Tripiṭaka kept in the library of the India Office, a task which had been attempted with but indifferent success by a certain English student of Chinese. While thus engaged he was surprised to receive a note from his friend Kasahara saying that he had been diagnosed by a physician as having an advanced case of consumption and that he was, therefore, going home. Kasahara was never in robust health, and his studious habits, combined with his arduous work in copying Buddhist scriptures in Paris and later in England, evidently hastened the progress of the disease. Such was his conscientious devotion to the cause of learning that even after the physician ordered him home he did not leave England until he had completed the task assigned him by Max Müller, which consisted in making a critical examination of the text of a Sanskrit work called *Dharmasaṃgraha* believed to have been written by Nāgārjuna. He came home in November and died two years later at the age of thirty-one, mourned and honored by all who knew him. Among them none grieved for his death more deeply than his master and friend Prof. Max Müller, who in a long letter printed in the *Times* paid a touching tribute to his unique character and personality. It goes without saying that Nanjio sorrowed very deeply for the loss of his life-long bosom friend. While Nanjio's bent of mind inclined toward history and literature, Kasahara was more interested in philosophy, being a keen student of Kant and Schopenhauer. His early death was, indeed, a great loss to the Buddhist world of Japan.

The work that Nanjio took upon himself of rearranging and editing an English catalogue of the contents of the Chinese Tripiṭaka, occupied him fully three years. It was issued by the Clarendon Press in April, 1883, under the title of the *Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka, the Sacred Canon of Buddhism in China and Japan*. He was presented with ten copies of the work besides an honorarium of a hundred-pound sterling, which as usual he at once invested in books. In the following month he was gratified to see the publication of the two sutras of *Muryoju-kyo* and *Amida-kyo* (*Larger and Smaller Sukhāvātṣyūha*) jointly translated by his master and himself. These were subsequently comprised in the *Sacred Books of the East*.

Nanjio's work in the field of Sanskrit research was now widely recognized in Europe, and he was planning an ambitious program of investigation when circumstances made it necessary for him to cut short his stay in England. A letter from his adopted father then living in Kyōto brought him sad news. His real father who had visited his adopted mother (who was seriously ill in that city) was seized with some sudden sickness to which he succumbed in a few hours. Moreover, his adopted mother's condition was very precarious, and so his speedy return to Japan was earnestly requested by his adopted father. Always dutiful to his parents, both real and adopted, this touching appeal left him no choice but to take the earliest opportunity to hurry homeward.

Prof. Max Müller and other friends of his, when they heard of this, heartily regretted it and tried hard to persuade him to give up his idea of going home. But their words made no effect upon his resolution which, as already mentioned, had been taken from a sense of filial duty. Shortly prior to his departure he was invested by the University of Oxford with the degree of Master of Arts in recognition of his scholarly services in connection with the publication of the catalogue of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. When he left Oxford Max Müller came with him as far as London where he took leave of his revered master in tears of sorrow and gratitude. In his *Reminiscences* he devotes several passages to his personal contact with Prof. and Mrs. Max Müller who both made a deep and lasting impression upon Nanjio and Kasahara. Both these men held them in deep and heartfelt veneration to the end of their lives.

Leaving London on March 28, 1884, Nanjio arrived at Yokohama on May 18, traveling by way of America.

## V.

When Nanjio returned home May, 1884, he was surprised to find the process of transformation already in progress when he left eight years ago carried forward with wonderful success in all spheres of national life dur-

ing the short space of time he was away. But he was even more surprised to discover that his coming home had been awaited at the headquarters of his denomination with feelings of fear and misgiving. He made this discovery the day after his landing at Yokohama.

An important member of the staff of the Higashi Hongwanji Temple at Kyōto, who came up to Tōkyō specially for the purpose of welcoming him home, told him that the late Marquis Inouye, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, who took friendly interest in the affairs of that denomination, wanted to see him as soon as possible. So Nanjio accompanied his friend to call upon the powerful statesman at once at his official residence. The latter asked him whether he had in mind any new scheme of work at the headquarters of his sect. To this he replied that he had no idea whatever to try his hand at the administrative work of the sect, his ambition being to engage in the prosecution of the scholarly research he had begun in Europe. Thereupon the host turned to the emissary from Kyōto, and said, to the great amazement of Nanjio: "You have heard from Nanjio himself what his plan of work is, and so I don't think it necessary for me to take the matter up with him."

