# PACIFIC WORLD

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# PACIFIC WORLD
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## CONTENTS

# The Lord of All Virtues[1]

**Hudaya Kandahjaya**
Numata Center, Berkeley

THE NAME ŚRĪ GHANANĀTHA appears on a Javanese stone inscription, known as the Kayumwungan inscription, but today this epithet is so obscure that we can hardly understand its significance or why the poet chose it at all.[2] Nonetheless, a lead-bronze inscription and small clay votive *stūpas* dug out during the second Borobudur restoration project—which have been hitherto not utilized in analysis of the monument—pave the way to better understanding of this elusive name and of Borobudur Buddhism. They are critical for decoding verses of the Kayumwungan inscription that are otherwise not self-explanatory, and also for decoding mysterious phrases in other evidence, such as the terms *stūpa-prāsāda* in the Old Javanese text the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, and Bhūmisambhāra in the Tri Tepusan inscription. A clearer understanding of "Śrī Ghananātha" helps in explaining the architecture, visual symbolism, and textual data embedded in Borobudur. These elements, in turn, help to demonstrate that Śrī Ghananātha likely means the Lord of All Virtues as applied to Borobudur. This is in conformity with supporting passages in the Kayumwungan inscription. The intimate bond between the inscription and Borobudur is fortified, and the Kayumwungan inscription may indeed be considered the consecration manifesto of Borobudur.

I shall limit this report of work in progress to discuss the following three topics, i.e., inception of the Mantranaya in Java; the numinous as seen in the *Kūṭāgāra*, tree, and *stūpa*; and finally the multitude of virtues of Sugata. These topics assist us in grasping the sophisticated link between the idea behind Śrī Ghananātha and the scheme underlying the construction of Borobudur.

INCEPTION OF THE MANTRANAYA IN JAVA

The lead-bronze inscription was excavated in 1974 from the plain less than 100 meters west of Borobudur. A large number of small clay votive *stūpas* were also dug out from the same area. Reports on this discovery were published in 1976 and 1979, respectively.[3] Boechari dated the votive *stūpas* to at least the second half of the ninth century and the lead-bronze inscription to a decade or two earlier. Boechari published his transcription of the inscription in 1976. A lot remains to be done to improve his readings, but for the time being I have to be content with his initial attempt.[4]

Given Boechari's readings, it appears that some of the lines in this inscription correspond with verses preserved in a Balinese *stuti* called the *Nava-Kampa*, or "The Ninefold Tremble."[5] So far, the origin of *Nava-Kampa* verses is unknown. But some lines of this *stuti* can be found in a number of *dhāraṇī*s. Of particular interest, the *Susiddhikara-sūtra*,[6] a text known from the Chinese translation of 726, includes phrases parallel to those at the beginning of the *Nava-Kampa*. Moreover, the *Nava-Kampa* seems to suggest that after recitation there would be brought about perfection in all actions (*sarva-karma-siddhi-karam āvartayiṣyāmi*), which is somewhat in line with the title and purpose of the *Susiddhikara-sūtra*. Thus, it looks that the kind of *dhāraṇī*s represented by the *Nava-Kampa* originated in the cycle or family of this sutra (see table 1).

A number of implications follow from these correspondences. First, in terms of dating, agreement between the inscription and the Balinese *Nava-Kampa* indicates that Sanskrit texts from Balinese sources may date from as early as the ninth century. This indication is of great consequence for the study of early Javanese Buddhism, for which there is so little written evidence. But now one can resort to old Balinese sources to look for possible evidence with greater confidence.[7] This reminds us of Stutterheim's proposal to employ the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*—which comes down to us from the Balinese tradition—for the study of Borobudur. Back then his proposal stood only on top of Goris's conclusion on linguistic grounds, which suggested that the older parts of the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* might have already existed before the Javanese King Siṇḍok (r. 929–947).[8] Today we have a body of archaeological evidence to support the early dating of the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* and to seriously consider this text as being strongly connected to Borobudur.

Second, the connection with the *Susiddhikara-sūtra* opens up another dimension to this archaeological evidence. While a Sanskrit manuscript of this sutra is yet to be found, the Chinese translation done by Śubhākarasiṃha in 726 is available. This sutra clearly belongs to a school upholding Mantranaya. We read in the chapter of "Selection of the Site" that this sutra considers the Buddha's eight great *stūpas* as excellent sites for reciting mantras and gaining success.[9] These *stūpas* are especially praised in the text known as the *Aṣṭamahāsthāna-caitya-vandanā-stava*.[10] The Himalayan living tradition indicates that the ritual involving these eight great *stūpas* leads to the production of *stūpa tsa-tsa*, or votive tablets in the shape of *stūpas*, not unlike those unearthed near Borobudur. In other words, the inscription and the votive *stūpas* turn out to be tightly interrelated archaeological evidence pointing to a Mantranaya environment around the time Borobudur was being constructed. Furthermore, given that one part of the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* is titled the "Sang Hyang Kamahāyānan Mantranaya," the connection between this Javanese compendium and Borobudur is strengthened. Such a connection becomes more significant as the contents of this text seem to be in agreement with Borobudur symbolism.

Third, with the help of the *Nava-Kampa*, one line of Boechari's readings of the lead-bronze inscription may be construed as *Namo Bhagavate Mahāvajra-dhara svāhā*. As such, it indicates that the Buddhists of Borobudur knew the term *vajradhara*. This information reminds us of a site for the Vajradhara school (*kabajradharan*) named Buḍur in the *Deśawarṇana* (*Negarakṛtagama*), a Javanese text dated to the fourteenth century.[11] Scholars dispute if Buḍur refers to Borobudur. Those rejecting any link between Borobudur and tantric Buddhism find *kabajradharan* a reason to dissociate the monument and the place name. But now, the evidence indicates that Borobudur is associated with Mantranaya, and therefore it is highly likely associated with a site for the Vajradhara school named Buḍur.

### THE NUMINOUS AS SEEN IN THE KŪṬĀGĀRA, TREE, AND STŪPA

The *Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitya-vandanā-stava* says that by establishing or offering a *stūpa* that commemorates the eight miraculous events that happened in the life of Śākyamuni, one gains a great merit, reward, and praise. This practice even leads one to a heavenly realm after death. A votive *stūpa* with eight smaller *stūpas* attached to its *anda* is a token commemorating those eight great events that anyone could

**Table 1. Relationship among the lead-bronze inscription,** *Nava-Kampa,* **and** *Susiddhikara-sūtra*

| Boechari's transcription | *Nava-Kampa* | *Susiddhikara-sūtra* |
|---|---|---|
| (**A.1.**) . . . ratnatrayāya sya d ama [---] kvavajrav ā daya<br>[---] yaksasenāpati —<br>namo bhagavate [---]<br>ti mati valaviryya vici-travi [-] ya [---] raśata sahasra sya vra [---] . . . haśaśanakarasya<br>catu [r] guha [--] laṅkuteśā cira sya<br>su [---] meśala paraśu pāsa vajra jvalā gu-a– (**A.2.**) usalāka su | Namo Ratna-trayāya svāhā,<br>namaś Caṇḍa-vajra-pāṇi svāhā,<br>mahā-yakṣa-senā-pati svāhā,<br>namo Bhagavate 'prati-hata-bala-vīrya-vidhi-trividyā-dhara-sahasra svāhā,<br><br>catur-bhujalākṛti svāhā,<br>asi-musala-paraśu-pāśa-vajrāgni-jvālātibhīṣaṇaka-rūpa svāhā | Namo Ratna-trayāya,<br>namaś Caṇḍa-vajra-pāṇaye,<br>mahā-yakṣa-senā-pataye,<br>namo<br><br><br><br>asi-musala- vajra paraśu-pāśa-  hastāya |
| puṣṭa-atija-iteja-e saṇḍaya vilamvita dakṣiṇapāthā sya | paśu-pati-jatijada-sañcaya-vilambita-dakṣiṇa-pāda svāhā | |
| parvvata-sthala tapavini-viṣṭa vāmacarana sya | sarva-niyantaka, tava viniṣṭha-vāma-caraṇa-uṣṇīṣa svāhā, | |
| namo bhagavato mahāvajra [---] sya | namo Bhagavate mahā-vajra-dhara svāhā, | |
| mahāmedan<br>  namahṛdaya.<br>  parama—ruṇa.<br>  sarvabhūtagaṇa— -aśa kara.<br>  rodrakara. traśakara.<br>    g- —<br>  kara (**A.3.**) vivādakara.<br>  sarvvakarmmāsiddhi-  kara.<br>  siddhikara.<br>  avartaya śyami | namo Rudra,<br>  namo hṛdayaṃ,<br>  parama-dāruṇaṃ,<br>  sarva-bhūta-gaṇa-  vinaya<br>  karaṃ,<br>  roṣāstrāśīviṣadhaḥ-karaṃ,<br>  sarva-karma-siddhi-  karam<br><br>  āvartayiṣyāmi, | |
| tadyathāta | tad yathā | |

produce and donate. Excavators discovered thousands of such votive *stūpas* at Borobudur. This shows that this kind of offering was the practice of the day. In modern Bali, the *Nava-Kampa* is recited in death ritual, as well as in daily ritual. Perhaps it is reminiscent of an older rite performed at Borobudur.

Tracing this practice further back, we can retrieve a substantial number of accounts asserting the significance of miraculous events and how they are likely related to Borobudur. I will elaborate briefly some of the ones more relevant to the planning of Borobudur. First, the *Lalitavistara* narrates at length the life story of Śākyamuni up to his turning of the dharma wheel. The absence of an account of the Buddha's passing away cogently intensifies the force that elevates Śākyamuni to divinity. Somewhat similarly, the title of the text seems to suggest an eternal cosmic play.[12] This is the story that the architects of Borobudur picked to be carved extensively and elegantly on the first gallery wall. The divine birth narrative draws our attention. Here looking at the *Lalitavistara* reliefs of the birth story, Krom rightly noticed the double wall—instead of triple—of the *kūṭāgāra* in which the Bodhisattva dwelled while descending from the Tuṣita and staying in his mother's womb.[13] Assuming the architects' text was similar to ours today and acknowledging their mastery of texts and details, the discrepancy seems to be intentional rather than accidental. The whole structure of the monument, we can say, represents the absent third wall of the *kūṭāgāra* depicted in the relief. In fact, there are compelling grounds for believing that Borobudur represents the Javanese image of the *kūṭāgāra* of Śākyamuni, which carries with it many unusual properties and also interchangeable terms, such as *garbha* or *śrī garbha, ratnavyūha,* and *caitya*.[14]

Second, the *Gaṇḍavyūha* reliefs occupy a large portion of the Borobudur walls. This sutra starts with the Buddha staying at the *kūṭāgāra* in the Jeta Grove in the park of Anāthapiṇḍada, in Śrāvasti. Scrutinizing the site and settings at which the whole *Gaṇḍavyūha* narrative took place reveals much precious information. The sutra specifically states the *kūṭāgāra,* not just the Jeta Grove, is the site at which all started. While the initial setting appears historical, the events are increasingly ahistorical and cosmological. When it records the bodhisattvas in attendance, the list systematically arranges 152 names in 15 categories.[15] Most of the categories are in a group of ten, except for the category of eyes (*netra*), which has twelve names. Ten out of fifteen categories create five pairs of categories because each of these pairs has a synonymic category (see table 2).

**Table 2. Categories of bodhisattvas' names**

| Group no. | No. of bodhi-sattvas | Bodhisattvas' ending names | | Subtotals of no. of bodhisattvas | | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 10 | -uttarajñānī | -buddhī | 10 | 20 | supra knowl-edge, or intelli-gence |
| 2. | 10 | -dhvaja | -ketū | 10 | 20 | banner |
| 3. | 9 | -tejā | prabhā | 11 | 20 | light |
| 4. | 10 | -garbha | | | 10 | womb |
| *5.* | *12* | *-netra* | | | *12* | *eyes* |
| 6. | 10 | -mukuṭa | -cūḍa | 10 | 20 | crown, or crest |
| 7. | 10 | -ghoṣa | -svara | 10 | 20 | voice, or sound |
| 8. | 10 | -udgata | | | 10 | come out |
| 9. | 10 | -śrī | | | 10 | auspi-cious |
| 10. | 10 | -indrarāja | | | 10 | Lord |
| **Subtotals** | 101 | | | 51 | 152 | **Total** |

The importance of eyes becomes clear in subsequent events when the bodhisattvas alone are able to witness the Buddha's spiritual power manifested in this very *kūṭāgāra*. This seems to be the rationale for the Javanese architects to take this starting part seriously, as the scene is depicted right at the first two panels introducing the series of *Gaṇḍavyūha* reliefs. This is especially notable because other depictions of *Gaṇḍavyūha* elsewhere in Asia jump to the beginning of Sudhana's pilgrimage and dismiss the introductory part altogether.[16]

As the narrative shifts to Sudhana's pilgrimage, Qobad Afshar tells us that when he investigated the places visited and identified them with ancient Indian toponyms, he learned that Sudhana's itinerary circled the Indian subcontinent,[17] that is to say, Jambudvīpa. In other words, the sutra seems to provide a circumambulating program for

the pilgrim to proceed south from one *kalyāṇamitra* to the next, going deeper into the human realm, until stopping at Magadha in the center and entering into Maitreya's *kūṭāgāra*, which at this point is identical to the magnificently adorned abode of Vairocana or the universal cosmos (*vairocanavyūhālaṃkāragarbha mahākūṭāgāra*). The mention of Maitreya's *kūṭāgāra* in the Tuṣita heaven brings to mind the story related to the *kūṭāgāra* of Śākyamuni as told in the *Lalitavistara*. As we compare this and other features, it becomes clear that to some extent the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* and the *Lalitavistara* have many parallels and are thereby closely correlated (see table 3).

**Table 3. Correlations between the *Lalitavistara* and the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra***

| Components | *Lalitavistara-sūtra* | *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* |
|---|---|---|
| Starting location | Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍada Arāma in Śravasti (*Śrāvastyāṃ viharati sma Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍadasyārāme*). | Mahāvyūha *kūṭāgāra* in Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍada Arāma in Śravasti (*Śrāvastyāṃ viharati sma Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍadasyārāme mahāvyūhe kūṭāgāre*). |
| Arapacana syllabary | Viśvamitra was unable to teach the youth Siddhārtha, who excelled in arts and sciences. Siddhārtha taught the syllabary to many youths. | Viśvamitra does not teach the youth Sudhana, but lets the youth Śilpābhijña (Advanced Knowledge in Arts and Sciences) teach Sudhana the syllabary. |
| Mathematics | Siddhārtha exhibited his mathematical knowledge. | The youth Indriyeśvara teaches Sudhana mathematical knowledge. |
| Young lady Gopā | Siddhārtha married young lady Gopā. | Young lady Gopā tells Sudhana that she has known Siddhārtha since many aeons ago. |
| Earth goddess Sthāvarā | Earth goddess Sthāvarā protected Siddhārtha at the enlightenment site. | Earth goddess Sthāvarā teaches Sudhana the practice of protecting a bodhisattva. |

| Components | *Lalitavistara-sūtra* | *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* |
|---|---|---|
| Mother of Buddha | Lady Māyā was the mother of Siddhārtha. | Lady Māyā tells Sudhana that she is the mother of all buddhas. |
| Tuṣita | The Bodhisattva expounded the 108 Dharmālokamukha before his last descent to earth in a *kūṭāgāra*. | Bodhisattva Maitreya tells Sudhana that, like other bodhisattvas in their last birth, he will be in Tuṣita teaching the *Mahājñānamukha* before descending. |
| Spiritual Instructors | Siddhārtha had two spiritual instructors. | Sudhana has 52 (or 53, 54, 55) spiritual instructors (*kalyāṇamitra*). |
| Location | Siddhārtha roamed Madhyadeśa until enlightenment. | Sudhana circumambulates Jambūdvīpa until enlightenment. |
| Closing remark | A statement: "Here ends the source of all Bodhisattva's conduct" (*sarvabodhisattvacaryāprasthāna*). | A section: "The Samantabhadra's Conduct" ("Bhadracarī," or "Samantabhadracaryāpraṇidhāna"). |

These correlations suggest that the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* could be conceived as a generalized *Lalitavistara*, while the *Bhadracarī* is the summary of all. This enforces the idea of an eternal cosmic play, especially when we also take into account the *jātaka*s and the *avadāna*s, which make up all the texts that the architects of Borobudur selected to be exposed on Borobudur walls. Thus, the conduct of the Bodhisattva or the Buddha as exemplar was probably the rationale underlying the selection process for the depiction on reliefs.[18] The poet of the Kayumwungan inscription picked the phrase "the conduct of the Buddha" (*vuddhacarita*) when he composed verse 4.

Nevertheless, unlike the *Lalitavistara*, the meaning of the title *Gaṇḍavyūha* is far from clear, especially when the Chinese counterparts of *Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Buddhāvataṃsaka* are alternative names, not translations. A search for the meaning of *gaṇḍa* exposes two interesting

senses, i.e., stalk (trunk) and goitre, which are interrelated by way of being the interstice between two knots.[19] Further, Gaṇḍa is the name of the gardener serving Prasenajit, the king of Kauśala.[20] He offered a mango to the Buddha. The mango seed produced the mango tree (Pāli Gaṇḍamba) at the gate of Śravasti, under which Śākyamuni performed the double miracle (Pāli *yamaka-pātihāriya*; Skt. *yamaka-prātihārya*).

The word *gaṇḍa,* meaning "(tree) trunk," is very well attested to in the *Divyāvadāna.* It appears in compounds, such as *mūla-gaṇḍapatrapuṣpaphala*.[21] This compound enumerates in an orderly fashion the components of a tree from the bottom to the tip: "root, trunk, leaf, flower, fruit." As such, when the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* records *nānābodhigaṇḍavyūhān,*[22] the word *gaṇḍa* in this compound most likely has the same meaning, so that *nānābodhigaṇḍavyūhān* are "various ornamented trunks of (trees of) enlightenment." But, given that the compilers did not bother to include *nānābodhi* or *bodhi* in the title, it might just be the case that a broader meaning is intended. The trunks might include other trees under which Buddha's miraculous events occur; *gaṇḍavyūha* might also mean "detailed explanation or description of (tree) trunk (miraculous events)."[23] This meaning of *gaṇḍavyūha* still shares the miraculous context in which the compound *buddhāvataṃsaka* is found in the *Divyāvadāna*.[24] Now, it turns out that *buddhāvataṃsaka* may have two meanings, depending on how one interprets this compound. One is "the garland of the Buddha."[25] The second is "the garland of buddhas."[26] Of these two meanings, the one most clearly manifested at Borobudur is "garland of buddhas."

However, as both titles—*Gaṇḍavyūha* and *Buddhāvataṃsaka*—turn out to arise from the great miracle in Śrāvasti, the background of this event is equally important for the study of Borobudur. This great miracle occurred due to rivalry between some ascetics and the Buddha. The ascetics felt deprived of provisions after King Bimbisāra offered Veṇuvana—the first royal gift in the year following the enlightenment—and other offerings to the Buddha. The *Avadānakalpalatā* of Kṣemendra goes even farther claiming that it was the gift of Veṇuvana that caused jealousy among the six *tīrthika* teachers.[27] In verse 13 of the Kayumwungan inscription, the poet states that the temple of Jina being built is similar to the famous Veṇuvana.

Third, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* (*Lotus Sutra*) has never been thought to have been known to the Javanese of Borobudur.[28] But when we scrutinize verse 2 of the Kayumwungan inscription, there is a

statement about *saddharma* that alludes to familiar contexts or phrases found in the *Lotus Sutra* (see table 6 showing the comparison at the end of this paper). As such, it looks like that the poet was familiar with the *Lotus Sutra*. This text emphasizes the divine status of Buddha and says that many bodhisattvas reside in *kūṭāgāra*(s).[29] When a buddha travels around through many buddha-fields, a *kūṭāgāra* can operate as a vehicle, one not unlike the conveyance by which the Bodhisattva descends from the Tuṣita heaven to the earth as told in the *Lalitavistara*. This scripture is also famous for its advice to build *caitya*s for the Tathāgata. It says that a *caitya* is to be built wherever the *Lotus Sutra* is expounded, preached, written, studied, or recited.[30] It also indicates that it is not necessary to depose the relics of the Tathāgata in the *caitya*, since the relics of the Tathāgata are already entirely there. In other words, the *caitya* is identical to the body of Tathāgata,[31] thus like a *stūpa* it is to be worshiped as such.[32] This view is supported by another statement saying that the Great Jewel Stūpa is none other than the whole mass or entire personality of the Tathāgata Prabhūtaratna.[33] In addition, like a physical body, a *stūpa* could produce voice[34] and would magically emerge from the earth when the *Lotus Sutra* is expounded.

Fourth, in addition to the portrayal of *kūṭāgara* in the *Lalitavistara*, which I consider comparable to the circular terraces of Borobudur, it is worth noting that this text mentions the phrase *kūṭāgāra-prāsāda* at least six times[35] in various contexts. Then, if we recall that the *Lalitavistara* interchanges a *caitya* with a *kūṭāgāra,* and the *Lotus Sutra* maintains an identity among *caitya,* relics, and *stūpa*, and even recognizes a *stūpa* as being the whole body of a *tathāgata*, we may come to an understanding through a process of substitution that the phrase *kūṭāgāra-prāsāda* might have eventually been transformed into *stūpa-prāsāda*. The latter is a term that I am thus far not able to find recorded anywhere else except in the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, where it says: "This body—inside and outside—is a *stūpa-prāsāda*."[36]

Fifth, the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* correlates the five elements with the five *tathāgatas* (see table 4). Scholars have reported this association in different traditions, but Kats found no satisfactory correspondence with those reported by Waddell, Hodgson, or Groeneveld.[37] It does not match the scheme used by Śubhākarasiṃha either.[38] But de Visser informs us that Amoghavajra differed fundamentally from Śubhākarasiṃha by relating Vairocana to the earth element and Akṣobhya to the *ākāśa* element.[39] Comparing all of them,

it can be seen that the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* has two elements that match the Amoghavajra's configuration. This comparison has two important implications. First of all, the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* represents a distinct tradition. Secondly, it also shows that it follows a tradition that upholds Akṣobhya being the *ākāśa* element, thus leaning toward the tradition advocated by Amoghavajra.

## THE MULTITUDE OF VIRTUES OF SUGATA

Verse 1 in chapter 24, "Trapuṣa-bhallika," of the *Lalitavistara* mentions Śirighana, or Śrīghana. It is by far the clearest evidence indicating that the architects of Borobudur had access to the epithet Śrī Ghana, since this scripture is carved prominently on the Borobudur walls. The verse is as follows: "I praise the feet of Śrī Ghana, overspread with a thousand-spoke chariot-wheel, which, having the radiance like the glowing countless-petaled lotuses, are continually rubbed by the tiaras of the gods."[40] The same verse attests the usage of the word *ara,* being a spoke of a wheel. Śrī Ghana(nātha) and the word *ara* appear in verses 11 and 8 of the Kayumwungan inscription, respectively.

Assuming that the Chinese translators encountered the epithet Śirighana in the manuscripts of the *Lalitavistara* being translated, their translations as *fo* (Buddha, 佛)[41] or *shizun* (Bhagavat or the Blessed One, 世尊)[42] provide additional indications that this epithet refers to the Buddha. But it is equally imperative to note that translators of the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*[43] rendered the same term as "the assembly of all merit and virtue" (*gōngdé jù,* 功德聚), that is the Buddha, or "a stūpa as symbol of Buddha."[44] Still, on the other hand, *gōngdé jù* 功德聚 can come not only from Śrī Ghana, but also from the Sanskrit *guṇagaṇa*[45] (multitude of virtues) and *saṃbhāra* (usually "assembly of merits and knowledge").[46] Some passages in the *Lalitavistara*[47] and the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*[48] corroborate this identification.

While there is no direct proof that the Javanese of Borobudur took the meaning of *guṇagaṇa* and *saṃbhāra* in the same way the Chinese translation team did, there is circumstantial evidence—especially with regards to the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*—indicating that both groups of Buddhists were dealing with the same version, and possibly the same personality, Prājña,[49] and both might have thereby had similar interpretations. In the Javanese context, we also know that the Javanese were not lacking in the notion of an assembly of merits and knowledge.

**Table 4. Configuration of the great elements in some tantric traditions**

| Tathāgata | Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan | Waddell | Hodgson | Groeneveld | Śubhākarasiṃha | Amoghavajra |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wairocana | Earth | Ākāśa | Ākāśa | Earth | Ākāśa | Earth |
| Akṣobhya | Ākāśa | Wind | Wind | Water | Earth | Ākāśa |
| Ratnasambhawa | Water | Earth | Fire | Fire | Fire | Fire |
| Amitābha | Fire | Fire | Water | Wind | Water | Wind |
| Amoghasiddhi | Wind | Water | Earth | Ākāśa | Wind | Water |

In addition to the sutras that are depicted at Borobudur, the knowledge was certainly known to the poet of the Kayumwungan inscription. Verse 3 of this inscription includes the concept *saṃbhāra.* Moreover, the name Bhūmisambhāra—inscribed in the Tri Tepusan inscription dated to 832—led de Casparis to connect this name to Borobudur,[50] though many scholars vehemently rejected the idea due to its tenuous link.[51] However, if I take into account the way the compound *bhūmisaṃbhāra* is used in the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*—from which the poet of the Tri Tepusan inscription might have gotten the idea—the text suggests that this compound is not being used in connection with the word *bhūdhara* but with the grounds of Tathāgata (*tathāgata-bhūmi*).[52] Therefore, if I put aside certain details of de Casparis's argument that causes a vulnerable link and instead apply a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of *saṃbhāra* shown above, de Casparis's intuition, associating the name Bhūmisambhāra with Borobudur, might be right.

In any case, the Sanskrit *guṇagaṇa* is especially remarkable. Verse 15 of the Kayumwungan inscription puts this in a compound together with Sugata to describe the *vihāra* being consecrated. Via the Chinese translations, we are able to recapture the poet's idea and perceive the profound relationship between the name Śrī Ghananātha (in verse 11) and the multitude of virtues of Sugata (*sugataguṇagaṇa* in verse 15) in the Kayumwungan inscription.

Last but not least, the Sanskrit word *ghana* is obviously in the name Śrī Ghananātha, but what is not obvious is its connection to meaning "the cube of a number." This meaning does not carry any weight until we introduce the cube of three ($3^3$ which is equal to 27) to Amoghavajra's grid formula for the construction of the *garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*.[53] Then, it is clearer why the meaning of *ghana* and the selection of a grid of 27x27 do matter to this formula, especially after this study finds some essential yet missing links. The findings of small clay votive *stūpas* with eight smaller *stūpa*s attached to the *anda* confirm that the main *stūpa* of Borobudur could be considered as absorbing the concealed eight *stūpas.* By the same token, the numinous as seen in the *kūṭāgāra,* tree, or *stūpa* permits the taking of 216 grids off the grid of 27x27 to reflect the invisible 108 Buddha statues, each for the nadir and zenith of Borobudur. In this way, the architects of Borobudur also represent the name Śrī Ghananātha mathematically and geometrically by entirely applying all the grids created by the *ghana* of three to the assignment of Buddha statues at Borobudur (see table 5).

**Table 5. Odd-number gridwork for numerical series on Buddha images**

| Layer | Grids/Side | Grids/Layer | Borobudur | | Numerical transformation for no. of grids |
| | | | Image | Level | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | Layers 3 to 5     = 16 + 24 + 32 = 72<br>Buddhas in levels 9 to 7 = 16 + 24 + 32 = 72 |
| 2 | 3 | 8 | | | |
| 3 | 5 | 16 | 16 | 9 | |
| 4 | 7 | 24 | 24 | 8 | |
| 5 | 9 | 32 | 32 | 7 | |
| 6 | 11 | 40 | | | Layers 6 to 8 = 40 + 48 + 56 = 144 |
| 7 | 13 | 48 | | | |
| 8 | 15 | 56 | | | |
| 9 | 17 | 64 | 64 | 5 | Layers 9 to 14 = 64 + 72 + 80 + 88 + 96 + 104 = 504 |
| 10 | 19 | 72 | 72 | 4 | Buddhas in levels 5 to 1 = 64 + 72 + 88 + 104 + 104 = 432 |
| 11 | 21 | 80 | | | Difference = 72 |
| 12 | 23 | 88 | 88 | 3 | |
| 13 | 25 | **96** | **104** | 2 | |
| 14 | 27 | 104 | 104 | 1 | |
| Total | | 729 | | | |

**Table 6. Correspondences between the *Lotus Sutra* and the Kayumwungan inscription**

| Saddharma in the *Lotus Sutra* | | Saddharma in the Kayumwungan inscription | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sanskrit | Kern's translation | Translation | Sanskrit |
| Chap. 10, "Dharmabhāṇaka": *sarvalokavipratyanīkaḥ sarvalokāśradadhanīyaḥ* | no acceptance with every-body, to find no belief with everybody | **Verse 2:** | |
| *ādhyātmikadharmarahasyaṃ tathāgata-balasaṃrakṣitamapratibhinnapūrvamaṃ ācakṣitapūrvamanākhyātamidaṃ* | the transcendent spiritual esoteric lore of the law, preserved by the power of the *tathāgatas*, but never divulged; it is an article (of creed) not yet made known | untold to the people by mundane buddhas, which is unequaled, . . . which cuts off . . . , | *lokānāṃ laukyavuddhair agaditam atula . . . chidam* |
| Chap. 13, "Sukhāvihāra": *sarvalokavipratyanīkaṃ sarvalokāśraddhe-yamabhāṣitapūrvamanirdiṣṭapūrvaṃ* | meets opposition in all the world, the unbelief of all the world, never before preached, never before explained | | |
| *tathāgatānāṃ paramā dharmadeśanā* | the supreme preaching of the *tathāgatas* | | |
| *dharmaguhyaṃ cirānurakṣitaṃ sarvadharmaparyāyāṇāṃ mūrdhasthāyi* | reveals this long-kept mys-tery of the law exceeding all others | | |

**Table 6 (cont.)**

| *Saddharma* in the *Lotus Sutra* | | *Saddharma* in the Kayumwungan inscription | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sanskrit | Kern's translation | Translation | Sanskrit |
| Chap. 20, "Tathāgataddharyabhi-saṃskāra": *sarvabuddharahasya* | | | |
| *sarvabuddhagambhīrasthāna* | | | |
| *rahasyajñānaṃ puruṣottamānāṃ* | | | |
| Chap. 15, "Tathāgatāyuṣpramāṇa": *mahābhaiṣajya* | great remedy | **Verse 2:** | |
| Chap. 22, "Bhaiṣajyarājapūrvayoga": *sarvavyādhicchedaka sarvasaṃsārabhaya-bandhana-saṃkaṭapramocaka* | extirpates all diseases, releases from the narrow bonds of the mundane whirl | the prime medicine for all diseases of existence | *akhila-bhavavyādhi-bhaiṣajyam agram* |

## NOTES

1. This paper was read at the annual conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Atlanta, GA, June 27, 2008. I would like to thank Hiram W. Woodward Jr. and Marion Robertson for giving me constructive comments on a draft of this article. Any remaining errors are mine.

2. J.G. de Casparis, *Prasasti Indonesia I: Inscripties uit de Çailendra-tijd* (n.p.: Bandung, 1950), 139, 199, took this name as referring to King Dharanindra, whom he identified as Indra, the Hindu god who controls the rains or clouds (*ghana*). He seems to dismiss this idea later. I can find only secondary sources mentioning Casparis's dismissal of this name. One is in M. D. Poesponegoro and N. Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, vol. 2 (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1984), 103, which refers back to de Casparis's article, "New Evidence between Java and Ceylon in Ancient Times," *Artibus Asiae* 24 (1961): 241–248. But here I cannot find any discussion regarding this dismissal. The second source is in Lokesh Chandra, "The Śailendras of Java," *Cultural Horizons of India* 4 (1995): 219–220. Again, in this article I cannot find the reference for such dismissal. Chandra takes Śrī Ghananātha as the husband of Princess Prāmodavarddhanī, who was consecrated together with her father-in-law (this part is rather confusing, because in one place, i.e., p. 228, he says "his father" instead of "her father-in-law" as mentioned in p. 229). For Khmer's occurences of this epithet, see Claude Jacques, "The Buddhist Sect of Śrīghana in Ancient Khmer Lands," in *Buddhist Legacies in Mainland Southeast Asia: Mentalities, Interpretations and Practices*, ed. François Lagirarde and Paritta Chalermpow Koanantakool (Paris and Bangkok: École Française d'Extrême-Orient and Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, 2006), 71–77. For a recent survey on this epithet, see Peter Skilling, "Random Jottings on Śrīghana: An Epithet of the Buddha," in *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University for the Academic Year 2003*, vol. 7 (March 2004): 147–158.

3. Boechari, "Preliminary Report on Some Archaeological Finds around the Borobudur Temple," in *Seri CC No. 5 Reports and Documents of the Consultative Committee for the Safeguarding of Borobudur,* 5th Meeting, April 1976 (Borobudur: Proyek Pelita Pemugaran Candi Borobudur, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1982). W.D. Boechari and H. Ongkodharma, "Report on Clay Votive Stūpas from the Borobudur Site," in *Seri CC No. 8 Reports and Documents of the Consultative Committee for the Safeguarding of Borobudur,* 8th Meeting, April 1979 (Borobudur: Proyek Pelita Pemugaran Candi Borobudur, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1982).

4. To date I have not had the opportunity to access the actual inscription nor the facsimile. Meanwhile, the table presented in the report does not show the full transcription. The whole thing deserves a full study by itself, which I hope I will be able to do eventually.

5. S. Lévi, *Sanskrit Texts from Bāli* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1933), 80–81; and in T. Goudriaan and C. Hooykaas, *Stuti and Stava* (Amsterdam and London: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1971), 314–316.

6. Rolf W. Giebel, *Two Esoteric Sutras: The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra, the Susiddhikara Sutra* (Berkeley: Numata Center, 2001), 148–149, 315.

7. Some scholars have already attempted to take advantage of Balinese data to explain early Javanese Buddhism, especially after Lévi's discovery of what was published later as *Sanskrit Texts from Bāli* (Baroda, India: Oriental Institute, 1933). Among these is F. D. K. Bosch, "Buddhist Data from Balinese Texts; and Their Contribution to Archaeological Research in Java," in *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeeling Letterkunde* 68, ser. b (1929): 43–78; Max Nihom, *Studies in Indian and Indo-Indonesian Tantrism: The Kuñjarakarṇadharmakathana and the Yogatantra* (Vienna: Publications of the DeNobili Research Library, 1994). For recent discussion related to this subject, see Hiram Woodward, "Esoteric Buddhism in Southeast Asia in the Light of Recent Scholarship," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35, no. 2 (June 2004): 329–354. Of interest to this study is Stutterheim's attempt, which is in the following note.

8. W. F. Stutterheim, "Chaṇḍi Barabuḍur: Name, Form & Meaning," in *Studies in Indonesian Archaelogy*, trans. F. D. K. Bosch, KITLV Translation Series, no. 1 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956), 54.

9. Giebel, *Two Esoteric Sutras*, 143, 216, 273, 306, and 309. *T*. 893, 606a1: *fobadata* 佛八大塔 or *badalingta* 八大靈塔 occurs several times in the *Susiddhikara-sūtra*. The term *badata* occurs in other texts ascribed to Bukong (*T*. 897), Huilin (*T*. 911), and Yixing (*Xuzangjing* 438).

10. See G. P. Malalasekera, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism,* vol. 2 (Colombo: Government of Ceylon, 1971–1977), fasc. 2, 2:243–244 for *Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitya-stotra* (*T*. 1685, *Foshuo-badalingtaminghao-jing* 佛說八大靈塔名號經 by Faxian) and *Aṣṭamahāsthānacaitya-vandanā-stava* (*T*. 1684, *Badalingta-fanzan* 八大靈塔 梵讚 by Faxian). The Chinese translation of *T*. 1684 was done at the end of the tenth century by Faxian. A translation has been made into English by Dr. Kuyi Shen and posted by Prof. Huntington at his website http://huntingtonarchive. osu.edu/resources/buddhistIconography.html. *T*. 1685 is translated by H. Nakamura, "The *Aṣṭamahāsthānacaityastotra* and the Chinese and Tibetan Versions of a Text similar to It," in *Indianisme et Bouddhisme, Mélanges offert à Mgr Étienne Lamotte,* vol. 23 of Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve: Universite catholique de Louvain, Institut Orientaliste, 1980), 259–265.

11. Verse 77 of the *Deśawarṇana*; see Stuart Robson, *Desawarnana* (*Nagara-krtagama*) by Mpu Prapanca (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995); or, Slametmulyana, *Nagarakretagama dan Tafsir Sejarahnya* (Jakarta: Bhratara Karya Aksara, 1979).

12. There are other indications leaning toward theistic connotations. The *Lalitavistara* uses the epithet Svayaṃbhu in referencing to the Buddha; see P. L. Vaidya, *Lalita-Vistara* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1958)*,* e.g., 68. The Balinese tradition recognizes Adi-Buddha; see T. Goudriaan and C. Hooykaas, *Stuti and Stava* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Pub. Co., 1971), 412.

13. N. J. Krom, *Barabuḍur: Archaelogical Descriptions* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1927), 1:112.

14. Vaidya, *Lalita-Vistara,* 48; Gwendolyn Bays, *The Voice of the Buddha, the Beauty of Compassion* (Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1983), 106; Bijoya Goswami, *Lalitavistara* (Kolkata: Asiatic Society, 2001), 84.

15. *T.* 278 and *T.* 279 do not have the first ten names ending in *–uttarajñānī.* They thus list only 142 names.

16. E. Steinkellner, *Sudhana's Miraculous Journey in the Temple of Ta Pho* (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1995); Lokesh Chandra, ed., *Sudhana's Way to Enlightenment* (New Delhi: Sharada Rani, 1975); Yunpeng Li 李 雲鵬, *Pictorial Displays of the 53 Visits of Sudhana, and Śākyamuni* (*Shancaitongzi wushisan can shijiashizun yinghua shiji tu* 善財童子五十三參釋迦世尊應化示蹟 圖), (n.p., n.d.).

17. Q. Afshar, *An Ancient Indian Itinerary: The Geographical Appellatives in the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra; Tentative Identifications* (Lausanne: Kronasia, 1981).

18. Possibly this was one of the reasons why the *Mahākarmavibhaṅga-sūtra* became out of context and needed to be covered.

19. T. W. Rhys-Davids and William Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary* (repr., Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2004)*,* 241: "*Gaṇḍa* [a variation of *gaṇṭha* (–i), in both meanings of (1) swelling, knot, protuberance, and (2) the interstice between two knots or the whole of the knotty object, i. e. stem, stalk]."

20. See G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names* (London: Luzac & Co., 1960), 741.

21. P.L. Vaidya, *Divyāvadānam* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1999). This phrase occurs on the following pages: 63 line 14, 68 line 25, 130 line 24, 215 line 9, 413 line 13, and 428 line 22.

22. P.L. Vaidya, *Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtram* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960). In section 37 of the *Samantasattvatrāṇojaḥśrī,* 214, line 1. However, Chinese witnesses read it as *bodhimaṇḍa* rather than *bodhigaṇḍa. T.* 278, 732b3 has 種種道場; *T.* 279, 381c13 has 種種如來菩提場; and *T.* 293, 752c7 has 種種 如來菩提場. Two reasons may explain this reading. First, although we do not exactly know the script being used to record the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra,* the syllable "ga" in some Indic scripts could be mistakenly read as a "ma" or vice versa, especially when the letter is considered badly written or a typo. Second, *bodhimaṇḍavyūha* is a well-attested compound. Kajiyama, *Satori e no henreki:*

*Kegonkyō Nyuhōkkaibon,* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1994), 28, translates the phrase as (その世界には) 様々な菩提道場が整然とあり, clearly taking it as *bodhimaṇḍa,* in spite of the written *bodhigaṇḍa* in the Sanskrit text. Nonetheless, all these by themselves do not necessarily and effectively reject the possibility of still reading it as *nānābodhigaṇḍavyūhān.* This case may demonstrate that the exact meaning of the compound *gaṇḍavyūha*—as also appeared in the title and in the colophon of the Sanskrit text—might already have been not exactly understood by the time the first Chinese translation was executed.

23. Besides the Bodhi tree (H. Nakamura, *Gotama Buddha: A Biography Based on the Most Reliable Texts* (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing, 2000), 186, in Hindi it is known as the *aśvattha* tree, or in Sanskrit the *pippala* tree (botanical name *Ficus religiosa*) or the mango tree; we recall that the Buddha's life stories record miracles happening under many other trees. Three of the better known ones are (1) the Plakṣa tree, when the baby Bodhisattva was born (the name Plakṣa comes from the *Lalitavistara*; others may call it by a different name; ibid.*,* 59: Aśoka; 62: Sāla); (2) the Jāmbū tree, when the young Bodhisattva first attained his first complete absorption (*jhāna*) (ibid.*,* 91); and (2) the twin Sāla trees, when the Buddha entered into *parinirvāṇa.* The less known trees, but not less important, are (1) trees under which the Buddha spent many days just after the full enlightenment, i.e., the *ajapāla* tree or the Goatherd's Banyan, the *mucalinda* tree, and the *rājāyatana* tree (ibid., 217); (2) trees associated with the Buddha's performance of supernormal powers, i.e., the *āmalakī* tree, the *harītakī* tree, and the *pāricchattaka* tree (ibid., 302); (3) many enlightenment trees for different buddhas (Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, 319).

24. P.L. Vaidya, *Divyāvadānam*, 257 line 30, 258 line 14: *yadāpi mahārāja bhagavatā śrāvastyāṃ tīrthyān bijayārthaṃ vijayārthaṃ mahāprātihāryaṃ kṛtam, buddhāvataṃsakam yāvadakaniṣṭhabhavanaṃ nirmitaṃ mahan, tatkālaṃ taitraivāhamāsam | mayā tadbuddhavikrīḍitaṃ dṛṣṭamiti |*

25. Ju-hyung Rhi, *Gandhāran Images of the "Śrāvastī Miracle": An Iconographic Reassessment* (PhD diss., University of California Berkeley, 1991), 305, takes *buddhāvataṃsaka* as "adornment of the Buddha."

26. Ōtake Susumu, "On the Origin and Early Development of the Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra," in *Reflecting Mirrors: Perspectives on Huayan Buddhism*, ed. Imre Hamar (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 90, interprets *buddhāvataṃsaka* as "legion of buddhas."

27. P.L. Vaidya, *Avadāna-kalpalatā* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1959), chap. 13, "Pratihāryāvadānam." Deborah Black, *Leaves of the Heaven Tree: the Great Compassion of the Buddha* (Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1997), 65, in chap. 14, "Performance of the Miracles," trans. from Tibetan.

28. There are at least two scholars suggesting that the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* was behind the construction of Borobudur. I have earlier rejected the

idea as there is no evidence of its existence in Java. The two scholars are J.J. Boeles, *The Secret of Borobudur* (Bangkok: Jan J. Boeles, 1985) and D. Snellgrove, *Asian Commitment: Travels and Studies in the Indian Sub-Continent and South-East Asia* (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2000), 377–378, the latter of whom suggests that the configuration of the main and the surrounding sixteen *stūpa*s of Borobudur might have been triggered by this sutra. After this study, their idea can be supported, but only at the most general level. As for the details, it is difficult to maintain that this sutra is the only one providing the architectural prototype for Borobudur. I also feel that Boeles's primary argument on the perforated *stūpas*, being of checkerboard-like, was based on a mistaken notion of the Sanskrit term *aṣṭāpada.* H. Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Biographical Notes* (Hirakata: KUFS Publication, 1980), 185, referring to Yutaka Iwamoto's study ("Lexikalische Nachlesen aus dem Saddharmapuṇḍarīka I," *Asia Asiatica* 9 [September 1965]: 78–82), says that *aṣṭāpada* must have been *aṣṭapaṭṭa*, meaning "eight crossings."

29. H. Kern, *The Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or the Lotus of the True Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884), chap. 16, English translation: "They will behold here my Buddha-field in the Saha-world, consisting of lapis lazuli and forming a level plain; forming a chequered board of eight compartments with gold threads; set off with jewel trees. They will behold the towers that the Bodhisattvas use as their abodes." Sanskrit text: *idaṃ ca me buddhakṣetraṃ sahāṃ lokadhātuṃ vaiḍūryamayīṃ samaprastarāṃ drakṣyati suvarṇasūtrāṣṭāpadavinaddhāṃ ratna-vṛkṣairvicitritām | kūṭāgāraparibhogeṣu ca atra bodhisattvān nivasato drakṣyati |*

30. The prescription is in chap. 10, "Dharmabhāṇaka," of the *Lotus Sutra.*

31. M. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (orig. pub. 1899; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2005), 376, shows that *ghana* may mean "the body." This meaning is apparent in the compound *ekaghana,* that according to the context suggests the compound literally means "the same body," or "identical."

32. The Sanskrit passage, from which the English summary is derived, is as follows: *yasmin khalu punarbhaiṣajyarāja pṛthivīpradeśe'yaṃ dharmaparyāyo bhāṣyeta vā deśyeta vā likhyeta vā svādhyāyeta vā saṃgāyeta vā, tasmin bhaiṣajyarāja pṛthivīpradeśe tathāgatacaityaṃ kārayitavyaṃ mahantaṃ ratnamayamuccaṃ pra-gṛhītam | na ca tasminnavaśyaṃ tathāgataśarīrāṇi pratiṣṭhāpayitavyāni | tatkasya hetoḥ? ekaghanameva tasmiṃstathāgataśarīramupanikṣiptaṃ bhavati, yasmin pṛthivīpradeśe'yaṃ dharmaparyāyo bhāṣyeta vā deśyeta vā paṭhyeta vā saṃgāyeta vā likhyeta vā likhito vā pustakagatastiṣṭhet | tasmiṃśca stūpe satkāro gurukāro mānanā pūjanā arcanā karaṇīyā sarvapuṣpadhūpagandhamālyavilepanacūrṇacīva racchatradhvajapatākāvaijayantībhiḥ | sarvagītavādyanṛtyatūryatālāvacarasaṃgīt isaṃpravāditaiḥ pūjā karaṇīyā |*

33. Chap. 11, "Stūpasaṃdarśana," of the *Lotus Sutra.*

34. *asmin mahāpratibhāna mahāratnastūpe tathāgatasyātmabhāvastiṣṭhati*

*ekaghanaḥ | tasyaiṣa stūpaḥ | sa eṣa śabdaṃ niścārayati |* H. Kern's translation for this passage is: "In this great Stūpa of precious substances, Mahāpratibhāna, the proper body of the Tathāgata is contained condensed; his is the Stūpa; it is he who causes this sound to go out" (Kern, *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or the Lotus of the True Law*, 228).

35. They are in chap. 2, "Samutsāha"; chap. 3, "Kulapariśuddhi"; chap. 5, "Pracala"; chap. 10, "Lipiśālāsaṃdarśana"; chap. 13, "Saṃcodanā"; and chap. 15, "Abhiniṣkramaṇa."

36. J. Kats, *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1910), 53. *Nihan ta waneh pājara mami ri kita, ikang śarīra i jro i yawa stūpa prāsāda. Kunang ta ngaranya ikang akṣara: namaḥ siddhaṃ. a, ā; i, ī ; u, ū; . . . śa, ṣa, sa, ha. Nihan lwir ning akṣara pinakāntara nikang śarīra [stūpa]-prāsāda tatwa. . . .* ("Look, more of my teaching for you. This body—inside and outside—is a *stūpa-prāsāda*. The name of the letters is: the holy Siddhaṃ. a, ā; i, ī ; u, ū; . . . śa, ṣa, sa, ha. These letters attached to this body are the essence of [*stūpa*]-*prāsāda*. . . .")

37. Kats, *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, 186.

38. Dale A. Todaro, "The Illuminating Secret Commentary on the Five Cakras and the Nine Syllables by Kakuban," in *Shingon Texts* (Berkeley: Numata Center, 2004), 276.

39. M.W. de Visser, "The Bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha (Kokūzō) in China and Japan," in *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Afdeelingen Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks,* deel XXX, no. 1 (1931): 11–12.

40. Vaidya, *Lalita-Vistara,* 269. The Sanskrit verse says: *rathacaraṇanicitacaraṇā daśaśataarajalajakamaladalatejā | suramukuṭaghṛṣṭacaraṇā vande caraṇau śirighanasya ‖1‖* The Chinese translation by Divākara (*T. 187, Fangguang-dazhuangyan-jing* 方廣大莊嚴經) has it as follows: 世尊足有千輻輪 猶如蓮華 甚清淨 恒為諸天寶冠接 是故我今稽首禮 (*T. 187, 599b27–28*).

41. *T. 186, Puyao-jing* 普曜經. *T. 186, 525a3–4:* 常奉行諸行 悅寂句威力 使魔失 徑路 自投稽首佛. Comparing with *T. 187* in the previous note, Dharmarakṣa might have had a slightly different recension.

42. See note 39.

43. U. Wogihara, *Sanskrit-Chinese-Japanese Dictionary* (Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1979), 1356. P.L. Vaidya, *Samādhirājasūtra* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1961), verse 106 in chap. 35, "Supuṣpacandra": *hā suvratā kṣāntitapodhanāḍhyā hā rūpadākṣiṇyaguṇairupetā | hā niṣkuhā śrīghana niṣprapañcā kuha prayāto'si vihāya mā tvam ‖ 106 ‖* And, verse 2 in chap. 36, "Śīlaskandhanirdeśa": *tasmāt samagrā bhavatha aduṣṭacittāḥ sarve ca bhogā satata manāpakārī | dṛṣṭvā ca buddhān śirighana aprameyān bodhiṃ spṛśitvā bhaviṣyatha dharmasvāmī ‖ 2 ‖*

44. W.E. Soothill and L. Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (orig.

pub., 1937; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977)*,* 168.

45. A. Hirakawa, *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary* (Tokyo: The Reiyukai, 1997), 200.

46. The *Lalitavistara* provides a somewhat detailed and elaborate understanding for the Buddhist concept of *saṃbhāra.* As already noted by some lexicographers, the *Lalitavistara* shows two more *saṃbhāra*s, i.e., *śamatha-saṃbhāra* (accumulations of tranquility) and *vidarśanā-saṃbhāra* (accumulations of insight), in addition to the usual *puṇya-saṃbhāra* (accumulations of merits) and *jñāna-saṃbhāra* (accumulations of knowledge); see, e.g., Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* 1179; and F. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), 580; on p. 487 Edgerton indicates that *vidarśanā* is a synonym for *vipaśyanā.* All of these four *saṃbhāra*s are members of the 108 doors into the light of the dharma *(dharmālokamukha).* But, the *Lalitavistara* does not stop there. It also indicates that *saṃbhāra* may include other kinds of excellent attributes. In chap. 27, "Nigama*,*" the compiler lists eight kinds of *saṃbhāra*s, including the four just mentioned. These eight are: accumulations of charity *(dāna-saṃbhāra),* morality *(śīla-saṃbhāra),* sacred word *(śruta-saṃbhāra),* tranquility *(śamatha-saṃbhāra),* insight *(vidarśanā-saṃbhāra),* merits *(puṇya-saṃbhāra),* knowledge *(jñāna-saṃbhāra),* and great compassion *(mahākaruṇā-saṃbhāra).*

47. At least two passages: (1) in chap. 2, "Samutsāha": *"guṇagaṇavimala-sarasisujātasya"* (the Chinese translation in *T.* 187, 540b09 is 譬如蓮華出於功德廣大池中, a bit different to the expected *gōngdé jù* 功德聚); (2) in chap. 15, "Abhiniṣkramaṇa": *hā mama anantakīrte śatapuṇyasamudgatā vimalapuṇyadharā | hā mama anantavarṇā guṇagaṇapratimaṇḍitā ṛṣigaṇaprītikarā ||130||*

48. There are at least two instances in the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* where *saṃbhāra* is translated as *gōngdé jù* 功德聚. Chap. 36, *"Pramuditanayanajagadvirocanā,"* verse 92: *tataḥ saṃbhūtaḥ praṇidhimeghaḥ sarvajagatsukhapravaṇagarbhaḥ | saṃbhārasaṃbhawa anantā mārgasamudranaya anugataśca ||92||* Then, chap. 42, *"Sutejomaṇḍalaratiṣrī,"* lines 11–12: *etat pramukhair buddhakṣetraparamāṇurajaḥ samair bodhicittāṅgasaṃbhārair abhiniṣpannaḥ sa bodhisattvo jāto bhavati tathāgatakule.*

49. Earlier I have demonstrated that Prājña's version of *Bhadracarī* was likely the one depicted at Borobudur, and consequently the same for the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra.* Besides, either the Javanese monk Bianhong–whom I considered went back to Java after the demise of his master, Huiguo—brought back a copy of Prājña's *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra,* or Prājña himself provided a copy while staying in Java. Before arriving at Canton in 780, Prājña spent twenty-two years on the islands of the South Seas (W. Pachow, "The Voyage of Buddhist Missions to South-East Asia and the Far East," *Journal of the Greater India Society* 17 [1958]: 19, says, "traveled extensively in the South Seas." But, Kenneth R. White, *The*

*Role of Bodhicitta in Buddhist Enlightenment including a Translation into English of Bodhicitta-śāstra, Benkemmitsu-nikyōron, and Sammaya-kaijo* [New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2005], 425, says Prājña spent twenty-two years in the South Seas). Thus, Java is not excluded from the possible places where he stayed.

50. J.G. de Casparis, *Prasasti Indonesia I,* 167.

51. After introducing the word *bhūdhara* to create a hypothetical name "Bhūmisambhāra-bhūdhara," de Casparis (ibid., 169) reconstructs the meaning of Bhūmisambhāra as: "*De Berg van het verwerven (van vrome verdiensten) (op de tien) stadia (van de ontwikkeling van de Bodhisattva)*," or the "Mountain of Accumulation of Virtue on the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva." The meaning in English is given in p. 202. Two scholars, A.J. Bernet Kempers, *Ageless Borobudur: Buddhist Mystery in Stone, Decay and Restoration, Mendut and Pawon, Folklife in Ancient Java* (Wassenaar: Servire, 1976), and Soekmono, *Chandi Borobudur: A Monument of Mankind* (Assen: Van Gorcum and Paris: The Unesco Press, 1976), support de Casparis's suggestion. But, L.C. Damais, and others (see Poesponegoro and Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia,* 2:122–124) reject his idea altogether.

52. The phrase is found in chap. 15, "Indriyeśvara": *tathāgatabhūmisaṃbhāra-jñānāni.* Chinese translations are as follows: *T.* 278, 704c09: 此如來地; *T.* 279, 350c19: 此人應入一切智地; *T.* 293, 704b10: 此人應入如來智地.

53. I have demonstrated how this formula might have been the underlying scheme for the placing of Buddha statues at Borobudur. See H. Kandahjaya, *The Master Key for Reading Borobudur Symbolism* (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995), 28–30, 38–40.

# Bianhong, Mastermind of Borobudur?

**Hiram Woodward**

Walters Art Museum

BIANHONG, A NATIVE OF JAVA, arrived in Chang'an in 780. The brief Chinese biography of Huiguo (746–805), the monk who studied with the prolific esoteric master Amoghavajra and was in turn the teacher of Kūkai (774–835), states that Bianhong 辨弘 came from Holing (Java) and presented Huiguo with a copper cymbal, two conches, and four vases, expressing interest in the teachings of the Womb Mandala.[1] According to Kūkai—a towering figure in the history of Japanese Buddhism—Bianhong had already studied esoteric texts in Java, and in Chang'an, Huiguo initiated him into the Womb (but not the Diamond) Mandala.[2] (Kūkai was initiated into both.) It is not known whether Bianhong ever went home to Java.

The hypothesis that Bianhong did return and was involved in the design of Borobudur was proposed by Hudaya Kandahjaya.[3] Brief inscriptions on Borobudur's covered base belong on palaeographic grounds to the 820s, and it has been suggested that the monument was founded by King Warak (r. 803–827).[4] Bianhong could well have participated in planning sessions in the early 800s. To the question, "Was Bianhong the mastermind?" the answer is surely, "Quite possibly." Still, since the true answer is essentially unknowable, the question is not really a good one. More fundamental are two distinct matters, one being the degree to which the monument should be understood in a Chinese context, the other being whether there is a tantric element.

In regard to tantric, or Mantrayāna, elements, a case can surely be made that by 800 there was awareness of esoteric texts in Central Java. There were the texts Bianhong himself studied before his departure to China. Very likely the excerpts from such texts as the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* (also known as the *Mahāvairocana-abhisaṃbodhi-tantra*) preserved in Java in the *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānan Mantranaya* were circulating in the eighth century.[5] Evidence dating from the 790s indicates that there were links between central Java and the Abhayagiri Monastery

in Sri Lanka, where Amoghavajra was presumably in residence in the 740s.[6] (He returned to China in 745, where he died in 774.) Finally, the inscription found less than a hundred meters from Borobudur, discussed by Hudaya Kandahjaya in his contribution to this issue of *Pacific World*, may be considered a *dhāraṇī* with esoteric content, and it shows that Buddhists following the Mantrayāna were active in the vicinity of the monument.[7] That the Buddhists who planned Borobudur were ignorant of these currents is improbable. On the other hand, the content of the reliefs at Borobudur is not esoteric. It depends on a scripture concerning the law of cause and effect (a *Karmavibhaṅga*), the *Lalitavistara*, the *Jātakamālā* and other *jātaka* and *avadāna* texts, the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, and the *Samantabhadracārya-praṇidhana* (Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, the *Bhadracarī*).[8] The monument, in its overall thrust, surely conforms with the doctrines of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, of which the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and the *Bhadracarī* are the final parts. (Sometimes the arrangement of the buddhas overlooking the galleries, with *jinas* of the center and of the four directions of space, is considered evidence of esoteric content, but these buddhas may simply be buddhas who have descended from pure lands in various galaxies to pay homage to the teaching.) All this means that the planners must have chosen one of several paths: they could have suppressed all knowledge of the Mantrayāna in their efforts to create a monument proclaiming Avataṃsaka (Ch. Huayan) tenets; or, they could have embraced certain Mantrayāna beliefs but re-interpreted them in their own way; or, on the other hand, they could have decided they wanted to build a monument that simultaneously had dual or multiple meanings, or, perhaps, meanings specifically outer, inner, and secret.[9] If Bianhong was an important player in the decision-making process, this last alternative is the only one possible—though it could be added that he likely regarded the Avataṃsaka content as both undergirding and totally consistent with his own beliefs. All of this supposes that Borobudur presents a coherent message, that it is not the product of one ideology grafted onto another in the course of construction. Although there is evidence of changes in plans while the monument was being built, the upper terraces and the galleries in their final form must have been planned together; otherwise there would not have been seventy-two panels devoted to the *Bhadracarī* on the fourth gallery and seventy-two latticed *stūpas* on the terraces.[10] Of course, to the possibilities just listed above, various nuances could be added, such as that Borobudur's

Avataṃsaka was already tantricized, and so there was not necessarily a strong consciousness of two distinct paths.

As for China, the very fact that Bianhong is a historical figure implies the existence of forgotten Javanese monks who also traveled to China. Once a Chinese factor is assumed, many conjectures can be made about the meaning of Borobudur, and discussion will be found in the pages that follow concerning the design of the terraces, the role of assemblies (*hui,* 會), cause and fruit, sudden enlightenment, and other matters. It has to be granted, however, that identifying elements for which no other explanation can be found than knowledge of Chinese thinking is a somewhat different matter, simply because there survives so much more evidence on the Chinese side than on the Indian. An example is the matter of the *Gaṇḍavyūha–Bhadracarī* sequence, the first text depicted in the reliefs of the second and third galleries, the second on the fourth. These two scriptures had existed independently until brought together in the eighth century, perhaps not until the creation of the text sent by the ruler of Uḍra (modern Orissa) to the emperor of China in 795. This was translated in Chang'an by Prajña in 796–798.[11] The Bhadracarī illustrations at Borobudur best conform in certain details to the text translated by Prajña.[12] Bianhong arrived in China in 780, but nothing is known about how long he stayed. If he was still there in 796, then he could have studied the text with Prajña and returned with it to Java. On the other hand, ties between Java and Orissa are attested by art-historical evidence, and recent excavations at the site of Udayagiri will doubtless strengthen the evidence for close communication.[13] Therefore the text translated by Prajña could have reached Java directly from Orissa, without any Chinese connection at all.

My focus will be on Borobudur's upper terraces. Since their design is unique in the Buddhist world and because they are relatively mute—especially in comparison with the illustrations of the identified Buddhist texts in the gallery spaces below—there is no way to understand them without making imaginative leaps. The interpretations I have made in the past, as they are the basis for the proposals in this paper, will be first reviewed. Then I shall focus on the place of the alphabet diagram (*prastāra*), as found in esoteric texts, in the designing of the terraces, and on the implications this dependence has for the understanding of Borobudur.

## INTERPRETING THE TERRACES

Early on, I suggested that the designers of Borobudur were familiar with the story of the demonstration by the Huayan master Fazang (643–712) of the nature of the *dharmadhātu* ("truth realm").[14] He placed ten mirrors in a room, four on the walls, four in the corners, one on the ceiling, and one on the floor. In the middle he put a Buddha image lit by a bright torch. Fazang installed a permanent version of his mirrored hall at the Jianfu Temple in Chang'an, which Bianhong presumably visited, since it was still in existence in 814.[15] Fazang is said to have declared: "Your majesty, this is a demonstration of Totality in the Dharmadhatu. . . . [I]n each and every reflection of any mirror you will find all the reflections of all the other mirrors, together with the specific Buddha image in each, without omission or misplacement. . . . right here we see an example of one in all and all in one—the mystery of realm embracing realm ad infinitum is thus revealed."[16]

This led to my supposition that the *stūpas* of the Borobudur terraces were originally gilded, or intended to be gilded—a proposal unlikely ever to be demonstrable archaeologically because the *stūpas* would have been covered with plaster before any gilding was applied. They reflected not only each other but also the visitor, who saw his own reflection mingled with the sight of the Buddha Vairocana inside. This visitor, it can be imagined, has become an inhabitant (*vihārin*) of the pavilion of Maitreya.[17] In the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* the Bodhisattva Maitreya gives the pilgrim Sudhana a tour of this pavilion (*kūṭāgāra*), a tour depicted in an extensive sequence of reliefs in Borobudur's third gallery. There, however, the visitor to the monument perceives the architectural elements of the tower as a tourist would but not as a true inhabitant—an enlightened being for whom everyday experience is no different from the pavilion. For such a person the entire world is like Indra's net, "where principal and satellites reflect one another," representing "the nature of things manifesting reflections multiplied and remultiplied in all phenomena, all infinitely."[18] This understanding is like the *samādhi* (concentration) of oceanic reflection (*sāgara-mudrā-samādhi*), which the Buddha had entered before he uttered the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* —especially if imagined as a nighttime sea become suddenly calm and reflecting the stars.[19] The Chinese title for the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra* was "Entering the *Dharmadhātu* Chapter," and it can be said that on the Borobudur terraces, the visitor has actually entered the *dharmadhātu*.

An argument made subsequently was that was that the three rings of 16, 24, and 32 *stūpas* could be understood as alluding to the sun, the moon, and the planets and stars, the latter comprising five-times-five planets and the seven stars of the Big Dipper, in accordance with a Daoist sequence that culminates in "pacing the mainstay" (*bugang,* 步綱).[20] These celestial bodies, the "Three Originals," can also be found inside the human body, below the navel. At the same time, I proposed that the circular configuration of the perforated *stūpas* indicated a familiarity with the *cakrākṣara*, "wheel letters" or circle of phonemes, as illustrated in a text in Chinese attributed to Amoghavajra (*T.* 1020), but I did not attempt to explain the meaning or function of the wheel (fig. 1). In addition, I argued that the square- and diamond-shaped openings in the *stūpas* were also breaths, which the Javanese initiation text the *Advaya Sādhana* describes as having geometrical shapes.[21]
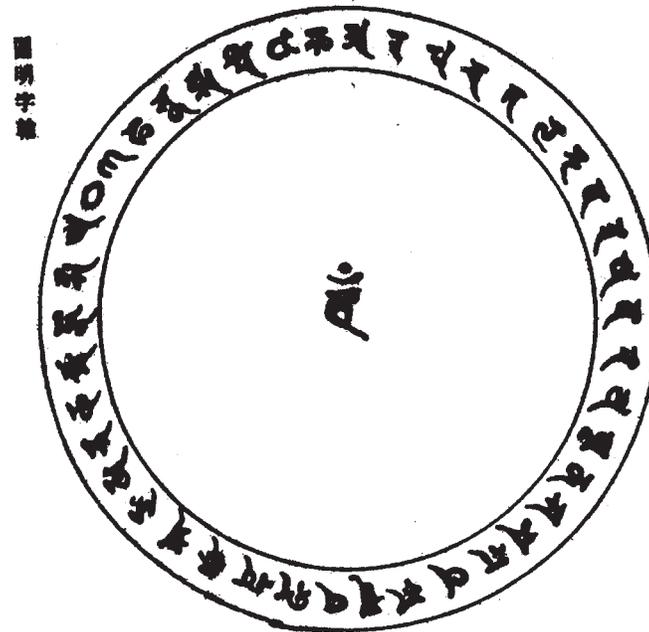


Figure 1. *Cakrākṣara* with the forty-two letters of the Arapacana syllabary, as it appears in the Chinese text *T.* 1020. Reproduced from Lokesh Chandra, "Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan," in Lokesh Chandra, *Cultural Horizons of India*, vol. 4 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 1995), 402.

There is yet another connection that can be proposed, one that appeared in my publications of 2004 and 2005.[22] This is that the three terraces are like the *cakras* of the interior yogic anatomy in the *Yoginī* tantras and in *kuṇḍalinī* yoga: they are imaginable as lotuses, each petal bearing a letter.

LETTER DIAGRAMS

It has long been apparent that the numbers of the perforated *stūpas* on the three terraces correspond to those of a simple grid of 81 squares, in which the outermost ring has 32 squares and the ones next to it 24 and 16 squares.[23] Interpretations of the numbers of *stūpas* on the terraces, 16, 24, and 32, for a total of 72, have to take into account that the numbers were generated by this grid. What we don't know is the form in which such a grid became known to the Borobudur designers and what its associated content was. I propose that the grid was known in the form of a letter diagram (*prastāra*).

Such a letter diagram has been reconstructed by Toru Tomabechi on the basis of the Tibetan text of the *Uttarottara-tantra* of the *Sarva-buddhasamāyogaḍākinījālasaṃvara*.[24] Figure 2 is a re-drawing of Tomabechi's diagram, substituting Roman letters for Devanagari, and adding numbers that represent the order of the letters in the Sanskrit alphabet. The lost "root" *Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinījālasaṃvara* is thought to be the text briefly described by Amoghavajra in his *Introduction to the Yoga of the Eighteen Sections of the Vajraśekhara-tantra* (*T*. 869), which has been translated into English by Rolf Giebel.[25] The same letter diagram appears in a Hindu tantra, the *Vīṇāśikha-tantra*, with which the Buddhist text must bear a close relationship. This tantra, which can be read in an English translation by Teun Goudriaan, is one of the texts claimed by a Cambodian inscription of 1052 to have been used in a ceremony of 802, 250 years previously—a claim that might be considered dubious, were it not for the fact of knowledge of the comparable Buddhist tantra in mid-eighth-century China.[26] In both of these texts, the letter diagram exists for the primary purpose of extracting a mantra.[27] The identity of the mantra can be disguised when it is described in terms of the position of the phonemes in the letter diagram.

There is a third such *prastāra*, one found inscribed on stone slabs at the Buddhist temple of Bat Cum at Angkor in Cambodia (fig. 3).[28] It has only been published in the form of a sketch, in which the Khmer characters are replaced by Roman letters, and lacunae indicated with

| (17) k | (18) kh | (19) g | (20) gh | (21) ṅ | (22) c | (23) ch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (24) bh | (10) ḹ | (1) a | (2) ā | (3) i | (7) ṛ | (24) j |
| (39) b | (15) ḥ | (42) y | (46) ś | (43) r | (4) ī | (25) jh |
| (38) ph | (16) ṃ | (49) h | kṣaṃ | (47) ṣ | (5) u | (26) ñ |
| (37) p | (14) āu | (45) v | (48) s | (44) l | (6) ū | (27) ṭ |
| (36) n | (9) ḷ | (13) o | (12) āi | (11) e | (8) ṝ | (28) ṭh |
| (35) dh | (34) d | (33) th | (32) t | (31) ṇ | (30) ḍh | (29) ḍ |

Figure 2. Letter diagram (*prastāra*) according to the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga*, as reconstructed by Toru Tomabechi, redrawn with numbers indicating the order of the letters in the Sanskrit alphabet.

conjectures in parentheses. Very likely it dates from 953, the date of the Buddhist inscription at Bat Cum—though it is sometimes held that the site was originally that of a Hindu temple constructed early in the tenth century.[29] This diagram is of great importance because the outlines of lotuses are inscribed in the grid: this means that it is possible to imagine the letters in a circle, on the petals of a lotus, and to visualize them in three dimensions, one lotus above the other.

In the diagram (fig. 2), *kṣaṃ* appears in the center; *kṣa* is considered a fiftieth letter, added to the Sanskrit alphabet in tantric texts to make a more satisfying number than 49.[30] Eight letters (numbers 42–49 in the alphabet) lie in the innermost square, then letters 1–16,

the 16 vowels, in the middle square, and finally the 24 letters 17–40 in the outer square. The missing letter is *m*, letter 41, the last of the twenty-five consonants. The forty-nine letters cannot be figured in such a diagram without adjustments. George Cœdès, who published the Bat Cum diagram (fig. 3), had thought the missing letter was *k*, the first consonant. Other than this, and the absence of a letter in the center, the only difference in the Bat Cum diagram is the location of the vowels 7 to 10, which start in the southeast corner in Tomabechi's reconstruction and in the northwest corner in the Cambodian design.
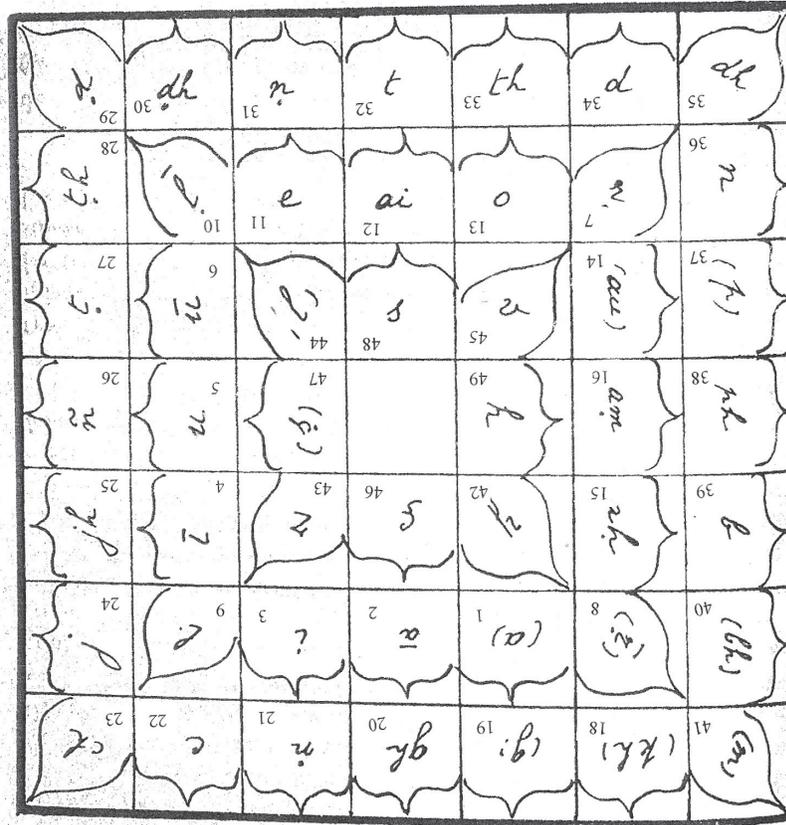


Figure 3. Reconstruction by George Cœdès of a lithic inscription found at Bat Cum, Angkor, showing a letter diagram (*prastāra*). The numbers (indicating the order of the letters in the Sanskrit alphabet) have been added. After G. Cœdès, "Un yantra récemment découvert à Angkor," *Journal Asiatique* 240 (1952): 465–477.

The alphabet diagram is the matrix from which any mantra can be derived.[31] It may also be considered to represent the emanation of speech, beginning with the supreme *aum* and extending to the primary phonemes, as well as an ideal totality. In the Chinese text, the place of the assembly (*hui,* 會) for the teaching of the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga-ḍākinījālasaṃvara* is a "mantra palace" (*zhenyan gongdian,* 眞言宮殿).[32] Perhaps this mantra palace is the letter diagram itself. In the Tibetan text, an aspect of the diagram is called a *gźal yas khaṅ*, equivalent to Sanskrit *kūṭāgāra*, a word that of course had great significance for the Borobudur planners.[33]

Knowledge of the *prastāra* helped shape the design of the terraces. If this argument is granted, then it has to be asked how much of its content carried over. Surely there is sound of some sort on the terraces; this is especially the case if the openings in the *stūpas* really are breaths. In Kūkai's words, "No sooner does the inner breath of living beings vibrate the air of the external worlds than there arises voice (*shō* [聲, sheng, "voice"])."[34] The nature of the sounds may be open to dispute, however. They could be basic phonemes, just as in the *prastāra*. They might be a selection of these phonemes, re-arranged in the form of either three different mantras or a single mantra of 72 syllables.[35] The syllables of a mantra could indeed be visualized in circle, corresponding to a ring of *stūpas* at Borobudur. Finally, the sounds could be those of discursive speech, if this speech is mantra-ized, so that its very sounds stand for the apprehension of Truth. Here arises the question of the *Bhadracarī* and of how the 72 panels correspond to the 72 *stūpas*.

It is contended here that the sounds are those of an extended alphabet. After all, this is the most direct way to deal with the planners' understanding of the *prastāra*. The sixteen *stūpas* are the sixteen vowels, sounds that are the first to emanate, and which may be conceived spatially as the most celestial of the sounds.[36] In the second ring are the sounds characterized by an increased degree of voiceness, namely the consonants.[37] Since there are 25 consonants (letters 17–41) and only 24 spots, the letter *m* must be missing, just as in the *prastāra*. There is a passage in the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* (or, at least, in the Tibetan text) that could be considered corroborative evidence, because it also omits the letter *m*. The consonants plus the eight semivowels and spirants (letters 42–49) are said in the commentary to the passage to be emblems of aspects of the "intrinsic nature of emptiness."[38] So that there are 32 rather than 33 letters and the absence of *m* is not

immediately apparent, the nasals (*ṅ, ñ, ṇ, n*, plus *m* if it were there) are pulled out of their ordinary sequence and put at the end.

That leaves the third ring, which at Borobudur has 32 *stūpas*. But there are only eight letters left, the semivowels and spirants. Augmenting the alphabet so that it conforms to an ideal number is well attested; vowels can be divided in half, for instance, and nasalized sounds added at the end.[39] No alphabet with 72 phonemes has been found, but here it is proposed that at Borobudur the third ring was identified with the semivowels and spirants, letters 42–49, each followed by the sounds *a, ā, aṃ*, and *aḥ* (8 x 4), a means found in the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* to turn 25 consonants into 100 letters.[40]

## CELESTIAL BODIES

Having constructed a provisional alphabetic sequence of phonemes, it must be asked what these sounds stand for: first, celestial bodies, and second, something more elusive—in the words just quoted, aspects of the intrinsic nature of emptiness. An allusion to celestial bodies is incontrovertible, even if there may be a question about which bodies are at stake. In the *Vīṇāśikha-tantra,* the following verses appear, in connection with the *prastāra*:

> 248. *anenādhiṣṭhitaṃ devi cakravat parivartate |*
> *yathā tāragaṇaṃ sarvaṃ grahanakṣatramaṇḍalam ||*
> 249. *dhruvādhiṣṭhitaṃ tat sarvam acalaṃ paravartate |*
> *tadvac charīraṃ devasya sarvabījagaṇaṃ hi yat ||*

This is translated by Goudriaan as follows:

> 248. (this whole system) revolves like a wheel under His presidence, just like the complete host of stars, the orbit of planets and celestial bodies,
> 249. the whole of which, presided by the Pole Star, revolves although being immovable. In the same way the body of the God which is identical with the complete host of Bījas ["seed syllables"].[41]

Transporting the *prastāra* (with its numerical sequence of 1, 8, 16, and 24) to the Borobudur terraces, the central and surrounding *stūpas* would be visualized as follows:

> (1) Pole star (*dhruva*)
> (16) Stars (*tāra*)
> (24) Planets (*graha*)
> (32) Lunar mansions (*nakṣatra*)

Here the numerology holds for the lunar mansions, if their number is augmented from 27 or 28 to the ideal number 32. As the structure of the *prastāra* is like that of the sacred diagram (the Vāstupuruṣa Mandala) used in consecrating the site upon which a temple is to be built, the literature on this subject can be considered relevant—especially the fact that Utpala, in his commentary on the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā,* repeated some of the *nakṣatra* in order to turn a list of 27 or 28 into a list of 32.[42]

In Indian thought, the number 16 has had an enduring association with the moon.[43] A day, sunrise to sunrise, has 24 hours, and the day replicates the year.[44] This means that a correlation proposed by Mark Long and Caesar Voûte is very likely the correct one:

(16) Moon
(24) Sun
(32) Lunar mansions[45]

My thinking has changed since 1999, when I proposed that the configuration 16-24-32 was actually dependent upon knowledge of a Daoist sequence (sun; moon; 5 x 5 planets plus seven stars of the Big Dipper).[46] Since the Borobudur design, instead (it is argued here), arose from the alphabet grid, what can be said is that when Bianhong went to China he might have become aware of other interpretations and that he would have considered them evidence of the fundamental universality of the *prastāra.* If, indeed, Huiguo had performed the Daoist *kaozhao* 考召, "inspecting [demons] and summoning [spirits]," as Michel Strickmann believed, then Bianhong could have become aware of the cosmic significance of the numbers 16, 24, and 32 through his teacher.[47] Strickmann, however, may have misunderstood the meaning of the characters *kao* and *zhao* in Huiguo's biography.[48] Also arguing against such a scenario is the fact that although there is plenty of evidence for the incorporation of the seven stars into Buddhist practice, that seems not to have extended to the number 32.[49]

There could have been, however, reinforcement of the cosmic aspect elsewhere. The *mingtang* of the Empress Wu (625–705), a Buddhist adaptation of a Han-dynasty ceremonial structure, was no longer in existence during the period of Bianhong's stay, and so we need not be concerned with its actual appearance but, instead, the visual image that formed in his head as he heard about it. Firstly, the name *mingtang* could have been understood as *\*vidyā-kūṭāgara,* that is, the tower of Maitreya permeated by the sound of mantras. Then Bianhong learned that the *mingtang* was many storied, square below,

like the earth, and round above, like heaven. Lastly he heard that on the ceiling of the round part were depictions of the sun, the moon, and the other heavenly bodies (*riyue xing chen*, 星辰星辰).[50] Bianhong's mental image of these heavenly bodies could well have corresponded to the eventual Borobudur.

There is an additional possibility. Bianhong was told that a water clock had been part of the *mingtang* complex. If this water clock resembled the well-documented Song-dynasty example, then it had a great wheel with 72 spokes, and among the lesser wheels, one had 16 lugs for striking the double-hours of the day by bells and drums.[51] The visual relevance of these wheels would have been appreciated by Bianhong, who could have seen in them not only echoes of disks bearing letters but representations of the simultaneity of past, present, and future.

## THE NATURE OF PHENOMENA

The letters of the alphabet can be arranged in three rings, as seen so far, as well as in other sorts of diagrams and in a single ring, in the form known as a *cakrākṣara*. There was a long textual tradition of *cakrākṣara*, and it is here proposed that to the *prastāra* all the established meanings of the *cakrākṣara* adhered. This traditional single-ring alphabet was not the regular Sanskrit alphabet, however, but another with 42 characters, known as the Arapacana syllabary, which originated in northwestern India.[52]

In the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, the pilgrim Sudhana visits the Good Friend Śilpābhijña, a scene depicted in panel II.119, on the main wall of the second gallery at Borobudur. Śilpābhijña's instructions are based on a forty-two-character *cakrākṣara*. His opening words are:

> so'vocat-ahaṃ kulaputra śilpābhijñāvato bodhisattvavimokṣasya lābhī | tasya me kulaputra mātṛkāṃ vācayamānasya akāramakṣaraṃ pari-kīrtayato bodhisattvānubhāvena asaṃbhinnaviṣayaṃ nāma prajñā-pāramitāmukhamavakrāntam |[53]

> He said, "Son of Good Family, I have obtained higher knowledge of the arts and sciences of bodhisattva liberation. While reading the alphabet, Son of Good Family, when I enunciate the syllable *a* by the power of a bodhisattva, I enter a gate of perfected wisdom named pure sphere."[54]

In Thomas Cleary's translation from the Chinese:

"I have attained an enlightening liberation with higher knowledge of arts. In uttering the phonemes, as I pronounce *A*, by the associative power of an enlightening being [i.e., bodhisattva] I enter a door of transcendent wisdom called sphere of totality."[55]

Śilpābhijña then runs through the remaining 41 phonemes. Let us focus on the letter *ṇ,* the 36th phoneme (picked out because the Sanskrit contains the term *cakrākṣara*). The text reads:

> *ṇakāraṃ parikīrtayataḥ cakrākṣarākārakoṭivacanaṃ nāma prajñāpāra-
> mitāmukhamavakrāntam |*

> "When I enunciate the syllable *ṇa*, I enter a gate of perfected wisdom named speech of the limit of forms of the wheel of syllables."[56]

In Cleary's English, again from the Chinese:

> . . . pronouncing *Na*, I enter a door of transcendental wisdom called voicing the millions of configurations of the wheel of phonemes. . . .[57]

There are two Chinese texts based upon the visit to Śilpābhijña, *T.* 1019 and 1020, both ascribed to Amoghavajra.[58] *T.* 1019 takes the passages concerning the 42 phonemes and augments each of them. Śikṣānanda's Chinese translation of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* text concerning the letter *ṇ* is:

> 唱拏孃可切字時。入般若波羅蜜門
> *T.* 279, 10.418b21: 名觀察字輪有無盡諸億字

*T.* 1019 takes the *Gaṇḍavyūha* text as a starting point and adds to it. Here is the entry for the phoneme *ṇa* in its entirety:

> *T.* 1019, 19.708c10: Na 儜上字時。
> *T.* 1019, 19.708c11: 入字輪積集俱胝字般若波羅蜜門。
> *T.* 1019, 19.708c12: 悟一切法離諸諠諍無往無來行住坐臥不可得故

The addition comes from a passage concerning *ṇa* in a *cakrākṣara* in the *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*:

> *T.* 220, 5.302c11: 悟一切法離諸喧諍無往無來行住坐臥不可得故。[59]

The entire *T.* 1019 passage means something like "Pronouncing *ṇa* and entering the Prajñāpāramitā gate called 'voicing the millions of configurations of the *cakrākṣara*,' I realize (*wu,* 悟) that all dharmas are other than various noisy arguments, are neither coming nor going, [and that] standing, walking, sitting, [and] lying down cannot be perceived [in them]."[60]

The passage combines a positive idea—that *ṇa* stands for all possible (sacred?) speech—with a negative one, that phenomena cannot be pinned down. Dharmas, in the plural, are phenomena,

or more specifically, the finite number of mental elements that comprise consciousness.[61] What is at stake is the "empty" nature of these elements: the enlightened mind realizes not only that standing, walking, and so forth cannot be identified with phenomena when their true nature is understood, but that no such verbal entities apply at all.

It would seem, logically, that the perforated *stūpas* of the terraces should be identified as the "gates" of the text. The image that arises, however, from the Sanskrit term *mukha*, or face, and the Chinese *men* 門, or gate, seems to fit the Borobudur gates that are passed through in the ascent from one gallery to the next so well that it could even be said that that the Javanese architects were aware of the meaning of both terms and that both contributed to the design. The correct interpretation, therefore, is that the inhabitant of the terraces has achieved the enlightened understanding of the nature of reality and that the *stūpas* are not the gates, or doors, which have already been entered and passed through. The perforated *stūpa* that hums the phoneme *ṇa*, in other words, contains only the ghosts of the absent concepts, the noisy arguments and the others. In the Sarvāstivādin count, which may have been followed at Borobudur, there are in fact seventy-two conditioned dharmas—but these wouldn't actually be present on the terraces, only the proper understanding of each.[62]

The title of *T.* 1019 includes a host of terms and concepts that go beyond both the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and the *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*:

> *Dafangguang fo Huayanjing Rufajiepin dunzheng Piluzhena fashen zilun yujia yigui*
>
> 大方廣佛花嚴經入法界品頓證毘盧遮那法身字輪 瑜伽儀軌
>
> Ritual Procedure for the Syllable-Wheel Yoga of Suddenly Realizing the Dharma-Body of Vairocana, from the "Entering the *Dharmadhātu*" Chapter of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaipūlya-sūtra*[63]

What makes this a Mantrayāna text, it may be surmised, is that the wheel of letters is no longer merely a collection of signs. Instead, the very sounds of the phonemes embody a realization of the concepts they stand for, and this realization can be implanted or sealed through a ritual procedure (*yigui,* 儀軌). "Entering the *Dharmadhātu*" is the Chinese name for the *Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra*, and the position is taken here (as in earlier publications) that on the Borobudur terraces we indeed enter the *dharmadhātu*. The title suggests that this entering is equivalent to "Suddenly Realizing the Dharma-Body of Vairocana."

"Vairocana" is unproblematic: the identity of the terrace buddhas as the supreme cosmic Buddha Vairocana is what is generally assumed. Furthermore, the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* contains a statement that connects the terrace buddhas (in *dharmacakramudrā*, the wheel-turning gesture) with letters: "Thus this is a single wheel of letters, a single continuum, which revolves like a wheel. If the *mantrin* [one adept at mantra] knows that wheel of letters, he will always illumine [the world], like the Bhagavat Vairocana who turned the wheel."[64] Two remaining terms in the title, however, "suddenly realizing" (*dunzheng*, 頓證) and "dharma-body" (*fashen*, 法身; *dharmakāya*) raise issues that can be described in this paper but not entirely resolved—issues in part Buddhological in nature, in part involving the question of the degree to which the terraces stand for different degrees of accomplishment and of how the central *stūpa* is to be differentiated from the perforated ones.

The term "sudden," or "instantaneous," most commonly in *dunwu* 頓悟, "sudden enlightenment," figures prominently in discussions of Chan Buddhism. It was more a Chinese than an Indian concern, and analyzing suddenness on the basis of Sanskrit rather than Chinese texts is no simple matter.[65] But the term was also important in the Mantrayāna, as is apparent in the title of *T.* 1019. And it is not absent in Perfection (*pāramitā*) Path Buddhism. It was the opinion of Zhidun (314–366) that sudden enlightenment (*dunwu*) takes place in the course of the seventh of the ten stages of the bodhisattva path; other Chinese Buddhists placed it after the eighth stage.[66] Since the classic text outlining the ten stages, the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, is part of the *Avataṃsaka* compilation, looking at Borobudur as embodying the stages, with a significant break occurring at the seventh or eighth stage, is entirely appropriate. J. G. de Caparis presented an interpretation along these lines, but later in his career he seemed to pull away from it.[67]

Allowing a degree of suddenness to the passage onto the plateau and upper terraces from Borobudur's fourth gallery raises the question of whether the Mantrayāna sudden realization of the *dharmakāya* was somehow acknowledged. It is possible to understand Borobudur as simultaneously presenting two paths to a common goal. It is not necessary to trace one's way through all the reliefs; the axial stairs provide a direct route. The pilgrim who directly ascends the stairs must be arriving symbolically at the same spiritual level as one who has traversed the galleries. But no content is specifically stated; there

is merely the experience of passing through the gates at each level, with their suggestion of processes of death and rebirth. A pilgrim who passes through the galleries can be said to be following the Perfection Path to enlightenment. What remains to be determined is the degree to which just climbing the stairs implies the existence of a simultaneous Mantrayāna gate.

This is one way of addressing the relationship between *Avataṃsaka* and Mantrayāna elements at Borobudur. *T.* 902, a brief text attributed to Amoghavajra, "A Complete Explication of the Meaning of *Dhāraṇīs*," was translated by Paul Copp in his dissertation. It begins as follows:

> For a hundred thousand *koṭis* of *asaṃkhyeya kalpas,* Thus-come Ones [*tathāgatas*, the buddhas] have concentrated their bodhi-endowments and empowered the words and syllables (*wenzi,* 文字) of *dhāraṇī* true words (*zhenyan*, 眞言, mantra, Japanese *Shingon*). These [*dhāraṇī*-true-words] correspond to bodhisattvas of immediate awakening (*dunwu,* 頓悟), who immediately gather (*dunji,* 頓集) their endowment of merit and wisdom (*fude zhihui ziliang*, 福德 智慧 資糧, i. e. *puṇyajñānasaṃbhāra*).
>
> There are two forms of cultivation for those who would cultivate the bodhisattva way within the Great Vehicle and confirm (*zheng,* 證) the peerless bodhi-way. They consist of what is called cultivating to complete buddhahood by relying on the paramitas and cultivating to complete buddhahood by relying on true words, *dhāraṇīs*, and the three mysteries. [68]

The relatively common term *puṇyajñāna* appears in a Javanese inscription of 824 (the *saṃbhāra* considered implied) and is sometimes considered relevant to Borobudur.[69] If the *T.* 902 passage is interpreted in the light of the architecture of the monument, it can be understood to mean that the accumulation of merit and wisdom takes place in the galleries, and, having reached their summit, the pilgrim has an opportunity for sudden enlightenment or for sudden gathering (considering the two terms as equivalents of each other). Stepping into the realm of the terraces, becoming a bodhisattva of sudden enlightenment, means complete identification with *dhāraṇī*-true-words. It may be that he who relies on "true words, *dhāraṇīs*, and the three mysteries" can reach the terraces by the staircases, avoiding the gallery reliefs altogether. The content of the reliefs nevertheless stands for the *puṇyajñānasaṃbhāra* that entitles the bodhisattva of immediate awakening to enter the terraces.

The *T.* 1019 title speaks of "Suddenly Realizing the Dharma-Body of Vairocana." There seems to be no simple way to resolve the matter of giving "body" names to the Borobudur buddhas. There are four levels:

crowning *stūpa*
buddhas of the perforated *stūpas* of the terraces
buddhas overlooking the galleries
Śākyamuni in the first-gallery reliefs

There are, however, only three bodies in most systems, *nirmāṇakāya*, *sambhogakāya*, and *dharmakāya*, and so either one of these classifications must do double duty or a four-body nomenclature needs to be invoked. The *nirmāṇakāya* appears in the first-gallery reliefs, depicting the life of the Buddha. The buddhas overlooking the galleries are in my view the *sambhogakāya*; like the buddhas of the *Lotus Sutra*, they are *jinas* who gather from pure lands in the various directions of space to honor the teaching. The buddhas depicted in the upper register of some of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs of the fourth gallery are the same buddhas, assembled for the same reason. (On the other hand, if the gallery buddhas are primarily thought to radiate as the result of the mental accomplishment of the terrace buddhas, they could be understood as the *nirmāṇakāya*.)

If both the gallery buddhas and the terrace buddhas are considered the *sambhogakāya*, then it would have to be said that on the terraces we have entered a pure land and that our relationship to the *sambhogakāya* has been transformed (buddhas above us, in the galleries; approachable, on the terraces). This would presumably accord with Huayan doctrine. As Fazang wrote in "Cultivation of Contemplation of the Inner Meaning of the Hua-yen: The Ending of Delusion and Return to the Source" (*T.* 1876): "1. Third is the contemplation of the mystic merging of mind (*xin* 心) and environment (*jing* 境). 2. Mind means mind without obstruction; 3. all Buddhas realize this, whereby they attain the body of reality (*fashen* 法身 *dharmakāya*). 4. Environment means environment without obstruction; 5. all Buddhas realize this, whereby they achieve a pure land (*jingtu* 淨土). 6. This means that the Buddhas' body of reward (*baoshen* 報身, *sambhogakāya*) and the pure land on which it is based merge completely without obstruction."[70] For Fazang, the distinguishing feature of the dharma-body was that it was mental (*xin,* 心) while the *sambhoga*-body had location (*jing,* 境). The terrace buddhas have a location, conceivable as a pure land or perhaps

in the sun, moon, and lunar mansions. The crowning *stūpa*, in such a scheme, could stand for the *dharmakāya*.

Perhaps Fazang would also have said that on the terraces we enter a Vairocana assembly (*hui*, 會). In a letter he wrote to his Korean friend Ŭisang, ca. 690–692, there is a passage that seems to offer a window onto popular Buddhism: "Humbly, I pray that in the generations to come, after we have left behind [these] bodies and received [others], together, in the Assembly of [Vai]Rocana, we may listen and receive such an inexhaustible and excellent Law and train in the practice of such inexhaustible vows of Samantabhadra."[71] Sometime in a future existence, that is, we will ascend to a Vairocana Assembly. There we will dwell in accordance with the *Bhadracarī* and with the sounds of the *Bhadracarī.*

The Mantrayāna viewpoint is different. The title of *T*. 1019 speaks of immediately realizing the *dharmakāya* of the Buddha Vairocana, and so, perhaps, in agreement with the Mantrayāna position that the *dharmakāya* actually preaches and that word provides direct access to it, it is this body that is depicted. It was Kūkai who articulated a new vision of the *dharmakāya*, and quite possibly the *T*. 1019 title influenced his thinking.[72] (Whether Bianhong and Kūkai might together have discussed this matter will never be known.) The invocation of the *prastāra* as shaping the design of Borobudur seems inexorably to lead to the conclusion that the terrace buddhas are the *dharmakāya.* One way to reconcile this position with the Huayan outlook would be to presume that Bianhong would have said, "Followers of the Perfection Path perceive a pure land, but those in the Mantra Path know this truly is the *dharmakāya.*"

Some other term, then, needs to be found to characterize the crowning *stūpa*—if indeed it stands for a buddha-body at all. The Old-Javanese text the *Advaya-sādhana* offers *divārūpa*, "being like the sky," a condition superior to the sun and moon, and perhaps an equivalent to Mahāvairocana, as distinct from Vairocana.[73] An alternative is to use a different term for the terrace buddhas, such as the *bodhimaṇḍakāya*, found in Buddhaguhya's *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* commentary and defined by Hodge as "the abode of being which is the embodiment of All-knowing Awareness, taken on by Buddhas at the time of their Enlightenment."[74] This term is an attractive one, for it can be taken to allude to the moment of the original teaching of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, said to have occurred immediately following the

Buddha's enlightenment. Another alternative is to invoke the four bodies named at the end of Amoghavajra's *Introduction to the Yoga of the Eighteen Sections of the Vajraśekhara-tantra* (*T.* 869): *nirmāṇa-, sambhoga-, svabhāva-,* and *\*niṣyanda-kāya.*[75]

## THE *BHADRACARĪ*

Fazang's letter—just quoted—indicates that a Vairocana assembly is pervaded by the sounds of the *Bhadracarī*. And the fact that on the fourth gallery there are seventy-two panels illustrating the sixty-two stanzas of the extant text of the *Bhadracarī* confirms a place for this text on the terraces. If the sounds emitted on the terrace are really just phonemes, however, then, in accordance with conclusions already proposed, these phonemes would not simply denote the stanzas; the sound of each phoneme would itself contain the essence of the stanza, and be the seed from which its words have evolved.

The text of the *Bhadracarī* may itself provide clues to the nature of a sound beyond ordinary language, but the evidence is not clear cut. This is the fourth stanza:

*teṣu ca akṣaya-varṇa-samudrāṃ-svarāṅga-samudra-rutebhiḥ*
*sarva-jināna guṇāṃ bhaṇamānas tāṃ sugatāṃ stavamī ahu sarvāṃ*

This can be translated as follows: "And of them, with the sounds of the ocean of all voice qualities, I praise all those buddhas, by exalting the virtues of these buddhas, which are like oceans of imperishable phonemes."[76] The word *varṇa* need not be taken in the sense of "word" or "phoneme," and so this translation is essentially a Mantrayāna interpretation. Two sounds are juxtaposed in the stanza, and in both cases the word "ocean" (*samudra*) figures: one sound is that of the speaker's praise (an ocean), the other (oceans) is like that of the virtues (*guṇa*, qualities) of the buddhas. The second will always surpass the first, it seems, but if these two sounds can be melded into one—at least in a Mantrayāna reading—full identity and hence buddhahood is achieved. The oceanic aspect of the two sounds evokes the *samādhi* of oceanic reflection and suggests, again, the close connection between primal sound, the enlightened mind, and the Borobudur terraces.[77]

There is another sort of connection between the *Bhadracarī* stanzas and the latticed *stūpas*, also somewhat speculative in character. The Indian monk Atiśa (982–1052) arrived in Tibet in 1042, and there he composed a text known in English as *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment.*

Atiśa had earlier studied in Southeast Asia with Dharmakīrti, probably in Jambi, Sumatra, and determining the extent to which Dharmakīrti may actually have passed down teachings from a lineage traceable to the Buddhists responsible for Borobudur is a fascinating problem.[78] *Lamp for the Path* is a poem in sixty-eight stanzas outlining the Buddhist path, culminating (stanzas 60–68) in a brief explication of the *vajra* way (which by this time had progressed far beyond the Mantrayāna that figures in this paper). Stanza 8 is from a section intended to arouse the aspiration for buddhahood and runs as follows:

> With the seven-part offering
> From the [*Prayer of*] *Noble Conduct* [=*Bhadracarī*]
> With the thought never to turn back
> Till you gain ultimate enlightenment, . . .[79]

It was believed that the first twelve stanzas of the *Bhadracarī* (including stanza 4, translated above) outlined a seven-part practice of offerings. The question that is raised, therefore, is whether there might have been a tradition in Java and Sumatra that the *Bhadracarī* as a whole encapsulated the path to buddhahood.[80]

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

That the nature of cause and effect was a matter of importance to the planners of Borobudur is apparent from the choice of text for the reliefs of the base, reliefs that were covered over after their completion.[81] Actions and their fruits are depicted; taking life, for instance, is rewarded with a rebirth in a hell. Two kinds of question arise. One is the philosophical understanding of the nature of causation, or dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*; *yuanqi*, 緣起); the other is whether the monument as a whole can be understood in terms of cause and effect.