From this conversation it was plain to Nanjio that some influential people in Kyōto had been much worried by the apprehension that he might have some plan of radical reforms, which they probably knew were urgently needed but which they did not care to be imposed upon them by him. The expectation that he might take keen interest in the executive work at the headquarters was quite natural, because that was his chief concern prior to his departure for Europe. But Nanjio's chief interest was now in the prosecution of his Sanskrit study. It is also possible that his earlier experience in executive work was not quite congenial to his simple and straightforward character which abhorred all forms of intrigue and duplicity. And it is a notorious fact that even the government of religious communities is by no means free from trickery and dishonesty.

Whatever may have been the reason, the forty-odd years of Nanjio's arduous life after his return from England were devoted entirely to activities unconnected with executive affairs at the headquarters, except in an advisory capacity during his old age. He occupied a succession of prominent positions as professors and presidents of Buddhist seminaries and colleges in Tōkyō, Kyōto, and Nagoya. For some years after his return he served as lecturer on Sanskrit and Buddhism at the Imperial University of Tōkyō. He was one of the earliest recipients of the newly created doctorate of literature from the Minister of Education, and later he was appointed member of the Imperial Academy. He was thus highly honored for his scholarly attainments not only in Buddhist circles but in the country at large.

Besides his duties in the field of education, he found time for religious work on preaching trips in various parts of the country. He was an eloquent preacher, and wherever he went he always commanded a large and attentive

audience. In course of time he accumulated a large number of set sermons which he used to repeat with slight alterations, so that his assistants learned some of these compositions by heart. On one occasion he came to a meeting unexpectedly, and to the astonished amusement of the audience he solemnly repeated word by word a sermon that had just been preached by one of his assistants. After the meeting was over, one of the audience was asked as to what he thought of the funny incident. "Why," he said, "it is always satisfactory to have a story confirmed by the original inventor." Nanjio's valuable and indefatigable work as a preacher was as highly appreciated by the head of his sect as his work in the fields of research and education. At the time of his death, he occupied in his sect a position corresponding to that of a bishop in the Church of England without any administrative authority.

Since his return from England, he made two trips abroad. On the first trip (1887) he visited India where during about a month he went over the ground made sacred by Buddha's feet. On his way home he spent a few weeks in China visiting Tientai Shan and other places of interest in the history of Buddhism. At the great monastery at Tientai Shan he asked for a copy of the well-known *History of Tientai Shan*, but no priest seemed to know of such a work. But while being shown about one of the temples he noticed piles of wood blocks carelessly stowed away in a corner of a bell-tower exposed to wind and rain. You may easily imagine his surprise and joy when, taking down a few of those blocks, he discovered that they were the originals from which the missing work was printed.

The other visit abroad was to Siam, which country he visited in 1898 as a member of the numerous delegation selected by the different sects of Buddhism for receiving and taking home a relic of Buddha which the King of Siam graciously offered to the Buddhists of Japan. This was part of the relics that had just been excavated on the borders of Nepal and presented to his Siamese Majesty. This mission was a great success, being accorded a very warm reception by the royal family of Siam. On the return of the mission a special temple was erected at Nagoya for the safe custody of the holy relic. This is called the Nissenji (Japan-Siam Temple) and is taken care of by the different sects in turn.

It would take a full volume to give a detailed account of Nanjio's many-sided activities as a scholar and religious worker. So for the present I must content myself with the brief outline sketch which I have so far jotted down. But no sketch of his life, however brief, can be suffered to appear in print without some attempt at summarizing the valuable contributions he made to the world's knowledge of Buddha's teaching. Fortunately, the difficult task in this respect has been kindly lifted off my shoulder by Dr. J. Takakusu, who has supplied me with a statement which I append here in his own words.