According to Huayan teaching, comprehension was progressive. Putting the ultimate teaching about the nature of causation at the top of the list, the four stages of penetration were:

> (4) *Dharmadhātu* (*fajie,* 法界) causation
> (3) *Tathāgatagarbha* (*rulai zang,* 如來藏) causation
> (2) Storehouse-consciousness (*ālaya*; *laiye,* 賴耶) causation
> (1) Karmic (*yegan,* 業感) causation.[82]

The initial teaching corresponds to Borobudur's covered base, with its scenes of cause and effect: this happens, then that. If the relationship

holds, the Mahāyāna doctrines of *tathāgatagarbha* and *ālaya* would be somehow implied by the gallery reliefs—though confirmation of this awaits discovery of a passage in the commentarial literature. On the terraces, we could say that there appear exactly the same events as depicted on the covered base, now properly understood as interreflective, simultaneously present, and ultimately alike, as in the *dharmadhātu.* Understood this way, Borobudur clearly embodies Huayan teachings about the nature of causation.

It is possible to see Borobudur as two distinct, similarly structured systems: the plateau = the covered base; the first ring of *stūpas* = the first gallery; likewise, the second and third; and the crowning *stūpa* = the fourth gallery. That the gallery system is cause, the terraces effect, is an interpretation that finds support in the religious currents of the late eighth century in Chang'an, as found within Huayan, for instance, in the writings of Chengguan (738–839), subsequently considered the fourth Huayan patriarch. If Bianhong remained in Chang'an in the 790s and was part of the circle of Prajña in the course of the *Avataṃsaka* translation project, he surely knew Chengguan. In one text within his vast output (*T.* 1882), Chengguan explicated a triad of deities, the two bodhisattvas Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra and the Buddha Vairocana, who together stand for the teachings of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra.* Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra represent (among much else) cause (*yin,* 因); Vairocana, meanwhile, is fruition (*guo,* 果).[83] The two bodhisattvas appear at the end of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* and are depicted in the Borobudur reliefs, and Vairocana is the buddha within the perforated *stūpas.*

The Shingon Buddhism of Japan, founded by Kūkai, made a pair of mandalas, one the womb, based on the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra*, the other the diamond, based on the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha.* In Shingon thought, the Womb Mandala, which pairs Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi (rather than Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra), is cause; the Diamond Mandala is result.[84] "The double maṇḍala tradition," Charles Orzech has written, "probably arose in the generation after Pu-k'ung [Amoghavajra] . . . "—that is, exactly the time Bianhong was in Chang'an.[85] Historically speaking, the placement of the effect realm above the cause realm is likely to precede the Shingon arrangement, in which two painted mandalas are placed on facing walls.

This hypothesis is enriched and complicated by the existence of two large tenth-century cloth paintings from Dunhuang, now in the Musée Guimet, and only published in 1995.[86] One of them depicts the

nine assemblies of the *Huayan Sutra*, precisely in the form seen in various Dunhuang caves. (An embroidery with this subject matter, "Seven Locations and Nine Assemblies" [*Qichu jiuhui,* 七處九會] was commissioned in Japan in 742.)[87] The other has been described by Dorothy Wong as follows:

> The second silk painting illustrates the Daśabhūmika chapter of the Huayan jing, enumerating the ten stages of bodhisattvahood. The only known depiction of this subject, the painting is divided into four registers, consisting of twelve scenes. The ten transcendent assemblies symbolic of the ten stages are shown from left to right, top to bottom. In the bottom register, the two extra squares show Samantabhadra in the lower left and Mañjuśrī in the lower right, flanking the assembly of Vairocana in the center. The presence of the boy Sudhana among the entourages of Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī makes reference to the Gaṇḍavyūha, suggesting that the painting embodies the teachings of both the Daśabhūmika and Gaṇḍavyūha chapters of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra. In doctrinal terms, the painting is an exposition of the path of spiritual advancement, from a description of the progressive stages of bodhisattvahood to Sudhana's pilgrimage and realization of enlightenment under the guidance of the two great bodhisattvas.[88]

Wong goes on to state, "The French scholar Giès suggests that these two liturgical paintings are related to each other dialectically. Perhaps hung on temple walls facing each other as a ritual presentation, they set up a visual hierarchy analogous to the scholastic exposition of both a general theory and a scheme of practice."[89]

Since the two Guimet paintings are of somewhat different dimensions and seem not to have been painted by the same artist (although, believes Giès, they are the product of the same workshop), it cannot be stated with certainty that they formed a pair—though it seems quite likely. Elements in common with the Shingon mandalas include the pairing of bodhisattvas in one painting and the presence in the other of nine compartments (either nine assemblies or nine sub-mandalas), a configuration no doubt indebted to a traditional Chinese one-and-eight arrangement.[90] Since the theme of cause and effect seems so integral to the Huayan beliefs, the Shingon pair is likely to have been modeled upon a Huayan concept embodied at Borobudur in one way, in lost prototypes for the unique Guimet paintings in another.[91]

## THE FUNCTION OF BOROBUDUR

Three occurrences of the Chinese term *hui* 會, assembly, appear to yield insights into Borobudur. One, the nine assemblies of the *Huayan Sutra*, has just been discussed. Another occurrence is in Fazang's letter to Ŭisang, where the concept of the Vairocana assembly is found. The idea that the spirits of the deceased might dwell in a Vairocana Assembly permeated by the sounds of the *Bhadracarī* opens the way to a revival of an interpretation of the monument by J. G. de Casparis.

It could be presumed that on the Borobudur terraces the spirits are those of the royal ancestors, and that the monument, as De Casparis proposed, was a dynastic memorial.[92] In 1985, Robert W. Hefner, in *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam*, described funeral rites of the Tengger, a non-Islamicized people living in a remote mountainous part of eastern Java. Ceremonies are held not for individual ancestors but for a group, whose souls ascend to heaven, when purified by the chanting of a text.[93] Analogously, the texts illustrated in Borobudur's galleries ensure by their presence that the ancestors' souls have been purified.

It is unlikely that the mere presence of the reliefs, however, is sufficient to purify the ancestors' souls. We should imagine a tantric ceremony that committed the ancestors to service as overseers of the welfare of the kingdom and the dynasty. Bianhong need not have been the priest who carried out such a rite, but he could have been. That brings us, once again, to the relationship between Huayan and Mantrayāna elements and to the third occurrence of the word *hui* 會. Amoghavajra's *Introduction to the Yoga of the Eighteen Sections of the Vajraśekhara-tantra* (*T.* 869) is the text that includes the brief description of the *Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinījālasaṃvara*, as the fifteenth assembly. Since the author recognizes that the eighteen sections prescribe different methods and rites, he needs to address the question of how they are compatible. The answer is provided in the conclusion:

> They [the eighteen assemblies] interpenetrate one another just as the radiance of the pearls of Indra's net is reflected from one to another in endless progression. If the practitioner properly masters this general purport of *yoga*, he will be like the Buddha Vairocana, with every part of his body, every pore, each [of the thirty-two] characteristics and each [of the eighty] minor features [of a buddha], every stock of merit and every stock of wisdom [=*puṇyajñānasaṃbhāra*] abiding in

the state of fruition, proclaiming the Buddha's teaching of *yoga* not
shared with the Two Vehicles.[94]

In other words, Bianhong could well have carried out initiations at
some distance from Borobudur, knowing full well that the Borobudur's
terraces embodied an ultimate truth, one conforming with the Huayan
doctrine of Indra's net, and one that fuses the deities invoked in his
initiation, as well as the phonemes of the alphabet, the celestial bodies,
and the stanzas of the Bhadracarī.

## BOROBUDUR AND DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENTS:
## A BROADER PERSPECTIVE

There is one other thing the terraces must embody, however, and
that is the internal *cakras* of the mystic yogic anatomy found in the
*Yoginī* tantras and in Hindu *kuṇḍalinī* yoga. To say this, however, is
to open up disputed issues concerning the dating of texts, the role of
Chinese influences, and the relationship between Buddhist and Hindu
paths. It must also involve deciding whether Borobudur stood on a
cutting edge, whether it was in the loop, or whether it was a relative
backwater.

The *Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinījālasaṃvara* is recognized as a
pioneering text because it has a strong sexual element, and as studies
of it appear, issues involving the development of the *Yoginī* tantras will
no doubt be clarified.[95] At any rate, if the *Hevajra-tantra* dates from no
earlier than the late ninth century—a dating that can be reconciled
with the art-historical evidence—then Borobudur could well represent
an earlier phase of the *cakra* system.[96] What the *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga-
ḍākinījālasaṃvara prastāra* demonstrates is the degree to which the
*cakra* system must have its roots in an alphabet diagram. This could
well extend to the terminology if each of the three rings in the diagram
is considered a *cakrākṣara.* Here is one way to see the system proposed
at Borobudur evolving into the *kuṇḍalinī* system, with its *cakras* in the
form of lotuses bearing letters on the petals (recognizing circularity
in the discussion, because the *kuṇḍalinī* system has informed the
Borobudur hypotheses):

| Borobudur | *Kuṇḍalinī* yoga |
|---|---|
| Top ring: letters 1–16 (vowels) | Throat *cakra*: letters 1–16 |
| Middle ring: letters 17–40 | Heart (letters 17–28) and navel (29–36) *cakras* |
| Lowest ring: letters 42–49 (x 4) | Sex organs (letters 39–44) and *mūlādhāra* (45–48) |

The number of *cakras* in the *Hevajra-tantra*—four, at the head, throat, heart, and navel—matches up better, but the letters less well (except that the throat *cakra* likewise has sixteen petals).[97]

In a recent, thorough study, Geoffrey Samuel concluded as follows: "We are unlikely ever to know precisely how the 'internal yogas' of Tantric Śaivism and Buddhism developed. All we can really say at this stage is (1) we have evidence for similar practices in China many centuries before our earliest Indian evidence, and we know that there had been several centuries of active interchange along the China-Indian trade routes by the time that these practices appeared in India, and (2) from their earliest appearance in India, these practices were conceptualized (or reconceptualized) within a specifically Indian framework."[98] In terms of the material presented in this article, we know that Bianhong is likely to have understood that the cognate celestial bodies in Daoism (sun; moon; planets plus seven stars) can be found inside the body. It would not have been a difficult step to move them from below the navel to stages along a central channel in the body, in front of the spinal cord.[99]

Bianhong has probably already been credited with too much, however. There were other figures who might have been key inventors and synthesizers in the late eighth century. An excellent example is Śrīsiṃha, who was born in China, studied tantra on Mount Wutai, traveled to India, and at Bodhgaya uncovered tantric texts that had been sealed underneath the Buddha's adamantine throne—that is, he wrote them.[100] At any rate, it may be hoped that scholars who read and study texts will in the coming decades find ways to integrate Borobudur into histories of doctrinal developments.

NOTES

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1. *T.* 2057, 50.295b16–18, translated by Hudaya Kandahjaya, "A Study on the Origin and Significance of Borobudur" (PhD diss., Graduate Theological Union, 2004), 94. I should make it clear that I do not read Chinese; the fact that I am able to explore Chinese texts to a limited degree is primarily due to the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism (http://buddhism-dict.net/ddb), which provides access to the online Chinese Buddhist canon and to the character-searching capability of a computer.

2. Kandahjaya, "Study," 95; Ryūichi Abé, *The Weaving of Mantra* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 126.

3. Kandahjaya, "Study," 165, 251.

4. Jeffrey Roger Sundberg, "Considerations on the Dating of the Barabuḍur Stūpa," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)* 162, no. 1 (2006): 95–132.

5. Hiram Woodward, "A Review Article: Esoteric Buddhism in Southeast Asia in the Light of Recent Scholarship," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 32, no. 2 (2004): 339.

6. Jeffrey Roger Sundberg, "The Wilderness Monks of the Abhayagirivihāra and the Origins of Sino-Javanese Esoteric Buddhism," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)* 160, no. 1 (2004): 95–123. For questions regarding the biography of Amoghavajra, see Woodward, "Esoteric Buddhism," 338–339.

7. See also UNESCO, *The Restoration of Borobudur: Jewel of a Golden Age* (Paris: UNESCO, 2004), 157.

8. For the law of cause and effect, see Jan Fontein, *The Law of Cause and Effect in Ancient Java* (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1989). Sundberg has proposed that the presence of *vajra* finials in structures depicted in relief nos. Ia15 and Ib81 represent an overt acknowledgment of the Vajrayāna. See Sundberg, "Considerations," 103.

9. For outer, inner, and secret exegesis, see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Elaborations on Emptiness: Uses of the Heart Sutra* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 83, 109–115 (an example approximately contemporary with Borobudur). For the capacity to use sign systems from another perspective, see Anthony Diller, "Sriwijaya and the First Zeros," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 68, no. 1 (1995): 53–66.

10. The case for changes in plan is associated with Jacques Dumarçay, e.g.,

*Borobudur*, ed. and trans. Michael Smithies (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991).

11. Robert Gimello, "Ch'eng-kuan's Meditations on the 'Three Holy Ones,'" in *Kegongaku ronshu*, ed. Shigeo Kamata (Tokyo: Daizo Shuppan, 1997), 144.

12. Kandahjaya, "Study," 197, 218, 250, 260.

13. See Archaeological Survey of India, "Excavations – 2000-2005 – Orissa," http://asi.nic.in/asi_exca_2005_orissa.asp.

14. Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., "Barabuḍur as a *Stūpa*," in *Barabuḍur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument*, ed. Luis O. Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr. (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1981), 129.

15. Eugene Y. Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2005), 259, 428n78. A modern reconstruction of the demonstration appears as fig. 5.8.

16. Translation from Garma C. C. Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hwa Yen Buddhism* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), 24. For a critical account, see Jinhua Chen, "More than a Philosopher: Fazang (643–712) as a Politician and Miracle Worker," *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 334–335.

17. For "inhabitant" of the *kūṭāgāra*, Luis O Gómez, "Observations on the Role of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* in the Design of Barabuḍur," in *Barabuḍur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument*, ed. Luis O. Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr. (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1981), 175.

18. Fazang, "Cultivation of Contemplation of the Inner Meaning of the Hua-yen: The Ending of Delusion and Return to the Source" (*T.* 1876, 45.640b28–640c03), in Thomas F. Cleary, *Entry into the Inconceivable: An Introduction to Hua-yen Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), 168.

19. My image, inspired by Francis H. Cook, *Hua-yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), 74.

20. Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., "On Borobudur's Upper Terraces," *Oriental Art* 45, no. 3 (1999): 34–43.

21. Ibid., 38; Lokesh Chandra, "Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan," in *Cultural Horizons of India,* ed. Lokesh Chandra, vol. 4 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 1995), 406–407.

22. Woodward, "Esoteric Buddhism," 343; Hiram W. Woodward, "Temple: Buddhist Temple Compounds in Southeast Asia," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, Mircea Eliade, and Charles J. Adams (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 9052–9056.

23. Hudaya Kandahjaya, *The Master Key for Reading Borobudur Symbolism*

(Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995), 60–63.

24. Toru Tomabechi, "The Extraction of *Mantra* (*mantroddhāra*) in the *Sarvabuddhasamāyogatantra*," in *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ: Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of his 70ᵗʰ Birthday,* ed. B. Kellner, H. Krasser, H. Lasic, M. T. Much, and H. Tauscher, 2 pts., Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, vol. 70 (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 2007), pt. 2, 903–923. I thank Amy Heller for alerting me to the publication of this article.

25. Rolf W. Giebel, "The *Chin-kang-ting ching yü-ch'ieh shih-pa-hui chih-kuei*: an Annotated Translation," *Journal of Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies* 18 (1995): 107–202; ninth assembly, 179–182. I thank Hudaya Kandahjaya for making a copy of this publication available to me.

26. Teun Goudriaan, *The Vīṇāśikhatantra: A Śaiva Tantra of the Left Current* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985). For this text and Cambodia, see 24–27; see also Alexis Sanderson, "The Śaiva Religion among the Khmers, Part I," *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 90 (2003): 355–358, and Alexis Sanderson, "Religion and the State: Śaiva Officiants in the Territory of the King's Brahmanical Chaplain," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 47 (2004): 233–238. According to Sanderson, the title is *Viṇāśikha,* not *Vīṇāśikha.* Since neither the term *devarājya,* attested in the ninth century, nor its successor, *devarāja,* appears in this text, the meaning of these two words, found in Cambodian inscriptions, remains to be resolved. See Hiram W. Woodward, "Practice and Belief in Ancient Cambodia: Claude Jacques' *Angkor* and the *Devaraja* Question," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 32, no. 2 (June 2001): 249–261. An inscription not cited therein is K. 1141, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand, 972 CE, in which a *K. A. ta rājya* has its eyes opened; see Saveros Pou, *Nouvelles inscriptions du Cambodge II & III* (Paris: Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001), 115–117.

27. On extraction, see André Padoux, "Contribution à l'étude du mantraśāstra I, La selection des *mantra* (*mantroddhāra*)," *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* (1978): 65–85; Elizabeth English, *Vajrayoginī: Her Visualizations, Rituals, and Forms* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2002), 52–54 (cf. also p. 115 for a three-ring alphabet).

28. G. Cœdès, "Un *yantra* récemment découvert à Angkor," *Journal Asiatique* 240 (1952): 465–477. A fourth *prastāra*, in Tibetan script, appears in a ca. eleventh-century painting; see Pratapaditya Pal, "Cosmic Vajravarahi," *The Arts of Kashmir* (New York, Asia Society, 2007), fig. 116, 108–109.

29. Jacques Dumarçay and Pascal Royère, *Cambodian Architecture: Eighth to Thirteenth Centuries* (Leiden, Boston, and Köln: Brill, 2001), 18–19, 66.

30. André Padoux, *Vāc: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras* (Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1992), 156.

31. Harvey Alper wrote, "One wonders further whether the *prastāras* and *gahvaras* were ever used after being drawn either as *yantras* or as vehicles for mystical or meditative speculation. Such a use might seem natural since, for example, the *gahvara* is (Goudriaan and Gupta 1981, 1.76, citing the *Yonigahvara*), 'considered the womb of all *mantras.*'" Harvey P. Alper, "A Working Bibliography," in *Understanding Mantras*, ed. Harvey P. Alper (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991), 416. The reference is to Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Śakta Literature* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981).

32. Rolf W. Giebel, "*Chin-kang-ting ching*," 178–179.

33. Tomabechi, "Extraction," 907. I thank Peter Szanto for confirming the equivalence.

34. Abé, *Weaving*, 282. The relationship between breath and sound had long been a matter of speculation in India. See, for instance, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 1.3; Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Upaniṣads* (Oxford: University Press, 1996), 100–101. Reference to this passage from Guy L. Beck, *Sonic Theology: Hinduism and Sacred Sound* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995), 38–39.

35. Mark Long's proposal, that a mantra in the chap. 9 of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* is relevant, may be found on his web site (http://www.borobudur.tv/lanka_03.htm), but this proposal was not incorporated into his book, Caesar Voûte and Mark Long, *Borobudur: Pyramid of the Cosmic Buddha* (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld Ltd., 2008).

36. For the spatial aspect, see Padoux, *Vāc,* 17n41, citing the *Aitareya Araṇyaka*.

37. For increasing voiceness, see Beck, *Sonic Theology*, 39.

38. Stephen Hodge, trans., *The Mahā-vairocana-abhisaṃbodhi Tantra with Buddhaguhya's Commentary* (Abingdon and New York: RouledgeCurzon, 2005), 368. Cf. Chikyo Yamamoto, trans., *Mahāvairocana Sūtra* (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 2001), 160.

39. Padoux, *Vāc*, 161–165.

40. Hodge, *Mahā-vairocana-abhisaṃbodhi Tantra*, 344 (chap. 21, "The Arising of the Hundred Letters"). This is more succinctly explained in Chandra, "Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan," 397.

41. Goudriaan, *Vīṇāśikhatantra*, 78, 123

42. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple,* 2 vols. (Delhi, Varanasi, and Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), 1:34.

43. For instance, see Padoux, *Vāc*, 90.

44. Edward C. Sachau, ed., *Alberuni's India* (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1989), 343; Teun Goudriaan, *Māyā Divine and Human* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass,

1978), 279.

45. Voûte and Long, *Borobudur*, 272. Another possibility (moon, sun, sun) appears on p. 282.

46. Woodward, "Borobudur's Upper Terraces," 39.

47. Michel Strickmann, *Mantras et mandarins: Le bouddhisme tantrique en Chine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 214, 235. The gloss "inspecting [demons] and summoning [spirits]" comes from Kristofer Marinus Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the* Daozang, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 2:1077 (entry by Poul Anderson).

48. According to Dr. Yu-min Lee (verbal communication), the characters *kao* and *zhao* do not form a compound in this sentence (*T.* 2057, 50.295a19). It is the emperor who summons.

49. For instance, see Christine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 134–173 (in the chapter "Under Stellar Protection"). For the seven stars in Japan, see the various articles in the journal *Culture and Cosmos* 10 (2006).

50. Antonino Forte, *Mingtang and Buddhist Utopias in the History of the Astronomical Clock* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente; Paris: Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, 1988), 186.

51. Joseph Needham, Ling Wang, and Derek J. de Solla Price, *Heavenly Clockwork: The Great Astronomical Clocks of Medieval China*, Antiquarian Horological Society Monograph, no. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 38–39. In the diagram of the wheel for the jacks exhibiting the watches of the night, twenty-four jacks are shown.

52. Richard Salomon, "New Evidence for a Gāndhārī Origin of the Arapacana Syllabary," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 110, no. 2 (1990): 255–273.

53. Text online: Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon, http://www.uwest.edu/ sanskritcanon/dp/old/sutra/roman/Sutra%2016/Su-16R-47.html.

54. Translation by Hudaya Kandahjaya (e-mail message, 13 November 2008).

55. Thomas F. Cleary, *The Flower Ornament Scripture: A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra* (Boston & London: Shambhala, 1993), 1440–1441.

56. Translation by Hudaya Kandahjaya, who has explained (e-mail message, 13 November 2008),

> The Chinese translation took *koṭi* in the sense of "ten millions" or "millions." But the Tibetan took it as "limit," as in the compound *bhutakoṭi*, meaning "true end" or "true goal." The latter is a synonym of *paramārtha*, the supreme truth. Other meanings of *koṭi* include "end or top of anything," "edge or point (of a sword)," "the highest point,"

"eminence," "excellence," etc. Looking at the Sanskrit compound *ākārakoṭi*, the Tibetan way of taking *koṭi* as limit or end makes sense. Though it is possible that the compiler plays with all those words and meanings. Then, by the same token, we may compare the whole compound *cakrākṣarākārakoṭivacanaṃ* with *buddhavacanaṃ*, the speech or the words of Buddha, thus making *cakrākṣarākārakoṭi* comparable to *buddha*. In other words, it sounds like this gate cryptically talks about the speech of Buddha.

57. Cleary, *Flower Ornament Scripture*, 1442.

58. See George J. Tanabe, Jr., *Myōe the Dreamkeeper: Fantasy and Knowledge in Early Kamakura Buddhism* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1992), 140–141:

This short treatise [*T.* 1020] explains the general significance of the forty-two-character mantra, which is arranged in a wheel of letters. It, too, gives specific instructions on posture and so forth, and focuses on the central vision of a "radiance that shines everywhere like the empty sky." The forty-two letters are arranged in a disc of the moon, and all together the Sanskrit letters are said to radiate a golden light that illuminates the ten directions. In each ray of light, there will be countless spheres of countless beings between which no obstruction can be found. A vision of this would constitute, as the title of the work indicates, a sudden insight into the Kegon realm of an interfusion made visible by radiance. This is exactly the same vision sought by Myōe, and it is clear that Amoghavajra was an even earlier proponent of Esoteric Kegon.

59. I thank Dr. Yu-min Lee for finding this passage, which appears also at *T.* 220, 7.82a17, as well as in the *Amoghapāśakalparāja* (trans. Bodhiruci), at *T.* 1092, 20.300c13. See also the *Pañcavimsati, T.* 221, 8.26c14–15. A connection between *ṇa* and quarrel (*cheng*, 諍) carries over into Amoghavajra's treatise, *T.* 880 (at 18.338c20) and from there to Kūkai (Abé, *Weaving*, 292). The Sanskrit wheel of letters in the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* has a similar content, but the letters *dha, ṇa,* and *ta* are absent in the Chinese text (they should fall between T. 848, 18.10b06 and T. 848, 18.10b07); see Hodge, *Mahā-vairocana-abhisaṃbodhi Tantra*, 132.

60. I thank Dr. Yu-min Lee.

61. For lists, see Junjirō Takakusu, *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu: Office Appliance Co., 1956).

62. Somewhat altering the suggestion in Woodward, "Barabuḍur as a Stūpa," 137n38.

63. The translation of the title comes from the entry (by Iain Sinclair) in the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism (http://buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.

pl?59.xml+id('b5927-65b9-5ee3-4f5b-82b1-56b4-7d93-5165-6cd5-754c-54c1-9813-8b49-6bd8-76e7-906e-90a3-6cd5-8eab-5b57-8f2a-745c-4f3d-5100-8ecc'), accessed December 8, 2008). There appears to be a reference to *T.* 1019 in *T.* 2154 (*Kaiyuan shijiao lu,* 開元釋教錄) by Zhisheng (668–740) at *T.* 2154, 55.700b27, strengthening the possibility that it really was the work of Amoghavajra.

64. Hodge, *Mahā-vairocana-abhisaṃbodhi Tantra*, 253.

65. Luis O. Gómez, "Indian Materials on the Doctrine of Sudden Enlightenment," in *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet,* ed. Whalen Lai and Lewis R. Lancaster (Berkeley: Buddhist Studies Series, 1983), 393–434.

66. A. Stein, "Sudden Illumination or Simultaneous Comprehension: Remarks on Chinese and Tibetan Terminology," in *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought,* ed. Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), 56; Young-Ho Kim, *Tao-sheng's Commentary on the Lotus Sūtra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 31. I thank Imre Hamar for sending me a copy of his paper, "Practice and Enlightenment in Chengguan's Philosophy," which appeared in *Enlightenment and Its Cultural Aspects in the Modern Perspective* (Seoul: Academic Institute of Songchol Son Buddhism/White Lotus Buddhist Cultural Foundation, 2003) (cited in *Reflecting Mirrors: Perspectives on Huayan Buddhism*, ed. Imre Hamar [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007], 14). In the passages concerning sudden enlightenment discussed in this article, Chengguan appears to be reflecting his training in Chan rather than engaging with the *Daśabhūmika.*

67. J. G. Casparis, *Inscripties uit de Çailendra-tijd*, Prasasti Indonesia diterbitkan oleh Djawatan Purbakala Republik Indonesia, I (Bandung: A. C. Nix, 1950), 202 (English summary). For a recent analysis along these lines, see Julie A. Gifford, "Picturing the Path: The Visual Rhetoric of Borobudur" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2004), 285.

68. Paul F. Copp, "Voice, Dust, Shadow, Stone: The Making of Spells in Medieval Chinese Buddhism" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2005), 151–154. (I thank Paul Copp for writing me that he no longer believes Amoghavajra was the author of this text; of course, if it dates from the time of Huiguo, its relevance is enhanced.)

> *T.* 902, 18.898a04: 總釋陀羅尼義讚
> *T.* 902, 18.898a05: 三藏沙門大廣智不空奉詔解釋
> *T.* 902, 18.898a06: 如來於百千俱胝阿僧祇劫。
> *T.* 902, 18.898a07: 積集菩提資糧加持陀羅尼眞言文字。
> *T.* 902, 18.898a08: 令頓悟菩薩與此相應。頓集福德智慧資糧。
> *T.* 902, 18.898a09: 於大乘修菩薩道二種修行。證無上菩提道
> *T.* 902, 18.898a10: 所謂依諸波羅蜜修行成佛。依眞言陀羅尼三密門修行成佛。

69. Kayumwungan inscription of 824, verse 3; see Kandahjaya, "Study," 120.

For *bhūmisambhāra* in the Tri Tepusan inscription of 842, see ibid., 256, and J.G. de Casparis, "The Dual Nature of Barabuḍur," in *Barabuḍur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument*, ed. Luis O. Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr. (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1981), 61.

70. "Cultivation of Contemplation of the Inner Meaning of the Hua-yen: The Ending of Delusion and Return to the Source" (*T.* 1876; trans. Cleary), in Cleary, *Entry into the Inconceivable*, 147–169, esp. 166. I have inserted some Chinese terms into his terse translation (see *T.* 1876, 45.640a25–27).

71. Antonino Forte, *A Jewel in Indra's Net: The Letter Sent by Fazang in China to Uisang in Korea* (Kyoto: Istituto Italiano de Cultura Scuola di Studi sull'Asia Orientale, 2000), 34.

72. David Lion Gardiner, "Kûkai and the Beginnings of Shingon Buddhism in Japan" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1995), 113; Abé, *Weaving*, 214–218.

73. Chandra, "Saṅ Hyaṅ Kamahāyānikan," 374–375, 384–386.

74. Hodge, *Mahā-vairocana-abhisaṃbodhi Tantra*, 564. There are also °*cakrakāya* names (Woodward, "Esoteric Buddhism," 345n47).

75. Giebel, "The *Chin-kang-ting ching*," 200.

76. I follow the structure of Idumi's translation: "And of them, with an ocean of voice in which all notes of sound are found, I praise all those Buddhas, by exalting the virtues of these Buddhas, which are like the ocean of inexhaustible nature." Both the Sanskrit text and the translation come from Kandahjaya, "A Study," 189. The translation was originally published in Hokei Idumi, "The Hymn on the Life and Vows of Samantabhadra," *The Eastern Buddhist* 5, nos. 2–3 (1929): 226–247. I substitute "with the sounds of the ocean of all voice qualities" on the basis of Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary,* 2 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972), 2:616 (the entry for *svarāṅga*). For *akṣaya-varṇa-samudrāṃ*, I pluralize *ocean*, to agree with *guṇāṃ* (qualities, virtues), take *varṇa* in the sense of phoneme, and translate *akṣaya* as "imperishable" (a common Sanskrit meaning, recognizing that "inexhaustible" may be more appropriate in a Buddhist context; see Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid*, 2:3). For *varṇa* in this technical sense, see Padoux, *Vāc*.

77. I will not attempt to address the question of whether Chinese translations permit the same interpretation (Amoghavajra, *T.* 297, 10.880a15; Prajña, *T.* 293, 10.847a08).

78. Woodward, "Esoteric Buddhism," 347.

79. Ruth Sonam, trans., *Atisha's Lamp for the Path: An Oral Teaching by Geshe Sonam Rinchen* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1997), 58.

80. For alerting me to the relevance of *Atisha's Lamp*, I acknowledge a debt to the paper presented by Julie Gifford, "Training the Mind at Borobudur: Śailendra

Buddhism, the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, and the Development of Tibetan Lojong Practice," paper presented at the panel "Borobudur in International Perspective," International Association for Buddhist Studies, Atlanta, GA, 27 June 2008. For the *Bhadracarī* and the Borobudur terraces see also Gifford, "Picturing the Path," 286. I have reached a parallel position by a different route.

81. Fontein, *Law of Cause and Effect*.

82. Forte, *Jewel in Indra's Net*, 41–42.

83. Robert Gimello, "Ch'eng-kuan's Meditations" (note 11 above), 136, 168 (*T.* 1882, 45.671a14).

84. Ryūjun Tajima, *Les deux grands maṇḍalas et la doctrine de l'ésoterisme shingon* (Tokyo: Maison franco-japonaise and Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1959), 48–49. Benjamin Rowland alluded to the relevance of the two Shingon mandalas in "Barabudur: A Study of Style and Iconography in Oriental Art," *Art in America and Elsewhere* 29, no. 3 (1941): 114–127. Rowland seems to have picked up the idea from Shoun Toganoo, *Rishukyō no Kenkyū* (Kōyasan: Kōyasan Daigaku, 1930), abstracted by Paul Demiéville, *Bibliographie bouddhique* 4–5 (1931–1933): 96–98. Rowland made a similar observation in *The Art and Architecture of India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (London: Penguin Books, 1953)—though dropping it in later editions—and this stimulated the analysis of Alex Wayman, "Reflections on the Theory of Barabuḍur as a *Maṇḍala*," in *Barabuḍur: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument*, ed. Luis O. Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr. (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1981), 173–194. See Heino Kottkamp, *Der Stupa als Repräsentation des buddhistischen Heilweges* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz), 368–369.

85. Charles D. Orzech, "Maṇḍalas on the Move: Reflections from Chinese Esoteric Buddhism Circa 800 C.E.," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19, no. 2 (1996): 216n18.

86. Jacques Giès, ed., *Les arts de l'Asie centrale: la collection Paul Pelliot du Musée national des arts asiatiques–Guimet*, 2 vols. (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1995), 1:51–72.

87. Dorothy Wong, "The Huayan / Kegon / Hwaŏm Paintings in East Asia," in *Reflecting Mirrors: Perspectives on Huayan Buddhism*, ed. Imre Hamar (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 338. On the nine assemblies, see also the entry "*jiuhui* 九會," Digital Dictionary of Buddhism (http://buddhism-dict.net/ddb); and Gimello, "Ch'eng-kuan's Meditations," 202–203. There is a treatise by Chengguan, *T.* 1738, *Explanations of Verses on the Seven Locations and Nine Assemblies* 新譯華嚴經七處九會頌釋章.

88. Wong, "Huayan," 343.

89. Ibid., 344.

90. As pointed out in Charles D. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The*

*Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 172–173.

91. The matter of the existence of visual connections between the Huayan Nine Assembly paintings and Borobudur cannot be explored here. At the bottom of the Nine Assemblies is depicted a large lotus containing a compartmentalized cityscape, thought to be the *cheng* 城 ("walled city") described in Book Five (Lotus Repository World) of the sutra. (I thank Dorothy Wong for writing me about this.) There are mentions of *cheng* at *T.* 279, 10.40b14 and 40c08 (Cleary, *Entry into the Inconceivable*, 208, "Lotuses of jewels form castles"). In the surrounding border are roundels with symbols which, to the best of my knowledge, have not been explicated. In regard to Borobudur, mention should also be made of passages in Book Four, descriptions of Pure Lands that are "covered with webs of jewel lights" or round, square, triangular, and octagonal. (Cleary, *Entry into the Inconceivable*, 187, 189; *T.* 279, 10.36a31.)

92. De Casparis, "Dual Nature," 67 (his earlier views, which he mentions, might be the most relevant).

93. Robert W. Hefner, *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 163, 171.

94. Giebel, "The *Chin-kang-ting ching*," 200. For a discussion of the term "yoga," see Charles D. Orzech, "The 'Great Teaching of Yoga,' the Chinese Appropriation of the Tantras, and the Question of Esoteric Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 34 (2006): 29–78, esp. 47–48.

95. Ronald M. Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), see the index. Jacob Dalton, "The Development of Perfection: The Interiorization of Buddhist Ritual in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32 (2004): 5n7, writes, "The *Sarvabuddhasamāyoga Tantra* appears numerous times throughout the Tibetan Dunhuang materials. This work seems to have been of considerable importance in the history of early tantra. . . . Unfortunately, the title refers to a complicated series of texts in several editions and has yet to be examined in any detail."

96. Dalton, "Development," 25n68, "late ninth or early tenth century," referring to Davidson; Geoffrey Samuel, *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra* (Cambridge: University Press, 2008), 285, "perhaps dating from the late ninth century in its present form." For the art-historical evidence, see Rob Linrothe, *Ruthless Compassion: Wrathful Deities in Early Indo-Tibetan Esoteric Buddhist Art* (London: Serindia, 1999).

97. David Gordon White, *Kiss of the Yoginī* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 224. The phonemes in the *kuṇḍalinī* system may be found, among other places, in P. H. Pott, *Yoga and Yantra* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), table 1. The evidence of the *Saṃvarodaya-tantra*, briefly described in

Woodward, "Esoteric Buddhism," 343, is also relevant. See also David Gordon White, "Yoga in Early Hindu Tantra," in *Yoga: The Indian Tradition*, ed. Ian Whicher and David Carpenter (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 143–161.

98. Samuel, *Origins*, 285.

99. As for other elements in *kuṇḍalinī* yoga, the goddess Kuṇḍalinī herself no doubt has connections with an earth goddess: see Gavin Flood, *The Tantric Body: The Secret Tradition of Hindu Religion* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 116. As for the side channels, connections with temple door jambs and river goddesses play a role: see Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., "The Laksmana Temple, Khajuraho, and its Meanings," *Ars Orientalis* 19 (1990): 27–48.

100. Lopez, *Elaborations on Emptiness* (see note 9 above), 12–13.

# Theravāda in History[1]

## Peter Skilling

École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris and Bangkok
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand
Honorary Associate, Department of Indian Sub-Continental Studies,
School of Languages and Cultures, Faculty of Arts, University of Sydney

## I. RECONNAISSANCE

"Theravāda Buddhism" seems to be a transparent and straightforward term. It is taken for granted as an integral feature of the religious landscape not only of South and Southeast Asia, but also of contemporary Buddhism in the West. The term is regularly used without any attempt at definition, and without asking to what degree "Theravāda Buddhism" is a valid or useful category.[2] A chapter entitled "Theravāda Buddhism" in one recent book uses the word "Theravāda" and cognate forms forty-one times in about seven pages of text (not counting captions and side-bars).[3] Is there anything surprising in this? Perhaps not: but when we consider that the term Theravāda is rare in Pali literature, and that for nearly a millennium it was rarely used in the Pali or vernacular inscriptions, chronicles, or other premodern texts of Southeast Asia, this might give us pause.

This essay is written on the premise that we—historians of Buddhism—do not adequately understand, and have not adequately attempted to understand, the term "Theravāda." Nonetheless, we have imposed it in our studies to create, in many cases, artificial and ahistorical entities. I believe that we need to reexamine the evidence, to see how the complex of historical movements within Theravāda define and refer to themselves, and to see how they define and refer to others, both Buddhist *nikāyas* and other religions.[4] I take it as axiomatic that the history of Theravāda cannot be written on the basis of Pali sources alone. We must exploit the full range of sources, including not only the vernaculars of the cultures in which Theravāda has developed from a

monastic aggregation into distinctive social complexes, but also the classical Buddhist languages—Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese—and other vernaculars used by Buddhist traditions. We must take epigraphic, literary, archaeological, iconographical, and anthropological evidence into account.

As a working hypothesis, I suggest that "Theravāda Buddhism" came to be distinguished as a kind of Buddhism or as a "religion"—remembering that "Buddhism" is a modern term and that "religion" is a vexed concept—only in the late colonial and early globalized periods, that is, in the twentieth century. In the pre-colonial and early colonial periods, Europeans grouped non-Christian religions in several ways, and Buddhism was subsumed with Indian, Mongolian, Chinese, and Japanese religions under the categories of "idolaters" or "heathens." Eventually European savants, for the most part working in milieux that were deeply charged by Christian beliefs and presuppositions, realized that the religious life of certain groups or societies was centered on "Buddha." Gradually they saw that this religion, which they eventually came to call Buddhism, had different forms or schools. Exactly when "Theravāda Buddhism" gained currency as a discrete category, and how this category in due course entered the consciousness of "Theravādin societies" themselves, is a good question, but it seems that it was rather late in the game—that is, only by the middle of the twentieth century.[5] We need to bear these points point in mind if we are to understand the history of Theravāda.

Theravāda has now become a standard and authoritative term, defined (or mis-defined) even in computer dictionaries. It is a ready-made label that gives us "Theravādin meditation," "Theravādin philosophy," "Theravādin psychology," "Theravādin art," "Theravādin iconography," and so on. As a *type of Buddhism*, the very idea of Theravāda is a by-product of globalization. With increased international migration in the second half of the twentieth century, Sinhalese, Burmese, Khmer, Lao, and Thai communities have had to construct identities in a multicultural world, and so have become "Theravāda Buddhists." Beyond this, we live in an age in which packaging and labeling are essential to the social constitution of both the individual and the group. Ambiguity is not tolerated. Today Theravāda is a self-conscious identity for many, although not necessarily in the societies that have nurtured it for centuries. For most Thai, for example, the primary marker of identity remains to be "Buddhist" (*pen phut, pen chao phut, naptü*

*phra phutthasāsanā)*. To say "to believe in Theravāda" (*naptü therawāt*) is unnatural.

The evolution of Theravāda as a modern religion is not the concern of this paper. My concern is the use of Theravāda as a historical category. The problem is this: the word "Theravāda" and cognate forms or near-synonyms "Theriya" and "Theravaṃsa" are infrequent in Pali texts. Their use is limited to some of the commentaries and to the historical (*vaṃsa*) literature—literature specifically concerned with school formation and legitimation. But in the pre-modern period, what we call the Theravāda Buddhists of Southeast Asia did not seem to use the term at all. It was neither a marker of identity nor a standard of authority in the inscriptions or chronicles of the region. Nor does the term occur in the early European accounts of the religion and society of the region, whether Portuguese, Dutch, French, or English. Simply put, the term was not part of the self-consciousness of the Buddhists of the region.

The overuse of the term Theravāda in historical studies has led to several misconceptions. One is the idea that there existed some sort of monolithic religion, or institutional entity, called "Theravāda," that spread throughout the region. This obscures the fact that the Southeast Asian sanghas that renewed their ordination lineages in Sri Lanka were, as soon as they returned to their own lands, autonomous or rather independent entities. They invoked their Lankan credentials as a claim to ritual purity, but they did not maintain binding institutional links with Lanka. The new lineages established their own identities; more often than not within one or two generations they fell into dispute and split into further independent lines.

This state of affairs arises from the nature of ordination, of the independent system of self-reproduction of Buddhist monastic communities. Higher ordination (*upasampadā*) can be performed without reference to any outside authority (except, depending on circumstances, temporal authority, which made efforts to control sanghas for political and economic reasons). The only conditions were the presence of a monk qualified to act as preceptor (*upajjhāya*, who must have a minimum ten years' ordination) and a quorum of monks to perform higher ordination. It is, precisely, our task to understand how ordination lineages spread, how they defined themselves, how they related to other lineages in the region, and how they contended with each other and with temporal powers for recognition and patronage.

The history of "Theravāda" is, then, a history of ordination lineages. It is not a history of "sects" in the sense of broad-based lay groups, as in Reformation Europe. Monks, rulers, and lay supporters were concerned with establishing or restoring pure ordination lineages in order to sustain the life of the *sāsana* by activating pure "fields of merit" and ensuring the continuity of ritual. The records show little concern for ideas or philosophy. It is this spread of monastic ideals and lineages that we must try to understand, usually through indirect evidence, since despite the importance of claimed descent, lineage records were not maintained or constructed.

Our study must maintain an awareness of the monastic/lay distinction. How should we understand relations between laity and lineage? Even if the monastics were Theravādin, or better (see below) belonged to a Sīhalavaṃsa or some other lineage, can we say this of the laity? To what degree did the laity participate in the distinctions and contentions of monastic lineages? What range of ideas or activities do monastic lineages embrace? How far are they relevant to the social and religious lives of the laity? Traditionally, could categories like Theravāda or Sīhalapakkha apply to laypeople at all? What are the boundaries in terms of individual or society?

The preservation, transmission, and study of the Pali canon and the use of Pāli as a liturgical language—by monastics and laity—is one distinctive and unifying feature of the Theravādin lineages.[6] But the use of Pali should not overshadow vernacular literature and practice. If Pali was a resource, a database, that offered stability and continuity to a congeries of constantly evolving traditions, it was the vernacular transformations of the Pali—through sermon, gloss, bilingual recitation, and the plastic arts—that enabled what Steven Collins has called "the Pali imaginaire" to function as a vital agent in the religious life of mainland Southeast Asia.[7]

### Defining Theravāda

What is Theravāda? If we describe it as a system, what do we mean? A system of thought? A system of ethics? A monastic infrastructure, an economic institution, or a soteriological framework? If it is several or all of these, how does it differ from other Buddhist systems? *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide* defines Theravāda as follows: "Of the many distinctive schools of Buddhism that formed in the first centuries after the death of the Buddha, only one has survived into the present day—the

Theravāda or 'Doctrine of the Elders.' The followers of this tradition trace its origins back to Gautama Buddha himself. They maintain that the Buddha's teaching has been handed down in an unbroken succession within the Sangha or monastic community, hence the reference to 'elders' or venerable members of the Sangha who have protected the tradition's integrity."[8] Unfortunately, the definition misses the point. The term "*thera*" does not refer to a lineal succession of "elders," but to a specific "historical" or foundational group: the five hundred *arhats* who recited and collected the teachings of the Buddha at Rājagṛha after the first rains-retreat following the death of the Buddha.[9] This is stated, for example, in the *Dīpavaṃsa*: "because the collection was made by the *theras*, therefore it is called the Theravāda."[10] For a more accurate definition, we may turn to Ven. Payutto (Prayudh Payutto, Phra Brahmaguṇābharaṇa, 1938–). After describing the events of the First Rehearsal, he writes: "The teachings thus agreed upon that have been handed down to us are called *Theravāda* or 'the teachings laid down as principles of the Elders.' The word *Elders* in this context refers to those 500 Arahant elders participating in this First Rehearsal. The Buddhism that is based on the First Rehearsal mentioned above is called *Theravāda Buddhism.* In other words, the Buddha's teachings, namely the Doctrine and Discipline, both in letter and in spirit, that were thus rehearsed were to be remembered as such and strictly adhered to."[11] One problem with this traditional definition is that all of the eighteen Buddhist schools trace their origins back to the First Council, which is their common heritage. Each of the surviving *Vinayas* and other records preserved in several languages presents its own version of the "Council of the Five-Hundred." How then, do the Ceylon *theras* differ?[12]

### Indo-Tibetan Perspectives

There are several Pali terms for what we call "Theravāda," including "Theriya" and "Theravaṃsa."[13] Before examining them, however, we will turn to India, to see how the later north Indian Buddhists described the "Theravāda."

What did the Indian Buddhist schools call what we call "Theravāda," and how did they present it? To start with, they did *not* call it "Sthaviravāda." "Sthaviravāda" and "Sthaviravādin" are ghost words. They are Sanskrit neologisms coined on the analogy of Pali "Theravāda," and they have not been found in any Sanskrit text.[14] The word "*sthavira*" does occur, but as a technical *Vinaya* term for a senior

monk, defined as one who has been ordained as a *bhikṣu* for ten years or more (in Pali *thera*, in Hybrid Sanskrit also *sthera*). The term is used by *all* Buddhist schools, and is not a marker of "Theravāda." It occurs in compounds like *saṃgha-sthavira* and *rāja-sthavira*, or as a prefix to a proper name, as—taking examples from Indian inscriptions—in Sthavira Pūrṇadāsa, Sthavira Mahānāma, or Sthavira Acala.[15] The compound "Siṃghala-sthavira," found in an inscription from Bodh-Gayā, is ambiguous, although my own interpretation is that it refers to a "Sinhalese senior monk."[16]

The Sthāvira lineage is regularly referred to in Indian doxographic works that were translated into Tibetan and Chinese, but no Sanskrit versions survive. Therefore we cannot say with certainty what Sanskrit terms lie behind the translations. The few available references in Sanskrit suggest a *vṛddhi* form: Sthāvira,[17] Sthāviriya,[18] or Sthāvarī.[19] These are Sanskrit counterparts of "Theriya," a common Pali and Prakrit counterpart to "Theravāda." In this essay, I tentatively adopt the form Sthāvira.

In his *History of the Dharma*, Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364) defines the Sthāviras as follows:

> *gnas brtan 'phags pa'i rigs yin par smra bas gnas brtan pa.*[20]

> Because they assert that they belong to the noble lineage (*āryavaṃśa*) of the Sthāviras they are *Sthāviras.

I am not certain this tells us much—the *ārya-vaṃśa* seems to be, again, a shared quality of Buddhist monastic heritage.[21]

### The Four Vinaya Schools and the Four Philosophical Schools

A persistent problem in the modern historiography of Buddhism in India is a denial of tradition—a refusal to try to understand how Indian Buddhism looked at itself. This strikes me as odd. To *believe in* or to *accept* tradition is one thing; but to achieve historical understanding, one must first try to see how Buddhism presented itself, whether or not one believes it or accepts it as historically accurate or viable. *A priori* rejection because the information goes against received opinions or because a source is preserved only in Tibetan amounts to ideologically motivated blindness.

In India, classifications of Buddhism depended on context. In terms of *Vinaya*, there were the "four *nikāyas*": Sarvāstivāda, Sthāvira, Sāṃmitīya, and Mahāsāṃghika. This classification subsumed the

traditional lists of the (conventionally enumerated) eighteen *nikāyas.* The fourfold classification was widespread in north India by the seventh century, if not earlier, and is reported by Yijing (635–713) in his "Record of the Inner Law Sent Home from the South Seas" and in other sources.[22] The four schools are mentioned in tantras and tantra commentaries such as the *Hevajra-tantra* and the *Yogaratnamālā* on the *Hevajra-tantra.*[23]

When the four schools are explained in detail, three branches are listed under Sthāvira.[24] These are given in Indian sources from the eighth century on preserved in Tibetan, such as Vinītadeva's *Nikāyabheda*, Subhūtighoṣa's *Sarvayānālokakāra-vaibhāṣya*, the *Śrāmaṇera-pṛcchā*, and the *Bhikṣuvarṣāgra-pṛcchā*,[25] as well as in the great Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon of the late eighth century, the *Mahāvyutpatti*. The names of the three schools derive from the monasteries in Anurādhapura, Sri Lanka, at which their sanghas were based:

Mahāvihāravāsin   Residents of the Great Monastery
Abhayagirivāsin   Residents of the Abhayagiri Monastery
Jetavanīya       Residents of the Jetavana Monastery.