## VI.

## Literary Achievements of the Late Dr. Nanjio

by J. Takakusu

The late Dr. Bunyiu Nanjio was a foremost authority on Sanskrit. His worldwide fame as a great scholar was established as early as the latter part of the 1800s, when Sanskrit literature began to be studied by and influence the literary world of Europe. All the foremost Sanskrit scholars, who appeared in those days, passed away one after another, until after the Great War only two men survived, one of whom being Dr. Emil Sénart, President of the French Academy and publisher of Sanskrit *Mahāvastu*, and the other Dr. Nanjio. The savants were looked up to as an illustrious and peerless pair in the field of Sanskrit research. The lamented death of one of them leaves a void which is hard to fill.

The name of Dr. Nanjio is inseparably associated with the catalogue of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. Whenever we speak of the Tripiṭaka, we recall the name of Dr. Nanjio, and the mention of Dr. Nanjio brings up the association of the Tripiṭaka. It was Dr. Nanjio, who compiled and annotated the catalogue of the Chinese commentary on the Tripiṭaka and published it through the University Press of Oxford. It was in recognition of the great value of the work thus completed by him that the University of Oxford conferred upon him the degree of M.A., and it was this work that made him famous throughout the world. It is safe to say that no Orientalist is without this invaluable book in his library.

While in Oxford Dr. Nanjio also edited in collaboration with his honored teacher Prof. Max Müller the *Larger and Smaller Sukhāvataṣṭayūtha*, *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, *Prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya Sūtra*, etc., all of which were received with admiration by Western scholars of Oriental literature, religion, and philosophy.

For some years after his return to Japan from Oxford, Dr. Nanjio was chiefly engaged in the propagation of Buddhism, and his name was not heard in the field of Sanskrit research. It was, therefore, with something of agreeable surprise that the whole world of Buddhism hailed the publication by the Russian Academy of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*, which he edited in collaboration with the great Dutch scholar, Dr. H. Kern. This work of his was especially appreciated, because Dr. Kern had declared that the publication of the sutra would have been impossible without Dr. Nanjio's cooperation.

All these books are indispensable to students of Sanskrit literature and Buddhism. Such students and the followers of the sects founded on the

teachings of Buddha embodied in these works owe to Dr. Nanjio a heavy debt of gratitude for the great service he has rendered them. It appears that he undertook and completed translations of all the other sutras of this group but these have not yet been published.

Dr. Nanjio's last contribution to the study of Sanskrit literature was the publication by the Otani University of Kyōto of *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, which he had copied while he was studying at Oxford. A translation of the sutra was subsequently published by the same university. This translation was completed by him with the assistance of Mr. Hotoku Idzumi, one of his best pupils.

There is another Sanskrit sutra which Dr. Nanjio had copied and put in order. This is *Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra*, and is in course of publication under the hands of Mr. Idzumi. It is a discredit to the reputation of Japan that during nearly half a century since Dr. Nanjio returned home from Oxford, carrying with him a great pile of Sanskrit sutras which he had copied, the publication of all these sutras has not as yet been completed. This fact, however, tells in a convincing way how stupendous was the work done by Dr. Nanjio at Oxford. I well remember how often Dr. Max Müller held up Dr. Nanjio's life as an example of assiduity and painstaking work for us Japanese students to follow. I also remember how Mrs. Müller used to refer to Dr. Nanjio in high terms as a representative Japanese gentleman.

Dr. Nanjio was possessed of a wonderful memory. He remembered all the details of the experiences he had during his long life. His diaries were lost by the great earthquake fire of 1923, but recalling his life and career he recently wrote a book of reminiscences and had it published under the title of *Kwaikyū Roku*. This book has now become the last of his literary works.

NOTES

1. This article was originally published as five separate articles in *Pacific World IV*, no. 2 (February 1928): pp. 56–60; *Pacific World IV*, no. 3 (March 1928): pp. 103–106; *Pacific World IV*, no. 4 (April 1928): pp. 153–157; *Pacific World IV*, no. 5 (May 1928): pp. 198–200; and *Pacific World IV*, no. 6 (June 1928): pp. 247–250.
2. According to the generally accepted system of transliteration, his name should be written without *i*'s thus: Bunyu Nanjo. But he preferred to retain the *i*'s, because that was the way his name appeared on the English visiting card prepared for him in London by his friend the late Mr. Magoichiro Yokoyama, from whom he got his first lessons in English.