North Indian accounts agree with the indigenous tradition of Sri Lanka. The *Mahāvaṃsa* refers to the three schools in several places as "the three *nikāyas*" (*nikāyattaya*); in the twelfth century they were unified by King Parākramabāhu.[26] Even if the nature of the unification and the role of the Mahāvihāra vis-à-vis the other schools are debated, we can safely say that before the twelfth century, the Mahāvihāra was not the sole representative of "Theravāda," and that after the twelfth century the surviving "Theravāda" was only one branch of the earlier Lankan school. The idea of "Theravāda" as an unchanging and perennial lineage contradicts the school's own history (as well as common sense).

North Indian tradition as preserved in Tibet defines each of the four schools in terms of a fixed set of categories. Gorampa (1429–1489) explains that "among the four root Śrāvaka schools there are four different *Vinayas*, four different languages, four different preceptors, four different numbers of panels of the monk's robe, and four different insignia on the edge of the robe."[27] In his "Sun of the Land of Samantabhadra," published in 1699, 'Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa'i-rdo-rje (Ṅag-dbaṅ-brtson-'grus, 1648–1721/2) describes the Sthāviras as follows:

*gnas brtan pa ni | skad bi śa tsi śa za'i skad dam 'briṅ du 'don pa | mkhan po rje rigs smyig ma mkhan mtha' 'khob 'dul ba'i mchog tu luṅ bstan pa katya ya na nas | snam phran sṅa ma ltar daṅ | grva rtags 'khor lo miṅ lha daṅ | 'byuṅ gnas daṅ | go cha ste | rin chen 'byuṅ gnas daṅ | śes rab go cha lta bu yin te | ṅes brjod las |*

    *gnas brtan pa la go cha lha ||*
    *sde daṅ 'tsho daṅ skyoṅ ba'o | źes so ||*[28]

The language of the Sthāviras is "Paiśāci," the "language of the flesh-eaters" (*piśāca*), or the "intermediate recitation." Their [first] preceptor is the Vaiśya bamboo-maker (*veṇukāra*) Kātyāyana, who was declared [by the Blessed One] to be "foremost among those who convert the border regions." The robe [*snam = snam sbyar = saṃghāṭī*] has [from twenty-one to twenty-five panels (*khaṇḍa*)] like that of the preceding [Sāṃmatīyas].[29] The insignia on the edge of the robe is the wheel (*cakra*). The names [of monastics end in] *-deva*, *-ākara*, or *-varman*, as for example Ratnākara or Prajñāvarman. According to the *ṅes brjod*:

    The [names of] Sthāviras [end in] *varman*, *deva*
    *sena*, *rakṣita*, and *pāla.*

In the Pali tradition, Kaccāna or Mahākaccāyana, a direct disciple of the Buddha, is a brahman, as his *gotra* name suggests. It is possible that the reference here is to the enigmatic author of the *Nettippakaraṇa*, but the *gotra* name raises the same problem. None of the other information can be confirmed. If there is any substance to it, the passage—transmitted in various Tibetan sources, but not yet located in an Indian text—may describe the Sthāviras (and other schools) according to north India stereotypes of the Pāla period. Sakya Paṇḍita (1182–1251) summarizes the tradition in his *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes*:

    The four fundamental communities of the Disciples
    had four distinct codes of discipline,
    and their canonical languages, too, were four:
    Sanskrit, Prākrit, Apabhraṃśa, and Paiśācī.

    The eighteen schools that developed therefrom
    had eighteen distinct codes of discipline,
    because all these schools differed
    in their procedures—for accepting vows
    in the beginning; for observing them,
    repairing them, and reciting the *Prātimokṣa*
    meanwhile; and, finally, for renouncing them.
    What one prohibited is permitted for another.[30]

## The Four Philosophical Schools

North Indian tradition grouped Buddhist philosophy under four main schools: Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Cittamātra/Vijñānavādin, and Mādhyamika. This classification was sufficiently current to be adopted in the classical Indian doxography, the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*,[31] and in other non-Buddhist texts,[32] and to be discussed in tantric and Kālacakra literature.[33] Mimaki suggests that the classification was developed by the end of the eighth century;[34] it was widely adopted in Tibet where it became standard in any number of doxographic manuals.[35] ’Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa’i-rdo-rje is somewhat dogmatic about the number of philosophical schools:

> *raṅ sde bye smra mdo sems dbu ma ba, bźir ṅes ’dir ni grub mtha‘ lṅar min gsuṅs.*

> Regarding the tenets of our own [that is, the Buddhist] schools, our own schools are limited to the four: Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Cittamātra, and Mādhyamika, for it is said that here there are not five systems of tenets.[36]

This statement reflects Tibetan scholastic politics rather than the situation in India. Earlier Tibetan works in the genre listed the schools in several ways, one of which names five schools, adding the Sāṃmitīyas. Despite the fact that it is equally valid in terms of the historical evolution of Buddhist thought, the fivefold classification did not find favor in Tibetan scholasticism.

The association of the four philosophical schools with the four *Vinaya* lineages is problematic. The Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas are usually considered to be philosophical movements within the Sarvāstivādin lineage.[37] The fundamental Yogācāra works rely on Sarvāstivādin texts, while Mādhyamika is not associated with any particular *Vinaya* tradition. The tenets laid down in the doxographic literature, particularly those of the Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas, may well have existed largely in the textbooks by the time the later manuals were composed. In any case, the Sthāvira tradition is conspicuous by its absence. How do we explain this? Why did north Indian tradition not recognize the Sthāviras as a philosophical school, even when it knew it as a *Vinaya* lineage?

In the absence of evidence, no certain answer can be given. The four-school classification appears to be a curriculum list and may reflect the interests of the professors of Nālandā or other monastic universities

of northeastern India: it is possible that, quite simply, the Sthāvira philosophy was not on the curriculum. The classification also shows a Sarvāstivādin bias, and the Sarvāstivādin texts that we know pay very little attention to the Sthāviras. From the writings of Tāranātha Kun-dga'-sñiṅ-po (1575–1635), which are based on Indian sources, we do know that the Sthāviras were active as an ordination lineage in India; but perhaps they were not strong players in the field of philosophy. However, their texts and ideas were known to a degree, as extensive citations from the *Vimuttimagga* are given by Daśabalaśrīmitra in his *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtaviniścaya*, which was apparently composed in north India in the twelfth century.[38] It is also possible that the Sthāvira texts did not address the interests of late north Indian scholasticism, with its penchant for epistemology and logic. Although later Pali texts, such as the *ṭīkās*, borrow and adapt Vaibhāṣika categories in their exegesis,[39] and show the development of epistemological ideas,[40] these do not seem to have taken a foothold in the curricula or to have developed into a strong, independent tradition that could enter into dialogue and debate with the north Indian Buddhist and indeed non-Buddhist schools.[41]

Part of the problem may lie with the lacuna in sources for the history of Buddhism of south India. The Theravāda that we know today had an important presence in south India, at least in several coastal centers, and the evidence suggests that the Mahāvihāra philosophical and hermeneutical heritage is a south Indian–Sri Lankan phenomenon rather than, as presented in later periods after the eclipse of south Indian Buddhism, exclusively Lankan. But almost no literary records of the once thriving Buddhist traditions of the region—evidenced by rich and unique archaeological remains—survive.[42] Our reconstruction of Indian Buddhism is very much a Buddhism of the north, based on surviving Gandhari, Buddhist Sanskrit, and Sanskrit sources, as well as those preserved in Chinese and Tibetan. Very few, if any, southern texts were translated into those languages, although here too more research is needed.

### Theriya and Mahāvihāra

I am not confident that a convincing narrative history of "Theravāda" is possible. The historical development of the school before the time of Buddhaghosa is, to put it mildly, obscure, and I do not doubt that its origins were complex. I wonder whether the celebrated "Pali

canon," or at least the *Khuddakanikāya*, did not start out as a practical didactic and recitative collection rather than an official or exclusive dogmatic corpus. It is possible that the school drew on Vibhajyavādin traditions; certainly at a later, uncertain point the Mahāvihāra identified with that tradition.[43] A colophon to a section of the *Vinaya Cullavagga*, at the end of the *Samuccayakkhandhaka*, represents the textual tradition as:[44]

> *ācariyānaṃ vibhajjavādānaṃ*[45] *tambapaṇṇidīpapasādakānaṃ mahāvihāra-vāsinaṃ vācanā saddhammaṭṭhitiyā.*

> This is the text of the Vibhajyavādin teachers, who brought faith to the island of Tambapaṇṇi, the residents of the Great Monastery, for the perpetuation of the true dharma.[46]

The phrasing may be compared with that of several inscriptions from Andhra Pradesh in south India, such as a copper-plate charter from Kallacheruvu, Dist. West Godavari, which mentions the "Mahāvihara of Tāmraparṇi,"[47] and the verse preambles and colophons of the works of Buddhaghosa, especially his commentaries on the four *Āgamas* or *Nikāyas* and his *Visuddhimagga*.[48] Of the three Theravāda schools, it seems to have been mainly the Mahāvihāra that established the South Asian connections in what the late R. A. L. H. Gunawardana (1938–2010) called "the world of Theravādin Buddhism," although Abhayagirivihāra had its own overseas network, in Southeast Asia if not in India as well.[49]

"Mahāvihāra" or "Great Monastery" itself has several referents, and more research is needed into the scope of the term. In India there were many Mahāvihāras, some of which belonged to Sarvāstivādin or other sanghas, and are known from inscriptions, monastic sealings, and textual references. The term was carried to China and Japan.[50] It is usually assumed that within the Theravādin lineage, and in most Ceylonese documents, the term refers to the ancient institution of the Mahāvihāra at Anurādhapura. But this is not always the case, and there were other Mahāvihāras in later periods. The relevance and significance of the term in the post-Polonnaruwa period, when the three Theravādin lineages were merged, remains to be clarified. They were replaced by a system of eight *mūlas*, fraternities or groups, which flourished from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, the Polonnaruwa period. The *āraññikas* maintained their identity, and "beginning in the twelfth century, the distinction between the 'village monks' (*gāmavāsin*) and 'forest monks' (*āraññavāsin*) became more salient."[51] These two

categories became basic to the Thai hierarchy by the Ayutthaya period, as we shall see.

### *Theravāda in History*

Modern definitions of Theravāda tend to situate themselves outside history, and choose to ignore the complexity and relative lateness of the tradition.[52] The fact that the Theravādin lineage transmits an ancient collection of scriptures—the justly renowned "Pali canon"— has obscured the fact that what defines the tradition is the fifth-century commentaries and the later sub-commentaries and manuals. As a system of thought and code of practice it is disseminated through manuals and digests—for example the *Suttasaṅgaha* or the all-important *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* of Anuruddha (date uncertain: tenth/eleventh century?), and through vernacular texts and sermons. The centering of "Theravāda" in the Pali canon, above all in the "four main *Nikāyas*," is a child of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. It has grown up to become what we might call a "new Theravāda," largely anglophonic but increasingly international in influence and outreach.[53] This new trend should be respected and recognized as one of the Buddhisms active today. But should it be read back into the past? The prominence given to an essentialized and ahistorical Theravāda inhibits the study of the history of ideas and the history of social expressions of South and Southeast Asian Buddhism. Theravāda is not an unchanging entity: to assume so would contradict the law of impermanence. It is a "tradition in progress"—and are not all traditions?—one that has responded and adapted to changing circumstances and environments for more than two thousand years. This has given Theravāda its endurance, vitality, and relevance.

The definitions of Theravāda given above are ideal definitions: they emphasize the pure lineage of the dharma and *Vinaya*. This lineage is a monastic or *Vinaya* lineage, a *vaṃsa* or *paramparā*. But *Vinaya* lineages—communities of monks and nuns—developed in the world, in society. Monasteries became social and economic institutions; for centuries they were grand estates with land, fields, and serfs. *Nikāyas* came to be defined not by shared allegiance to ideas or to *Vinaya* lineage but as legal entities and as landholders. Gunawardana writes of early medieval Sri Lanka that "[T]he main monastery of the *nikāya* closely supervised the administration of the property of hermitages belonging to the *nikāyas*; these hermitages had to submit their annual statements

of accounts for approval by the monks of the main monastery. Hence, in the ninth and tenth centuries, the *nikāya* was not merely a fraternity of monks subscribing to a particular school of thought;[54] it was also a body which owned a vast extent of land and had supervisory control over these lands through institutions representing the *nikāya* which were spread over many parts of the island."[55] To an extent bookkeeping may have been more significant in the development of monasticism than spiritual practice or ideas. The economic history of the *nikāyas* can be gleaned from inscriptions and chronicles. According to the *Mahāvaṃsa*, for example, Aggabodhi I granted a village to the ascetics of the Thera tradition.[56] *Mahāvaṃsa* states that King Kassapa V restored and donated a *vihāra* to "monks belonging to the lineage of the Theras" (*theravaṃsajabhikkhu*).[57] Mahinda IV had a "betel-*maṇḍapa*" built, and dedicated the revenue that it would generate to monks of the Theravaṃsa for the purchase of medicines.[58] He constructed a residence named Mahāmallaka and donated it to nuns (*bhikkhunī*) belonging to the Theravaṃsa.[59]

As a monastic order, Theravāda is further defined by its rituals—the performance of *upasampadā* and *kammavācā*, and the recitation of *paritta*, in Pali. Ritual demarcates physical boundaries (temples, monastic residences, and within them special sanctuaries). Ritual delineates social boundaries and identities—"Buddhist," monk, nun, novice monk, novice nun, *upāsaka*, *upāsikā*, donor, supporter. Ritual orders time—daily, weekly, monthly, annual rites. Ritual dictates economic imperatives—royal expenditures and the import of precious commodities such as aromatics and precious substances.

## II. TOWARDS A HISTORY OF BUDDHISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

For the early history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia we have no ancient indigenous chronicles. There are scattered Chinese accounts of Buddhism in states that are usually difficult to pinpoint on the modern map. There are inscriptions, generally fragmentary and mostly removed from their original contexts. These include many Pali citation inscriptions from the sixth to the eighth centuries in the Irrawaddy Delta in lower Burma and across central Thailand. There are images of buddhas and bodhisattvas, and there are architectural remains. In Thailand we face a collection of epigraphic riddles: a Pali-Khmer inscription and massive pair of footprints in Prachinburi; a reference to Anurādhapura in a brief Mon inscription in a cave in Saraburi; the

*bhikṣu-mahāyāna-sthavira* ordered to maintain ascetic and ritual practice for King Śrī Sūryavarmadeva in a Khmer inscription from Lopburi; and a mention of Abhayagiri—a mountain rather than a *vihāra*—in a bilingual Sanskrit-Khmer inscription from Nakhon Ratchasima. No continuous narrative emerges from these fragments of the written records of the past. All that can be said is that a school that used Pali as its scriptural language was prominent in the Chao Phraya Basin and in lower Burma, and that the school, or more probably schools, were likely to have been descendants of the Theriya lineage. It is simplistic to say that this Buddhism "came from Ceylon." Trade and political relations were complex; the many communication routes from India and Lanka to Southeast Asia allowed diverse cultural contacts. Given the (I believe) complete silence of extant Mahāvihāra literature on relations with Southeast Asia before the Polonnaruwa period, it does not seem likely that the dominant *Vinaya* lineage in the Chao Phraya basin was that of the Mahāvihāra. Nor is there compelling evidence (at least for the mainland) for an affiliation with the Abhayagiri. I tentatively conclude that a Theriya lineage, or Theriya lineages, were introduced at an early date, that is, in the early centuries CE, from India—at several times and in several places, and that these lineages developed into a regional lineage or regional lineages in its or their own right, with their own architecture, iconography, and (now lost) literature.

For later periods—starting with the second millennium of the Christian era—we have more sources. Here again they are often fragmentary, or they were composed or edited centuries after the events that they purport to describe. These sources include inscriptions in Mon, Thai, Khmer, and Pali from Hariphunchai, Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, Lanna, and Lanchang, and chronicles in the same languages. Despite the availability of these sources, the study of the history of religion in Southeast Asia remains undeveloped compared, for example, to that of Tibet, China, or Japan. Current and widely distributed books give unreliable and dated accounts. Harvey, for example, writes of Burma that "In northern Burma, Sarvāstivada and Mahāyāna Buddhism, along with Hinduism, were present from the third century AD, with Tantric Buddhism arriving by the ninth century. A change came about when a northern king, Anawratā (1044–1077) unified the country and gave his allegiance to the Theravāda of the Mons; for he was impressed by the simplicity of its doctrines."[60] Anawratā's adherence to Theravāda was questioned forty years ago by Luce, whose arguments were

summarized by D. G. E. Hall in his influential *History of South-East Asia*.[61] Since, as Hall notes, "not a single authentic inscription dates from his reign, save for votive tablets briefly inscribed," how are we to know that King Anawratā was "impressed by the simplicity" of Theravāda? Harvey's section on Thailand reads as follows: "In the region of modern Thailand, a mix of Mahāyāna and Śaivism was present from the tenth century. In the thirteenth century, the Tai people, driven south from China by the Mongolians, entered the area and drove out its Khmer rulers. Theravāda missions, sent from Burma from the eleventh century, found a response from the ruler of the Tais, once followers of Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism. Theravāda then became the dominant religious tradition."[62] This is outdated and inaccurate on every count. It could be reasonably recast as:

> In the region of what is today modern Thailand, a tradition or school that used Pali and must be related to the Theriya tradition—perhaps from India more than from Sri Lanka—seems to have been predominant in the first millennium of the Christian Era.[63] Cults of bodhisatvas like Avalokiteśvara and of brahmanical deities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Sūrya were also active.[64] In the thirteenth century, as the power of the Khmer waned, the Tai people became ascendant, establishing states in the area of Chiangmai, Sukhothai, Suphanburi, and Ayutthaya. Not much can be said about the religious protohistory of the Tai in terms of the Buddhisms that we know today (except that they were never "followers of Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhism" and were not driven south from China by the Mongolians, and there were never any "Theravāda missions" from Burma). It is, however, evident that there was continuity between the earlier traditions of the Mon Theravāda lineage, both in the central plains (through so-called Dvāravatī) and in the north (through Hariphunchai) and the traditions of the Tai. Brahmanical cults, a legacy of the central plains tradition and of the previously predominant Khmer civilization, continued to be maintained, both at the court and popular level, well into the Ayutthaya and indeed the Bangkok periods. Local Brahmans and Brahmanical rites have played a significant ritual role up to the present.[65]

Skilton, in his *A Concise History of Buddhism*, writes that "Though later to be universally dominated by the Theravāda form of Buddhism, the early history of the Dharma in South-east Asia is more piecemeal and eclectic. The later history of Buddhism in the region is characterized by a strong correlation of religion and national identity, and the promulgation of an ultra-orthodoxy derived from the works of Buddhaghosa,

on the model of developments in Sri Lanka and the Mahāvihāra."[66] One can agree that the early history of the dharma in Southeast Asia is "piecemeal and eclectic"—indeed, no master narrative can be written— but one wonders what this abstract "Theravāda form of Buddhism" which "universally dominated" Southeast Asia might be. It seems as if Sri Lanka was a kind of Rome or Constantinople, and that Southeast Asian sanghas had no autonomous or local histories or development. It more likely that "Theravāda," including that of Lanka, was a constant exchange and adaptation in response to the realities of patronage, economics, and social change.[67] The idea of "the promulgation of an ultra-orthodoxy derived from the works of Buddhaghosa" is decidedly odd and cannot be justified, or even located, in Thai religious, social, or political history.[68]

As mentioned above, the categories "Buddhism" and "religion" raise their own problems.[69] The most common word used by Buddhists for what today we call "Buddhism" is *śāsana*, "the teaching or dispensation," a term used by all Indian Buddhist schools.[70] In Siam, the inscriptions of Sukhothai use several combined forms:[71]

| | |
|---|---|
| *buddhaśāsanā* | Inscriptions 49-14, 69-1-6 |
| *phra buddhaśāsanā* | Inscription 1-2-12 |
| *śāsanā phra buddha* | Inscription 3-1-54, 57 |
| *śāsanā phra buddha pen chao* | Inscription 3-1-46 |
| *śāsanā phra chao* | Inscription 9-1-32; Inscription 14-2-14 |
| *śāsanā phra pen chao* | Inscription 3-1-31, 43, 59; Inscription 14-1-37, 2-18 |

*Śāsanā* most frequently refers to the dispensation of Gotama or Śākyamuni. In inscriptions or aspirations it may also refer to the dispensation of the next buddha, Maitreya.

If the term "Theravāda" was not used in Southeast Asian records, there is no dearth of alternate terms. I give below a few examples.

### Sīhala-śāsanā

In the Thai principalities, and throughout Southeast Asia, the monastic lineage of Sri Lanka had enormous prestige. Monks went to Lanka to be reordained and returned to start new monastic lines. As a result, lineage is frequently phrased in terms that show its Lankan pedigree.

An inscription from Chiang Rai, for example, records that in BE 2041 (= CE 1498) "twenty-five senior monks (*mahāthera chao*) went to bring the *śāsanā* of Phra Buddha Chao in Laṅkādīpa to Muang Hariphunchai."[72] Chapters of the northern Thai Pali chronicle *Jinakālamālinī* (completed 1527 CE) bear the titles "Sīhalasāsanāgamanakāla"—the "period of the arrival of the *śāsanā* from Ceylon"—and "Sīhalasāsanajotanakāla."[73] The body of the text uses the terms *Sīhala-sāsana* and *Sīhala-saṅgha*. The fifteenth-century Thai literary classic *The Defeat of the Yuan* (*Yuan Phai*) relates that when King Paramatrailokanātha decided to enter the monkhood, he sent his son to Ceylon (Laṅkādvīpa) to invite pure monks, free of defilement, to assist in the ordination ceremony.[74]

### *Gāmavāsī and Araññavāsī*

As mentioned above, important division of the sangha in Lanka from the twelfth century on was that of "town-dwellers" (*gāma-vāsī*) and "forest-dwellers" (*arañña-vāsī*).[75] These are ancient *Vinaya* terms, shared by the *Vinayas* and texts of all Buddhist schools. Sukhothai inscriptions refer to both, and suggest that they maintained separate ordination lineages.[76] In the Ayutthaya Buddhism of central Siam, the sangha was administered as a well-organized bureaucracy. Broad administrative divisions paralleled old civil divisions into Right, Center, and the Left. They included:

> Forest-dwelling groups (*fāy arañavāsī*), the Center
> Fraternity of town-dwellers (*gaṇa gāmavāsī*), the Left
> Town-dwellers (*gāmavāsī*), the Right, under Phra Vanaratna of Wat Pā Kaew.

Within these were further stratifications, with a Phra Khru at appointed temples. The Phra Khru (*phra khrū* [hybrid Pali, *garū*]) was a subordinate but powerful office in the monastic hierarchy, itself divided into several ranks. Under the Arañavāsī were:

> Phra Khru of the section of insight meditation (*phra khru fāy vipassanā*)
> Phra Khru, head of the Mon fraternity (*gaṇa rāmañ*)
> Phra Khru, head of the Lao fraternity (*gaṇa lao*).[77]

Under the Right Gāmavāsī were the *gaṇa* or fraternities of the southern principalities.

The Southeast Asian orders transmitted scriptures in different scripts and languages. In Thailand alone Pali, initially written in

the so-called Pallava script, came to be written in the Mon, Lanna, Tham, Khom, and Burmese alphabets; as a liturgical language it was pronounced and recited differently in different cadences. When King Rāma I of Bangkok sponsored a recitation-redaction of the Pali texts, manuscripts in Thai, Mon, and Lao were consulted, with some manuscripts brought from Nakhon Si Thammarat in the South.[78] Further, each vernacular had its own script or scripts, and interacted with Pali or Sanskrit in multiple ways. There was no single, standard or uniform interface between the "Pali database" and the living ritual repertoires and narrative *imaginaires*.

### The "Four [Laṅ]kā Lineages" in Nakhon Si Thammarat

At an uncertain date, certainly in the Ayutthaya period, in Nakhon Si Thammarat and and Phatthalung, the sangha was described in terms of "four *kā*." Local oral tradition explained that, from the beginning, the relics at Nakhon Si Thammarat were protected by four flocks of crows (*kā*) of four colors in the four cardinal directions. When legendary king Prayā Śrī Dharrmāśoka[79] built a *stūpa* for the relics, the names and colors of the four flocks of crows became the titles of the four Phra Khru who oversaw the *stūpa*. In fact, the "four *kā*" are four monastic lineages believed to have come from Laṅkā:[80]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kā Kaew | Pa Kaew (Vanaratana) lineage | white |
| Kā Rām | Rāmañña (Mon) lineage | yellow |
| Kā Jāta | Pa Daeng lineage | red |
| Kā Döm | Former lineage | black |

The origins and evolution of these orders are obscure, but most are ancient, and their lineage networks extended to Sukhothai, Chiangmai, and the Shan principalities. In the South, the lineages were enduring, and the terms continued to be used until the Bangkok period. With the constant travel to and fro there were many locally or chronologically differentiated lineages within the Sinhala traditions. At the time *Jinakālamālinī* was compiled (beginning of the sixteenth century), there were three lineages in the north: the Nagaravāsī, the Pupphavāsī, and the Sīhaḷabhikkhus (i.e., the City-Dwellers, the Suan Dok monks, and the Wat Pa Daeng monks).[81]

## *The Four Nikāyas of Present-Day Siam*

Since the late nineteenth century four monastic traditions have been officially recognized in Siam:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mahānikāya | The "Great or Majority *Nikāya"* |
| Dhammayuttika | The "*Nikāya* Devoted to the Dhamma,"[82] founded by King Mongkut |
| Cīna-nikāya | The "Chinese *Nikāya*," brought to Siam by southern Chinese immigrants |
| Annam-nikāya | The "Annamite *Nikāya*," brought to Siam by immigrants from Vietnam |

Mahānikāya and Dhammayuttika are not necessarily exclusive. The twentieth-century northeastern master Ajahn Chah (Bodhiñāṇa, 1918–1992), for example, studied under Ajahn Mun Bhūridatto (1870–1942)[83] and other Dhammayuttika masters, but maintained his Mahānikāya lineage. Laypeople are neither Dhammayuttika nor Mahānikāya, though some may prefer to support monks of one or the other lineage. Representatives of all four traditions are invited to important royal or state ceremonies (although the status of the Cīna- and Annam-nikāyas is inferior to that of the two Theravāda lineages). At funerals both Theravādin and Chinese or Annamite monks may be invited to chant and conduct rites, depending on the ethnicity and wishes of the sponsors. The Chinese and Annamite monks perform rituals and recite *dhāraṇīs* in southern Chinese or Annamite styles that were imported in the nineteenth century or earlier.

## *Ahistorical Inventions: Ariya Buddhism and Other Chimera*

Modern scholarship has compounded the confusion by coining new terms for the Buddhism of Southeast Asia.[84] These late twentieth century neologisms include "Lopburi Hīnayāna" and "Ariya Buddhism," "Tantric Theravāda," "Siamvaṃsa school," and "Sukhavatī school." This is not the place to address the problem of these curious inventions, and I will briefly take up only one example, Tantric Theravāda. Neither Thai nor Khmer Buddhism, as seen above, represents itself as "Theravadin"—let alone "Tantric." In India itself the word "tantra" is contested—there is no agreement as to what the long-lived, diverse, multicultural, multireligious term "tantra" means.[85] It is noted in the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* that "Tantra in Western nomenclature has achieved forms of signification independent from its Sanskritic use and

has become a somewhat promiscuous category applied to various rituals not easily classified."[86] The word "tantra" is not used in Southeast Asian Buddhism to describe either texts or practices (and the adjective *tāntrika* is equally unknown). There is no problem in drawing parallels (if there are any): that is our job. But when we place Khmer or Southeast Asian practice within a category alien to it, then, inevitably, everything else about tantra is associated with it, and confusion reigns.

## III. INCONCLUSION

At the end of this rather desultory excursion into history, I remain with more questions than conclusions. One is whether a precise terminology is possible or even desirable. It is inevitable that terminology be *ad hoc*, and that it changes as questions and data change. I do not propose that we abandon the use of the term Theravāda—that would be absurd—but I do suggest that we do our best to understand its historical context, and that we keep it in rein. It is inevitable that there are imbalances and inconsistencies in our terms for the complex phenomena of Buddhism. It is common to delimit Buddhisms by geographic, ethnic, or national names, without, perhaps, addressing questions of significance and appropriateness. Thus we have Indian, Sinhalese, Tamil, Newar/Nepalese, Tibetan/Himalayan, Mongolian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese Buddhism*s*. In some case we refine these with names of reigns or capitals: Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing Buddhism*s*; Nara, Heian, Kamakura, Edo Buddhisms; Koryǒ, Silla, Paekche Buddhism*s*; Kandyan Buddhism; and so on. We delimit the range by a period/place in a straightforward way, without imposing preconceptions (although there is certainly room for debate about center and periphery, elitism, and so on, but they are not really precluded by the terms). Perhaps we need to experiment further in our descriptions of the Buddhisms of Southeast Asia.

## NOTES

1. This is a considerably revised recension of a paper presented under the title "Ubiquitous and Elusive: In Quest of Theravāda" at the conference "Exploring Theravada Studies: Intellectual Trends and the Future of a Field of Study," hosted by the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore, August 12–14, 2004, and organized by Guillaume Rozenberg and Jason Carbine. I am grateful to the organizers of the conference for inviting me to speak, to the participants for their comments, and to colleagues too

many to mention for discussions in the intervening years. I especially thank Giuliana Martini for her comments on and corrections to the final draft.

Note: "Sanskrit" and "Prakrit," rather than "Saṃskṛta" or "Prākṛta," have been widely accepted in Indological writing for decades. I see no reason to persist with the use of "Pāli" and "Gāndhārī," and I therefore use "Pali" and "Gandhari" throughout. In addition, taking into account the compelling evidence presented by Gouriswar Bhattacharya, I write "bodhisatva" rather than "bodhisattva": see Gouriswar Bhattacharya, "How to Justify the Spelling of the Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Term Bodhisatva?" in *From Turfan to Ajanta: Festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the Occasion of his Eighteenth Birthday*, ed. Eli Franco and Monika Zin (Rupandehi: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2010), 35–50.

2. See, for example, John Clifford Holt, Jacob N. Kinnard, and Jonathan S. Walters, eds., *Constituting Communities: Theravāda Buddhism and the Religious Cultures of South and Southeast Asia*, SUNY Series in Buddhist Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003). The standard monograph remains Richard F. Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (1988; 2nd ed., London: Routledge, 2006). The title is problematic insofar as it implies that "Theravāda" began in "ancient Benares," that is, the Deer Park at Sarnath: however, the sermon at Sarnath is the foundation of *all* that later became Buddhism—not only Theravāda, but *all* schools.

3. Kevin Trainor, ed., *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide*, rev. ed. (London: Duncan Baird, 2004), 120–131.

4. Other *nikāyas* seem to be grouped under the general name *ācariyavāda*, a term not used, as far as I know, in other Buddhist schools. Another term met with in Pali is *nikāyantara*, which is also used in Sanskrit texts. Further research is needed to determine how "Theravāda" has viewed the "Other" through its long history, during which it has been in constant interaction with other religions and practices.

5. I refer to the research paper of Todd Perreira presented at the XVth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, June 2008), to be included in Jason Carbine and Peter Skilling, eds., *How Theravāda Is Theravāda?* (Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corp., forthcoming). Guruge states that "Resulting from the reaction of Buddhists of South and Southeast Asia to the use of the rather pejorative term 'Hīnayāna' to designate the form of Buddhism practiced in the region, the term 'Theravāda' came to be applied to it around mid-twentieth century." See Ananda W.P. Guruge, "Does the Theravāda Tradition of Buddhism Exist Today?" in *Buddhist and Pali Studies in Honour of the Venerable Professor Kakkapalliye Anuruddha*, ed. K.L. Dhammajoti and Y. Karunadasa (Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, 2009), 97.

6. For a lucid and reliable account of the Pali canon and Pali literary traditions, see Oskar von Hinüber, "Pali, Buddhist Literature in," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr., 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 2:625–629.

7. Steven Collins, *Nirvana and Other Buddhist Felicities: Utopias of the Pali Imaginaire*, Cambridge Studies in Religious Traditions 12 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). See now the abridged version, Steven Collins, *Nirvana: Concept, Imagery, Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

8. Kevin Trainor, ed., *Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide*, rev. ed. (London: Duncan Baird, 2004), 120.

9. Note that it is not true that the Theravāda is the only school that has "survived into the present day," since up to the present a Sarvāstivāda monastic lineage is followed in Tibet and a Dharmaguptaka lineage is followed in East Asia.

10. *Dīpavaṃsa* 4:6, *therehi katasaṃgaho theravādo 'ti vuccati.*

11. P. A. Payutto, *Phra traipidok: sing thi chao phut tong ru / The Pali Canon: What a Buddhist Must Know* (Bangkok: privately printed, BE 2546 = CE 2003), 17. I prefer, however, to translate "*thera*" as "senior" or "senior monks" rather than "elder."

12. One significant distinction is that the Theravāda tradition maintained that it preserves the original redaction, while in north India it was admitted that the original redaction (*mūlasaṃgīti*) was no longer extant: see Peter Skilling, "Scriptural Authenticity and the Śrāvaka Schools: An Essay towards an Indian Perspective," *The Eastern Buddhist* 41, no. 2 (2010): 1ff.

13. *Mahāvaṃsa* 3:40cd, *thereh' eva katattā ca theriyāyaṃ paraṃparā*; 5:1, *yā mahākassapādīhi mahātherehi ādito, katā saddhammasaṃgīti theriyā ti pavuccati.*

14. I am not certain when or by whom the term Sthaviravāda was coined. It is already used by Lamotte, and might have been given currency by A. K. Warder in his *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), *passim*. There is no equivalent—*\*Gnas brtan smra ba'i sde*?—in Tibetan. Sometimes "Sthaviravāda" is reconstructed in European translations from the Chinese, but on investigation the Chinese turns out to be something like *\*Sthavira-nikāya*. The key point is the absence of the suffix –*vāda*.

15. Keisho Tsukamoto, *A Comprehensive Study of the Indian Buddhist Inscriptions*, part 1 (Kyoto: Heirakuji-Shoten, 1996), I: Bihar 1.5, I: Bodh-Gayā 21, and III: Ajaṇṭa 68.6. For feminine forms of the term see Peter Skilling, "A Note on the History of the Bhikkhunī-saṅgha (I): Nuns at the Time of the Buddha," *World Federation of Buddhists Review* 31, nos. 2–3 (April–September BE 2537 = CE 1994): 47–55.

16. Claudine Bautze-Picron, *The Art of Eastern India in the Collection of the Museum*

*für Indische Kunst, Berlin: Stone and Terracotta Sculptures*, Monographien zur indischen Archäologie Kunst und Philologie, Band 12 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1998), no. 305.

17. The Peking edition of the *Mahāvyutpatti* has *Ārya-sthābirāḥ* ('*phags pa gnas brtan pa*); see Daisetz T. Suzuki, ed., *The Tibetan Tripitaka, Peking Edition—Kept in the Library of the Otani University, Kyoto*, vol. 144 (Tokyo–Kyoto: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1957), *ṅo mtshar bstan bcos*, *go*, 305b1. The Sanskrit index of Ryōzaburō Sakaki's edition of the *Mahāvyutpatti* (orig. pub. 1925; repr., Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, Reprint Series 1, 1962, Index volume, 162) gives the form *sthāvira*, but the text (§9095) gives *Ārya-sthavirah*, which is presumably a misprint (see note at Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. II, Dictionary [orig. pub., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1972], 105b, s.v. "*Ārya-sthāvira*"). N. D. Mironov's edition (*Mahāvyutpatti*, Bibliotheca Buddhica XIII [orig. pub. 1911; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992], § 275.18) and the edition of Yumiko Ishihama and Yoichi Fukuda (*A New Critical Edition of the Mahāvyutpatti, Sanskrit-Tibetan-Mongolian Dictionary of Buddhist Terminology* [Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1989], §9032) have *Ārya-sthāvirāḥ*.

18. See Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. II, Dictionary, 105b.

19. D. L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, London Oriental Series, vol. 6 (orig. pub. 1959; repr., London: Oxford University Press, 1980), II 5, 68.

20. *Bu ston Chos 'byuṅ* (Kruṅ go bod kyi śes rig dpe skrun khaṅ, 1988), 133.13. The phrasing of 'Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa is slightly different: *gnas brtan 'phags pa'i rigs yin par ston pas gnas brtan pa* ('Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa'i-rdo-rje, *Grub mtha'i rnam bśad kun bzaṅ źiṅ gi ñi ma* [Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1992], 264.10).

21. See Mori Sodō, "*Ariyavaṃsa* and *Ariyavaṃsa-kathā*," in *Studies on Buddhism in Honour of Professor A.K. Warder*, ed. N. K. Wagle and F. Watanabe (Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 1993) (South Asian Papers, no. 5), 100–112.

22. Śramaṇa Yijing, *Buddhist Monastic Traditions of Southern Asia: A Record of the Inner Law Sent Home from the South Seas*, translated from the Chinese (Taishō Volume 54, Number 2125) by Li Rongxi (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research [BDK English Tripiṭaka 93-I], 2000), 11. The four-school model is vouchsafed by Indian sources for, at any rate, the seventh century on. Chinese sources also know a five-school model which seems to reflect the situation in the Northwest. This model deserves further attention, given that it includes the Dharmaguptakas, with whom many of the recently discovered Gandhari manuscripts are believed to be associated. For sources and for the historiography of the study of the four- and five-school models in European scholarship up to about 1945, see Lin Li-Kouang,

*Introduction au Compendium de la loi (Dharma-Samuccaya): L'aide-mémoire de la vraie loi (Saddharma-Smrtyupasthāna-sūtra): recherches sur un sūtra développé du Petit Véhicule*, introduction by P. Demiéville (Publications du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'études, t. 54) (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1949), 176–216.

23. Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra*, I, 49; II, 5–6, 90, 149, and 156; Ch. Willemen, *The Chinese Hevajratantra: The Scriptural Text of the Ritual of the Great King of the Teaching, the Adamantine One with Great Compassion and Knowledge of the Void* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1983), 38–39, 97–98; G. W. Farrow and I. Menon, *The Concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra with the Commentary Yogaratnamala* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), 20–21, 225. The four philosophical schools are also mentioned in Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra*, part II, p. 156. In dPa'-bo Gtsug-lag-phreṅ-ba's (1504–1566) *Chos 'byuṅ mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (Mi rigs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1986), part I, p. 71 there is an interesting note—originally inter-linear?—on this:

> *'di la gnas brtan pa kho na sde pa'i rtsa bar 'dod pa daṅ thams cad yod smra rtsa bar 'dod pa sogs bśad lugs maṅ du yod kyaṅ gsaṅ sṅags su dgyes rdor daṅ sambhuṭar rtsa 'khor lo bźi la sde pa bźi'i miṅ du gsuṅs pa daṅ dus 'khor du źal bźi las sde pa bźi spros pa sogs yod pas rtsa ba'i sde bźi kho nar 'thad pa yin no.*

> Herein, because the Sthaviras want [their school] alone to be the root *nikāya*, the Sarvāstivāda want [their school alone] to be the root *nikāya*, there are many methods of explanation [of the emergence and relations of the schools]; in the Mantra [system] the *Hevajra* and *Sampuṭa* [tantras] apply the names of the four main *nikāyas* to the *cakras*, while the Kālacakra [system] applies them to the four faces, only the four main *nikāyas* are accepted.

24. Many of these sources are preserved in Tibetan translation, which uses *gnas brtan* for *sthavira*, and *gnas brtan sde* for *Sthāvira-nikāya or, perhaps, *Sthāvariya, etc.

25. See Peter Skilling, "Theravādin Literature in Tibetan Translation," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 19 (1993): 154–155. Yijing refers to three divisions of the Sthāviras without naming them.

26. See Heinz Bechert, "The *Nikāyas* of Mediaeval Sri Lanka and the Unification of the *Sangha* by Parākramabāhu I," in *Studies on Buddhism in Honour of Professor A.K. Warder*, ed. N. K. Wagle and F. Watanabe (Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 1993) (South Asian Papers, no. 5), 11–21.

27. Go-rams-pa Bsod-nams-seṅge, "Sdom gsum rab dbye'i rnam bśad rgyal ba'i gsuṅ rab kyi dgoṅs pa gsal ba," in *Sdom pa gsum gyi rnam gźag ston pa'i gźuṅ gces btus* (New Delhi: Institute of Tibetan Classics, 2009) (Bod kyi gtsug lag gces btus vol. 12), 152.4.

28. 'Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa'i-rdo-rje, *Grub mtha'i rnam bśad kun bzaṅ źiṅ gi ñi ma* (Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1992), 267, penult.

29. This means that it is the same as that of the Sāṃmitīyas, described as *snam phran ñer gcig nas lṅa yan chad*. According to Bu-ston (*Bu ston chos 'byuṅ*, 133.14), both number of panels and insignia are shared with the Sāṃmitīyas (*snam phran daṅ brtags maṅ pos bkur ba daṅ mthun par grag go*). The phrase *snam phran* has been misunderstood in previous translations (Obermiller uses "fringe" of the "mantle" in Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, *History of Buddhism [Chos-ḥbyung] by Bu-ston*, trans. E. Obermiller [Heidelberg: In Kommission bei O. Harrassowitz, 1931–1932], II, 99–100; Vogel, "strips" of the "waist-cloth" in Claus Vogel, "Bu-ston on the Schism of the Buddhist Church and on the Doctrinal Tendencies of Buddhist Scriptures," in *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hīnayāna-Literatur, Erster Teil*, ed. Heinz Bechert, Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung, III, 1 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985], 107–108). The Sanskrit terminology may be gleaned from the *Vinaya-sūtra*: *khaṇḍasaṃghāṭyāṃ nava prabhṛtyā pañcaviṃśater yugmavarjam = snam sbyar gyi snam phran dag ni dgu yan chad ñi śu rtsa lṅa man chad de zuṅ ma gtogs so* (reference from J. S. Negi, *Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. 7 [Sarnath, Varanasi: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2001], 3243b). These are the dimensions given for the Sarvāstivādins by Bu-ston and 'Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa. For Thai tradition see Somdet Phra Mahā Samaṇa Chao Krom Phrayā Vajirañāṇavarorasa, *The Entrance to the Vinaya, Vinayamukha*, vol. 2 (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya Press, BE 2516 = CE 1973), 13–18, esp. 15: "A *cīvara* must have not less than five *khaṇḍa*, but more than this can be used provided that the numbers of them are irregular—seven, nine, eleven. Many *khaṇḍa* may be used when a *bhikkhu* cannot find large pieces of cloth."

30. Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltshen, *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes: Essential Distinctions among the Individual Liberation, Great Vehicle, and Tantric Systems*, trans. Jared Douglas Rhoton, ed. Victoria R.M. Scott (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), vv. 173–175 (for the Tibetan text see p. 287). For a "quintessential summary" in prose, see Sa pan's "Letter to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Ten Directions," ibid., p. 244. For Gorampa's commentary, see Go-rams-pa Bsod-nams-seṅge, "Sdom gsum rab dbye'i rnam bśad rgyal ba'i gsuṅ rab kyi dgoṅs pa gsal ba," 150ff.

31. *Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha of Sāyana-Mādhava*, ed. Mahāmahopādhyāya Vasudev Shastri Abhyankar, 3rd ed. (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1978), chap. 2 line 41: *te ca bauddhāś caturvidhayā bhāvanayā paramapuruṣārthaṃ kathayanti. te ca mādhyamika-yogācāra-sautrāntikavaibhāṣikasaṃjñābhiḥ prasiddhā bauddhā.*

32. See Katsumi Mimaki, *La réfutation bouddhique de la permanence des choses (sthirasiddhidūṣaṇa) et la preuve de la momentanéité des choses (kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi)*, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, Fascicule 41 (Paris: Institut

de Civilisation Indienne, 1976), 67–69 for a list of sources—Indian Buddhist, Indian non-Buddhist, Tibetan Buddhist, and Tibetan Bon po—for the four schools. These and other sources are cited in 'Jam-dbyaṅs Bźad-pa'i-rdo-rje, *Grub mtha'i rnam bśad kun bzaṅ źiṅ gi ñi ma*, 246–248.

33. For *Kālacakra*, see Vesna A. Wallace, *The Kālacakratantra: The Chapter on the Individual Together with the Vimalaprabhā* (New York, NY: American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2004), 241–247; and citations in Khedrup Norsang Gyatso, *Ornament of Stainless Light, An Exposition of the Kālacakra Tantra* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2004), 570–573.

34. Mimaki, *La réfutation bouddhique*, 69.

35. Perhaps the earliest notice of the four philosophical schools to be published in a European language was that presented by the pioneering Hungarian scholar Alexander Csoma de Kőrös in his "Notices on the Different Systems of Buddhism Extracted from the Tibetan Authorities," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 7, no. 1 (1838): 142; reprinted in Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, *Tibetan Studies, Being a Reprint of the Articles Contributed to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and Asiatic Researches*, ed. E. Denison Ross (orig. pub. 1912; repr., New Delhi: Gaurav Publishing House, 1991), 73–79. For doxographic literature see Katsumi Mimaki, *Blo gsal grub mtha': Chapitres IX (Vaibhāṣika) et XI (Yogācāra) édités et Chapitre XII (Mādhyamika) édité et traduit* (Kyoto: Zinbun Kagaku Kenkyusyo, Université de Kyoto, 1982); Jeffrey Hopkins, "The Tibetan Genre of Doxography: Structuring a Worldview," in *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, ed. José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1996), 170–186. For translations of works in this genre see Geshe Lhundup Sopa, *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*, trans. Jeffrey Hopkins (London: Rider and Company, 1976) (Part Two gives a translation of Dkon-mchog-'jigs-med-dbang-po's [1728–1791] *Precious Garland of Tenets*).

36. 'Jam dbyaṅs bźad pa'i rdo rje, *Grub mtha'i rnam bśad kun bzaṅ źiṅ gi ñi ma*, root-text, 8.8, commentary, 246–248; translation from Daniel Cozort and Craig Preston, *Buddhist Philosophy: Losang Gönchok's Short Commentary to Jamyang Shayba's Root Text on Tenets* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 2003), 143 v. 1.

37. I doubt whether Sautrāntika in particular ever represented a historical body or even lineage. It represented, perhaps, a hermeneutic stance. Can we compare the term to, for example, "Marxist"? Some historians identify their approach as Marxist; others criticize or condemn Marxist historiography: that is, the term can be positive, negative, or neutral. Marxist historiography has evolved and changed considerably with time. Historians who consider themselves Marxist may disagree on fundamental points, they do not belong to any formal school, and they may be professionally associated with a variety of unrelated institutes. For Sautrāntika see the collection of essays devoted to the school in the special issue of the *Journal of the International Association of*

*Buddhist Studies* 26, no. 2 (2003), and Collett Cox, *Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence: An Annotated Translation of the Section on Factors Dissociated from Thought from Saṅghabhadra's Nyāyānusāra,* Studia Philogica Buddhica Monograph Series XI (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1995), 37ff.

38. Peter Skilling, "The *Saṃskṛtāsamskṛta-viniścaya* of Daśabalaśrīmitra," *Buddhist Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (1987): 3–23; Peter Skilling, "Theravādin Literature in Tibetan Translation," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 19 (1993): 69–201.

39. See the examples connected with the *indriyas* in Peter Skilling, "Discourse on the Twenty-Two Faculties Translated from Śamathadeva's *Upāyikā-ṭīkā*," in *Dharmapravicaya*: Aspects of Buddhist Studies, ed. Lalji 'Shravak', Prof. N. H. Samtani Felicitation Volume (New Delhi: Buddhist World Press, forthcoming).

40. See for example Y. Karunadasa, *The Dhamma Theory: Cornerstone of the Abhidhamma Philosophy,* Wheel Publication 412/413 (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996).

41. This is, however, something that warrants further investigation. My description of *pramāṇa* as a concern of North Indian Buddhists may be an overstatement, given the epistemological material in the Tamil *Maṇimekhalai* and the importance of epistemology in Indian thought in general, including the noteworthy Jaina contributions.

42. Fortunately recent research reconstructs at least some of the scope of Buddhism in the south: see for example Anne E. Monius, *Imagining a Place for Buddhism: Literary Culture and Religious Community in Tamil-Speaking South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

43. Our sources for the Vibhajyavāda are inconclusive and contradictory. For recent studies see L. S. Cousins, "On the Vibhajjavādins: The Mahiṃsāsaka, Dhammaguttaka, Kassapiya and Tambapaṇṇiya Branches of the Ancient Theriyas," *Buddhist Studies Review* 18, no. 2 (2001): 131–182; and Y. Karunadasa, *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: Its Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality* (Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010), Appendix: "Theravāda and Vibhajjavāda," 282–293. Oliver Abeynayake, "The Theravāda Tradition: Its Identity," *Journal of Buddhist Studies, Centre for Buddhist Studies Sri Lanka* 7 (2009): 90–100, generally follows Karunaratne. The phrase *vibhajjavādimaṇḍalaṃ otaritvā*, rendered by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli as "one who keeps within the circle of the Vibhajjavādins," as the first of a series of qualifications of the attitude of who explains dependent origination is intriguing if inconclusive. See *Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosâcariya*, ed. Henry Clarke Warren, revised by Dharmananda Kosambi, Harvard Oriental Series, Volume 41 (orig. pub., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1989), § XVII, 25; Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, trans., *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) by Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa*

(Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1975), § XVII, 25.

44. *Vinaya* (Pali Text Society edition) II 72.27.

45. I follow the Syāmraṭṭha edition (vol. 6, 298) in reading *-vadānaṃ*. The Pali Text Society and Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti editions read *-padānaṃ*: Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti, *Cullavaggapāḷi*, 187.10 with footnote that Sīhala editions read *vibhajjavādīnaṃ*.

46. This is a rare example of an explicit statement of school affiliation in a colophon. As far as I know it is the only case in the Pali scriptures. The only North Indian texts that identify their school affiliation are those of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins.

47. For a brief report see *Indian Archaeology 1997–98: A Review* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 2003), 206–207. The inscriptions were published in B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao et al., *Buddhist Inscriptions of Andhradesa* (Secunderabad: Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust, 1998), copper plates of Siri Ehāvala Chāntamūla, 191–193 and Pl. VI (c); also, and better, *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India* 25 (1999): 114–121, copper plates of Mādhavavarma, 207 foll. Another inscription also mentions *mahavihāra*, but this seems to be a local monastery.

48. For examples see Cousins, "On the Vibhajjavādins."

49. R.A.L.H. Gunawardana, "The World of Theravāda Buddhism in History: Relevance of a Territorial Category as a Conceptual Tool in the Study of History," in Asanga Tilakaratne et al., eds., *Dhamma-Vinaya: Essays in Honour of Venerable Professor Dhammavihari (Jotiya Dhirasekera)* (Colombo: Sri Lanka Association for Buddhist Studies, 2005), 55–89.

50. See the entries by H. Durt and A. Forte, s.v. "Daiji" (*mahāvihāra*), in *Hôbôgirin: Dictionnaire encyclopédique du bouddhisme d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises, Sixième fascicule: Da–Daijizaiten* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve and Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1983), 679–711.

51. Stephen C. Berkwitz, *South Asian Buddhism: A Survey* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 147–148. One of the curiosities of Buddhist studies is that Ceylon is often located in Southeast Asia—presumably because of its putative Theravādin status (for which we turn to *Dīpavaṃsa*, *Mahāvaṃsa*, and the Pali texts, rather than to the distinctive archeological record, which has its own trajectory, not adequately integrated into current "Sri Lankan history"). This logical anomaly is rather like situating the Philippines in Southern Europe because it is predominantly Roman Catholic. See, for example, the "Timeline of Buddhist History" for Southeast Asia in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr., 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 2:935–936, which in its general unreliability undoes the good done by the better entries in the *Encyclopedia*. One is grateful to Berkwitz for relocating Sri Lanka in South Asia, and for putting the category of "South Asian Buddhism" back on the table.

52. For the lateness of Theravāda in relation to Mahāyāna see, for example, Peter Skilling, "Mahāyāna and Bodhisattva: An Essay towards Historical Understanding," in *Phothisatawa barami kap sangkhom thai nai sahatsawat mai* [*Bodhisattvaparami and Thai Society in the New Millennium*], ed. Pakorn Limpanusorn and Chalermpon Iampakdee, Chinese Studies Centre, Institute of East Asia, Thammasat University (proceedings of a seminar in celebration of the fourth birth-cycle of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn held at Thammasat University, 21 January 2546 [2003]) (Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, BE 2547 = CE 2004), 139–156.

53. Note the recent establishment of Association of Theravāda Buddhist Universities (ATBU).

54. I doubt that in any *nikāya* the monks and nuns as a whole subscribed to the "particular school of thought" of their *nikāya*: the relations between ordination, belief, and thought is another point that needs serious consideration.

55. R.A.L.H. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough: Monasticism and Economic Interest in Early Medieval Sri Lanka*, Association for Asian Studies: Monographs and Papers, No. 35 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1979), 85–86.

56. Wilhelm Geiger, ed., *Cūlavaṃsa, Being the Most Recent Part of the Mahāvaṃsa* (orig. pub. 1925, 1927; repr., London: The Pali Text Society/Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), 42:17: *theriyānaṃ tapassinaṃ*. Cf. also 41:99. I prefer to follow the manuscripts in calling the whole work *Mahāvaṃsa* rather than to follow the European convention of calling the later parts *Cūlavaṃsa.*

57. Ibid.,52:46.

58. Ibid., 54:46.

59. Ibid., 54:47: *upassayaṃ karitvāna mahāmallakanāmakaṃ, theravaṃsamhi jātānaṃ bhikkhunīnaṃ adāpayī.*

60. Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 143. Every sentence in the paragraph contains errors, most of them major.

61. D.G.E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, 4th ed. (orig. pub. 1955; repr., London: Macmillan, 1985), 158–161.

62. Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 144.

63. See Peter Skilling, "The Advent of Theravāda Buddhism to Mainland Southeast Asia," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 20–21 (1997): 93–107; Peter Skilling, "The Place of South-East Asia in Buddhist Studies," *Buddhist Studies* (*Bukkyō Kenkyū*) 30 (2001): 19–43; Peter Skilling, *Buddhism and Buddhist Literature of South-East Asia: Selected Papers by Peter Skilling*, ed. Claudio Cicuzza (Bangkok and Lumbini: Fragile Palm Leaves, 2009 [Materials for the Study of the Tripiṭaka Volume 5]); and esp. Prapod Assavavirulhakarn, *The*

*Ascendancy of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2010).

64. For Sūrya see Peter Skilling, "A Recently Discovered Sūrya Image from Thailand," in *Prajñādhara: Essays on Asian Art, History, Epigraphy and Culture in Honour of Gouriswar Bhattacharya*, ed. Gerd J.R. Mevissen and Arundhati Banerji (New Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2009), 455–465 and pls. 46.1–10. For the hybrid nature of "Thai religion" see Peter Skilling, "Worship and Devotional Life: Buddhist Devotional Life in Southeast Asia," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 15 vols., 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA/Thomson Gale), 14:9826–9834; Peter Skilling, "King, Saṅgha, and Brahmans: Ideology, Ritual and Power in Pre-modern Siam," in *Buddhism, Power and Political Order*, ed. Ian Harris (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 182–215.

65. Skilling, "King, Saṅgha, and Brahmans."

66. Andrew Skilton, *A Concise History of Buddhism* (Birmingham: Windhorse Publications, 1994), 156.

67. For the intricacies of Siamese Buddhism, see Peter Skilling, "Geographies of Intertextuality: Buddhist Literature in Pre-modern Siam," *Aséanie - Sciences humaines en Asie du Sud-est* 19 (June 2007): 91–112. For Thai Buddhism in the Ratanakosin or Bangkok period see Peter Skilling, "For Merit and Nirvāṇa: The Production of Art in the Bangkok Period," *Arts Asiatiques* 62 (2007): 76–94; Peter Skilling, "Similar Yet Different: Buddhism in Siam and Burma in the Nineteenth Century," in *Emerald Cities: Arts of Siam and Burma, 1775–1950*, ed. Forrest McGill (San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture, 2009), 46–73.

68. The problem for any synthetic writing on Southeast Asian Buddhism—that is, on over two thousand years of prehistory and history in a dozen cultures over a vast and diverse ecological and cultural landscape—is the dearth of reliable materials in European languages and the persistence of outdated information and frameworks. The thumbnail sketch is difficult if not impossible to achieve, and most fail, scuppered on the reefs of overgeneralization and inaccuracy. Recent sources that give more reliable and perceptive accounts include (for the early period) Prapod Assavavirulhakarn, *The Ascendancy of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia*; Kate Crosby, "Theravāda," in *Encyclopedia of* Buddhism, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr., 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 2:836–841; Robert L. Brown, "Southeast Asia, Buddhist Art in," in ibid., 2:782–788; Bonnie Brereton, "Theravāda Art and Architecture," in ibid., 2:841–844; and (the very brief) Rupert Gethin, *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 256–257. For the dynamics of regional developments on the broader global canvas, see Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830, Volume 1: Integration on the Mainland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

69. For "Buddhism" see John Ross Carter, *On Understanding Buddhists: Essays on the Theravāda Tradition in Sri Lanka* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), especially chaps. 1 and 2.

70. See C. A. F. Rhys Davids, "Sāsana," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, 12 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), 11:200–201. The early use in Western scholarship of the word "dispensation" for *śāsana* is intriguing, and smacks of biblical influences.

71. After Piriya Krairiksh, "Towards a Revised History of Sukhothai Art: A Reassessment of the Inscription of King Ram Khamhaeng," in *The Ram Khamhaeng Controversy: Collected Papers*, ed. James R. Chamberlain (Bangkok: The Siam Society, 1991), 78.

72. *Chareuk lanna phak 1 lem 1: Chareuk changwat Chiang Rai Nan Phayao Phrae/ Lanna Inscriptions Part I, Volume I: Inscriptions from Chiang Rai, Nan, Phayao and Phrae: Texts* (Bangkok: Amarin Printing Group Ltd. [published by James H. W. Thompson Foundation on the auspicious occasion of the third birth-cycle of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn], BE 2534 = CE 1991), Inscription Chiang Rai 4. For plate see ibid., Part I, Volume II, plate 7.

73. A. P. Buddhadatta, *Jinakālamālī* (London: Pali Text Society, 1962), 95.2, 119.15.

74. *Yuan Phai* v. 76, in *Photchananukrom sap wannakhadi thai samai ayutthaya: khlong yuan phai* (Bangkok: Rājabanditayasathan [The Royal Academy], BE 2544 = CE 2001), 100; A. B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara, "A Fifteenth-Century Siamese Historical Poem," in *Southeast Asian History and Historiography: Essays Presented to D. G. E. Hall*, ed. C. D. Cowan and O. W. Wolters (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1976), 144. Griswold and Prasert translate the phrase *choen chuay song phu phaew kaletklai* as "to invite a saintly monk," but given that Thai nouns have no plural form, and that an ordination requires a chapter of five to ten monks, I prefer to interpret *song* (= Pali *saṅgha*) as plural here. It seems more logical that, in order to lend authority to the ordination, a number of revered Lankan monks would have been invited to conduct the ceremony together with local monks.

75. Other monastic categories from Ceylon, such as *paṃsukūlika*, do not seem to have been introduced to Siam, although there was a brief *paṃsūkulika* lineage in Tibet.

76. G. Cœdès, in *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, Première partie, *Inscriptions de Sukhodaya* (Bangkok: Bangkok Times Press, 1924), takes the liberty of adding the word "sect" where the Thai has simply *upasampada nai gāmavāsī*, *upasampada nai arañavāsī*: Inscr. 9, Wat Pa Daeng, p. 136: "[il] eut reçu l'ordination dans la secte des Gāmavāsis en sakkarāja 705 . . . il reçut l'ordination dans la secte des Araññavāsis en sakkarāja 710. . . ."

77. In this context, "Lao" refers to a wide cultural and linguistic zone from Chiang Mai in Thailand to Luang Prabang and northern Laos, once a band of Tai principalities—it does not refer to the modern state of Laos.

78. "Kham prakāt devatā khrang saṅgāyanā pī wok samritthi sok pho. so. 2331 rajakāl thi 1," in Phrachao Boromawong Thoe Kromaphra Sommot Amonphan, ed., *Prakāt kān phra rājabidhī* lem 1 (Bangkok: Ongkankha khong Khurusapha, BE = 2508 = CE 1965), 304.

79. Phrayā Śrī Dharrmāśoka, to judge from inscriptions, was a historical title or figure (ca. twelfth century CE?), but we know more about him from local legends from several regions of Thailand.

80. Prince Damrong Rājanubhab, *Tamnān gaṇa saṅgha* (Bangkok: Ho Phra Samut Vajirañāṇa [Vijarañāṇa Library]/Rongphim Sophonphiphatthanakorn, BE 2466 = CE 1923), 39–41; Sutthiwong Phongphaibun, "Kā 4 fāy: khana song," in Sutthiwong Phongphaibun, ed., *Sārānukrom wathanatham thai phāk tai pho. so. 2542*, 10 vols. (Bangkok: Amarin Kanphim, BE 2542 = CE 1999), 1:176–178. See also Chaiwut Piyakun, "Kalapanā Wat Khian Bāng Kaew," in *Sārānukrom wathanatham thai phāk tai*, 1:283–285; Lorraine M. Gessick, *In the Land of Lady White Blood: Southern Thailand and the Meaning of History* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1995). The identity of Kā Jāta is not certain. Prince Damrong interpreted it as a lineage of monks from Lanka itself (taking *jāta* as *jāti*). If we take *jāta* in the sense of "red," the name suggests the Pa Daeng lineage.

81. Hans Penth, *Jinakālamālī Index: An Annotated Index to the Thailand Part of Ratanapañña's Chronicle Jinakālamālī* (Oxford: The Pali Text Society/Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1994), 171; see Penth's individual references and see Saeng Manavidura, "Some Observations on the Jinakālamālīpakaraṇa," in *The Sheaf of Garlands of the Epochs of the Conqueror: Being a Translation of Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṁ of Ratanapañña Thera of Thailand . . . With an Introductory Essay by Saeng Manavidura*, trans. N.A. Jayawickrama, Pali Text Society Translation Series No. 36 (London: The Pali Text Society, 1978), xliv–xlv.

82. Given the many significances of "dhamma," I leave the word untranslated. It is simplistic to call Dhammayuttika a "reformed *nikāya*," both in its inception and in is evolution.

83. Note that the name is commonly romanized as "Mun," but is pronounced "Man" with a short "a" as in "fun."

84. The invention of schools of Buddhism is not unique to the region. For Nepal see David N. Gellner, "Hodgson's Blind Alley? On the So-Called Schools of Nepalese Buddhism," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 12, no. 1 (1989): 7–19. For the problems of the concept of the "Pure Land school" see Robert H. Sharf, "On Pure Land Buddhism and Ch'an Pure Land Syncretism in Medieval China," *T'oung Pao* 88 (2002): 282–331. For the

problems that surround the concept of Chan–Zen, see John R. McRae, *Seeing through Zen: Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

85. André Padoux, "What Do We Mean by Tantrism?" in *The Roots of Tantra*, ed. Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 23. Louis de La Vallée Poussin's entry on "Tantrism (Buddhist)," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, 12 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), 12:197 may still be consulted with profit. Robert Sharf launches a sharp critique in his "Does Indian Buddhism Have Tantra Nature?" paper presented at the panel "A Response to Ronald M. Davidson's *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*," Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA, November 2003.

86. Ronald M. Davidson and Charles D. Orzech, "Tantra," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr., 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004), 2:820. For another discussion of the term see the editor's introduction to David Gordon White, ed., *Tantra in Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

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# Tsongkhapa on Tantric Exegetical Authority and Methodology

**David B. Gray**

Santa Clara University

A KEY FIGURE in the history of Tibetan Buddhism is Tsongkhapa (1357–1419 CE), the great scholar-practitioner who founded the Geluk (*dge lugs*) order of Tibetan Buddhism. He is a somewhat anomalous figure in Western scholarship who remains widely known yet poorly understood. His is a name known by those who have even a casual familiarity with Tibetan Buddhism. While many, although by no means all, of his numerous works have been translated and studied in the West, his biographies remain untranslated, leaving few resources for the study of his life and works for those who do not read Tibetan.[1]

This situation is partly due to a stereotype of Tsongkhapa as a conservative scholar primarily interested in the reformation of the conduct of the monastic community. This view, which originated in Tibet and has been transmitted to the Western scholarly world, perhaps has led to what might be termed an imbalanced state of the field of Tsongkhapa's life and works. While his more scholastic works on Buddhist philosophy and doctrine have received considerable study, his works on tantra, and his biographies, have received much less attention.

In this paper, I will address this stereotype by exploring the common conception of Tsongkhapa as an accomplished scholar who was less than accomplished in the vital arena of religious practice. This, in turn, will lead into the topic of the paper, which is Tsongkhapa's own writing on the proper qualifications of a commentator on the tantras, which points to the key issue of the claims to authority that were made by key figures such as Tsongkhapa. These claims played a major role in the legitimation of the traditions that were developing in Tibet during this time period.

The view of Tsongkhapa as a conservative reformer is not incorrect, although it is, arguably, a partial view of his life and work. Tsongkhapa was best known in Tibet for his works in Tibetan philosophy. He was deeply concerned with the dissolute lifestyles of many of the monks of his time, and was dedicated to reforming monasticism. He was famous in his time for his "celebrated rehearsal of the practice of the monastic code, or Vinaya, in 1402."[2] It is for this reason that Geoffrey Samuel chose to highlight Tsongkhapa as an exemplar of the "clerical" mode of Tibetan Buddhism.[3]

In addition to his notable activities as a scholar and reformer, Tsongkhapa was also deeply engaged in tantric practices and experienced a number of visions. However, he was not widely known as a *yogī*. In fact, he seems to have developed a somewhat contrary reputation as a solid scholar who was not immune to missteps in the complex world of advanced tantric yogic praxis.

Tsongkhapa, like many Tibetan Buddhists of his time, was conservative in the sense that he saw spiritual authority as located, generally speaking, in the past and in India, emanating thence in lineages that connected contemporary Tibetans with great Indian masters such as Śākyamuni Buddha and the *mahāsiddha* Nāropa. This is not to say that Tibetans slavishly imitated Indian paradigms; during what Ronald Davidson has termed the "Tibetan Renaissance," spanning from the late tenth through fourteenth centuries, Tibetans translated and assimilated a vast amount of religious literature and practices from India and began the process of indigenizing it, opening it to "a specifically Tibetan articulation."[4]

Tsongkhapa was one of several Tibetans of his time who managed to achieve a convincing synthesis of the received teachings, such that he came to be seen (retrospectively) as the founder of a new tradition, the Geluk. Yet he himself was deeply dedicated to the great masters of India. Tsongkhapa, like other contemporary Tibetan practitioners, was the recipient of numerous transmissions of lineages deriving from the *mahāsiddha*s. Tsongkhapa saw India as the locus of spiritual authority, and like Tibetans of previous generations, he sought to travel to India to personally approach this source. However, Tsongkhapa was living in what was then still a new era in the history of Buddhism, an era in which pilgrimage to India was no longer safe or worthwhile for Buddhists, due to the destruction of the major centers of Buddhist learning there.[5]

His biographies relate that, during his thirty-ninth year, Tsong-khapa had been staying at Lhodrak Drawo Monastery at the invitation of the Nying-ma Lama Lhodrak Namka Gyaltsen (*lho brag nam mkha' rgyal mtshan*), where he was receiving teachings from this lama. While there, he gave rise to a strong desire to travel to India to meet with the *mahāsiddhas* Nāgabodhi and Maitrīpa. The Nying-ma Khenchen had the ability to communicate with the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi and con-sulted him on this issue. Vajrapāṇi wisely dissuaded Tsongkhapa from making this trip, which, by the late fourteenth century, would have been extremely dangerous, given the fact that by this time all of the major Buddhist sites in North India had been destroyed.

Instead, Tsongkhapa and his entourage went on pilgrimage to Tsari Mountain, a sacred site in southeastern Tibet. While on pilgrimage at Tsari Mountain, Tsongkhapa refrained from drinking consecrated beer, apparently out of concern that this would be a violation of his monastic vows. As a result, the *ḍākinīs* who dwell there afflicted him with sharp pains in his feet, which were not relieved until he propitiated them. A succinct account of this event is related by Tsongkhapa's disciple Khedrup Jay, in the short biography *Haven of Faith* that is positioned, in most editions, at beginning of the first volume of Tsongkhapa's *Collected Works*.[6] This work relates Tsongkhapa's visit to Mt. Tsari as follows:

> Then he arrived with more than thirty masters at the Great Tsari.[7] He stayed for a few days, and presented tea to the retreatants. Seeing the mountain, he performed the Saṃvara self-initiation and so forth, and many wonderful signs appeared. When he arrived at the pass that approached Tsari, he thought that even at this seat (*gnas, pīṭha*) he would not engage in the *gaṇacakra* [rite][8] with the inner offering.[9] As a result, he immediately had a sudden sharp pain in one of his feet. Arising as Mahākāla, he performed a Saṃvara *gaṇacakra* together with the inner offering. As soon as the *gaṇacakra* was dismissed, he immediately recovered without any pain.[10]

This story depicts a misstep in tantric praxis, in which Tsongkhapa, apparently out of concern for the maintenance of his monastic vows, refrained from performing an essential ritual step in highly charged environment of Tsari Mountain, widely believed by Tibetans to be the Cāritra *pīṭha* of the *Yoginī* tantric systems.[11] It is a misstep that had a painful consequence, but one that was fortunately easily relieved by the correction of the ritual omission.

This story was very well known; it was related in Tsongkhapa's biographies,[12] and was retold by later scholars such as the Druk-pa Kagyü master Padma dKar-po (1527–1592 CE).[13] And as Toni Huber has brought to our attention, the story is retold by the contemporary Druk-pa Kagyü *yogīs* who practice advanced tantric meditative practices in the vicinity of Tsari Mountain in order to illustrate the power of site and the devotional attitude needed to safely approach it.[14]

I bring up this story not to disparage Tsongkhapa or cast doubt on his qualifications for composing a commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra.* Such a judgment is not mine to make, nor is it one that I personally hold. But I bring it up to illustrate the caricature of Tsongkhapa that seems to have originated in Tibet, reinforced by the telling and retelling of this story, which portrays him as a somewhat stodgy and spiritually uninspired scholar who is more concerned with ethical conundrums (should a monk consume an alcoholic sacrament?) than the conduct appropriate to the consecrated environment of the *ḍākinī*s. In other words, he is portrayed as learned but not fully realized.

I begin with this story because it calls to mind an important distinction made in Tibetan religious discourse, that between the scholar (*mkhas pa*) and practitioner (*grub pa*). Here, Tsongkhapa fills the role of the scholar, whose persistent adherence to discursive thought patterns lands him in trouble when he enters the world of advanced tantric practice, where discursive thought is problematic and must ultimately be abandoned. This is an important distinction, which also calls to mind more general distinctions, such as between practice and knowledge. This latter category is highlighted in the Tibetan tradition in a fashion that is particularly meaningful here, via the distinction between the ordinary knowledge of a scholar, *shes-pa*, and the gnosis that ideally results from practice, *ye-shes.*

But while Tsongkhapa's achievements as a scholar were considerable, he cannot simply be pigeonholed as a scholar. This is in fact a mischaracterization, as it fails to take into account his rich visionary life,[15] as well as his four-year and one-year retreats at Ölka Chölung (*'ol kha chos lung*).[16] Yet his characterization as a scholar who faced challenges in the arena of tantric practice brings up the important question of the requisite qualifications as a commentator on the tantras.

The question of the requisite qualifications of a tantric commentator is among the many fascinating issues that Tsongkhapa addresses in his extensive commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara.* This work, titled the

*Complete Illumination of the Hidden Meaning* (*sbas don kun gsal*), is one of his mature works.[17] At some point during his sixty-third year, circa 1418 or 1419 CE when he was at the peak of his teaching career as well as the end of his life, Tsongkhapa taught his lecture series that would be recorded as his *Complete Illumination of the Hidden Meaning* commentary.[18]

In his introduction to this work, Tsongkhapa asks, and answers, a very important question, namely the basis of tantric commentary. On what authoritative sources should the commentator depend? He broaches, and answers, this question as follows:

> In general, in explaining root tantras that are abridged from extensive tantras, on what should one rely? It is said that there are three methods [for doing this]. In the *Commentary Praising Saṃvara,* [Vajrapāṇi] stated that [the abridged tantra's import] should be realized, for the sake of those who have not had the good fortune of hearing the very extensive root tantra, through reliance upon other tantras which collect the profound adamantine expressions[19] of the tantras, whose teachings have been collected from the extensive tantra, or the commentaries of bodhisattvas, or the instructions of the guru. The first type includes explanations that rely on other explanatory tantras that were abridged from the extensive original tantra (*āditantra*). The second type included explanations that rely on the commentaries of bodhisattvas, like the *Commentary Praising Saṃvara.* The third type includes explanations depending on the personal instructions of those like Lūipa, Kānhapa and Ghaṇṭāpa, who are like the noble master and his students. Therefore, it is not the intention of the bodhisattvas that you should rely only on their commentaries.[20]

In addressing this question, Tsongkhapa turned to, and paraphrased, a famous commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* by Vajrapāṇi, which is one of the three "bodhisattva commentaries" on major tantras authored by Indian advocates of the *Kālacakra-tantra* during the late tenth through early eleventh centuries.[21] These became extremely popular and influential works in Tibet. Tsongkhapa here paraphrased a passage in this work, which occurs as follows within it: "Furthermore, due to its abundance of adamantine expressions, learned ones desiring liberation should know it by means of the instruction of the holy guru, what is said in other tantras, and the commentaries written by the bodhisattvas."[22]

The first reliance recommended by Vajrapāṇi, relying on "the instruction of the holy guru" (*sadgurūpadeśa*), is completely uncontroversial. The third, on the other hand, is an obvious plug for this work, and

points to the great ambition of the advocates of the Kālacakra tradition. The second reliance is rather subtle. Later in this work Vajrapāṇi explains, "One should understand [this] Tantra by means of other tantras, since the Tathāgata stated them."[23] Should one accept that the tantras are all genuine *buddhavacana,* authentic Buddhist scriptures, then it should logically follow that interpreting one in light of the others is not only permissible, but in fact a sensible strategy. This, however, was not the typical strategy taken by Indian Buddhist authors of tantric commentaries. Vajrapāṇi was advocating a somewhat radical exegetical strategy, and one which suited well his own approach. His method was to comment on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra,* which was very popular by the late tenth century, in light of the newly composed *Kālacakra-tantra* in order to, arguably, implicitly bolster the prestige of the latter.

Tsongkhapa was clearly sympathetic to Vajrapāṇi's approach. Like a number of his contemporaries, Tsongkhapa was deeply concerned with the comparative and synthetic study of Buddhist literature, aiming to develop a deeper understanding of the legacy of the translations of the authoritative speech of the Buddha (*bka' 'gyur*) and the Indian scholarship on it (*bstan 'gyur*). The many centuries of translation that ultimately resulted in the formation of the canons of Tibetan Buddhism had more or less concluded during the fourteenth century, during Tsongkhapa's lifetime.[24]

As a result, this strategy also suited the needs of Tsongkhapa, who was deeply concerned with the systematization of Buddhist literature. He thus did adopt the strategy of commenting on tantras such as the *Cakrasaṃvara* in light of what is taught in other tantras, although he did so sparingly, recognizing, perhaps, that this is a powerful exegetical tool that is nonetheless open to abuse, and is thus controversial. The strategy that he followed most closely was the traditional and conservative strategy, which is to follow the scripture's own tradition of oral instructions passed down from the great gurus of the Indian tradition.

Despite Tsongkhapa's quotation of Vajrapāṇi's *Laghutantraṭīkā* commentary, he warns against over-reliance on the bodhisattva commentaries, noting that even Vajrapāṇi himself calls for reliance on the gurus' oral instructions. The caveat in the last line is a testament to the work's popularity, which apparently was great enough that Tsongkhapa felt it necessary to state that the bodhisattva commentaries alone are not suitable bases for tantric exegesis.

The composition of the "bodhisattva commentaries" undoubtedly contributed to the successful dissemination of the Kālacakra tradition, and their popularity likely "raised the bar" for the composition of tantric commentaries by creating the impression that one needed to be highly realized—like Vajrapāṇi, the tantric elucidator extraordinaire— to comment on the tantras. Tsongkhapa continues his discussion with comments on this issue as follows:

> This literature does imply that commentary [on the tantras] should only be done by those who have attained the supramundane cognitions. While this is not a statement concerning the many other ways of attaining such powers, there is the attainment of the five supramundane cognitions that are realized by the power of manifesting the meaning of reality by means of great bliss. This is in accordance with the explanations of Ghaṇṭāpa and Ḍombiheruka.[25]

Tsongkhapa here refers to discussions in the Indian commentarial literature on the idealized qualifications of a guru. Ghaṇṭāpa, for example, in his presentation of advanced perfection-stage yogic practices of the Cakrasaṃvara tradition, lists attainment of the five supramundane cognitions among the qualifications for a guru in this tradition.[26]

Here Tsongkhapa concedes a very important point. He acknowledges, and supports, the claim that tantric exegesis requires considerable spiritual attainment. However, he makes an important distinction. For him, the establishment of an exegetical tradition requires the advanced spiritual attainment of a *siddha*. Indeed, all of the major exegetical traditions of major tantras such as the *Cakrasaṃvara* are traced back to the *mahāsiddhas* of India. However, advanced spiritual attainment is not required provided that one is not innovating, but simply following pre-established tradition. He continues his explanation as follows:

> Furthermore, it is the case that before developing an exegetical system on the intention of a tantra, one first distinguishes the practice systems of that particular tantra. However, it is not taught that it is necessary to obtain the supramundane cognitions in order to elucidate the meaning of the tantra, provided that one has followed a tradition created by former [masters]. Some people say that to just comment on a tantra one must have attained the supramundane cognitions, and that if one writes without them, one will go to hell. However, if one engages in tantric commentary without even having attained a trace of supramundane cognition, one is just making a fool of oneself.[27]

Tsongkhapa mentions the more stringent view apparently held by some of his unnamed contemporaries, namely, that advanced spiritual attainments are required to comment on the tantras, and those who lack this risk a very serious consequence, namely a downfall to hell. However, he dismissed this view, and argued for the far more liberal view that the worst consequence of unqualified tantric exegesis is making a fool of oneself.

Tsongkhapa here followed expected practice and did not make a claim to authority on the basis of his own spiritual realization; he did not claim to be a *siddha.* Instead, he took the approach that is far more common in Tibetan scholastic literature, which is the claim that he follows and relies upon a prestigious exegetical tradition that traces its roots to the great saints of India. Throughout the text he claims to follow the exegetical traditions of the *mahāsiddha*s, most notably Nāropa, who was one of the most prestigious figures in the dissemination of tantric traditions to Nepal and Tibet. He makes this point in his description of his own exegetical method, which immediately follows the discussion of authority quoted above.

> In that way, from among the three [approaches] here, I will explain based on two of them, the first and the third. I will conjoin the root [text] and its explanations relying upon the expositions of the creation and perfecting [stages] of Lūipa, Kāṇhapa, and Ghaṇṭāpa. Since I will explain relying on the personal instructions of Śrī Nārotapa, this explanation is distinctively excellent. Although the two stages are not shown clearly with respect to the text of the root tantra in the expositions of Lūipa and Ghaṇṭāpa, if you know well the instructions of these two, you will be able to understand by relying on the instructions which join the root [text] and its explanations. I will explain this in the context of [my presentation of] the meaning of the text.[28]

Tsongkhapa thus presents his role as a modest but important one. He does not present himself an innovator, engaging in the ambitious task of devising a new and original interpretation of the root scripture. Undoubtedly, he would agree that a high degree of spiritual development would be a prerequisite for such a task. Instead, he presents himself as a systematizer who elucidates the scripture by applying to it the relevant explanations of the past lineage masters. In another passage later in the commentary he strongly extols this approach, stating that "Since the oral instructions of the saints explain the thoroughly mixed-up and unclear root tantra, they seem to enchant the scholars, since they give unexcelled certainty on the path. Later scholars who

rely on Nāropa's commentarial tradition should explain in accordance with that only."[29] Although he seems here to contradict his previous statement that he relies on two sources in commenting on the tantra, the instructions of the lineage masters as well as the explanatory tantras, this should probably be read as an indication of his strong reliance upon, and enthusiasm for, the lineage instructions.

Given the fact that he so strongly evokes the lineage instructions as the basis of his exegetical authority, it is naturally essential that Tsongkhapa establish his lineage credentials. This is a common step in tantric exegesis. For example, one of the "oral instruction" textual sources that Tsongkhapa relies on to establish his connection to the *mahāsiddha* Nāropa is a précis of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* composed by the Kashmiri scholar Sumatikīrti, a student of Nāropa who eventually settled in the Kathmandu Valley and instructed a number of Tibetans who travelled there during the eleventh century.[30] This text, the *Laghusaṃvaratantrapaṭalābhisandhi,* ends with a colophon that clearly establishes the authority of the author, and hence the text. It reads as follows: "This completes the *Intended Import of the Concise Saṃvara Tantra,* composed in the presence of Śrī Nāropa's successor, the scholar Sumatikīrti. It was translated by the Indian preceptor himself, and the translator-monk Grags-mchog Shes-rab."[31] In referring to Sumatikīrti as "Nāropa's successor" (*dpal nā ro ta pa'i rjes su 'brangs pa*), it makes a powerful assertion of lineage authority. As this colophon was likely composed with Sumatikīrti's approval if not by him, it served to bolster his prestige with the networks of communication and exchange that linked the Kathmandu Valley with Tibet.

As time progressed, the length of the lineages naturally extended. While Sumatikīrti could reasonably claim to be Nāropa's direct disciple, later Tibetan commentators had to go to greater lengths to demonstrate their connections to the master. The twelfth century Sa-skya master Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po (1092–1158 CE) composed[32] what is likely the earliest surviving commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra.*[33] In his *Pearl Garland* (*mu tig 'phreng ba*) commentary, he presents his position in the full lineage, going back to Mahāvajradhara Buddha, as follows:

> Regarding the lineage succession of the Root and Explanatory Tantras, the sixth truly and completely awakened buddha, Mahāvajradhara Buddha, explained them to the Lord of Secrets, Vajrapāṇi, who, having consecrated the master Saraha the Elder, explained them and

authorized them for him. He then consecrated and conferred authori-
zation to Nāgārjuna. He [explained them] to Saraha the Younger who
[explained them] to Master Lūipa. He [explained them] to both King
Ḍeṅgi-pa and his minister, Dārika.[34] The minister Śrī Dārika [explained
them] to master Antara-pa, who [explained them] to master Tilopa,
who [explained them] to Nāropa. He [transmitted them] to the guru
Pham-ting-pa, who [explained them] to Kālacakra-pa (*dus 'khor pa*),
Thang-chung-pa, and the Kashmiri guru Bodhibhadra.[35] They trans-
mitted them to the great guru translator [Mal-gyo bLo-gros-grags],
who explained them to my own guru [Sa-chen Kun-dga' sNying-po],
who is like a crown jewel among Vajrayāna teachers in the Kaliyuga,
whose name is difficult to state, but who was born in the 'Bro region
in Western Tsang.[36] Although this is one mode of transmission, [these
scriptures] were also taught to others, and one should know that [dif-
ferent lineages are preserved] elsewhere.[37]

We find here both the essential claim of lineage authority, as well as an
open-minded acknowledgment that this claim of lineage transmission
is simply one among many lineage claims made by Tibetan masters
during this formative period for the development of Tibetan scholastic
and practice traditions.

Tsongkhapa's lectures on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* that led to the
composition of his commentary took place almost three hundred years
after Sa-chen's and Mal Lotsāwa's (*mal lo tsā ba*) joint exposition of the
same text.[38] Tsongkhapa, unlike Sa-chen, does not give a complete
lineage linking himself back to the original expositor of this scrip-
ture, Mahāvajradhara Buddha. Rather, he starts with Nāropa, who had
become by his time a major locus of tantric scriptural and praxical
authority, renowned as he was as both a *mahāsiddha* as well as a great
scholar-practitioner (*mkhas grub che*). Tsongkhapa shows how he is
linked to Nāropa via the two prominent early figures in the trans-
mission of the scripture to Tibet, Mal and Mar-pa Chos-kyi-dbang-
phyug, both of whom studied in Nepal with Nāropa's disciples. He then
jumps to two of the most prominent scholars on the text, Sa-chen and
Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364 CE), without filling in the gap in the
transmission between them. His discussion of the transmission of this
scripture occurs as follows:

The superiority of this commentarial tradition is due to Śrī Nāropa.
Although he had many students, he had four principle disciples of
Cakrasaṃvara, who were named Mānakaśrījñāna,[39] Prajñārakṣita,[40]
Phi-tong-haṃ-du, and Pham-ting-pa.[41] Regarding the first of them,

Mardo[42] says that he was known as the northern door guardian [of Nālandā], having become the door guardian after Nāropa. The third, [Phi-tong-haṃ-du,] was the elder brother of Pham-ting-pa and was called Dharmamati.[43] Having remained for twelve years in the presence of Nāropa, he evidently went to Mt. Wu-tai-shan in China. The fourth is the Newar Phaṃtiṅpa. In the Kathmandu Valley he was known as A-des-pa Chen-po. He was also known as Abhayakīrti Bhikṣu.[44] He remained in the presence of Nāropa for nine years. Through Cakrasaṃvara he obtained inferior and middling powers. His younger brother, Kālacakra-pa, served Nāropa for five years. His younger brother, Thang-chu-pa,[45] studied Cakrasaṃvara with Nāropa. The Kashmiri Bodhibhadra, having served Nāropa, studied Cakrasaṃvara. Kanakaśrī studied with Phamtingpa and the first two of the previous four.[46] He was also called the Newar Bhadanta.[47] Sumatikīrti of lesser omniscience[48] also studied with him, and also to Mānakaśrī and Phamtingpa. The Newar Mahākaruṇa studied with Kanakaśrī.

Although there are many ways in which lineages in Tibet derive from them, there were two [people] who most benefited Tibet. They were the Mal-gyo translator bLo-gros-grags-pa, and the translator known as Mar-pa Do-pa, whose real name was Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug and whose secret name was Mañjuśrīvajra. Of them, Mal-gyo studied with the three Pham-ting-pa brothers, the Kashmiri Bodhibhadra, Sumatikīrti, and the Newar Mahākaruṇa. Mar-do listened to both Pham-ting-pa and Sumatikīrti. The Venerable Sa-skya Chen-po,[49] who studied Cakrasaṃvara with the translator Mal, the translator rMa, and the lesser translator Pu-rangs, considered Mal's system to be authoritative. Mal and Sa-chen did not write about the root tantra, but Sa-chen's explanations in conference with Mal were accurately edited by a certain disciple of theirs called Puṇyavajra in a detailed commentary on the root tantra called the *Pearl Garland.* Mar-do wrote a commentary on the root tantra.[50] His disciples gZe-ba, bDe-mchog-rdo-rje,[51] Nam-mkha'-dbang-phyug of India, and Cog-ro Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan[52] greatly propagated the Cakrasaṃvara [tradition].

Lama 'Phags-pa-'od[53] gave the consecrations, instructions, and explanations of the system of Sa-skya, Lo-chung,[54] Sa-chen, as well as the system of Atiśa to the Omniscient Bu-ston. Since he also received the exegetical transmission of Mar-do's system, he mastered Nāropa's explanatory style through the lineage of both the translators and the scholars. I myself heard the exegetical transmission (*bshad lung*) of the *Great Commentary on the Root Tantra* (*rtsa-gyud kyi rnam-bshad chen-mo*) from his disciple, the great Lama bDe-chen-pa.[55]

This lineage list is incomplete, as it contains a gap of approximately two hundred years, the time span between the early twelfth and early fourteen centuries, when Sa-chen and Bu-ston were active. However, Bu-ston was so renowned that it was not necessary for Tsongkhapa to fill in these details. Simply indicating the lama who initiated Bu-ston in these teachings (Lama 'Phags-pa-'od) and the disciple of Bu-ston who in turn instructed Tsongkhapa (Lama bDe-chen-pa) would be sufficient, I think, to establish Tsongkhapa's position in the scriptural lineage in the early fifteen century, when this work was composed. It also thus establishes his exegetical authority, provided of course that one accepts his relatively liberal standards for tantric exegesis, namely that reception of the lineage transmission is sufficient, and total realization in the practice tradition is not an absolute requisite.

Tsongkhapa makes an interesting claim at the beginning of the second paragraph above, following his discussion of the Newar disciples of Nāropa. This claim concerns the Tibetans who studied with them and transmitted the lineages to Tibet. He claimed that "Although there are many ways in which lineages in Tibet derive from them, there were two [people] who most benefited Tibet." These two, as he indicated, were Mal Lotsāwa and Mar-pa Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug. This claim might sound unusual even to scholars of Buddhism, as both are relatively obscure figures. Indeed, the latter figure is easily confused with the much better-known Mar-pa "the Translator," Mar-pa Lo-tsāwa, also known as Mar-pa Chos-kyi-blo-gros and Mar-pa Lho-brag-pa (1012–1097 CE).

Tsongkhapa's exclusion of Mar-pa "The Translator" Chos-kyi-blo-gros from the list of Tibetans "who most benefitted Tibet" in transmitting the lineages descending from Nāropa seems, at first glance, glaring. However, Tsongkhapa here is not making a sweeping claim. Like Sa-chen, he acknowledges that there were many transmissions of important teachings descending from Nāropa. While Mar-pa "The Translator" was famous for his transmission of important teachings, such as the "six yogas of Nāropa" and his tutelage of "the most renowned saint in Tibetan Buddhist history,"[56] Milarepa, he did not play a significant role in the textual transmission of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra,* and hence is not mentioned here.[57]

As we would expect in a conservative commentator whose claim to authority rests in faithful adherence to the exegetical approaches

of past masters, Tsongkhapa supports his arguments with abundant quotations from the works of these masters. He was particularly fond of Sumatikīrti's *Laghutantrapaṭalābhisandhi.* Tsongkhapa quotes and discusses almost all of this text, excluding only the homage line and colophon. His strong reliance on this text bolsters his oft-repeated claim that he is following Nāropa's exegetical tradition.

He likewise followed closely the commentaries on the tantra written by his lineage predecessors, most notably Bu-ston and Sa-chen. He often paraphrases their works, following them closely when he agrees with them. However, he does not slavishly follow them, but corrects the "errors" that he perceives in their works. His corrections are generally quite sound, as we would expect from a "conservative" scholar like Tsongkhapa. Sa-chen, for example, was obviously enamored with the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* and placed it in its own unique scriptural class, the "Further Unexcelled *Yoginī* tantras." His basis for doing so is rather slim; he largely depends on self-aggrandizing passages in the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra,* which are certainly not unique in the history of Mahāyāna literature.[58] He also depends on rather ambiguous passages in the root text and commentaries. One of these is the closing passage of the tantra, at the end of the fifty-first chapter, which occurs as follows in my translation:

> The inconceivable, all-pervasive reality lacks loss and gain. Contemplating thus, all of the worldly ones should not be faulted. Their inconceivable way is the inconceivable play of the buddhas, such that they delight in each and every disposition which manifests in sentient beings, in accordance with the divisions of the sūtras, and of the Action (*kriyā*), Practice (*caryā*), Yoga, and Secret (*guhya*) [tantras].[59]

Although it is not entirely clear that this passage should be read in terms of Buddhist scriptural classes, the commentators generally read it in this way, often in a manner suggesting the well-known system of four tantra classes.[60]

Sa-chen begins his commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* with a discussion of the scriptural classes. First he discusses the well-known division of Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures into the classical "exoteric" and tantric "esoteric" categories, which he refers to as the "Perfection scriptural collection" (*pāramitāpiṭaka, pha rol tu phyin pa'i sde snod*) and the "Spell Bearer scriptural collection" (*vidyādharapiṭaka, rig pa 'dzin pa'i sde snod*).[61] He then goes on to discuss the classes of tantric scriptures, as follows:

Although there are many contradictions between the classes of tantra and the intentions of masters, regarding Śrī Nārotapa['s intention], Master Kampala states in his commentary on the twenty sixth chapter [of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra*] that "[there are the] Action (*kriyā*), Performance (*caryā*), Yoga, *Yoginī*, and the *Mahāyoginī* tantras, which are equal to Action and Yoga [tantras]." And following the above-mentioned passage in the fifty-first chapter [of the root tantra], the classes of tantra are established as six. These are the Action tantras, the Performance tantras, the Yoga tantras, the Unexcelled Yoga tantras, the Unexcelled *Yoginī* tantras (*rnal 'byor ma bla na med pa'i rgyud*), and the Further Unexcelled *Yoginī* tantras (*rnal 'byor ma'i yang ma bla na med pa'i rgyud*).[62]

He follows this with a description of these six classes. The first five correspond to the fourfold system that was accepted in Tibet from the fourteenth century, the Action, Performance, Yoga, and Unexcelled Yoga classes, with the latter subdivided into "Father" and "Mother" classes.[63] His sixth class, the "Further Unexcelled *Yoginī* tantras" consists only of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra*. He was clearly motivated by enthusiasm for this scripture, as the passages he turns to for support, from the fifty-first chapter of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* and Kambala's commentary, hardly provide unambiguous support for his system. The former passage was quoted above; Kambala's comments read as follows in the surviving Sanskrit manuscript: "With respect to **common to all tantras**, in the Action, Performance, Yoga, and Higher Yoga [tantras], the nature of the *Mahāyoginī* tantras is unequalled by the Action and Yoga [tantras]."[64] This passage seems to gloss the text "all tantras" in terms of the standard four classes, and then posits a fifth, the *Mahāyoginī* tantras, that are above them, or which at least transcend the Action and Yoga tantras. However, all of the Tibetan translations differ from the Sanskrit here;[65] Sa-chen apparently interpreted an ambiguous passage in the light of his own desire to aggrandize this scripture.

Tsongkhapa here does not directly address Sa-chen's innovative sixth tantric class, as he addresses tantric doxography elsewhere.[66] However, he is critical of the partisan approach to tantric commentary. He makes this point with respect to one of the passages that extols the tantra's virtues, at the end of chapter three. It reads as follows: "This king of *maṇḍalas* does not occur, nor will it occur, in the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, *Saṃvara*, *Guhyasamāja*, or *Vajrabhairava*. Everything whatsoever, spoken or unspoken, exists in Śrī Heruka."[67] Sa-chen read

this passage as a literal assertion of this scripture's superiority, commenting that "the king of *maṇḍalas* of this tantra does not occur nor will in the *Vajrabhairava* and so forth, as it is superior to their *maṇḍalas*."[68]

Tsongkhapa presents a very sensible response to such claims. He comments, almost certainly in response to Sa-chen, that:

> While it is not the case that this *maṇḍala* is superior to the *maṇḍalas* of those other ones, it does mean that it is very difficult to find since it does not occur even in those other tantras that are both profound and vast. If this were not so, then they would be superior to this tantra as well, since their *maṇḍalas* likewise do not occur in this [tantra].[69]

Tsongkhapa here speaks as a true systematizer who was not merely interested in advancing a single scriptural and practice tradition, but who was faced with the much more difficult challenge of integrating a considerable number of traditions, each of which had strong partisan supporters during his time. Acknowledging any one scripture's claim to superiority is not conducive to his overall strategy of contextualizing the tantras, studying them in relation to the larger body of Buddhist literature. Unlike Vajrapāṇi (*qua* author of the Kālacakra-inspired commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra*), he did this not with the goal of demonstrating the superiority of any one scripture or practice tradition, but rather with the goal of elucidating the large and complex body of texts and practices with which the Buddhists of his time and place had inherited from their Indian and Tibetan forebears.

While Tsongkhapa may not have been a *mahāsiddha* himself, his intellectual and pedagogical work was certainly accomplished. His success as a scholar was largely due to his ability to develop a coherent intellectual framework for a diverse array of traditions of philosophical inquiry, scriptural analysis, and practice. Like his forebear, Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, his success as a systematizer is arguably one of his greatest achievements.[70] While his "system" was by no means flawless, devoid of oversights and inconsistencies, it was astounding in its breadth and convincing enough to serve as the basis for the Geluk tradition.

NOTES

1. To my knowledge, none of Tsongkhapa's biographies have been translated into Western languages. The best resources for the study of his biography remain Rudolf Kaschewsky's *Das Leben des Lamaistischen Heiligen Tsongkhapa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa (1357–1419). Dargestellt und erläutert anhand seiner Vita. Quellort allen Glückes*, 1 Teil, Asiatische Forschungen band 32 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974) and Robert A. F. Thurman's *Life & Teachings of Tsongkhapa* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1982), which contains a short biography related by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey on the basis of the standard biographies.

2. Matthew T. Kapstein, *The Tibetans* (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 121.

3. See Geoffrey Samuel, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1993), esp. 16–18, 506–515. Samuel notes Tsongkhapa's engagement in tantric and visionary practices (p. 507), and is careful to point out that his "shamanic" and "clerical" modes of Tibetan Buddhism are not mutually exclusive, with most Tibetan Buddhist lamas engaged in both to varying degrees (p. 20).

4. Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 373.

5. For a harrowing first-person account from a Tibetan Buddhist pilgrim who witnessed the destruction wrought in North India by the Turks during the mid-thirteenth century, see George N. Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin (Chag lo-tsa-ba Chos-rje-dpal), a Tibetan Monk Pilgrim* (Patna: K.P. Jawaswal Research Institute, 1959).

6. Given the later rise of the Geluk school, many copies of his *Collected Works* (*gsung 'bum*) were eventually published. In writing this essay I made use of the scans of the sKu-'bum byams-pa-gling edition published by the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC), as noted below.

7. Here I read *tsa rim chen* as *tsa ri chen*.

8. The *gaṇacakra* or *tshogs 'khor* is a tantric rite sometimes translated as a "feast," as it involves making offerings of food, drink, etc. to the deities and guru, followed by the consumption of the consecrated offerings by the participants. Regarding this rite see Ronald Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 318–322.

9. The *gnang mchod,* which typically would involve an offering of consecrated beer.

10. My translation from the text at mKhas-grub-rje, *rje brtsun bla ma tsong kha*

*pa chen po'i ngo mtshar rmad du byung ba'i rnam par thar pa dad pa'i 'jug ngogs* (in the *rje gsung 'bum,* sKu-'bum byams-pa-gling ed., vol. ka, *rnam thar* 1a–74a; pp. 1–147. TBRC work no. W22272008, vol. serial no. 0673), fol. 36b.7–37a.3.

11. Regarding this site see Toni Huber, *The Cult of Pure Crystal Mountain: Popular Pilgrimage and Visionary Landscape in Southeast Tibet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

12. Rudolf Kaschewsky, *Das Leben des Lamaistischen Heiligen Tsongkhapa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa (1357–1419), Dargestellt und erläutert anhand seiner Vita, Quellort allen Glückes*, 1 Teil, Asiatische Forschungen band 32 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974), 130–131.

13. For a translation of Padma dKar-po's account see Huber, *The Cult of Pure Crystal Mountain*, 62–63.

14. Ibid., 61.

15. A short perusal of Tsongkhapa's biographies indicates that he did have a number of significant visions of spiritual entities such as bodhisattvas and *siddhas* brought on by his intensive practice. See Kaschewsky, *Das Leben des Lamaistischen Heiligen Tsongkhapa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa*, 107–117, 130. See as well Thurman, *Life & Teachings of Tsongkhapa*, 16–22, for descriptions of his visions of various buddhas; bodhisattvas such as Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Vajrapāṇi; and the *mahāsiddha*s Nāropa and Tilopa.

16. See Thurman, *Life & Teachings of Tsongkhapa*, 17, 21–22.

17. I am in the process of finishing a complete translation of this work, which will be published in three volumes: a two-volume translation and a one-volume critical edition. The first volume of the translation is currently in press.

18. See Kaschewsky, *Das Leben des Lamaistischen Heiligen Tsongkhapa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa*, 329. Since Tsongkhapa lived for sixty-two years (1357–1419 CE), this event took place during the last year of his life, in 1418 or 1419 CE.

19. "Adamantine expressions" (*vajrapāda*) are the instances of symbolic speech found in the tantras, which require detailed explanation.

20. My translation from Tsongkhapa, *bde mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba* (in the *rJe yab sras gsung 'bum*, bKra shis lhun po par rnying print. TBRC scan of a reprint from old bkra shis lhun po blocks, vol. nya, *sbas don* 1a–251b; pp. 415–916. TBRC work no. W29193, vol. no. 5130; Dharamsala: Sherig Parkhang, 1997), fol. 13b–14a. For an annotated translation see David Gray, *Tsongkhapa's Illumination of the Hidden Meaning: Maṇḍala, Mantra, and the Cult of the Yoginīs (An Annotated Translation of Chapters 1–24)* (New York: AIBS/CBS/THUS [Columbia University Press], forthcoming).

21. These are (1) the *Vimalaprabhāṭīkā* commentary on the *Laghukālacakra-tantra,*

attributed to Puṇḍarīka; (2) the *Hevajrapiṇḍārthaṭīkā*, a commentary on the *Hevajra-tantra,* attributed to Vajragarbha; and (3) the *Laghutantraṭīkā*, a commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra,* attributed to Vajrapāṇi. The latter two are commentaries written from the Kālacakra exegetical perspective by advocates of that tradition. Regarding the dating of these texts, see Claudio Cicuzza, *The Laghutantraṭīkā by Vajrapāṇi: A Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Text*, Serie Orientale Roma 86 (Roma: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, 2001), 24–26. The *Vimalaprabhāṭīkā* has been edited in J. Upadhyāya, ed., *Vimalaprabhāṭīkā of Kalki Śrī Puṇḍarīka on Śrī Laghukālacakra-tantrarāja,* vol. 1 (Saranath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1986); and V. Dwivedi and S. S. Bahulakar, eds., *Vimalaprabhāṭīkā of Kalki Śrī Puṇḍarīka on* Śrī *Laghukālacakra-tantrarāja,* vol. 2 (Saranath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1994). The *Laghutantraṭīkā* has been edited in Cicuzza, *The Laghutantraṭīkā by Vajrapāṇi.* The *Hevajrapiṇḍārthaṭīkā* has been partially translated and edited in Francesco Sferra, "The *Elucidation of True Reality:* The Kālacakra Commentary by Vajragarbha on the *Tattvapaṭala* of the *Hevajratantra,*" in *As Long as Space Endures: Essays on the Kālacakra Tantra in Honor of H. H. The Dalai Lama,* ed. Edward A Arnold (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2009), 93–126.

22. My translation from the Sanskrit in Cicuzza, *The Laghutantraṭīkā by Vajrapāṇi,* 52, and the Tibetan at To. 1402, *sde-dge* rgyud 'grel vol. ba, fol. 82b–83a.

23. My translation from the Sanskrit in Cicuzza, *The Laghutantraṭīkā by Vajrapāṇi,* 124, and the Tibetan at To. 1402, fol. 124b.

24. The development of the Tibetan canonical Kangyur and Tengyur collections originated in the cataloguing of textual collections at the great libraries at the Shalu and Nartang monasteries from the late thirteenth through mid-fourteenth centuries, shortly before Tsongkhapa was born. See Kurtis R. Schaeffer, *The Culture of the Book in Tibet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 12–14.

25. My translation from Tsongkhapa, *bde mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba*, fol. 14a.

26. Among other things, he also indicates that the guru should have attained the tenth bodhisattva stage. See Ghaṇṭāpa, *Śrīcakrasaṃvarapañcakrama* (To. 1433, D rgyud 'grel vol. wa, 224b–227a)*,* fol. 224b.6–225a.1.

27. My translation from Tsongkhapa, *bde mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba*, fol. 14a, 14b.

28. My translation from ibid., fol. 14b.

29. My translation from ibid., fol. 22a.

30. Sumatikīrti actually played a significant role in the dissemination of the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra* in Tibet. He and two of his Tibetan disciples, Mal-gyo

Lo-tsā-ba bLo-gros-grags and Mar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug (ca. 1043–1138 CE) were involved in the production of all three of the revised Tibetan translations of this scripture. For more information on these texts see David Gray, *The Cakrasamvara Tantra: Editions of the Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts* (New York: AIBS/CBS/THUS [Columbia University Press], forthcoming). See also Emberto F. Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars in Transmitting the Indian Buddhist Heritage to Tibet (c. 750–c.1200)," in *Les habitants du toit du monde: Études recueillies en hommage à Alexander W. Macdonald,* ed. Samten G. Karmay and Philippe Sargant (Nanterre: Societé d'Ethnologie, 1997), 649.

31. Sumatikīrti, *Laghusamvaratantrapaṭalābhisandhi* (To. 1411, *sde dge rgyud 'grel*, vol. ma, 352a–353a), 353a; this text is edited and translated in David Gray, *Tsongkhapa's Illumination of the Hidden Meaning: Maṇḍala, Mantra, and the Cult of the Yoginīs (An Annotated Translation of Chapters 1–24)* (New York: AIBS/CBS/ THUS [Columbia University Press], forthcoming).

32. I use the term "composed" to indicate that the text, like many Tibetan texts of this time period, were not "written" by the author, but rather compiled from notes taken by disciples of oral teachings. Tsongkhapa's commentary was likely composed in this fashion, as we learn from the colophon of this work. For more information on how this work was composed see Gray, *Tsongkhapa's Illumination of the Hidden Meaning.*

33. To my knowledge, the earliest Tibetan commentaries on the *Cakrasaṃvara* are Sa-chen's *Pearl Garland* commentary (Sa-chen Kun-dga' sNying-po, *dpal 'khor lo bde mchog gi rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi ṭīka mu tig phreng ba*, in *The Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa Skya Sect of the Tibetan Buddhism. Vol. 1. The Complete Works of Kun dga' snying po*, comp. bSod nams rgya mtsho [Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968], 288.3–380.3) and a commentary by the translator Mar-pa Chos-kyi dbang-phyug, which Tsongkhapa quotes. While the latter work is probably several decades older, I am not aware of any surviving copies of it, so Sa-chen's work may very well be the oldest extant Tibetan commentary, if not the first.

34. Sa-chen here reverses their normal roles; usually, Dārika is identified as a king, and Ḍeṅgi-pāda his minister. For example, see Tsongkhapa, *dpal 'khor lo bde mchog rim pa lnga pa'i bshad pa sbas pa'i don lta ba'i mig rnam par 'byed pa* (in the *rje gsung 'bum,* sKu-'bum byams-pa-gling ed., vol. tha, *mig 'byed* 1a–37a; pp. 222–293. TBRC work no. W22272008, vol. serial no. 0682*), fol. 2b.

35. Pham-thing-pa was a prominent Newari student of Nāropa, and Dus-'khor-pa and Thang-chung-pa were his younger brothers. Bodhibhadra was a fellow disciple studying with Pham-thing-pa under Nāropa. Roerich erred in identifying him as Pham-thing-pa's brother. See Lo Bue's critique ("The Role of Newar Scholars," 644) of George N. Roerich's translation (*The Blue Annals*, 2nd ed. [Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976], 382). He was most likely the

Kashmiri Paṇḍita Śrī Bhadra, who is said to be a disciple of Nāropa in gTsang-smyon Heruka's biography of Mar-pa Lho-brag-pa (Gtsan-smyon He-ru-ka, *The Life of Marpa the Translator*, trans. Nālandā Translation Committee [Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1982], 58).

36. I believe that the penultimate master, the "great guru translator" (*bla ma lo tsā ba chen po*), was Mal-gyo Lo-tsā-ba bLo-gros-grags, who had indeed studied with these masters in Nepal (see Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 382). The ultimate guru is almost certainly Sa-chen; here we see the voice of his disciple Puṇyavajra who wrote the text. Note that the birthplace given for Sa-chen is *la stod 'bro yul.* I read *'bro yul,* the "land of the 'Bro," as a variant of *grom* or *brom,* his actual birthplace; the 'Bro were a powerful clan in the *la stod* region of Western Tsang, where he was born; see Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 80–81. Regarding his life, see Cyrus Stearns, *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'Bras Tradition in Tibet* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001), 133–157, and Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 293–303. Many thanks to Prof. Ronald Davidson for his assistance with the identification of figures mentioned in this passage.

37. Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po, *dpal 'khor lo bde mchog gi rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi ṭīka mu tig phreng ba,* 291.2.

38. As noted above, Tsongkhapa lectured on this subject during the last year of his life, ca. 1418–1419 CE. As we will see in Tsongkhapa's comments below, Sa-chen's commentary derived from his work with Mal Lotsāwa, dating to approximately 1130 CE. See Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance*, 338.

39. His name occurs in the *Blue Annals* in the list of masters in the *Cakrasaṃvara* lineage received by Mar-pa Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug. In this source his name is listed as Manakaśrījñāna. See Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 385.

40. He was one of Nāropa's disciples. See ibid., 384.

41. The label *pham-thing-pa* is not a proper name, but a title meaning "the one from Pharphing," an important Buddhist pilgrimage site at the southern edge of the Kathmandu Valley. It is sometimes used as a name for one of the brothers, and sometimes used to refer to the brothers in general. Regarding this see Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 643–652.

42. *Mar-do* is a nickname for Mar-pa Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, who was also known as Mar-pa Do-pa.

43. According to the *Blue Annals,* Dharmamati was the eldest of the Pham-thing-pa brothers. He studied under Nāropa for twelve years, and then went on pilgrimage to Mt. Wu-tai in China. His remains are reported to be enshrined near mChod-rten-dkar-po on the Sino-Tibetan border. See Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 381.

44. Some sources link the name Abhayakīrti with the older brother, a.k.a.

Dharmamati, and connect the younger "Pham-thing-pa" with the name Vāgīśvarakīrti. See Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 644.

45. His name is usually given as Thang-chung-pa. See Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 644, and Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 381.

46. Regarding Kanakaśrī see Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 652–653.

47. The Newar Bhadanta (misspelled in Tsongkhapa's text as *ba-dan-ta*) was, according to gZhon-nu-dpal, a servant to Pham-ting-pa's younger brother Thang-chung-pa, who was instructed by Pham-ting-pa to meditate on Vāgiśvara. He did this and afterwards threw a flower into a stream as a test of his attainment. He did so thrice, and all three times it flowed upstream. He only noticed this, however, on the last throw, and hence attained only middling success. His servant, however, drank of the water downstream, and hence gained the success that his master failed to acquire (Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 381). Tsongkhapa's identification of the Newar Bhadanta with Kanakaśrī appears to be incorrect. He evidently was an Indian from Magadha who studied at Vikramaśīla and was a student of Nāropa. See Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 652.

48. This seems likely to be a Newar Buddhist figure of this name. There was also a well-known Kashmiri of this name who assisted with the translation of texts in the Cakrasaṃvara tradition, but he studied with Nāropa himself. See Lo Bue, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 649.

49. That is, the great Sa-skya master Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po (1092–1158).

50. This would be the *Mar do lo tsa ba chos kyi dbang phyug gi bde mchog rtsa rgyud kyi bsdus don dang tikka rgyas pa.* This is text no. 12165 in A-khu-ching Shes-rab-rgya-mtsho's *tho yig,* a catalogue of texts available at Labrang Monastery during the early twentieth century, published in Lokesh Chandra, *Materials for a History of Tibetan Literature*, 3 vols., Śata-Piṭaka series, Indo-Asian literatures, v. 28–30 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1963). Unfortunately, this text does not seem to have come to light yet. Many thanks to Gene Smith for bringing this text to my attention.

51. Tsongkhapa here reads *gze ba bde mchog rdo rje,* which I read as a reference to two people, namely Mar-do's disciple gZe-ba-blo-ldan, who is usually known as gZe-ba. gZe-ba's son, to whom he transmitted the Cakrasaṃvara teachings, was bDe-mchog-rdo-rje. See Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, 384–385.

52. Regarding Cog-ro Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1108–1176), see Roerich, "The Role of Newar Scholars," 386–387.

53. That is, his teacher Yon-tan-rgya-mtsho, also known as Kun-mkhyen 'phags-pa-'od.

54. Tsongkhapa here uses the title *lo-chung,* "The Lesser Translator," in reference to Mar-pa Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug.

55. This refers to Chos-dpal-bzang-po, also known as Gong-gsum-bde-chen-pa. He was a disciple of Bu-ston who in turn taught Tsongkhapa.

56. Lobsang P. Lhalungpa, trans., *The Life of Milarepa: A New Translation from the Tibetan* (New York: Penguin Compass, 1992), back cover. His fame, one should note, spread rapidly; Milarepa was already renowned "as the most famous holy many in Tibet" by the mid-fourteenth century (Schaeffer, *The Culture of the Book in Tibet*, 55), and Tsongkhapa was certainly aware of this, given the patronage he received in Lhasa from the Phakmodrüpa Kagyü leader Drakpa Gyeltsen (Kapstein, *The Tibetans*, 120).

57. Tsongkhapa was well aware of Mar-pa Chos-kyi-blo-gros's contributions; see, for example, his writing on the subject of the so-called "six yogas of Nāropa," translated in Glenn H. Mullin, *Tsongkhapa's Six Yogas of Naropa* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1996).

58. The brief self-aggrandizing passages found in the *Cakrasaṃvara-tantra,* at the ends of chapters 3, 27, and 30, are quite typical, and are found in many tantras. They are quite tame compared to the extended self-extolling passages found throughout Mahāyāna sūtras such as the *Lotus Sūtra.* See, for example, chaps. 17–19 of that scripture, translated in Leon Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma (The Lotus Sūtra)* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 245–278.

59. Translated in David B. Gray, *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Śrī Heruka): A Study and Annotated Translation* (New York: AIBS/CBS/THUS [Columbia University Press], 2007), 381–382.

60. For a discussion of this passage see ibid., 382n28.

61. See Sa-chen Kun-dga' sNying-po, *dpal 'khor lo bde mchog gi rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi ṭīka mu tig phreng ba*, 289.2.

62. Ibid., 289.3–4.

63. For a discussion the formation of Tibetan tantric doxography see Jacob Dalton, "A Crisis of Doxography: How Tibetans Organized Tantra During the 8th–12th Centuries," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 115–181.

64. My translation from the following passage in Kambala's *Śrīherukābhidhāna-sādhananidhi-pañjikā* (*Herukāvidhāna* [National Archives of Nepal, ms. no. 4-122, *bauddhatantra* 87. Mf. B31/20, Moriguchi #610. 73 palm leaves, Newari script]), fol. 38b.7: *sāmānya sarvatantrāṇāṃ iti | kriyācaryāyogayogottarādiṣu / mahāyoginītantrasaṃbhāva kriyātulya yogena.*

65. The canonical translation reads as follows: *rgyud kun gyi ni thun mong du / zhes bya ba ni bya ba dang spyod pa dang rnal 'byor dang rnal 'byor ma rnams dang / rnal 'byor bla ma'i rgyud chen po'i rang bzhin du bya ba'i sbyor ba dang mtshungs pa ma yin no /* (fol. 40b). Sa-chen, apparently relying on another translation,

or perhaps producing an impromptu translation with Mal Lotsāwa, quotes the text as follows: *bya ba dang / spyod pa dang / rnal 'byor dang / rnal 'byor ma rnams dang / rnal 'byor ma'i rgyud chen po bya ba dang / sbyor bas lhan cig mnyam par gyur par byed pa'o /* (Sa-chen Kun-dga' sNying-po, *dpal 'khor lo bde mchog gi rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi ṭīka mu tig phreng ba*, 289.4).

66. He does so in his *Great Stages of the Mantra* or *sngags rim chen mo* (*rgyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba*, in the *rje gsung 'bum,* sKu-'bum byams-pa-gling ed., vol. ga, 1–497a; pp. 1-993. TBRC work no. W22272008, vol. serial  no. 0675).

67. Gray, *The Cakrasamvara Tantra (The Discourse of Śrī Heruka)*, 176–177.

68. Sa-chen Kun-dga' sNying-po. *dpal 'khor lo bde mchog gi rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi ṭīka mu tig phreng ba*, 308.1.

69. My translation from Tsongkhapa, *bde mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba*, fol. 63a. For an annotated translation see Gray, *Tsongkhapa's Illumination of the Hidden Meaning.*

70. Regarding this see Robert A.F. Thurman, "Tsoṅ-kha-pa's Integration of Sūtra and Tantra," in *Soundings in Tibetan Civilization. Proceedings of the 1982 Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies Held at Columbia University,* ed. Barbara Nimri Aziz and Matthew Kapstein (New Delhi: Manohar, 1985), 373–382.

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# Nāgārjuna's Worldview: Relevance for Today

**Kristin Largen**
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, PA

THIS ARTICLE IS A PART of a larger project in the field of comparative theology, which involves rethinking Lutheran Christian theological conceptions of salvation through engagement with Buddhism, particularly the Mādhyamaka school of Nāgārjuna. This essay draws on research done for my dissertation, which juxtaposed the worldview of Nāgārjuna and the soteriology of Wolfhart Pannenberg.[1] After reading the article, my hope is that the reader will come to appreciate not only Nāgārjuna's strong soteriological vantage point, but also the value his insights have regarding the nature of suffering and the liberation from suffering. For Christians, what can be learned from his thought is the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of all life. This leads to relinquishing the insistence on interpreting one's salvation either primarily or exclusively in individualistic terms, and instead seeing salvation as the culmination and transformation of all the relationships, great and small, that make up human existence. Nāgārjuna's thought is also a helpful corrective to the Christian tendency to view salvation as something that happens only after death and doesn't actually affect life in the here-and-now. Nāgārjuna reminds Christians that salvation is seen and experienced right in the middle of one's daily life, drawing Christians into more loving engagement with their neighbors and eliciting a stronger commitment to the preservation and protection of the whole creation.

Nāgārjuna is undoubtedly one of the most important Buddhist thinkers in the history of the tradition. He figures prominently in many Mahāyāna lineages, and his philosophical interpretations of the Buddha's teachings continue to influence Buddhist thought today. One of the main reasons for this is that his teachings not only offer profound philosophical insights into the nature of reality, but they are also supremely practical in orientation, meant to assist one in the

realization of enlightenment. In this article, then, I hope to do two things simultaneously: give a brief overview of his major teachings, while at the same time emphasizing their continued relevance for one's life in the world today.

BACKGROUND

Little is known about the life of Nāgārjuna, and thus the particulars of his life and death continue to be debated. Most scholars suggest that Nāgārjuna was born around 150 CE, and the date of his death is usually given around 250 CE. The tradition commonly accepts that he was born in a Brahman family; while this is the extent of the background information on Nāgārjuna that can be stated with confidence, this fact alone is enough to give us a hint of the cultural influences that must have influenced his work. Christoph Lindtner writes,

> From his birth to his death Nāgārjuna must as a member of the community have received an incessant flow of impressions and convictions, prejudices and superstitions from the Hindu society surrounding him. This forms a part of his background which was never recorded and for an assessment of which no sources are available to us.[2]

Perhaps in part because of this uncertainty, a great amount of hagiography developed around Nāgārjuna in later traditions, elaborating his yogic feats and magical powers in order to validate his status as an enlightened saint. In the Chinese life of Nāgārjuna, for example, Nāgārjuna's holiness and wisdom was apparent almost from birth. It is recorded that "At his mother's breast he heard the holy sounds of the four Vedas. . . . He could chant them all, and he understood their meaning."[3] When he reached adulthood and perfected his studies, the story is told that he and several friends obtained a magic formula by which they could enter the king's palace undetected and seduce the women there. The king, when petitioned by the women, set a trap for the young men, and caught them, killing them all but Nāgārjuna. "Then he [Nāgārjuna] awoke to [the truth that] desire is the origin of suffering and the root of the crowd of calamities, and that from this comes moral ruin and bodily peril."[4] When he escaped from the palace he left and devoted himself to monastic practice and study. There are clear parallels here to the story of Gautama Buddha's own leave-taking of his father's palace and the decadence represented therein, and beginning his own quest for enlightenment.

One of the most famous stories associated with Nāgārjuna is his legendary encounter with the *nāgas*, the mythical water snakes.[5] According to this legend, Nāgārjuna was lecturing at the Buddhist monastic university of Nālandā, where he was an abbot. Nāgārjuna noticed that two young men were frequenting his lectures; whenever they attended, the fragrance of sandalwood filled the entire area, and when they left, the fragrance disappeared with them. When Nāgārjuna questioned them, they told him that they were not men at all, but sons of the *nāga* king, who used the sandalwood paste as protection against the impurities of the physical world.

They further told Nāgārjuna that when the Buddha was teaching, the *nāgas* had attended his lectures on the Perfection of Wisdom, which few humans actually had understood. Therefore, the *nāgas* themselves had written down the Buddha's teachings and saved them for a time when a person might be born who could understand them. Nāgārjuna, they felt, was the one for whom they had been waiting. They then invited him to their kingdom under the ocean to read those Perfection of Wisdom sutras. Nāgārjuna accompanied them to their undersea world and studied the sutras; after a time, he returned to the human world to teach what he had learned. The name "Nāgārjuna," then, comes from his encounter with the *nāgas*.[6] Given all this, it is perhaps not surprising, then, that as Kenneth Inada notes, "He was, in short, considered to be the second Buddha and he always occupied the second position in the lineage of Buddhist patriarchs in the various sectarian developments of Tibet, China, and Japan."[7]

One last point concludes this section. It must not be forgotten that while Nāgārjuna was an influential philosopher and thinker, he was also a Buddhist monk, and thus heavily involved in the traditional ritual practices and moral codes that governed monastic life. This means, too, that for Nāgārjuna, philosophy was not an end in itself. It was always directed toward the goal of enlightenment, and thus had a soteriological function. This is true for many other prominent Buddhist teachers as well. Donald Lopez writes, "It is important to recall, however, that the Buddhist philosopher was also a Buddhist, and, in most cases, a Buddhist monk. He was thus a participant in rituals and institutions that provided the setting for his work. . . . All endeavors in the realm of what might be termed 'philosophy' were theoretically subservient to the greater goal of enlightenment, and the ultimate task of the philosopher, at least in theory, was to attain that enlightenment."[8]

Nāgārjuna was not only a great thinker, he was supremely concerned with the practical ramifications of his insights as well.

## THE *MŪLAMADHYAMIKAKĀRIKĀ*—EXPOUNDING THE MIDDLE WAY

Far and away the most significant of Nāgārjuna's writings is the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*, in which Nāgārjuna expounds upon the Buddha's teaching of the "middle path"—that is, the path between the two extremes of luxury and asceticism, between "eternalism and nihilism."[9] In his own life, the Buddha came to realize that true enlightenment could not be found while indulging oneself in the decadent pleasures of the world, but neither could it be found in the vigorous practice of extreme asceticism and self-mortification. Instead, one must follow a moderate path, avoiding the two extremes. The *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* describes the middle way as follows:

> Everlasting—that is one extreme; passing away—that is another extreme; give up these two extremes to go on the Middle Way—that is the Perfection of Wisdom. Permanence is one extreme, impermanence is another; give up these two extremes to go on to the Middle Way—that is the Perfection of Wisdom. . . . Form is one extreme, formlessness is another; the visible is one extreme, the invisible is another; aversion is one extreme, nonaversion is another; . . . depravity is one extreme, purity is another; this world is one extreme, the supramundane is another; . . . ignorance is one extreme, the extinction of ignorance is another; old age and death are one extreme, the cessation of old age and death is another; the existence of all dharmas is one extreme, the nonexistence of all dharmas is another; give up these two extremes to go on to the Middle Way—that is the Perfection of Wisdom.[10]

It is this "middle way" that Nāgārjuna takes up in the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*, and he uses four primary themes to do so, each of which will be discussed below: *śūnyatā*, *pratītyasamutpāda,* two truths, and nirvana. As all of these themes are inter-related and interwoven, it is a somewhat difficult task to isolate them and discuss them separately. Therefore, the sections should not be read as discrete, independent monologues, but rather as a unified dialogue in several parts.

### *Śūnyatā*

> He who is united with emptiness
> is united with everything.

> He who is not united with emptiness
> is not united with anything (*Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 24:14).[11]

The teaching of *śūnyatā* is one of the most well-known Buddhist concepts in the world, and, as Roger Jackson says, it is "probably the most important philosophical and religious concept of Mahāyāna Buddhism."[12] It is difficult to give just one definition of *śūnyatā*, as the way in which emptiness has been described by different Buddhist and non-Buddhist scholars throughout the tradition varies greatly. However, there are some basic characteristics, which, while perhaps not totally universal, are widespread enough to constitute a general definition. Jackson defines *śūnyatā* as well as anyone. He writes,

> *Philosophically*, emptiness is the term that describes the ultimate mode of existence of all phenomena, namely, as naturally "empty" of enduring substance, or self-existence (*svabhāva*): rather than being independently self-originated, phenomena are dependently originated (*pratītyasamutpāda*) from causes and conditions. Emptiness, thus, explains how it is that phenomena change and interact as they do, how it is that the world goes on as it does. *Religiously*, emptiness is the single principle whose direct comprehension is the basis of liberation from samsāra, and ignorance of which, embodied in self-grasping (*ātmagraha*) is the basis of continued rebirth—hence suffering—in samsara.[13]

Perhaps one of the most important points to note in Nāgārjuna's use of *śūnyatā* is the way he applied it methodologically, rather than ontologically. What this means is that, first and foremost, Nāgārjuna sets up *śūnyatā* to function as a methodological tool, something to "accomplish the task of tailoring off the genuinely real world from that which is accepted as real on commonsensical ground."[14] Therefore, those interpreters who attempt to force either a nihilistic or absolutist reading onto Nāgārjuna's thought are making a conceptual error. Malcolm McLean writes, "It is hard to avoid the impression that both the nihilists and the absolutists in their interpretations of *śūnyatā* have grasped the snake by the tail! They have taken *śūnyatā,* which is intended only to be used as a conceptual tool, with no objective referent, and ontologised it negatively and positively respectively."[15] To say that *śūnyatā* refers either to nothingness, or fullness, literally speaking, is to make it into a "view," a "theory," an interpretation that Nāgārjuna himself expressly rejected.[16]

What, then, can be said about *śūnyatā*? To begin, it is perhaps best to describe *śūnyatā* negatively, that is, what it is not: an object, a thing, a/the Supreme Being, the Absolute, the Void, Fullness, etc., for emptiness itself is only dependent and nominal, and thus, ultimately empty. In fact, Candrakīrti writes that to identify emptiness with some form of absolute is "as if a shopkeeper were to say, 'I have nothing to sell you,' and would receive the answer, 'Very well, then just sell me this—your absence of goods for sale.'"[17]

However, this does not mean that there are no positive statements that can be made about *śūnyatā. Śūnyatā* is the true form of existence, the state in which all things "are." Further, as we will see below, *śūnyatā* refers to the fact that everything is dependently arisen; that is, nothing exists that has inherent existence. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, emptiness is the key to enlightenment and the key to freeing oneself from suffering. It is the wisdom that leads to liberation.

This is the point Nāgārjuna is making in the verse of the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* quoted at the opening of this section: "He who is united with emptiness is united with everything. He who is not united with emptiness is not united with anything." The importance of this interpretation can hardly be overstated. As Garfield writes, "the interpretation of the entire Mādhyamika system depends directly on how one understands the concept of emptiness. If that is understood correctly, everything else falls into place. If it is misunderstood, nothing in the system makes any sense."[18] Without a proper understanding of *śūnyatā*, the world will never cease to delude and tempt the individual, and she will never be able to get beyond her simple sense perceptions and desires. Her suffering will never end, nor will she escape the karmic bonds that propel her through cycle after cycle of existence. Thus, for anyone who seeks wisdom, the first and most important concept that must be grasped is emptiness.

Huntington states the rewards of realizing emptiness most vividly, I think, in a way that puts a very human face on what can be very abstract and confusing language. He writes: "To actualize emptiness is to affirm one's membership in the universal context of interpenetrating relations which give meaning and structure to human activity. And this affirmation of membership is registered in a transformation of behavior which simultaneously fosters and is fostered by a change in the nature of one's experience of the everyday world—a world which no longer appears as a collection of intrinsically real, compartmentalized

objects, each one dissociated from the others and from a similarly isolated, fragmented 'I.'"[19] I agree with Huntington here that the realization of emptiness actually helps us to be better human beings, to live more harmoniously in community with each other, and to recognize the ties that link us together.

This leads to my final observation, that is, the reason why the concept of emptiness is so closely linked to enlightenment, and what import it serves in the larger picture of a Buddhist worldview. Nāgārjuna himself describes the function of emptiness clearly in *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 24:20, where he writes, "If all this is not empty, there is no production or destruction. In that case, the nonexistence of the four noble truths would follow." In other words, if phenomena weren't really empty after all, and actually did have independent self-nature, then everything would be permanent, ceaseless, and unchanging, and therefore it would be impossible for anything to have an end. More specifically, suffering also would be permanent and without end, and thus the four noble truths would be a lie. There would be no end to suffering, nor an eightfold path to deliverance.

Given the relationship between emptiness and the nature of salvation in the Buddhist tradition, the soteriological efficacy of the Buddha's teaching is dependent upon the proper view of *śūnyatā*. Hence emptiness, and its complement, *pratītyasamutpāda*, are the heart and soul of the whole Mādhyamaka worldview, and the center of its soteriological path.

### *Pratītyasamutpāda*

We declare dependent-origination
to be emptiness.
That has taken the form of the doctrine
which is indeed known as the middle way.

Since there is no dharma whatever
that has not originated dependently,
therefore there is no dharma whatever
that is not empty. (*Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 24:18–19)

In order to understand the concept of *pratītyasamutpāda* in Nāgārjuna's thought, it is first necessary to describe the relationship between *pratītyasamutpāda* and *śūnyatā*. For that purpose, these two verses are two of the most important verses of the entire *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*, given that they state most clearly and directly

the connection between existence, emptiness, and dependent origination.[20] First, Nāgārjuna is saying that there is no difference between understanding an entity as "empty" and understanding it as "dependently arisen." Both terms point to the same reality, and the mode of being in the world for any entity can be described in two ways. Either term can say that all things exist in relationship to other things, and that those relationships are constitutive of their being. That is, nothing can exist on its own independently. That is the definition of *pratītyasamutpāda*. Or, one can say that nothing has its "own being" (*svabhāva*). Rather, everything is empty of discrete, autonomous existence. That is the definition of *śūnyatā*. Either way, the same thing is asserted.

Contrary to the traditional way of understanding phenomena in Western philosophy, in which independent entities are considered primary and the relationships between them only secondary, in this understanding of emptiness, relationships are primary for existence, and an independent entity is an illusory appearance. Thus, *pratītyasamutpāda* and *śūnyatā* are not two different things, but rather two ways of describing the same thing. Further, it is this twin awareness of dependent origination and emptiness that constitutes the "middle way," that is, the way between the philosophical extremes of absolutism—the reification of things as independently existent, and nihilism—the denial of any existence at all.

It is important to note here that this affinity between the two teachings of *pratītyasamutpāda* and *śūnyatā* is something new in Nāgārjuna's work. Nancy McCagney observes, "Equating *śūnyatā* and *pratītyasamutpāda* is a dramatic departure from earlier usage in the Pāli Canon."[21] Earlier, and traditionally, *pratītyasamutpāda* (Pāli *paticcasamuppāda*) was most often defined as the twelve links of the chain of causation. Those links are: ignorance, karmic activities, consciousness, mind and matter, six sense-doors, contact, sensation, craving, clinging, becoming, birth, old age, and death.[22] *Pratītyasamutpāda,* then, in establishing the connected nature of all phenomena, establishes the chain of causation. It is this chain of causation that is said to give rise to suffering, and thus *pratītyasamutpāda* becomes a way to interpret the four noble truths—particularly the second truth, which is concerned with the origins of suffering (the chain in normal order), and the third truth, which is concerned with the cessation of suffering (the chain in reverse order). It was Nāgārjuna, however, who took this

understanding of dependent origination and linked it to the concept of emptiness.

For Nāgārjuna, dependent origination is not the link between two "things"—that is, it does not function as cause and effect. Rather, dependent origination describes the fundamental lack of any self-sufficient, independent reality—it describes "radical becoming," rather than static "being." Padhye writes, "the fundamental purpose behind *pratītyasamutpāda* is to outline what is the case."[23] What he means by this is that the objective of the doctrine of dependent origination is to remove misunderstandings about the nature of the world and sketch out a theory of how things "really are." *Pratītyasamutpāda* is not something to be overcome or ultimately discarded on the way to enlightenment; rather, it itself is not different from enlightenment. Indeed, in his *Suhṛllekha* (Letter to a Friend), Nāgārjuna writes, "This dependent origination is the precious and profound treasure of the Buddha's teaching. Whoever sees this as real, realizes the Buddha and sees the Supreme Unity."[24]

Nāgārjuna gives several examples to explain what he means by *pratītyasamutpāda*, a few of which I want to mention here. One of the most easily understandable comes in his *Śūnyatāsaptatikārikā*. There he writes, "A father is not a son, a son is not a father. Neither exists without being correlative."[25] This is obvious to us from our own experience. The assertion that a man is a father requires that he have a child— "father" is a term of relationship, and one cannot attain it independently. At the same time, in that relationship, there is only one father and only one son. Just because each is dependent upon the other does not mean that they are interchangeable. Dependence does not mean equivalence. This example is particularly revealing because it indicates the depth to which these relationships are fundamental to our being. The relationship a father has to his child profoundly changes his entire life. It is not just something "added on" to his "true self," which makes only a superficial change—like a coat of paint that merely makes the outside of the house look nicer, but doesn't alter the floor plan. Rather, the very "selfhood" of a father is reconfigured and recreated by the event of having a child, so much so that he cannot conceive of himself outside that relationship.[26] In just this way, says Nāgārjuna, the entire world is interdependent and interrelated, we just don't realize it.

Two other examples Nāgārjuna gives to illustrate this principle of dependent origination are found in the *Vyavahārasiddhi*. There

he writes, "One syllable is not a spell. On the other hand many syllables are not a spell either: dependent upon syllables that are [therefore] insubstantial this [mantra is neither existent] nor non-existent. Likewise no medicine appears independently of its specific ingredients. It appears [like] an illusory elephant: It is not [identical with them] nor is it [absolutely] different from them."[27] These two examples also point to the truth of dependent origination, but in a more general way. These examples indicate the interconnectedness of all phenomena, not just the particular one-to-one connection between a father and a son. In the first example, Nāgārjuna illustrates that one syllable by itself has no meaning, no function. Rather, it requires a larger network of syllables, a broader context into which it can come to life in *particular* relationships—not just a random pile of syllables will do—in order to make a spell. At the same time, however, a particular amalgam of syllables does not have a fixed, independent existence; thus it is also correct to say that the mantra is "empty," dependent as it is upon the network of syllables.

Similarly, an efficacious medicine requires the combination of specific ingredients, none of which is therapeutic on its own. It is impossible to isolate one component of any medicine and pronounce that it and it alone is the one individual healing property of the medicine. The medicine only works insofar as it combines a nexus of compounds. The medicine is not this or that ingredient, but rather the unique combination of all of them together. Yet, it is the combination in active relationship that is medicinal: a bunch of ingredients all piled up loosely on a counter does not constitute a medicine. A medicine is not a mathematical equation, where one apple, plus two oranges, plus three bananas makes six pieces of fruit. Medicine does not result from the combining of discrete, autonomous objects, but rather arises in dependence upon a series of particular relationships. It is thus "empty" of any existence of its own.

Nāgārjuna believed that any conception of independent origination was inherently fallacious; his system describes a world in which everything is dependent upon everything else, in which everything is empty. These two ideas point to the same reality.

### Two Truths

The dharma teaching of the buddhas
depends on the two truths:

the supreme truth
and the conventional truth.

Those who do not understand
the distinction between the two truths
do not know
the profound truth of the Buddha's teaching.

Without recourse to worldly practice,
the highest truth is not taught.
Without understanding the highest truth,
nirvana is not achieved. (*Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 24:8–10)

Gadjin Nagao writes, "If the relationship between emptiness and dependent co-arising is the warp running tautly through the fabric of Mādhyamika thought, the two truths of ultimate meaning and worldly convention comprise the woof. It is the weaving together of the two that makes up Mādhyamika philosophy."[28] Thus, we need to fill out the picture of Mādhyamaka philosophy with an analysis of Nāgārjuna's doctrine of two truths.

Of *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 24:8, David Kalupahana writes, "This has turned out to be one of the two most discussed verses in Nāgārjuna's *Kārikā*. Modern disquisitions on the conception of two truths could perhaps fill several substantial volumes."[29] This is true not only for verse 8, but also for the three related verses, 8–10. The bulk of the debate centers on the relationship between the two truths: How are they different, and how are they related? There is a great deal of discussion around this issue primarily because the concept of the two truths is understood to originate with the Buddha, and thus the question remains as to what extent Nāgārjuna is following in direct continuity with the Buddha's teaching and in what respects he is espousing something new.

From verse 9 above, it appears that Nāgārjuna claims to be drawing upon the Buddha's teaching and aligning himself with the Buddha's position. The Buddha's "profound truth" is the truth of liberation, and this is the truth that Nāgārjuna, too, is describing. While Nāgārjuna is writing with a clear soteriological purpose in mind, he uses language that is very different from the Buddha's, and his argumentation also seems to lead to some novel conclusions. Thus it remains to examine the way in which Nāgārjuna both maintains a distinction between the two truths, yet at the same time closely identifies them.

Jay Garfield, in his commentary on the above verses, writes,

> This is the first explicit announcement of the two truths in the text. It is important to note that they are introduced as two *truths*, and that they are introduced as distinct. This will be important to bear in mind later. For it is tempting, since one of the truths is characterized as an ultimate truth, to think of the conventional as "less true." Moreover, we will see later that while the truths are introduced as quite distinct here, they are in another sense identified later. It will be important to be very clear about the respective sense in which they are distinct and one.[30]

Note the issues Garfield identifies. First, he argues that Nāgārjuna is doing two things simultaneously: he is both distinguishing between the two truths, and identifying them. Second, Garfield calls attention to the common tendency to denigrate the conventional truth and elevate the ultimate truth, so much so that often the only truth that is considered liberative is the latter. As we will see below, this tendency is misguided and violates Nāgārjuna's own teaching that the two truths are profoundly interconnected and mutually dependent.

One of the common interpretations of the two truths doctrines is that the higher truth is ineffable, beyond language, and therefore a conventional truth in needed to put the ultimate truth into words. Musashi Tachikawa takes this approach. He writes, "The 'conventional truth' represents the verbalization of 'ultimate truth.' On the one hand language is totally rejected and ultimate truth is held to be ineffable, but on the other hand it is possible to give verbal expression to ultimate truth in the form of conventional truth."[31] This is a problematic interpretation, not only because it does imply a "higher/lower" schema for the two truths, but also because it ascribes that same distinction to language in general, arguing that what is most true is actually unspeakable, and that the spoken truth is actually a crutch, or, at best, a finger pointing to something beyond itself. This does not in fact appear to be Nāgārjuna's understanding of language. The only thing Nāgārjuna seems to be saying about language is that it, too, is "empty" and does not have independent ontological status. Saying that, however, does not imply that the conventional truth expressed in language is any more provisional than the ultimate truth, which, of course, also must be empty. I agree here with Jeff Humphries, who, writing about Buddhism and literature, states, "According to the Mādhyamika system, the truth is never essentially present, but it is evident as emptiness in all phenomena, including words."[32]

Thus, despite all appearances to the contrary, one of the most important points to note about Nāgārjuna's doctrine of two truths is that one truth is not "higher," or "better," than another.[33] Even though this seems to be the end result of much analysis on this subject, Nāgārjuna himself clearly rejected any privileging of one truth over another. In Garfield's commentary on the above verses he writes, "It is important to see here that Nāgārjuna is not disparaging the conventional by contrast to the ultimate, but is arguing that understanding the ultimate nature of things is completely dependent upon understanding conventional truth."[34] Lindtner argues the point similarly, saying, "The two truths cannot be claimed to express different levels of objective reality since all things always equally lack *svabhāva*. They are merely two ways of looking (*darśana*) at things, a provisional and a definite."[35] In the same vein, Richard King writes, "The 'two truths' must not be seen in terms of two specific 'levels of reality,' for to do this would be to undermine Nāgārjuna's denial of a difference between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. *Saṃvṛti-satya* is the conventional and 'concealing' level of meaning, while *paramārtha-satya* is the supreme or 'ultimate meaning' (*parama-artha*). The distinction is semantic and not ontological."[36]

Nāgārjuna's theory of two truths, therefore, does not imply that the sensory world is invalidated somehow, or that the things we interact with on a daily basis really don't exist. They still serve a purpose, and they still have utilitarian value. Ian Mabbett writes: "Just as things like carts, cloth or pots, in spite of being dependent and devoid of intrinsic reality, can still carry out their functions of transporting wood, grass or earth, containing honey, water or milk, and protecting from cold, wind or heat, even so this statement of mine, in spite of being dependent and void of intrinsic reality, can carry out its function of demonstrating that things are devoid of intrinsic reality."[37] Candrakīrti says something similar in *The Entry into the Middle Way*. He argues, "A jug, a woollen or burlap cloth, an army, a forest grove, a rosary, a heavenly tree, a house, a small cart, a guesthouse, and so on and so on—these things and whatever else that is, like them, apprehended by living beings: They are to be understood [as conventionally real] because the sage had no quarrel with the world."[38] I think this last sentence is particularly important: an enlightened person has no "quarrel with the world"—that is, she does not regard it as an obstacle in her path, or an

enemy to be conquered. For one who has realized the two truths, the world is not to be shunned or disparaged.

From this discussion of two truths we now turn to the final, and from a practical view the most important, component of Nāgārjuna's thought, the concept of nirvana. Nāgārjuna's entire system is focused on the realization of nirvana; thus we must explore how it is that he understands this primary goal of all meditation, study, and practice.

### Nirvana

> Whoever sees dependent origination,
> he sees this:
> suffering, its arising,
> its annihilation, and also the path. (*Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 24:40)

The attainment of liberation is the point around which Nāgārjuna's entire philosophical system revolves. Abstract philosophical concerns and the intricacies of Nāgārjuna's logic sometimes overshadow the practical import of his thought, and Nāgārjuna often is seen as a pure philosopher, rather than a religious leader. To think that these are two distinct aspects of his life is a serious misinterpretation. D. Seyfort Ruegg emphasizes that Buddhism has suffered from the dichotomy set up between philosophy and religion in much of Western scholarship. Buddhism does not fit neatly into either category, but rather is both at the same time. The problem is not with Buddhism itself, but rather the way in which the two terms are often defined in the West. Ruegg writes, "a doctrine like Buddhism that has represented itself as therapeutic, and soteriological, would not be counted as essentially philosophical so long as philosophy is understood to be nothing but analysis of concepts, language and meaning (though these matters do play an important part in the history of Buddhist thought too). But the fact remains that, in Buddhism, soteriology, gnoseology and epistemology have been closely bound up with each other.[39] There is no distinction in Nāgārjuna's thought between "religion" and "philosophy," because that separation was not part of his intellectual milieu. Instead, it is clear that the goal of Nāgārjuna's philosophy is a religious one: liberation, enlightenment, nirvana.

> There is no distinction whatsoever between samsara and nirvana.
> There is no distinction whatsoever between nirvana and samsara.
> (*Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 25:19)

This verse is one of the most surprising, controversial verses in the entire *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*. Mervyn Sprung writes, "What a mind-splitting thunderclap this conception must have been to Nāgārjuna's contemporaries!"[40] It is entirely unexpected and challenges much of traditional Buddhist thinking about the nature of nirvana. Rather than stress the difference between nirvana and samsara, Nāgārjuna is arguing their lack of distinction. Jay Garfield calls it "one of the most startling conclusions of the *Mūlamādhyamakakārikā*,"[41] and describes Nāgārjuna's position as follows: "Just as there is no difference in entity between the conventional and the ultimate, there is no difference in entity between nirvana and samsara; nirvana is simply samsara seen without reification, without attachment, without delusion."[42]

T. R. V. Murti seems to agree with Garfield on this point, at least generally speaking. However, he holds that samsara and nirvana are not exactly identical, interpreting the verse with a Kantian spin. Describing Nāgārjuna's claim that there is no difference between samsara and nirvana, he writes, "Noumenon and Phenomena are not two separate sets of entities, nor are they two states of the same thing. The absolute is the only real; it is the reality of samsara, which is sustained by false constructions (kalpanā). The absolute looked at through the thought-forms of constructive imagination is the empirical world; and conversely the absolute is the world viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*, without these distorting media of thought."[43] It should be questioned whether Nāgārjuna's verses actually point to "the absolute" (assuming Murti means nirvana) as being "real" in a way that samsara is not. Rather, it appears Nāgārjuna has gone to some lengths to emphasize that nothing is "real" in the sense of having abiding, independent existence; instead, as we have seen, everything that is, is empty.

Unfortunately, in many instances, the Buddhist concept of nirvana is interpreted as an escape from here to there—a leaving, a turning one's back on this life and looking elsewhere. This conception of nirvana is most prevalent in Western popular parlance, where the very word nirvana has come to mean a state of sheer bliss, otherworldly and transcendent. However, for Nāgārjuna, such an interpretation could not be further from the truth. Rather, as Padhye writes, "According to Nāgārjuna nirvana consists in 'proper understanding' or developing a proper perspective and cannot be considered even in imagination that it is an end of life or getting away from worldly transaction. It is but a direction to the discovery of the way things truly are."[44] In other

words, there is no "there" there, but rather nirvana is "right here"—suddenly apparent with a shift in perspective, or focus. As Garfield says, "Nāgārjuna is emphasizing that nirvana is not someplace else. It is a way of being here."[45] In other words, it is not "ontological," in that respect. Richards describes it this way: "*Nirvana* is not an existing entity. If it were to be so regarded it would have to be classified as a constructed product or *samskṛta* dependent upon something else. On the other hand *nirvana* is not a non-existent thing; it is neither existent nor non-existent, nor is it both existent and non-existent for that would make it a composite product while *nirvana* is non-composite or *asamskṛta*.[46]

In *The Buddhist Concept of Hell*, Daigan Matsunaga offers an idealist interpretation of this idea. He concludes that the basis of Mādhyamaka philosophy is that "the ultimate difference between heaven and hell lies in the attitude of the viewer."[47] At first glance, this might well seem to be an overstatement, but when we look more closely at Nāgārjuna's thought, we see that such a bold statement is a not unreasonable interpretation. Here is where we see the goal of enlightenment most clearly. At another place in the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* (26:11), Nāgārjuna writes, "The removal of ignorance occurs through knowledge and meditative praxis," and it is only through wisdom that the non-duality of nirvana and samsara can be seen. To the enlightened one, the former is not different from the latter, hidden off in some far-away place. Rather, it, too, belongs to the emptiness of all things and is itself "empty." In this view, the world as such is not inherently evil. Bruce Matthews writes, "The world in itself ought not to be viewed as either a source of pain or not a source of pain. It is only our relation to it through consciousness that makes it thus or otherwise."[48] Streng echoes this perspective: "The practical, everyday world as such is not to be rejected—only the ignorance, the attachment to *svabhāva*, should cease."[49] Wisdom, then, becomes the key to unlocking the secret of emptiness.

In the realization that nirvana is actually present to us now, life takes on new meaning. This means that there is no "beyond," no escape from this world as such. Whereas before, nirvana was opposed to human existence, now they are discovered to be one and the same reality. Without the false reification of substances, the true nature of the world can be seen, and the root of suffering is extirpated. As Garfield comments, "For then, in the context of impermanence and dependence, human action and knowledge make sense, and moral and spiritual progress become possible. It is only in the context of *ultimate*

*nonexistence* [i.e., the emptiness of both nirvana and samsara] that *actual existence* makes any sense at all."[50] Thus, in Nāgārjuna's philosophy, there is no way to fully separate these three important aspects of emptiness. Compassion leads to a realization of the interconnectedness of all life, which points to the emptiness (i.e., dependent origination) of all concepts, including nirvana, and this, in turn, circles back to compassion for all those who have not yet achieved the necessary wisdom that brings enlightenment. Hence, Nāgārjuna closes his *magnum opus* with a prayer to the Buddha:

> I bow to Gautama
> who, with compassion,
> taught the true dharma
> in order to eliminate all philosophical views.
> (*Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* 27:30)

### THE CONTINUING PRACTICAL RAMIFICATIONS
### OF NĀGĀRJUNA'S TEACHING

> Virtually all the great philosophical systems of India, Sānkhya, Advaitavedānta, Mādhyamaka and so forth, were preeminently concerned with providing a means to liberation or salvation. It was a tacit assumption with these systems that if their philosophy were correctly understood and assimilated, an unconditioned state free from suffering and limitation could be achieved. Thus, it may be said that Indian philosophy in general and the Mādhyamaka have a fundamentally soteriological orientation.[51]

Nāgārjuna's philosophy was squarely focused on the goal of enlightenment. In this respect, he stands directly in a line of Buddhist thinkers that extends back to Gautama Buddha himself. Although Nāgārjuna was also responsible for important modifications in the traditional Buddhist understanding of the world and nirvana, Le Roux writes, "Nāgārjuna insists that he operates squarely within the framework of Buddhist philosophy that reflects a context of soteriological efficiency with the reach of the Buddha's Four Noble Truths concerning suffering and the cessation of suffering."[52]

In his article on Nāgārjuna, Kant, and Wittgenstein, Hsueh-Li Cheng argues that "The doctrine of emptiness is not a metaphysical theory; rather it is essentially a way of salvation."[53] This might seem surprising to those of us who have struggled through the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* itself, or with the profound, dense commentaries on it, but, indeed, under the heavy layer of philosophical gloss lays a text that is profoundly

concerned with the way in which people see themselves and the world. However, this should not come as a complete shock when we remember that Nāgārjuna did not intend to expound anything new, but rather claimed he wanted only to reinforce the Buddha's original teachings, which were themselves supremely soteriological in character. It is like the parable told about the man who had been shot with an arrow. The Buddha showed how absurd it was to ask questions regarding the nature of the arrow while failing to treat the wound itself. In the same way, he chided those who would know all the details of nirvana, except how to get there.

Poussin also argues that the emphasis on salvation is present in the Buddha's teaching from the very beginning: "Deliverance, or Nirvāna, is the central idea of the teaching of Śakyamuni and the *raison d'étre* of the religious life." He then goes on to quote from the Buddha's teaching: "As the vast ocean, O monks, is impregnated with one flavour, the flavour of salt, so also, O monks, this my Law and Discipline is impregnated with but one flavour, with the flavour of deliverance."[54] This same idea is stated more directly by Francis Cook: "Emptiness is the key to the liberated life, and Buddhism is about liberation."[55] Here, he is echoing Conze, who said that "Emptiness has its true connotations in the process of salvation, and it would be a mistake to regard it as a purely intellectual concept. . . ."[56] Emphasizing the liberative function of insight into emptiness, these modern commentators echo the view of the great medieval Indian commentator on Nagārjuna, Candrakīrti (ca. 600–650 CE). At the central moment in his description of the path to liberation, he says,

> Dependent coarising [*pratītysamutpāda*], in its truth, lies open, manifest;
> The Bodhisattva dwells in wisdom and achieves cessation [nirvana].[57]

All these commentators recognized a central theme of the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*, and that is its concern with human experience. It is not some philosophic tract disconnected from concrete reality, designed for esoteric and abstract reflection. As we have seen, the four themes discussed above, *śūnyatā*, *pratītyasamutpāda*, the two truths, and nirvana all point to the final goal of liberation and enlightenment. This focus is apparent even in the structure of the chapter topics of the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* as well: the examinations are of "conditions," "the senses," "desire," "bondage," "suffering," and "actions and their fruits." Almost every chapter concerns itself primarily with some aspect of lived human experience and seeks to shed light upon it—not for the illumination itself, but rather for the result wisdom brings,

which is enlightenment and liberation. Thus, even for all its terse, technical language, in the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā*, Nāgārjuna has written a practical guide to salvation, and whatever else can be said about his philosophy, this must be said first. In other words, as Richards provocatively suggests, "Can it be that the meaning of *śūnyatā* ultimately has to be sought in its use in a form of life rather than in any attempt to locate an objective referent or counterpart?"[58] Using Nāgārjuna's own writings, a persuasive case certainly can be made.

## NOTES

1. An initial, popular presentation of this rethinking can be found in Kristin Largen, *What Christians Can Learn from Buddhists: Rethinking Salvation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009).

2. Christoph Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana: Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982), 251. However, in the same section, Lindtner argues that Nāgārjuna must have been aware of the various Indian *darśanas*, but they had no positive influence in the development of his thought (p. 250).

3. Roger Corless, "The Chinese Life of Nāgārjuna," in *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 526.

4. Ibid., 527–528.

5. I follow the account as recorded by David Ross Komito, *Nāgārjuna's Seventy Stanzas: A Buddhist Psychology of Emptiness* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1987), 17–18.

6. However, in Corless, "The Chinese life of Nāgārjuna," another etymology is given. "Because his mother gave birth to him under an [*arjuna*] tree he was called Arjuna. Because a dragon perfected his knowledge [lit., "completed his way"] he is fittingly called Dragon (*nāga*). His style (*hao*) is Long Shu [Dragon Tree, that is, Nāga-arjuna]." Roger Corless, "The Chinese Life of Nāgārjuna," 531.

7. Kenneth Inada, trans., *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of His Mūlamadhyamikakārikā with an Introductory Essay* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1970), 3. Although Inada's claim is not literally true—as there are lineages in which, although Nāgārjuna is important, he is not second in order—Nāgārjuna certainly does play an important role in most, if not the vast majority, of Mahāyāna lineages.

8. Donald S. Lopez, Jr., "Buddhism in Practice," in *Asian Religions in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 63–64.

9. Peter Della Santina, "The Mādhyamaka Philosophy," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 15, no. 2 (June 1987): 174.

10. As translated in John S. Strong, *The Experience of Buddhism* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1995), 142.

11. All translations from the *Mūlamadhyamikakārikā* are the author's own.

12. Roger Jackson, "For Whom Emptiness Prevails: An Analysis of the Religious Implications of Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī*," *Religious Studies* 21, no. 3 (September 1985): 14.

13. Ibid.

14. A. M. Padhye, *The Framework of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy* (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1988), 54.

15. Malcolm McLean, "The Meaning of *Śūnya* in the Teaching of Nāgārjuna," *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 38.

16. It should be noted, however that many scholars trained in the in the dGe lugs pa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism contend this conclusion. For example, José Cabezón, in his review of C. W. Huntington, Jr.'s *The Emptiness of Emptiness*, strongly refutes the suggestion that Mādhyamaka philosophy rejects all philosophical views and "technical philosophical terminology that has as its aim the setting forth of a normative and true philosophical viewpoint" (José Cabezón, review of *The Emptiness of Emptiness*, by C. W. Huntington, Jr., *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 13, no. 2 [1990]: 153). Cabezón emphasizes that, according to dGe lugs pas tradition, Mādhyamaka is viewed as a philosophical system in its own right, and he seems to want to challenge what he reads as Huntington's tendency to treat Mādhyamaka as pure praxis with no theory. To read Huntington's response to Cabezón's review and Cabezón's reply, see *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 15, no. 1 (1992): 118–143. While I agree that the Mādhyamaka school of Buddhism as a whole does promote a specific understanding of the Buddha's teaching and a particular ontology, it cannot be denied that there is strong evidence in Nāgārjuna's own words that he did, in fact, reject all views. I want only to note here that the question remains far from settled in current Buddhist scholarship.

17. C. W. Hungtinton, Jr., with Geshé Namgyal Wangchen, *The Emptiness of Emptiness* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989), 29.

18. Jay Garfield, trans., *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* by Nāgārjuna (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 301.

19. C. W. Huntington, Jr., *The Emptiness of Emptiness*, 117.

20. Both David Kalupahana (*Nāgārjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way* [Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1986]) and Jay Garfield (*Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*) use "dependent origination" to translate *pratītysamutpāda*, and I follow them here. Kenneth Inada (*Nāgārjuna*) uses "relational origination," and Frederick Streng ("The Significance of *Pratītyasamutpāda* for Understanding the Relationship between *Samvriti*

and *Paramārthasatya* in Nāgārjuna," in *The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta*, ed. Mervyn Sprung [Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1973]) uses "originating dependently."

21. Nancy McCagney, *Nāgārjuna and the Philosophy of Openness* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefied Publishers, 1997), 54.

22. Mathieu Boisvert, *The Five Aggregates* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1995), 7.

23. Padhye, *The Framework of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy*, 37.

24. Translated in Leslie Kawamura, *Golden Zephyr: The Garland of White Lotus Flowers: A Commentary on Nāgārjuna's "A Letter to a Friend"* (Emeryville, CA: Dharma Publishing, 1975), 85.

25. Translated from the Tibetan in Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana*, 41.

26. It should be noted here that these categories of "father" and "son" are socially located and thus are not ontological in character.

27. Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana*, 97.

28. Gadjin Nagao, *The Foundational Standpoint of Mādhyamika Philosophy*, trans. John P. Keenan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 21.

29. Kalupahana, *Nāgārjuna*, 331.

30. Garfield, trans., *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 296–297 (italics author's).

31. Musashi Tachikawa, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Nāgārjuna*, trans. Rolf W. Giebel (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1997), 27.

32. Jeff Humphries, *Reading Emptiness, Buddhism and Literature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 43.

33. However, there are those interpreters of Nāgārjuna who persist in thinking otherwise, despite all the evidence to the contrary. See, for example, Mervyn Sprung, "The Mādhyamika Doctrine of Two Realities as a Metaphysic," in *The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta*. He writes that *paramārtha* is an end to *saṃvṛti*: *saṃvṛti* is the means, and *paramārtha* is the end (pp. 45–46).

34. Garfield, trans., *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 298–299.

35. Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana*, 276.

36. Richard King, "*Śūnyatā* and *Ajāti*: Absolutism and the Philosophies of Nāgārjuna and Gaudapāda," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 17, no. 4 (December 1989): 389.

37. Ian Mabbett, "Is there a Devadatta in the House?" *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 24, no. 3 (June 1996): 308.

38. Huntington, *Emptiness of Emptiness*, 177.

39. D. Seyfort Ruegg, "Some Reflections on the Place of Philosophy in the Study of Buddhism," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 151.

40. Mervyn Sprung, *Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way: The Essential Chapters from the Prasannapadā of Candrakīrti*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 19.

41. Garfield, trans., *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 331.

42. Ibid.

43. T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1987).

44. Padhye, *Framework of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy*, 101.

45. Garfield, trans., *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 332.

46. Glen Richards, "*Śūnyatā*: Objective Referent or *Via Negativa*?" *Religious Studies* 14, no. 2 (June 1978): 258.

47. Daigan Matsunaga and Alicia Matsunaga, *The Buddhist Concept of Hell* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1972), 60.

48. Bruce Matthews, *Craving and Salvation* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983), 19.

49. Frederick Streng, "The Significance of *Pratītyasamutpāda* for Understanding the Relationship between *Samvriti* and *Paramārthasatya* in Nāgārjuna," in *The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedanta*, ed. Mervyn Sprung (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1973), 34.

50. Garfield, trans., *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, 318.

51. Peter Della Santina, *Mādhyamaka Schools in India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986), 31.

52. Charles du P le Roux, "The Other: Nāgārjuna and the Theologians," *Religion and Theology* 1–2 (July 1994): 136.

53. Hsueh-Li Cheng, "Nāgārjuna, Kant and Wittgenstein: The San-Lun Mādhyamika Exposition of Emptiness," in *Religious Studies* 17 (1981): 68.

54. Louis de La Valleé Poussin, *The Way to Nirvāna* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1917), 110.

55. Francis Cook, "Reflections on Christopher Ives's Commentary," in *Concepts of the Ultimate*, ed. Linda J. Tessier (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 127.

56. Ibid., 113.

57. Candrakīrti, *Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's* Madhayamaka-vatara *with Commentary by Jamgön Mipham,* trans. Padmakara Translation Group (Boston and London: Shambhala, 2004), 68.

58. Richards, "*Śūnyatā*: Objective Referent or *Via Negativa*?" 260.

# Pattern Recognition and Analysis in the Chinese Buddhist Canon: A Study of "Original Enlightenment"

**Lewis Lancaster**
University of California, Berkeley, Emeritus

**With the assistance of Howie Lan and Ping Auyeung**
University of California, Berkeley

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE is based on a somewhat different approach to the study of a doctrinal term in Buddhist texts. The information presented here has been gathered through a software interface developed at the University of California, Berkeley by team members Lewis Lancaster, Howie Lan, and Ping Auyeung. A two-year grant of support (2007–2009)[1] was given by the National Science Foundation for the development of this tool. We have collaborated with the Institute of Tripitaka Koreana[2] in Seoul, and they have generously shared scanned images of rubbings taken from the printing blocks at Hae-in Monastery. The "software" makes use of a digital version of the previous publication by Lancaster and Sungbae Park, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*.[3] The digital version of the catalogue is the work of Charles Muller of Tokyo University, who has made it freely available on the Internet.[4] The interface project has also been a part of the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI)[5] and received support from that group's *Atlas of Chinese Religions* research, which was funded by the Luce Foundation and is in collaboration with the GIS Center at Academia Sinica in Taiwan.[6] Continued research on developing the interface used for this article is being pursued in cooperation with The School for Creative Media,[7] ALIVE,[8] and the Halliday Centre at the Department of Chinese Translation and Linguistics at City University of Hong Kong.[9] Additional support comes from collaboration with research in the University of California at Berkeley College of Engineering.[10] Future expansion of the analytics is being

done through cooperation with staff and faculty members at Carnegie-Mellon University,[11] Rutgers University,[12] and UCLA[13] through a separate grant from the National Science Foundation.[14] This is an indication of the need for teamwork and collaboration as we find ways to make use of technology and computation in the humanities. The approach followed below could not have been possible without the technical help of Howie Lan and additional support from Ping Auyeung, and therefore they are rightly listed as co-authors.

The intention of the search and retrieval strategy described below is focused on the history of the appearance of the term/compound 本覺, often translated as "original enlightenment." It is an expression that has been studied in great detail and was chosen for this reason. The works of Jacqueline Stone[15] and Robert Buswell[16] contain valuable accounts of the ways in which the term was used and interpreted from the seventh century onward. There is no attempt to reconstruct the careful discourse laid out in those volumes. Rather, in this article, I have chosen to focus on the earliest appearances of the term as an attempt to trace the history of a word in Buddhist texts. This follows up on a lecture that I gave more than two decades ago under the title of "The Question of Aprocryphal Words in the Chinese Buddhist Texts."[17] At that time, I suggested that the term 本覺 should be considered "apocryphal" since no Sanskrit equivalent could be determined. In this paper, I attempt to address the issue once again in greater detail, using some of the tools that are under construction for tracing the patterns of occurrences of vocabulary in the canonic texts.

As we test the effectiveness of a new approach, it is important to match the computer and computational results with previous knowledge. Because of the need to compare different strategies of research, we are focusing on this particular compound that has a long history within the scholarly literature of the Buddhist tradition and studies.

The initial and crucial question that arises from the method is whether quantification of data has a role to play in the study of doctrinal matters. What can be accomplished by computation of occurrences of a term and displaying a report in visual form? In part, the motivation behind the development of this interface software has been the awareness that the deluge of data created by digital technology requires new ways of retrieval and analysis. Scholars need tools that can help them quickly and efficiently use thousands of items identified by digital search.

The "work flow," that is, the procedure by which a scholar approaches a digital search and the results of that search, forms the structure of this article. The steps that have been used are one method of handling the technology and the data. The "work flow" procedure used for this software is somewhat different from the ordinary way of research, and thus it is necessary to outline the particular strategies in some detail.

When approaching a research problem, we have to make immediate decisions about how to proceed. Academic training is structured along the lines of procedural steps. A major component of our past training and practice has been directed toward use of library reference assistance, based on codex collections of the data. However, in the digital age, where thousands or even millions of data are available, our former methods have begun to falter. Today, a pressing question is how a scholar should arrange, classify, and analyze search results from large data sets and/or the Internet. The older library reference system of using aids for research that point to sources of information is not so helpful in the digital arena, where we can go directly to the data without the intermediate step of consulting collateral documents. It is often difficult, without the considered judgment of the compilers of reference works, to determine the nature of the data that we access through the Internet and digital sets of information. Can software and new methods of approaching data through computation help us deal with these issues of verifying the accuracy of retrieved information? In other words, can we use computation of the data itself to solve problems such as determining accuracy of the data?

In the example being described in this paper, we turn attention to the digital version of the thirteenth-century Korean printing block edition of the Buddhist texts. It contains more than 52 million characters carved onto nearly 166,000 wooden surfaces, each producing a page of text when transferred to paper. There are other digital data sets that incorporate the readings of this edition, such as SAT and CBETA (see below). While it is recognized that volumes 1–55 of the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*[18] print edition of the twentieth century are primarily based on the Koryŏ woodblock version, the editors of the Tokyo edition added dozens of texts known in Japan but not found in the Northern Sung corpus as recorded in the Koryŏ. For this reason, the study of terminology between SAT and CBETA, each based on the *Taishō,* will not be identical to the patterns found in the Koryŏ version. The conclusions

reached in this article are limited to the results obtained from the Korean block prints, which constitute the oldest complete set of original printing blocks for a version of the Chinese canon.

As mentioned above, in the past, scholars have approached a corpus such as the Korean canon through references in the form of catalogues, dictionaries, glossaries, concordances, and bibliographies. This type of research has been little changed in the field of Buddhist studies since the nineteenth century. A change is occurring in the contemporary world because a revolution in technology allows us to search and retrieve from the whole of material in the digital format. As a result, a complete inventory of every word or phrase is available; sometimes the examples number in the thousands. The older references based on codex publications are ill-suited to deal with this superfluity of data. In the comments below, the computational approach combined with visual analytics is explored as one way of handling reference questions in the digital age.

For the chosen example of how the new approach might be used, we start with the term 本覺. Our interest is in all occurrences of this combination of glyphs adjacent to one another. The goal of the research is to see the term in its total context within the Hae-in Monastery version of the canon and to determine the origin and uses of the glyphs in 1,514 texts. The previous approach of having scholars do a manual page by page reading and collecting has serious limitations when applied to more than 160,000 pages. In the last decade of the twentieth century, search and retrieval of target words and phrases was transformed for Buddhist scholars using Chinese language texts. Digital versions for the canonic material make it possible to find all references and display the results in a menu listing each line in which a target word occurs. In many cases, such a menu contains thousands of line references. While the current search for a term identifies all of these lines, the numbers can be large enough to require days or weeks of study by a scholar to understand the pattern of the occurrences. We now need tools that take us beyond this current state of the art. The functions of one such tool are described in the search and computation discussed in this article. We have not given a name to this tool since it is still in development. It will be referred to as the "software" (in quotation marks) for the present.

When we use the "software" to make a search in the Korean edition of the Buddhist canon for our target glyphs 本 and 覺 we find that they

occur adjacent to one another 763 times. Even though the number is large, it is a great advance over having to deal with the total number of glyphs in the whole of the corpus. Identifying 763 specific sites within 52,000,000 glyphs is a major accomplishment. Nonetheless, 763 occurrences is still a significant amount of data to handle, and the effort required to go through those hundreds of lines and analyze them is time consuming. The effort being made through the new "software" is directed toward taking these 763 examples and helping scholars analyze and classify so that significant occurrences and patterns will be identified in the shortest time possible.

As a first step with the "software" interface, we look for the number of times that each of the two glyph/characters appears in the corpus (see fig. 1). As the search is made, a report appears in visual form on a "ribbon" of blue dots, where each of the blue dots represents one of the 52 million glyphs. The dots are arranged by "panes" that correspond to the more than 160,000 pages of the version preserved in Korea. The dot is an abstract image that permits the user to see patterns of occurrence without the barrier of complex display of natural language glyph constructions such as in the Google report.

It is at this first step that we note the distinct shift in methodology. The initial move on the part of the scholar is to turn directly to the data itself rather than to reference works. As mentioned above, this is accomplished because the "software" provides a process of searching through the entire corpus at once. We have not gone through a reference work that points to data residing in another volume located at a separate site.

In order to proceed with the "work flow," the user is shown the visual pattern of occurrence of 本覺 on the "ribbon of blue dots" (see fig. 2). This pattern is made into a visual one by changing the color of the dots that represent the target word from blue to red. Across the blue background, a pattern of red dots alerts us to the occurrences of the target word. This visual becomes the first factor in the scholar's "work flow" planning. It shows that the glyphs are adjacent to one another in a scattering, marked by heavy concentration, in a few places and single isolated ones throughout the canon. Securing this much information within a few seconds can be compared to the hours of effort it would take to construct such a pattern, even with an Internet search that returns all examples of the term. In other words, an enormous amount of data is being displayed quickly and visually. We can "see"

the occurrences of our target search within the 52 million glyphs and immediately understand the nature of the pattern. This is very different from the current Internet search based on Google algorithms where we have hundreds of individual items listed in a long series of "pages" (see fig. 3). This is not a criticism of the present technology. It has been a great boon to Buddhist scholars that the digital versions of the Chinese are freely supplied by the CBETA[19] and SAT[20] sites. These efforts have advanced our research many fold. We are deeply indebted to Fagu Buddhist College in Taiwan and Tokyo University for providing this service.

As with all digital technology, there is no point at which it can be said to be complete or finished. Data in the computer is always dependent on our continued efforts to preserve, disseminate, and access it. The new "software" interface being described here is an attempt to take the search and retrieval function to another level of speed and analysis. Visualizations of data can take many forms. In the window below (fig. 3), the glyphs have been shown as individual "blue dots" and the search, retrieval, and display was constructed based on "place of appearance" for each of the 52 million glyphs.

In the next visual, we explore the pattern of occurrence from the perspective of each text rather than each word and page. In this window (fig. 4) the 1,514 texts that make up the corpus of the Hae-in Monastery printing blocks are represented by a grid of squares. If the term in our search is present in any one of the texts, the square which represents it changes color to show the presence of the term (once or multiple times) in that text. Such a view of the 1,514 divisions is in contrast to the "ribbon of blue dots" that displays 52 million characters and 166,000 pages (fig. 2). Rather than looking at an image based on characters or pages, we have the possibility of a relatively smaller image exhibiting the search results showing only a report from each of the texts that make up the corpus. These visuals, whether based on each glyph or each text, are intended to provide different lens for viewing the pattern of occurrence for our two glyphs.

Attention turns to the "work flow," which is determined based on the illustrations shown above. In order to understand the factual basis for the visual patterns, the "software" can provide the user with the following computations. A visual can be presented with all words counted and displayed by number of occurrences in a bar graph (see fig. 5).
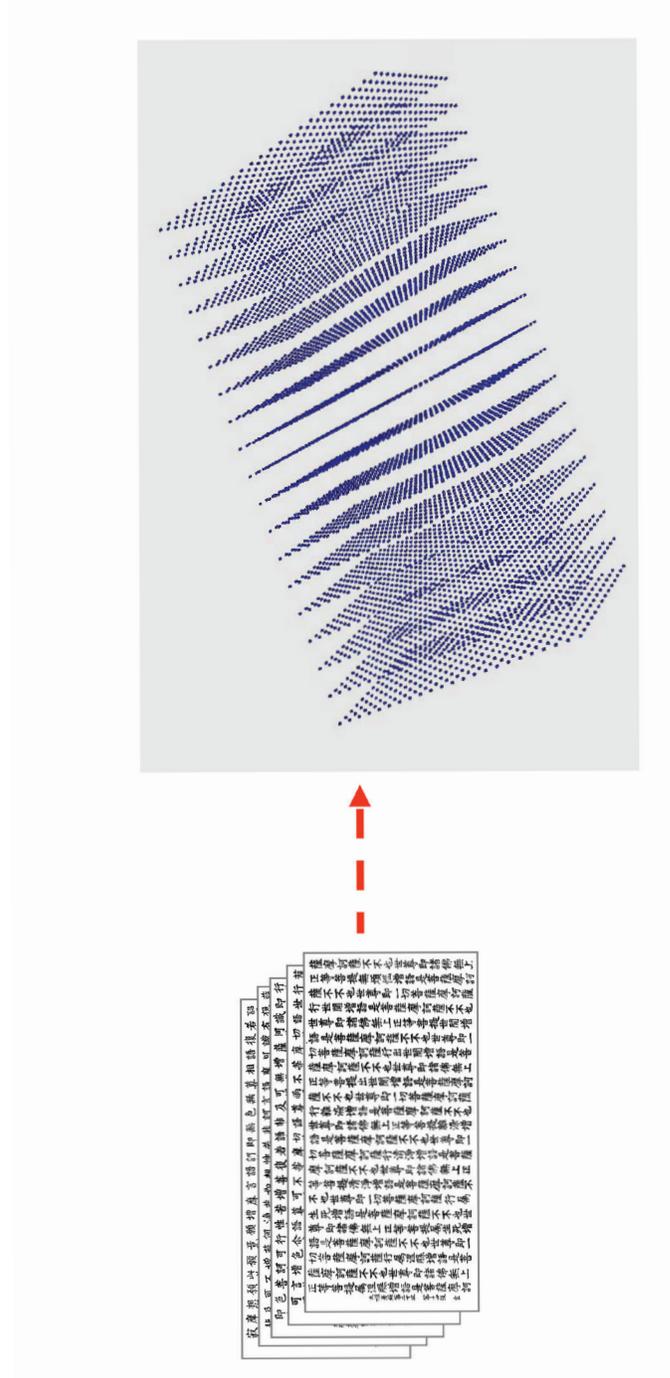
Figure 1. Rubbings of printing blocks shown abstracted into pane of "blue dots"

Figure 2. New interface showing all pages of the canon abstracted into a ribbon of "blue dots"
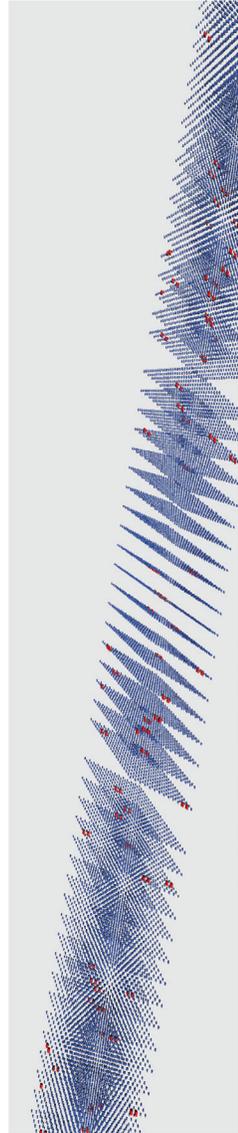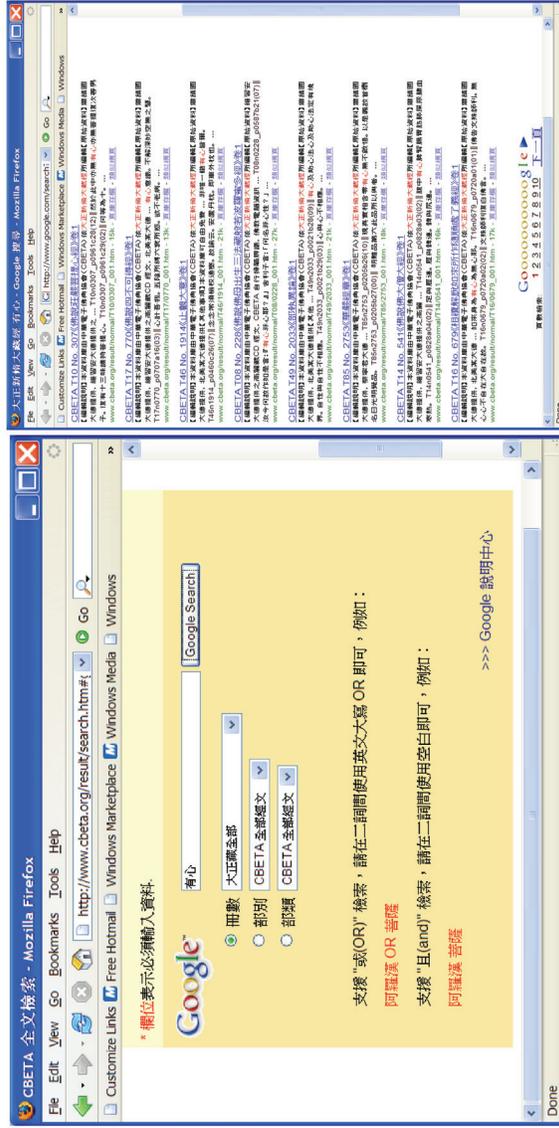
Figure 3. CBETA search results with pages of line references and ribbon of "blue dots" with target word showing as a red dot
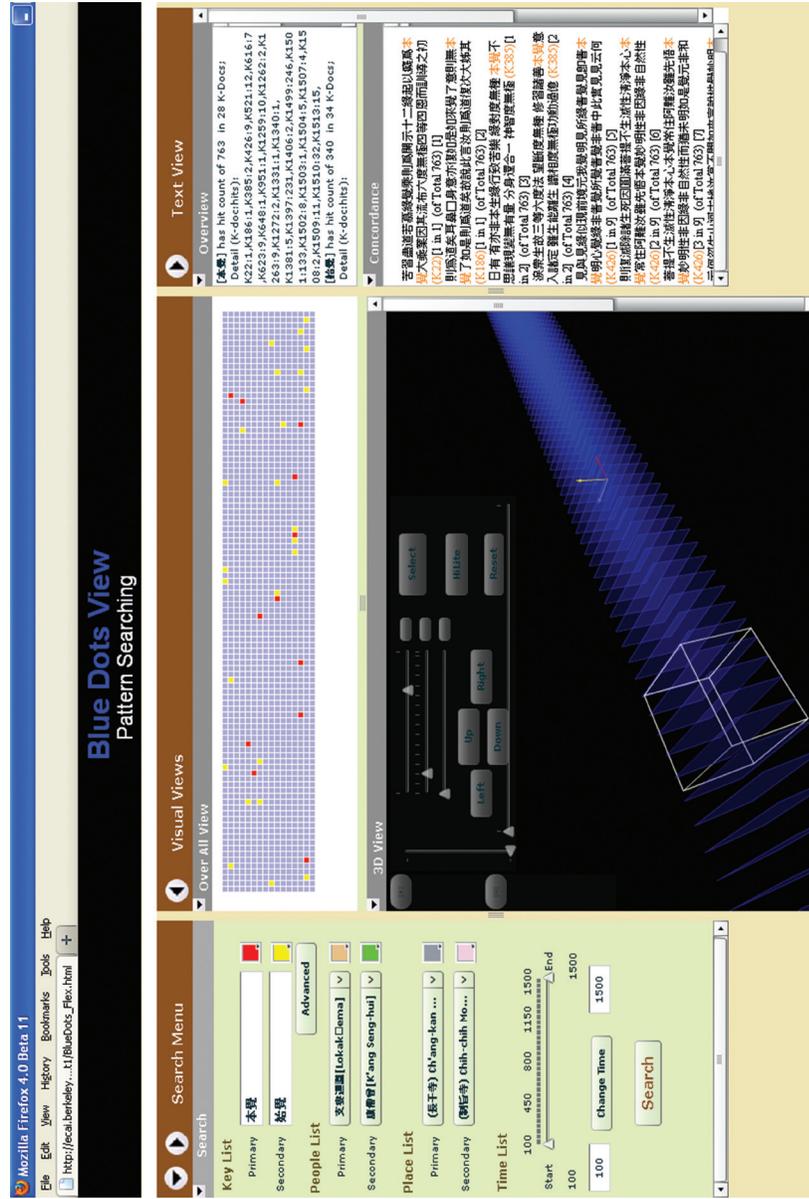
Figure 4. Full view of current interface of "software" showing multitude of search results
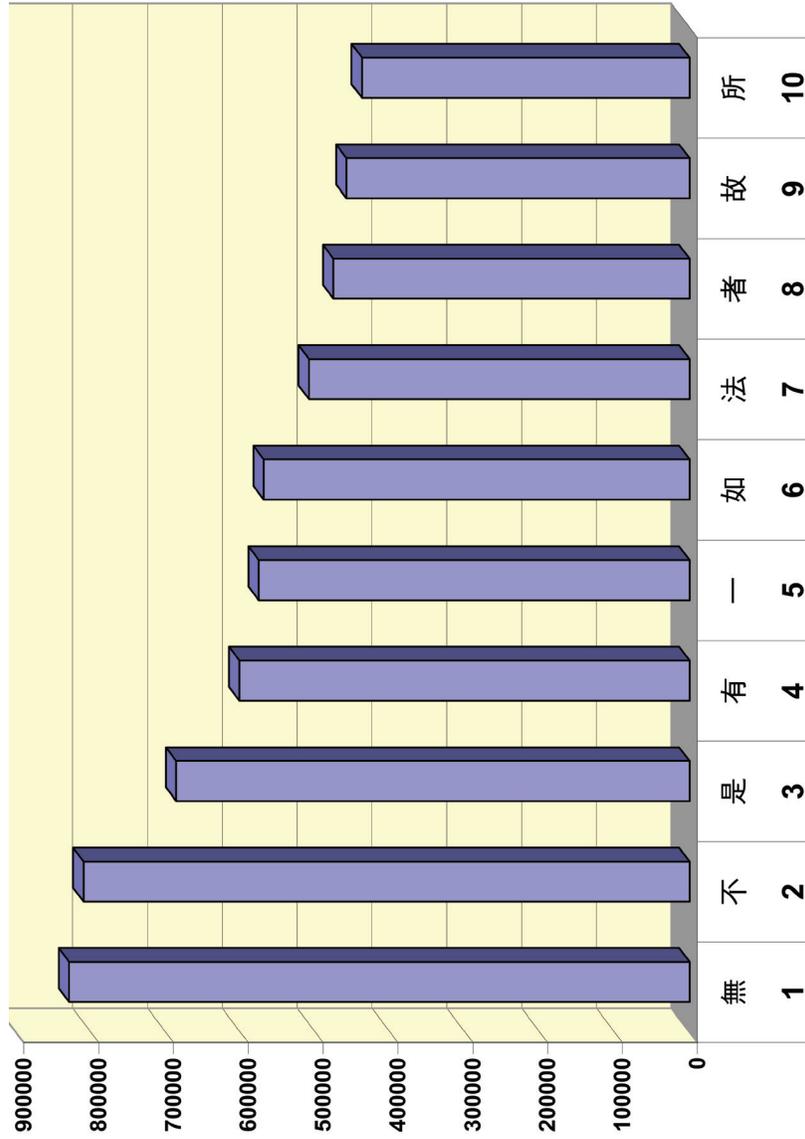
Figure 5. Computation of graph of total count of each character/glyph in the canon

本覺
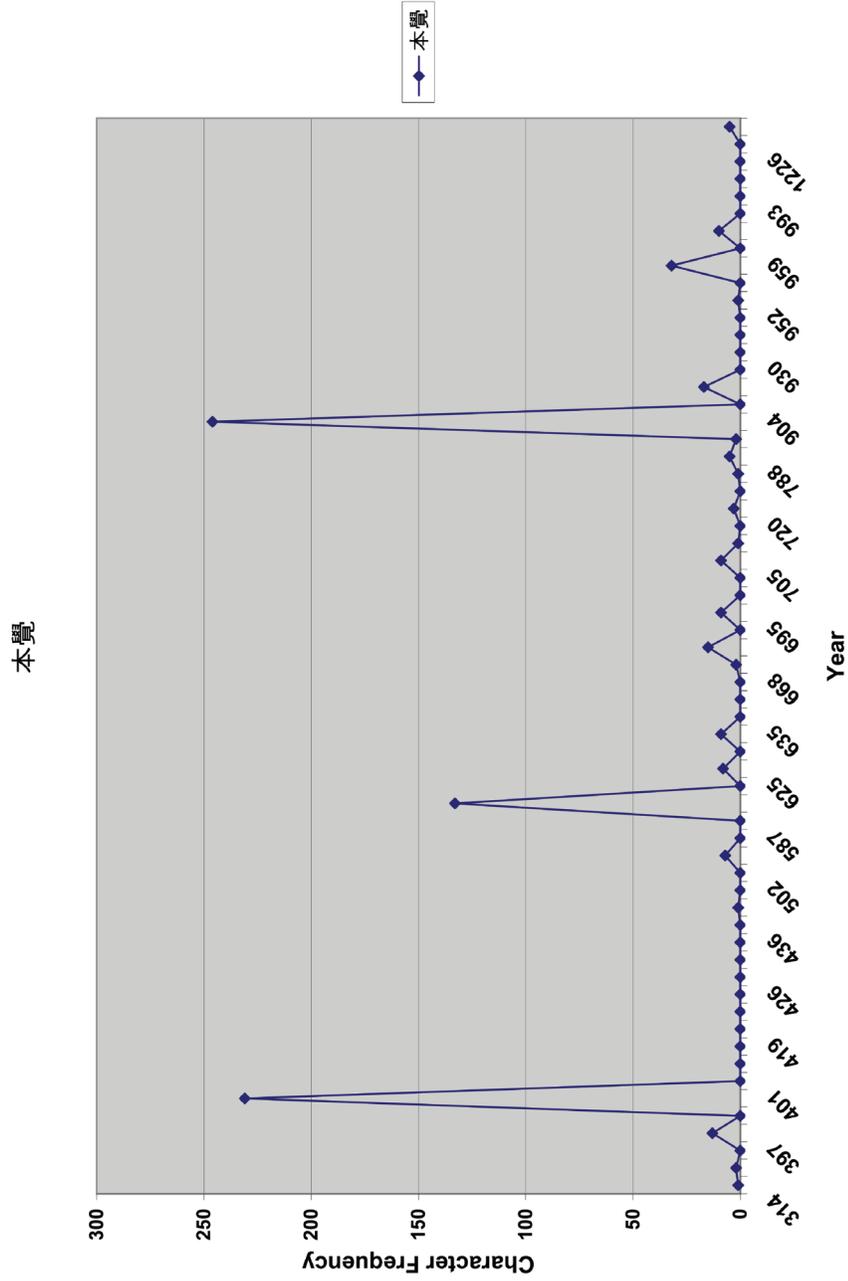


Figure 6. Computation of occurrence by date of translation

本覺
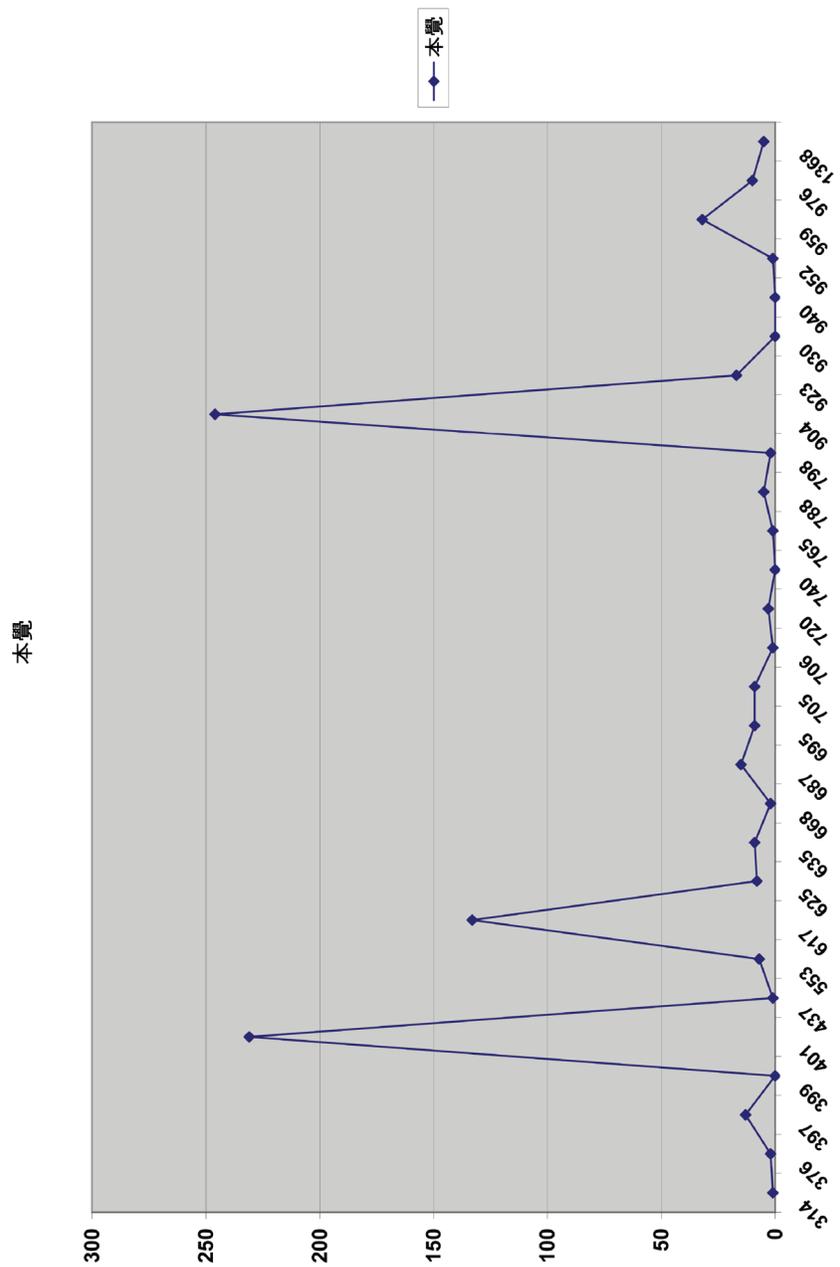


Figure 7a. Compound occurrence by year showing "profile" graph
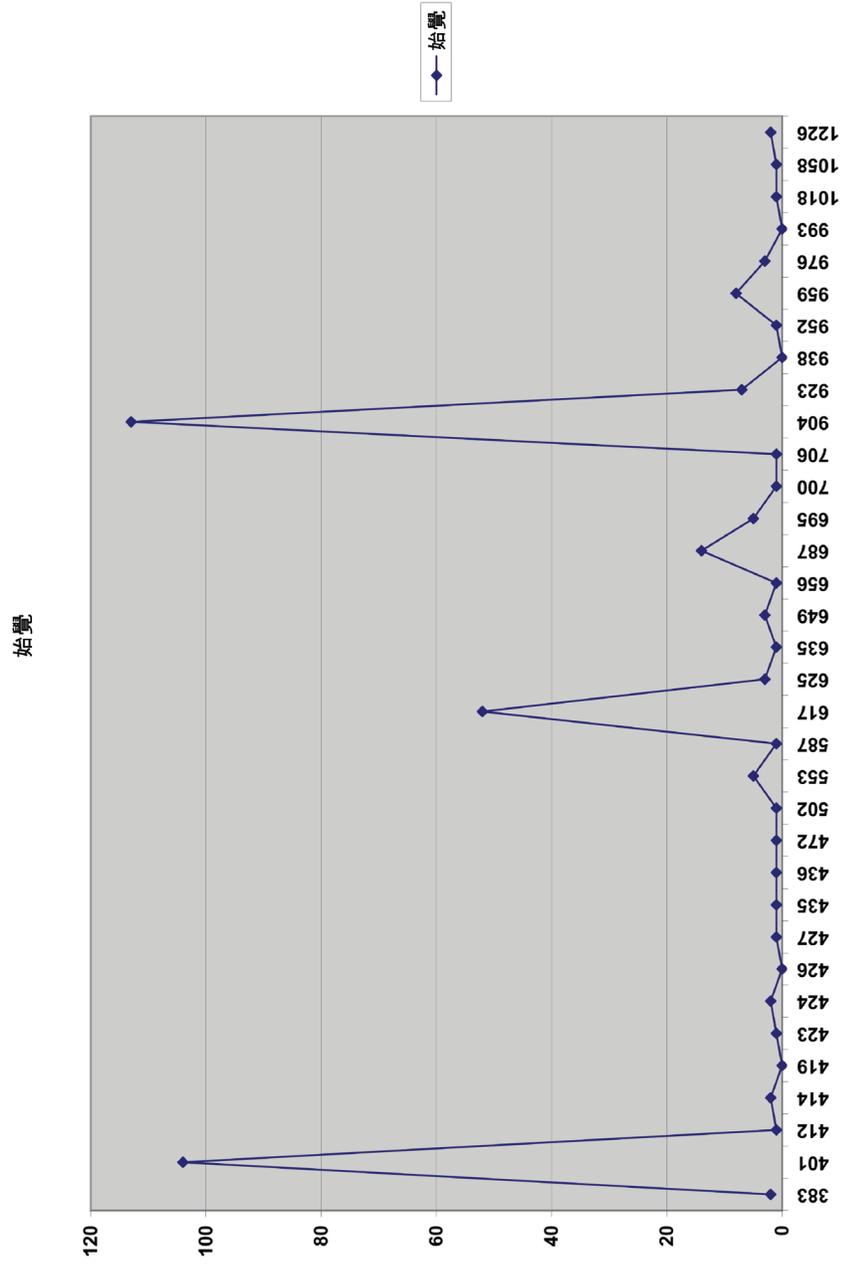
Figure 7b. "Profile" graph of companion compound
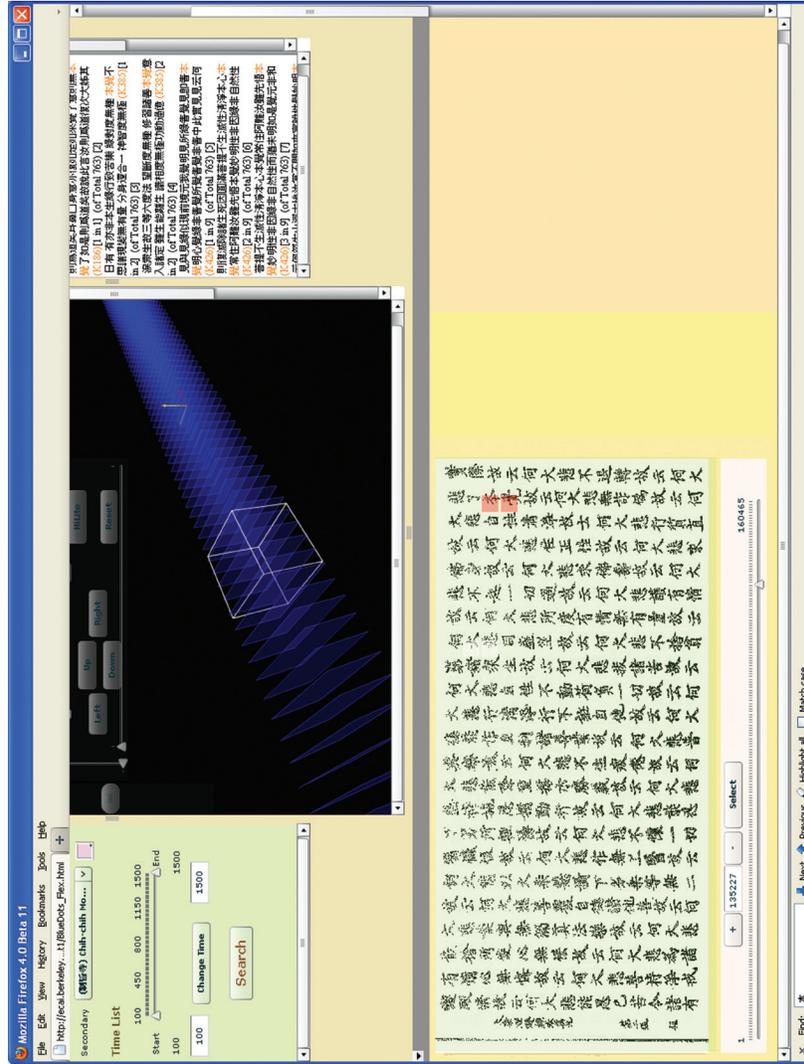
Figure 8. Scanned image of rubbing block appearing with target word highlighted
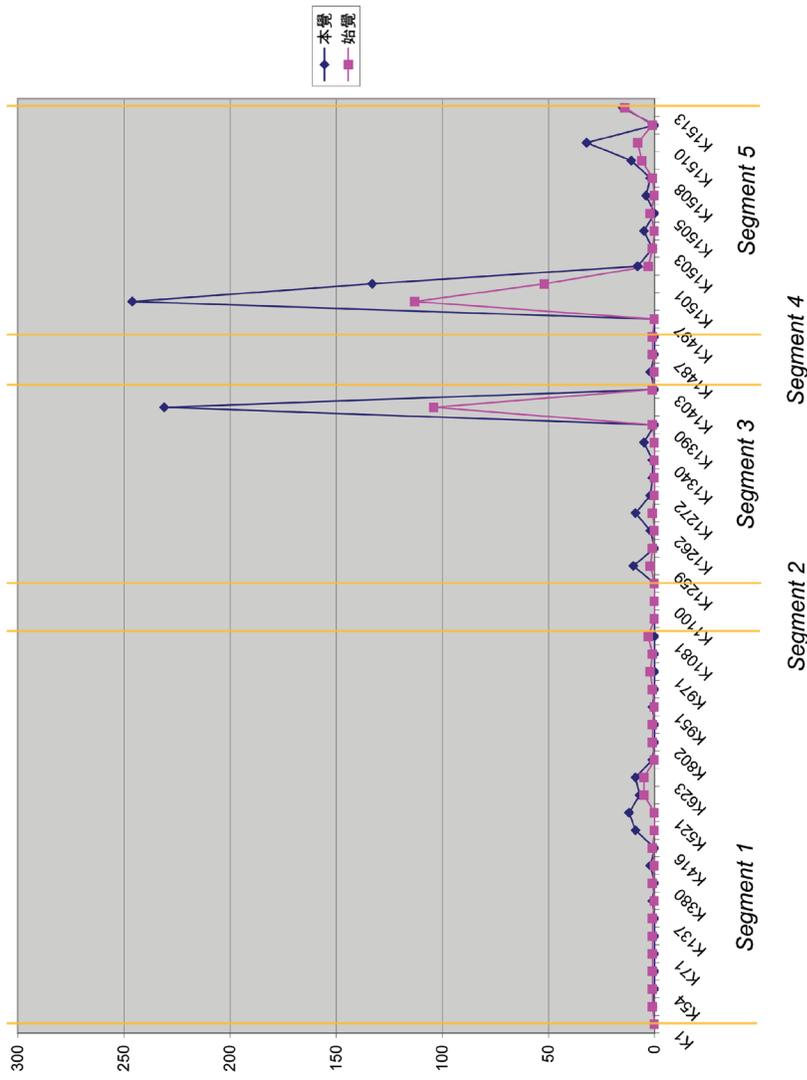
Figure 9. Computation and analysis graph showing five distinct segments of canon

COMPUTATION STEP ONE:
COUNTING ALL OCCURRENCES OF EACH GLYPH 本 AND 覺

Now that we have the overall pattern of occurrence (763 places scattered throughout the whole of the set with sizable clustering at a few points), the next step is to discover the significance of that visual pattern. The "software" provides assistance in the following fashion: the visual pattern based on computation can be used to give us a determination of the inner relationships of the glyphs that are the constituent elements of the data. Our inquiry for both glyphs gives the information:

本 is found in 1,180 texts with 71,833 hits
覺 is found in 1,182 texts with 69,527 hits.

In this count, we have determined that the two glyphs appear individually in large numbers throughout the 1,514 texts. Another computation reports that these individual glyphs are contained in 78% of the texts. Thus, the visual view of the text squares (fig. 4), with a large number of these squares colored to report occurrence, is based on this numerical computation.

*Work Flow Analysis: The fact that these two glyphs are so widely used alerts us to the possibility that there will be a number of variables in the function and meaning of any adjacent position of the glyphs.*

COMPUTATION STEP TWO:
COUNTING ALL OCCURRENCES OF THE
TWO GLYPHS 本覺 STANDING ADJACENT TO ONE ANOTHER

The next search is to combine the glyphs and search for every occurrence of the two in adjacent positions. This is at the heart of the research. We need to know when these two glyphs form the compound that means "original enlightenment." The report comes back with the statistic that the adjacent pair can be found in 763 places in the 166,000 pages. We also receive the information that the 763 occurrences of the adjacent pair of glyphs appear in 28 of the 1,514 texts. This computation can be further refined to show that the 28 occurrences represent about 2% of the 1,514 texts of the canon. While the number of hits for the adjacent glyphs number in the hundreds, this is far smaller than the numbers for the occurrence of each of the glyphs alone:

本覺 763 hits compared to
本 by itself 71,833
覺 by itself 69,527

The adjacent occurrence is less than half of 1% compared to the separate individual examples of the glyphs that form the compound.

*Work Flow Analysis: Since the compound appears in only 2% of the texts and the combination of two glyphs is less than half of 1% of the times when the single glyphs occur, it seems that the adjacent glyphs form a specialized term that has limited range in the text corpus.*

COMPUTATION STEP THREE:
COUNTING THE NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES IN EACH OF THE 28 TEXTS

The "software" displays a new feature: a read-out of the catalogue *K.* (Korea) number of the texts where the words occur followed by the number of occurrences within the particular document. As we will see later, this count for each text is a crucial element in understanding the patterning of the 763 examples of 本覺. The report of the texts gives them in the sequential order of their appearances in the printing blocks at Hae-in Sa, i.e., *K.* 22–*K.* 1513. Thus we find that in *K.* 22 there is one hit (*K.* 22:1) for 本覺, and in *K.* 1397 there are 231 (*K.* 1397:231), etc.

**Table 1. Occurrence count of target word listed by each text**

*K.* 22:1, *K.* 186:1, *K.* 385:2, *K.* 426:9, *K.* 521:11, *K.* 616:7, *K.* 623:9, *K.* 648:1, *K.* 951:1, *K.* 1258:10, *K.* 1262:2, *K.* 1263:9, *K.* 1272:2, *K.* 1331:1, *K.* 1340:1, *K.* 1381:5, *K.* 1397:231, *K.* 1406:2, *K.* 1499:246, *K.* 1501:133, *K.* 1502:8, *K.* 1503:1, *K.* 1504:5, *K.* 1507:4, *K.* 1508:2, *K.* 1509:11, *K.* 1510:32, *K.* 1513:15.

*Work Flow Analysis: The distribution of the adjacent glyphs involves a relatively small number of texts with a wide range of difference in enumeration. In order to judge the occurrences of the adjacent glyphs, we must search for characteristics of the 28 texts and determine if there are patterns that help explain the history of the adjacent glyphs 本覺.*

COMPUTATION STEP FOUR:
COUNTING THE NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF 本覺
BASED ON *TIME* OF TRANSLATION OR COMPILATION OF EACH TEXT

Because the "blue dots" are not just pictures but each contains many fields of metadata behind the image, it is possible, for example, to compute the occurrences of the 763 adjacent glyphs based on the time of translation. The ancient catalogues of China, as well as the colophons attached to texts, give us temporal information about the translation or compilation/authorship of each text. This time-stamped data can also be used to look for patterns of occurrence. The profile of the image, representing "time," indicates that there are specific "peaks" of activity. When we look at the image by the arrangement of the canonic texts compared to the image that shows the arrangement adjusted to time of translation, there are questions about the resulting patterns (see fig. 6).

In order to make this more meaningful, the computation that formed the basis for the imagery can be expressed in tabulation:

(1) The text *K.* number in which the adjacent glyphs occur.
(2) The number of examples found in each text.
(3) The percentage of the occurrences in the text compared to the total number of 763.
(4) The time of translation or compilation.

In table 2, we have a numerical report reflecting the information that underlies the visual pattern of occurrence as seen in the "blue ribbon" (fig. 2). Similar to the visual patterning, the tabulation indicates that the term is widely used throughout the corpus. In the tabulation, 本覺 is shown as appearing in sutras said to have been translated from the fourth century CE up to the Northern Sung dynasty and Koryŏ works of the tenth and fourteenth centuries CE (and one additional text dated to the Ming dynasty, seventeenth century CE).

The "software" now provides the next step, which displays the texts according the number of occurrences within them. The information shows that the range of hits is from a single one in a text (e.g., *K.* 1503) up to an impressive 246 (e.g., *K.* 1499). By this method, the texts can be clustered into units based on the number of times the adjacent glyphs occur (see table 3).

**Table 2. Computation of  occurrences arranged by order to text with date and percentages**

| Index | *K*-doc | HitsInDoc | Total Hits | % | Date range, CE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | *K.* 22 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 706 |
| 2 | *K.* 186 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 314 |
| 3 | *K.* 385 | 2 | 763 | 0.26% | 376 |
| 4 | *K.* 426 | 9 | 763 | 1.18% | 705 |
| 5 | *K.* 521 | 12 | 763 | 1.57% | 397–439 |
| 6 | *K.* 616 | 7 | 763 | 0.92% | 553 |
| 7 | *K.* 623 | 9 | 763 | 1.18% | 695–700 |
| 8 | *K.* 648 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 397–398 |
| 9 | *K.* 951 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 437–439 |
| 10 | *K.* 1258 | 10 | 763 | 1.31% | 976–997 |
| 11 | *K.* 1262 | 2 | 763 | 0.26% | 798–798 |
| 12 | *K.* 1263 | 9 | 763 | 1.18% | 635–730 |
| 13 | *K.* 1272 | 2 | 763 | 0.26% | 720–720 |
| 14 | *K.* 1331 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 720–774 |
| 15 | *K.* 1340 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 765–765 |
| 16 | *K.* 1381 | 5 | 763 | 0.66% | 788–788 |
| 17 | *K.* 1397 | 231 | 763 | 30.28% | 401–401 |
| 18 | *K.* 1406 | 2 | 763 | 0.26% | 668–668 |
| 19 | *K.* 1499 | 246 | 763 | 32.24% | 904–975 |
| 20 | *K.* 1501 | 133 | 763 | 17.43% | 617–686 |
| 21 | *K.* 1502 | 8 | 763 | 1.05% | 625–702 |
| 22 | *K.* 1503 | 1 | 763 | 0.13% | 952–952 |
| 23 | *K.* 1504 | 5 | 763 | 0.66% | 1368–1644 |
| 24 | *K.* 1507 | 4 | 763 | 0.52% | 923–973 |
| 25 | *K.* 1508 | 2 | 763 | 0.26% | 923–973 |
| 26 | *K.* 1509 | 11 | 763 | 1.44% | 923–973 |
| 27 | *K.* 1510 | 32 | 763 | 4.19% | 959–960 |
| 28 | *K.* 1513 | 15 | 763 | 1.97% | 687–695 |

**Table 3. [本覺] Occurrences ranked numerically**

| Number of occurences | *K*-doc |
|---|---|
| 1 | *K. 22, K. 186, K. 648, K. 951, K. 1330, K. 1340, K. 1503* |
| 2 | *K. 385, K. 1262, K. 1272, K. 1406, K. 1508* |
| 4 | *K. 1507* |
| 5 | *K. 1381, K. 1504,* |
| 7 | *K. 616* |
| 8 | *K. 1502* |
| 9 | *K. 426, K. 623, K. 1263* |
| 10 | *K. 1258* |
| 11 | *K. 1509* |
| 12 | *K. 521* |
| 15 | *K. 1513* |
| 32 | *K. 1510* |
| 133 | *K. 1501* |
| 231 | *K. 1397* |
| 246 | *K. 1499* |

The "software" reports the data in percentages as well as exact count, i.e., of the 763 hits, 610 or 80% are from three of the 28 texts: *K. 1397, K. 1499*, and *K. 1501*.

*Work Flow Analysis: The term is distributed unevenly. The pattern based on counts can indicate where attention should be directed. This alerts us to fact that any study of the term must take special note of three texts (K. 1397, K. 1499, and K. 1501, where 80% of the hits occur).*

If we turn to the three texts that contain 80% of the examples (i.e., *K.* 1397, *K.* 1501, and *K.* 1499) and ask for a display of the time of translation/compilation for the three, we can see the temporal pattern placed alongside the numerical occurrence pattern. When the "software" returns the report on the dating of the three major texts, it shows us:

fourth/fifth century, *K.* 1397 (231 occurrences) (Yao-Chin "translation")

seventh century, *K.* 1501 (133 occurrences) (Korean compilation)

tenth century, *K.* 1499 (246 occurrences) (Sung compilation)

*Work Flow Analysis: The dating of* K. *1397 with 231 examples of the glyph in the fourth century is an anomaly since the other texts with more than 100 entries are later compilations. Dating of the text* K. *1397 is in question.*

The anomaly of *K.* 1397 can be further explored by looking at the computation by date for all of the texts that contain the target word. We find that the attributions show examples of the adjacent glyphs (本覺) from the fourth to the eleventh centuries. The earliest and subsequent dates of translation as indicated in the catalogues and colophons are shown in table 4.

**Table 4. Cluster of occurrences by century**

| Date of translation | Text(s) |
|---|---|
| 4th/5th century CE (5 texts) | *K.* 186, *K.* 385, *K.* 521, *K.* 951 and *K.* 1397 |
| 6th century CE (1 text) | *K.* 616 |
| 7th century CE (3 texts) | *K.* 1406, *K.* 1501, *K.* 1502 |
| 8th century CE (11 texts) | *K.* 22, *K.* 1338, *K.* 1340, *K.* 1262, *K.* 1381, *K.* 426, *K.* 623, *K.* 1263, *K.* 1272, *K.* 1330, *K.* 1340 |
| 10th century CE (4 texts) | *K.* 1503, *K.* 1507, *K.* 1508, *K.* 1509 |
| 11th century CE (2 texts) | *K.* 1510, *K.* 1499 |
| 13th century CE (1 text) | *K.* 1500 |

*Work Flow Analysis: The texts that display of the adjacent glyphs can be seen to cluster:*

314–553 CE (7 texts) (314–439 CE and 553 CE)

635–798 CE (13 texts)

904–997 CE (6 texts)

We can note in the clustering of text by date of translation given in the catalogues that there are two periods of no recorded use of the adjacent glyphs. That is 553–635 CE and 798–904 CE. It is just as important to note the lack of occurrences as to record examples of them. The first temporal hiatus is made more impressive when we note that except

for one text in 553 CE, there was no example found after 439 CE until regular appearance seems to "resume" in 635 CE. This means that with one exception, our target word or adjacent position of the two glyphs disappeared from the corpus for nearly two centuries from 439 CE to 635 CE. It is hard to explain why a word would have been so popular in the fourth century and then fade from the texts only to reoccur in large numbers centuries later.

*Work Flow Analysis: The composition of the temporal clustering needs to be further refined.*

314–439 CE (6 texts)
Except for 553 CE, there was no example of the term over a period of more than two centuries (439–635 CE).

635–798 CE (13 texts)
Two of these are Korean compilations and the remaining attributed to Tang dynasty translations.

We have to note that translations of Buddhist texts in China ceased in 794 CE and did not resume until the Northern Sung once again started a bureau in 982 CE. Therefore, the hiatus of any pattern between 794 and 982 has to take this into account. The fact that there is a substantial break in the use of the term from 439 to 635 CE (apart from one example in 553 CE) must be considered when noting that the period of 314–439 CE stands out as an "island" of occurrences.

904–997 CE (6 texts)
All of these are compilations written in Korea, except for *K.* 1499, which was done in 961 CE in the Sung.

*Work Flow Analysis: With the larger groupings in later periods, the fourth-century cluster that is so distant in time from the other examples must be classified as an anomaly since there are few examples until the seventh century. The number of occurrences within each text may provide a method to determine the nature of the pattern.*

As a result of repeated pattern searching, the "software" makes a discovery that changes the workflow. Having created a number of graphical displays of the occurrence pattern for 本覺, a secondary search is made for any other nearby glyphs that have a similar pattern. In the case of 本覺 the "software" reports that there is such a "companion word," 始覺. The two terms march side by side in a surprising profile match as shown in figs. 7a and 7b.

*Work Flow Analysis: It is important to note those texts where both terms appear. Does the appearance of the "companion word" (始覺) assure us that the adjacent glyphs 本 and 覺 form the compound that we are researching?*

The search for the origin of the compound 本覺 and its companion word 始覺 has the "work flow" now focused on six texts that have a dating as early as the fourth/fifth century CE. Our computation gives us the number of occurrences in each of them. The result is something of a surprise.

Texts that lack the "companion word":
  *K.* 186 (1 example)
  *K.* 648 (1 example)
  *K.* 385 (2 examples)
  *K.* 521 (11 examples)
  *K.* 951 (1 example)

Text that shows a similar occurrence pattern of "companion word":
  *K.* 1397 (231 examples) (shares profile with 始覺)

*Work Flow Analysis: The list of fourth-/fifth-century texts can be split into two divisions by virtue of the count of occurrences of the adjacent glyphs.*

*K. 186, K. 385, K. 648, and K. 951 have one or two examples.*
*K. 521 and K. 1397 have multiple examples (11 and 231).*

K. *1397 shows co-occurrence with the "companion word." K. 521 does not have the "companion word," which implies it may belong to a different tradition than K. 1397. Examination of the early texts will give "ground truth" of the "software" suggestion that* K. *186, K. 385, K. 648, and K. 951 may not be early examples of* 本覺*.*

The most noticeable difference is seen in *K.* 1397, which has a large number of occurrences unmatched by any of the other texts that date to the fourth/fifth century. In the computation, we attempt to understand this anomaly.

## *K.* 1397: IS THE DATING CORRECT?

The "software" now runs some very specific searches automatically. One of these is to find all the places where the title of a text is mentioned by another text. We have already noted that the large number of occurrences of the glyphs in *K.* 1397 was a distinct variation of the pattern found in fourth-century texts.

The title search detects another anomaly. *K.* 1397 has three places where it mentions the title for *K.* 616. This is a problem because *K.* 1397 is dated as early as 384 CE, but *K.* 616 is dated as being completed in 553 CE. We assume from this information that the date of 384 CE for *K.* 1397 must be seriously questioned since it lists the title of a text that is dated in the sixth century. In the section below dealing with the dating of segments of the Hae-in corpus, we note yet another problem with the dating of this text.

This computation on the information found in the canonic data is an example of how the user can check on accuracy without relying on a separate reference work.

<div align="center">

*K.* 521: IS THE DATING CORRECT?
"COMPANION WORD" NOT PRESENT

</div>

This text is problematic from several points of view. First, the number of occurrences of the target word (11) places it apart from the other texts dated to the fourth/fifth century, except for *K.* 1397. The tie between the two texts (*K.* 521 and *K.* 1397) is made more evident when the "software" reports on examples of titles appearing in other texts. The title of *K.* 521 appears in *K.* 1397 three times. This implies that *K.* 521 was composed prior to *K.* 1397. The logic then follows that if *K.* 1397 must be dated later than the fourth/fifth century, the appearance of the title for *K.* 521 in *K.* 1397 cannot be used to set the date of *K.* 521 in the fourth/fifth century. The title search shows that we do not find an example of the title of *K.* 521 until the catalogue entry in *K.* 1053 (compiled 502–557 CE). Thereafter, the title is found in a number of sources:

*K.* 1053 (502–557 CE)
*K.* 1054 (594 CE)
*K.* 1059 (664–665 CE)
*K.* 1062 (730 CE)
*K.* 1397 (388–417 CE)
*K.* 1499 (961 CE)

Such catalogue searching alerts us to the fact that the *K.* 521 title is only found in the sixth- and seventh-century catalogues apart from the *K.* 1397 examples.

This leads to another internal search strategy that can help to establish the nature of the data without reference beyond it. While titles can be used as examples of the existence of a text, the simple

occurrence of a title does not guarantee that a similarity of title words is proof of identity. The same title may have been used for more than one document. A stronger argument can be mounted when we have not only a title, but also a quote from the text. If the quotations found in one text can be linked to the words found in another, then we have assurance that the title does, in fact, refer to a specific document.

We do have quotations of *K.* 521 in other texts. For example, in 禪源諸詮集都序 (a text identified as belonging to the Tang dynasty with no specific year designated) there is the following quotation said to be from *K.* 521:[21]

金剛三昧經云。

即是動不動不禪是無生禪

In *K.* 521 we find the passage:[22]

即是動不動不禪是無生禪

This establishes that *K.* 521 is the text being referenced, and, therefore, we know that 金剛三昧經 was known in the literature possibly as early as 618 CE, the first year of the Tang dynasty.

Another quote is found in *K.* 1499 done in 961 CE, indicating *K.* 521 as the source for the expression:[23]

知諸名色唯是癡心分別癡心分別

This quotation does indeed appear in the 金剛三昧經, *K.* 521:[24]

知諸名色唯是癡心癡心分別分別

This look at the quotations gives us proof that the 金剛三昧經 was known in the Tang dynasty and that knowledge of it also appeared in the Sung dynasty of the tenth century.

At this point, the quantitative approach of counting the number of occurrences of a glyph and looking at dating has indicated that there are problems with *K.* 1397 (*Shi mo ho yen lun*) and *K.* 521 (*Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*). These texts have been previously questioned, and much serious study has been given to the nature of their origins. The software has quickly alerted us to the fact that these two texts are problematic in terms of the date as well as the sequence with other texts. This identification of anomalies was constructed from only computation and pattern searching within the corpus of the Korean Buddhist texts. The data has yielded evidence of these problems without reference to any collateral documentation.

Our search for the origin of 本覺 continues. We turn again to the fourth-/fifth-century texts as the earliest examples and ask the interface to bring up the text for each occurrence of the adjacent glyphs. The scanned images of the printing blocks from Hae-in Monastery appear in the window with the target glyphs highlighted in color (fig. 8).

*Workflow Analysis: Removing K. 1397 and K. 521 from the list of early texts, we are left with the adjacent glyphs occurring in K. 186, K. 648, and K. 656 in the fourth/fifth centuries and K. 951 in the sixth century. If the compound is to be found in the first centuries of Buddhist translations in China, it would have to be in one of the three fourth-/fifth-century texts. We look for the presence of the "companion word."*

### K. 186: "COMPANION WORD" NOT PRESENT

*K.* 186, a text attributed to the well-known translator Dharmarakṣa, is said to have been translated January 28, 314 CE. If the compound 本覺 is found this early, it would give substance to the assertion that it is an ancient expression in Buddhism and belongs to an Indic origin. The text on the Korean printing blocks for the earliest dated example of adjacent occurrence of the glyphs in *K.* 186 reads:[25]

如來覺了意則無本覺了

The question is how to determine if this passage contains the adjacent glyphs as a compound. One approach is to run parsing software to see if there are linguistic reasons for making the decision. While this is certainly a good approach, there are difficulties for scholars to make use of such sophisticated programs. Therefore, we have included in the "blue dots" "software" another approach that is based on computation only. The "software" searches the sentence and computes whether or not there is evidence that the characters preceding and following the glyphs are compounded with the glyphs. For example, 無本 is entered for the search since 無 is the glyph that precedes the first glyph. Another search is made for 覺了, based on the fact that 了 is the glyph that follows the second member of the compound 本覺. The report notes that 無本 and 覺了 are both compounds that are found hundreds of time in the corpus. Therefore, from counting instances of occurrence, the software suggests that 本 and 覺 should be seen as members of different compounds, not constituting a compound by their adjacent status. Having been alerted to this

possibility, we can directly consult the text to see if we agree with the software prediction that 本覺 in this phrase is not a compound.

如來覺了意則無本覺了

Here the first use of 覺了 represents a verb with the attendant particle to indicate that the action is completed or in the past tense. A similar example occurs four characters later. It would appear to be a denial of the teaching about 本覺 to take it as a compound since the negative 無 preceding it would read:

> The Tathāgata has realized that the mind consequently is lacking original enlightenment. . . .

If this were the case, there would be no need to discuss 本覺 further. The sentence can be read differently:

> The Tathāgata has realized that the mind consequently lacks any basis and [he also] realized. . . .

如來覺了意則無本.......覺了

If this is a correct interpretation of the use of the adjacent glyphs, then 本覺 is not a compound but the placement of two characters next to one another, with each having a separate grammatical function. The "software" has correctly predicted that in this phrase 如來覺了意則無本覺了, the adjacent glyphs 本覺 are not a compound.

### K. 648: "COMPANION WORD" NOT PRESENT

We see a similar use of the adjacent glyphs in *K.* 648:[26]

當知是覺因覺習覺本覺緣者

In this case, the software searches for 覺本 and for 覺緣 and finds them both to have many examples of appearing as compounds. Therefore, we receive the prediction that it is also a passage where the adjacent glyphs 本覺 do not comprise a compound but are last and first members of other compounds.

Here the structure of the sentence is obvious with verb-object phrases being repeated.

當知是.....覺因....覺習....覺本....覺緣....者

This shows us that *K.* 648, said to be translated by Gautama Sanghadeva in 397–398 CE, does not use the adjacent glyphs 本覺 as a compound.

*K.* 951: "COMPANION WORD" NOT PRESENT

Another of the early dated adjacent glyphs is found in *K.* 951, a translation attributed to Buddhavarman and dated to 437–439 CE.[27]

以彼地有言語根本覺觀法故

Here once again, the glyphs have different functions. For example, 根 本 is a much-used compound, as is 覺觀. Thus the phrase should be parsed as follows:

以彼地有言語.....根本.....覺觀,,,,,法故

The adjacent characters do not form a compound.

### *K.* 385

The same holds true for the second adjacent example in *K.* 385:[28]

修習諸善本 覺意入諸定

This is a line of verse, and it splits in the same fashion as the one listed above.

修習諸善本...............覺意入諸定

*Work Flow Analysis: The two characters 本 and 覺 can occur next to one another without being a compound. Therefore, adjacent pairs (in K. 186, K. 385, K. 648) are not examples of an early occurrence of the compound. The fact that the "companion word" is not present in any of these texts indicates that it is an important indicator of the function and use of the two characters.*

From this computation, we can reach the following conclusions: (1) The texts dated from 384–471 CE containing the adjacent glyphs (i.e., *K.*, etc.) can all be rejected as containing early examples of the use of 本覺 as a compound. (2) We can next note that the earliest references that can be supported as true use of the compound 本覺 are in *K.* 426 (9 occurrences), *K.* 521 (11 occurrences), *K.* 616 (7 occurrences), and *K.* 623 (9 occurrences). These documents carry the following dates:

*K.* 426, listed as 700 CE (lacks the "companion word")
*K.* 521, listed as 397–439 CE (lacks the "companion word")
*K.* 616, listed as 553 CE ("companion word" occurs)
*K.* 623, listed as 695–700 CE ("companion word" occurs)

The pattern has now suggested that *K.* 521 and *K.* 616 are the early attested sites for the use of 本覺 as a compound.

*Work Flow Analysis: The relationship of one text to another is crucial in the dating. We need to run the search for examples of the titles of each of the texts to see if this can help with the arrangement of the order.*

This "software" search for titles quoted in other texts reports that *K.* 521 mentions the title of *K.* 616 three times. This alerts us to fact that *K.* 521 cannot be prior to *K.* 616. Therefore, the software computation and search leaves us with *K.* 616 as the earliest example of the compound.

### *K.* 616: "COMPANION WORD" OCCURS

When the text is put into the title "software" search, we find that the title is quoted a number of times

*K.* 1404 (502–557 CE)
*K.* 1055 (597 CE)
*K.* 1501 (617–686 CE)
*K.* 1075 (649 CE)
*K.* 1058 (695 CE)
*K.* 1498 (788–810 CE)

This indicates that the date of 553 CE is possible and that it is well-known title that was often used over the next century.

*Work Flow Analysis: Since the computation is able to find profiles of words, can it also provide a method of seeing structures in the organization of the corpus as a whole? We must ask for the "software" to give us a visual that detects if there are discernable segments in the canonic arrangement based on our computational searches.*

The "software" alerts us to possibility of five segments of the entire corpus (see fig. 9).

*Work Flow Analysis: Can we determine if the five segments in the visual can be documented?*

The discovery of the five segments accords with the history and structure of the corpus (see table 5).

**Table 5. Descriptive analysis of segments of the canon**

I. First set of block prints sent to Koryŏ from Northern Sung

    *K.* 1–1087

        • Translations (ca. 148–711 CE)

        • Compilations (562–730 CE)

II. Supplemental set of prints from the Northern Sung representing new translations being made after the carving of the original printing blocks

    *K.* 1088–1256

        • Translations (982–999 CE)

III. A supplement of blockprints that represent older translations of compilations that had not been included in the original set of printing blocks of the Northern Sung

    *K.* 1257–1406

        • Translations (730–798 CE)

        • Compilations (730–997 CE)

IV. A supplement of blockprints that represented the continued translation project of the Northern Sung

    *K.* 1407–1497

        • Translations (1000–1090 CE)

V. A supplement of compilations made in East Asia with authorship given in the colophons

    *K.* 1498–1513

        • Compilations (China) (668–1360/1644 CE)

        • Compilations (Korea) (617–1251 CE)

*Work Flow Analysis: "Software" should now report on which texts are found in each of the five identified segments.*

The "software" returns the following report of how the texts with 本覺 are found in the segments listed above for the way in which the printing blocks have been assembled (see table 6). In these texts, we find the earliest examples of the glyphs as a compound (see table 7).

**Table 6. First segment of blockprints (excluding *K*. 22, *K*. 186, *K*.385, *K*. 426, *K*. 648, and *K*. 951 as not containing the compound)**

| Text | Occurrences | Percentage | Date range (CE) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *K*. 521 | 12 | 1.57% | 397–439 |
| *K*. 616 | 7 | 0.92% | 553 |
| *K*. 623 | 9 | 1.18% | 695–700 |

**Table 7. Third segment of supplemental translations and compilations in the Tang dynasty**

| Text | Occurences | Percentage | Date range (CE) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *K*. 1258 | 10 | 1.31% | 976–997 |
| *K*. 1262 | 2 | 0.26% | 798–798 |
| *K*. 1263 | 9 | 1.18% | 635–730 |
| *K*. 1272 | 2 | 0.26% | 720–720 |
| *K*. 1331 | 1 | 0.13% | 720–774 |
| *K*. 1340 | 1 | 0.13% | 765–765 |
| *K*. 1381 | 4 | 0.66% | 788–788 |
| *K*. 1397 | 231 | 30.28% | 401–401 |
| *K*. 1406 | 2 | 0.26% | 668–668 |

*Work Flow Analysis:* 本覺 *does not appear in the second or fourth segments of the canon, that is, in any of the translations made during the Northern Sung period. In other words, the compound is not found in the late Sanskrit texts that were available in Kaifeng representing translations made from 982–1090 CE.*

This gives further evidence that the presence of the term 本覺 belongs to texts of East Asian origin rather than those that are translations from known Sanskrit documents.

*Work Flow Analysis: While we have rejected the earliest examples and noted that the compound is not found in the second or fourth segments, the issue regarding the Sanskrit equivalent is not fully resolved since we have a number of occurrences in Tang dynasty translations.*

This third supplement is of great interest because it brought to Korea a set of compilations and translations that were not included in the first set of rubbings from the Northern Sung. It is understandable that they were not part of the initial group because that segment only contained materials produced prior to 730 CE when the catalogue of the *Kaiyuanlu* was used as a guide for canonic listings. The texts found in the third segment (translations: 730–798 CE; compilations: 730–997 CE) that have examples of the compound include three compilations from the Tang: *K.* 1258, *K.* 1263, and *K.* 1406. Of the remaining texts, three are attributed to Amoghavajra, and it is in these that we can seek examples that might point to a Sanskrit equivalent for the term. We note the anomaly of *K.* 1397 once again. It is included in the segment of the Hae-in set that is a collection of texts mainly attributed to the Tang dynasty. In that segment it is the only text that carries a fourth-/fifth-century date. Even in the Tang list it stands out as an anomaly, with far more examples than any other text of the period.

If we explore the Tang translations, we look at the works attributed to Amoghavajra and Prajña. The texts are not listed in the *Kaiyuanlu* since they were translated after 730 CE when additional materials were rendered in Chinese. The "companion word" is not found in either text, i.e., *K.* 1381 and *K.* 1262.

*Work Flow Analysis: Does the "companion word" occur in any of these Tang examples? If not, it suggests that the glyphs do not represent the compound.*

### K. 1340: "COMPANION WORD" DOES NOT OCCUR

This is the well-attested 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經 that was translated by Kumārajīva, and this gives the possibility of a Sanskrit equivalent if we find the compound in both versions. The passage in this work of Amoghavajra reads:[29]

名爲佛自性清淨名本覺性

We find the equivalent passage in Kumārajīva's translation of the text:[30]

名爲佛自性清淨名**覺薩婆若性**衆生本業
名爲佛自性清淨名**本覺性** *= K.* **1340**

The hope for a Chinese equivalent is dashed when we note that 覺薩婆若性, "comprehends the nature of all knowledge," in Kumārajīva has been replaced with 本覺性, "the nature of original enlightenment," in Amoghavajra. This suggests that the original form of the Indic text did

not have the compound 本覺, but it was added to the eighth-century translation, most probably as a Chinese element.

## K. 1331: "COMPANION WORD" DOES NOT OCCUR

In this text we find the expression:[31]

顯明本覺眞

The "software" reports that 覺眞 is a well-attested compound (Skt. *prabuddha-tattva*). At the other side of the first glyph, 顯明 is also widely used as a verb "to make known." It is reasonable to assume that 本 is a modifier for the compound 覺眞 and not just for 覺 alone. This would give us the reading:

made known the basis for the reality of enlightenment.

It does not appear that we can list this statement as proof of our compound in a Sanskrit work of Amoghavajra.

## K. 1272: "COMPANION WORD" DOES NOT OCCUR
### K. 1272: First Occurrence

This work by Amoghavajra has the glyphs in adjacent position. As part of the search algorithm, the "software" indicates when the target glyphs are also used adjacent to one another in reverse order. This can be seen in this text of Amoghavajra where we find 是名本覺覺本 and 覺觀覺 本. It is important to take note of such a reversal of the glyphs, since it tells us much about the changing functions of the glyphs in the compound 本覺.

: 佛言本來清淨故是名**本覺**。 **覺本**淨 徹無處。 是故名爲法身智身 滿足故。 佛言一切衆生當用覺觀。 **覺 本**心性體靜無生。 離衆生 垢故。 **覺本**無 寂離涅槃性故[32]

In the first phrase we find:

佛言本來清淨故是名本覺

The Buddha said: "Because of the original purity this is, namely, the basis for enlightenment."

The next phrase 覺本淨 徹無處是故名爲法身 reverses the order of the glyphs and can be rendered:

Because of the full comprehension that the basis is pure without any foundation it is taken to be the *dharmakāya. . . .*

### K. 1272: Second Occurrence

There is another example in the text, where we find the expression[33]

觀本覺體

Here is another example of the "software" predicting that the glyphs are standing in relationship to those that follow and precede them. Both 觀本 and 覺體 are compounds that occur hundreds of times in the corpus. Thus, we would translate this as

comprehends the basis for the reality of enlightenment.

*Work Flow Analysis: We can eliminate the works of Amoghavajra as having examples of the compound. The last remaining possibility will be the works of Prajña. First, we will look for the "companion word."*

These two texts of Prajña were translated in 788 and 793 CE, respectively.

### K. 1381: "COMPANION WORD" DOES NOT OCCUR

大乘理趣六波羅蜜多經 is the lone translation of this text in the canon. In it, we find four examples of our glyphs standing adjacent to one another.[34]

### K. 1381: Occurrence 1

云何大悲了本覺故

In this phrase, we find the pattern of a question marked by the function character 云何 with the answer appearing before the function character 故. This would result in the translation:

What is the completion of Great Wisdom? . . . It is the basis for enlightenment.

There is no reason to discount this occurrence as the compound. However, a major problem with using this example for establishing a Sanskrit equivalent is the fact that no extant Sanskrit passage or any of the Chinese translations match the reading we find here.

I have translated the compound as "basis for enlightenment" rather than "original enlightenment." There is a major difference in these two renderings. It would appear that 本覺 should be taken as an answer to the process of completing the Great Wisdom. The phrase 大悲了 occurs many times in the canon and always implies a completion of a process. The answer should be a phrase related to a process question. Therefore, the compound 本覺 is translated as "basis

for enlightenment," i.e., the process of bringing to fruition the Great Wisdom as the "basis." If 本覺 is an already-existing entity in the mind, it would not be described as occurring in reference to a specific contemporary action. The Great Wisdom is described in many places as an ongoing process, and the meaning in this text seems to accord with that idea. In other words, it is not some primordial task that resulted in 本覺, which lies buried in the mind, but it is an ongoing activity that forms the basis for enlightenment. In this way the adjacent glyphs constitute a phrase more than a nominal compound.

A similar example from the same translation by Prajña helps with this translation:[35]

於大悲了達諸法

In the completion of the Great Wisdom one encompasses all the mental states (*dharma*).

### K. 1381: Occurrence 2

Another example for this text of Prajña is:

四念處以爲守護本覺心王 第一義禪定

The four stations of mindfulness, considered as protectors of the basis of the preeminent thought of enlightenment, are the highest meaning of meditation.

We find the expression 應堅守護本尊三昧耶 in: 頂一切如來眞實攝大乘現證大教王經[36]

. . . 應堅守護本尊三昧耶

. . . should maintain the basis for cherishing *samādhi*.

In keeping with the discussion of the process required for the creation of the "basis of enlightenment," we note the focus on the importance of meditation in these examples.

### K. 1381: Occurrence 3

了眞本覺是名智慧菩薩摩訶薩[37]

. . . comprehends completely that the true basis of enlightenment is namely the wisdom of the Bodhisattva Mahāsattva. . . .

The "software" alerts us to the fact that the term 眞本 is found in hundreds of examples. I translate it as meaning the "true basis."

*K. 1381: Occurrence 4*

不見本覺心自覺智現前眞性常不動[38]

. . . do not see that present true nature, (whether it be of) the basis of enlightened thoughts or the wisdom of one's own enlightenment, is always unmoving. . . .

It would seem that 眞性 is the object of the verb form 不見 and the intervening words are modifications of the object. The section does not exclude the possibility of the glyphs forming a compound.

Two occurrences of the adjacent glyphs continue in Prajña's version of the 大方廣佛華嚴經. This is a promising source for a potential Sanskrit equivalent. The *Gaṇḍavyūha* has six other translations in the main body of Koryŏ main blocks and another three in the supplement. This well-known text, which also forms one part of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, is known in extant Sanskrit manuscripts. It is important to note that of all the translations of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* in the Koryŏ blocks, i.e., *K.* 102, *K.* 104, *K.* 1029, *K.* 1282, and *K.* 1262, it is only in *K.* 1262 that we find the compound.

*K.* 1262

*K. 1262: Occurrence 1*

諸佛菩薩自證悟時轉阿頼耶得本覺智[39]

All the buddhas and bodhisattvas at the time of their own realization transform the *ālaya [-vijñāna]* and attain the wisdom that is the basis of enlightenment.

*K. 1262: Occurrence 2*

善知識者心如明燈順本覺性而覺了故善知識者如[40]

. . . because the Good Teacher's thought is just like a bright lamp, it is in accord with the nature of the basis of enlightenment and is completely enlightened.

**Table 8. Fifth segment compilations made in East Asia**

| Text | Occurrences | Percentage | Date range (CE) |
|------|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| *K.* 1499 | 246 | 32.24% | 904–975 |
| *K.* 1501 | 133 | 17.43% | 617–686 |
| *K.* 1502 | 8 | 1.05% | 625–702 |
| *K.* 1504 | 5 | 0.66% | 1368–1644 |
| *K.* 1509 | 11 | 1.44% | 923–973 |
| *K.* 1510 | 32 | 4.19% | 959–960 |
| *K.* 1513 | 15 | 1.97% | 687–695 |

*Work Flow Analysis: The largest numbers of occurrences of the adjacent glyphs are found in the texts identified as compilations made in Korea or China. They are not sources for proof of a Sanskrit equivalent. We need to see where the "companion word" occurs in these compilations.*

The computation suggests that the popularity of the compound is primarily found in the compilations, not the texts that are said to be translations. The "companion word" appears in all of the listed compilations except for *K.* 1504, a Ming document that has been added to the Hae-in Sa blocks at a much later date and hardly belongs in the explorations of the Koryŏ block prints. The important point is to note that most of the occurrences of the compound with its "companion word" are found in East Asian compilations. It would be difficult to establish the Sanskrit equivalent for the compound based on documents of this sort.

## CONCLUSIONS

From this extensive computational study, the ideas that I first put forward in the AAR paper[41] have now been established with much more precise data. The evidence as found in the Koryŏ edition provides no definitive proof that a Sanskrit original can be established for the term. The oldest use of the term seems to be in the sixth-century *K.* 616. At that time, it was combined with a "companion word," and thereafter the two compounds appear with a similar profile. *K.* 616 is probably an East Asian compilation, and we have no extant Sanskrit equivalent for it. It was a surprise to me that just by using rather simple computation I could identify anomalies and spot problems in dating and attribution.

My conclusion is that the "companion word" 始覺 may be the crucial and important link to the origin of the compound and its meaning. The compound 本覺 seems to have been used initially in the sense "basis of enlightenment" as a process rather than a name for an artifact eternally existing in the mind.

*Final Work Flow Analysis: There are many questions still awaiting research. What of the occurrence of the compound and "companion word" in the texts that were added to* Taishō *and the supplements that appear in CBETA? Do other doctrinal terms have "companion words," and can the "software" find these in other examples? The "companion word" needs to be explored in the same way that I have done here. The interface must be developed into a robust and open source tool for free distribution to others. Another term, "buddhanature," also should be similarly researched.*

The future development of the "software" and the ways in which computation will be used and accepted by scholars in the field opens up new vistas for understanding Buddhist words, their history of use, and the network analysis for how words interact. In this regard, Buddhist studies has the potential of taking the lead in developing new methods of research for the humanities.

## NOTES

1. National Science Foundation grants 0929851 and 0840061, "SGER: Text Analysis and Pattern Detection."

2. See http://kb.sutra.re.kr/ritk_eng/index.do for a description of the work of this institute.

3. Lewis Lancaster and Sungbae Park, comp., *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

4. http://www.acmuller.net/descriptive_catalogue/index.html.

5. http://www.ecai.org.

6. http://www.ascc.sinica.edu.tw/en/service/gis.html, under the guidance of Professor Fan I-chun.

7. http://www.cityu.edu.hk/scm, led by the Dean Jeffrey Shaw.

8. http://www.cityu.edu.hk/scm/alive, Applied Laboratory for Interactive Visualization and Embodiment under the direction of Sarah Kenderdine.

9. http://ctl.cityu.edu.hk, Halliday Centre for Intelligent Application of Language Studies directed by Chair Jonathan Webster and his colleague John Lee.

10. http://www.me.berkeley.edu/faculty/frenklach, Professor Michael Frenklach.

11. http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~christos, Professor Christos Faloutsos.

12. http://eliassi.org, Dr. Tina Eliassi-Rad.

13. http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/alc/faculty/tangher.html, Professor Timothy Tangherlini.

14. National Science Foundation grant 0970179, "EAGER: Network Pattern Recognition Project."

15. Note that the publication of Jacqueline Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: Kuroda Institute/ University of Hawaii Press, 1999), contains a bibliography and description of the studies of this topic in Japan and elsewhere.

16. See the work of Robert Buswell, *Cultivating Original Enlightenment: Wŏnhyo's Exposition of the Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra* (University of Hawaii Press, 2008). A review of the book by Charles Muller is found at http://www.acmuller.net/reviews/ cultivating_original_enlightenment.html, originally published in *International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture* 10 (February 2008).

17. Lewis Lancaster, "The Question of Aprocryphal Words in the Chinese Buddhist Texts," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA, November 8, 1986.

18. Known as simply *Taishō*, this work was edited by Junjiro Takakusu and Kaikyoku Watanabe and published in a set of 100 volumes from 1924–1934 with the publishing house Daizo shuppan kabushiki kaisha in Tokyo.

19. Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CBETA), http://www.cbeta. org. See a description of this data set at http://international.uiowa.edu/ centers/caps/documents/HuiminBhiksuFromCBETAtoBIP-IBA.pdf.

20. The Saṃgaṇikīkṛtaṃ Taiśotripiṭakaṃ: The SAT Daizōkyō Text Database, http://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index.html.

21. Even though the "software" presents these reports in terms of the page and columns of the Koryŏ blocks, most users do not yet have access to that data. Therefore, for this article, I list the *Taishō* references for convenience. 禪源諸詮集都序, *T.* 2015, 405b:28.

22. 金剛三昧經, *T.* 273, 368a:12. Also quoted in Wŏnhyo's commentary, 金剛三昧經論, *T.* 1730, 976b:27.

23. 宗鏡錄, *T.* 2016, 443a:24.

24. 金剛三昧經, *T.* 273, 372b:23.

25. 佛説大淨法門經, *T.* 817, 818c:17.

26. 中阿含經, *T.* 26, 579c:2.

27. 阿毘曇毘婆沙論, *T.* 1546, 161a:1.

28. 菩薩瓔珞經, *T.* 656, 69b:1.

29. 仁王護國般若波羅蜜多經, *T.* 246, 836c:20 = *K.* 1340.

30. 佛説仁王般若波羅蜜經, *T.* 245, 826b:20 = *K.* 19.

31. 受菩提心戒儀, *T.* 915, 941b:19.

32. 大乘瑜伽金剛性海曼殊室利千臂千鉢大教王經, *T.* 1177A, 757c:7.

33. 大乘瑜伽金剛性海曼殊室利千臂千鉢大教王經, *T.* 1177A, 742b:24 = *K.* 1272.

34. 大乘理趣六波羅蜜多經, *T.* 261, 904c:5.

35. 大乘理趣六波羅蜜多經, *T.* 261, 902a:4.

36. *T.* 874, 310c:2–3.

37. *T.* 261, 906b:18.

38. *T.* 261, 912a:1.

39. 大方廣佛華嚴經, *T.* 293, 688a:8.

40. *T.* 293, 812a:18.

41. See note 17.

p. 182 (blank)

# Basing Our Personhood on the Primal Vow

## Rev. Jundo Gregory Gibbs

Buddhist Churches of America, Oregon Buddhist Temple

### CONSTRUCTING THE SELF WHILE DISCERNING
### ITS NON-SUBSTANTIALITY

Constructing one's self-identity, forming one's character, is a real process within the universal flow of events. I will be claiming that this sub-process within the universal flow which is one person's subjectivity is interdependent with other persons, other activities, with cultures in which that person lives, and with various aspects of his or her own biology. Buddhist tradition helps us to understand that there is no uniquely self-same soul thing underlying this process of unifying the self, this building of our personhood.

The Pure Land stream of Mahāyāna tradition was polyvalent from the outset. In a real sense one of its streams of development culminates in the school of Jōdo Shinshū, when we understand it in terms of the writings of its founder, Shinran. In Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist tradition the process of forming one's identity as a self is not de-constructed or discontinued. Discovering that this process of identity-building is multi-leveled and interdependent with the lives and actions of others helps to demystify the self without denying that it, in some sense, exists or is real.

Discerning the non-substantiality of the self is not facilitated by pretending that it is not real or important. Rather than trying to deconstruct the self, the stream of Buddhist tradition our school is situated within points out its interdependence. The Hindu and Jain notion of a soul, the *ātman*, is thought to name a reality that is eternal, uniquely self-same, and non-physical, which constitutes the essence of personal identity. In Pure Land Buddhist practice we rely upon the fundamental vow of Amida, which defines the Buddha and ourselves in terms of one another. This sort of interdependence is consistent with the Mahāyāna view that nothing and no one possesses an essence. What we have in

this form of Buddhist practice is, I believe, a supposition of a coherent process of ongoing character-building where the self is not uniquely self-same. There is a paradox to this way of thinking at a philosophical level. Nonetheless, if we try to construct a conceptualization of the subjectivity assumed in *nenbutsu* practice, I think this is what we get.

The vows of Amida Buddha are the fulfillment of the ages-long quest of the Bodhisattva Dharmākara. The person, Dharmākara, in the narrative of the *Larger Sutra* has partially discerned and is deliberately reinforcing the interdependent nature of the process of building self-identity. The Bodhisattva Dharmākara who makes the vows is a paradigm, or classic exemplar, of the process of forging a character that is based upon embracing one's dependence on others. Dharmākara defines the buddha he will become, Amida, in terms of the ability to lead others to enlightenment as pure and thorough-going as his own.

This Pure Land tradition within Mahāyāna, particularly as it is worked out in the thought and practice of Shinran Shōnin, displays an understanding of the self as inseparable from others, as rejecting unique self-sameness, without the error of implying that personal identity is unreal and without reducing it to some static model such as that of a cart.

## NARRATIVE IDENTITY

One component of identity construction is the narrative process. Dennis Hirota glosses Paul Ricoeur's view in this recent passage: "Narrative is a configuring operation in which diverse and multiple phenomena are unified by being formed into actions of agents with goals, motives, and inter-personal relationships in a 'conceptual network.'"[1] Or, in the words of the philosopher Ricoeur himself, "[The identity of the self] rests on a temporal structure that conforms to the model of dynamic identity arising from the poetic composition of a narrative text."[2]

Such narrative processes are only a part of constructing one's personhood. I have argued elsewhere that not only narrative but also the unification that our bodies engage in while forming our biological personhood must be taken into account when investigating personal identity.[3]

At this time, I want to especially emphasize the role of narrative in our self-understanding. The vows of Dharmākara and his fulfillment of them in becoming Amida Buddha are explained in narrative

fashion in the *Larger Sutra* on Amida Buddha.[4] This narrative is often described with terms like "symbolic" or "metaphorical," but the vows in that narrative have real descriptive function. There is, to speak in the old way, an isomorphism, a sameness of form between the vows in the text and what is actually happening in the practitioner's life and in the compassionate activity of Amida Buddha. The fundamental structure of the vows—"if I do not fulfill this promise may I not attain Enlightenment"—shows the interdependent nature of Amida's identity.[5] Dharmākara Bodhisattva is promising to become a buddha (named Amida) whose identity is interdependent with the liberation of those who entrust themselves to his vow-power.

Interdependent identity is built into Dharmākara's vows. The promise to liberate those who entrust themselves to the Buddha's enacting of those vows is not metaphorical or symbolic. We have the description of a promise to lead to enlightenment those who wish the help of the buddha whom Dharmākara will become. There is no more accurate description of the primal vows that might replace the description in the text. That is to say, there is no more precise blueprint of the matter described, in deference to which the text of the vow could be considered a symbolic rendering.

## INTER-SUBJECTIVE IDENTITY-BUILDING

A recent attempt to look at self-building in both Western and in Japanese Buddhist sources has been made by Steve Odin in his *The Social Self in Zen and American Pragmatism*.[6] I am surprised at the stress Odin places on Fichte. As informed as his briefer references to Hegel are I feel he gives insufficient credit to Hegel for establishing an understanding of personal identity as interdependent with other persons' perceptions and with society and culture. It is Hegel's description of the interdependent nature of self-consciousness that is the inspiration for most of the development Odin traces leading up to the thought of G. H. Mead a bit more than a century later. The *locus classicus* for Hegel's attribution of self-identity to a relationship between persons is, "Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it *is* only by being acknowledged or 'recognized.'"[7]

The foundational work in Hegel's view of inter-subjective identity formation has been developed in many directions, including in the work of Ricoeur mentioned earlier. Mara Rainwater has remarked that

concern with linguistic issues such as the nature of meaning and inter-pretation "led Ricoeur to develop a model of selfhood that privileges a narrative (*ipse*) identity emerging cumulatively and inter-subjectively, always mediated by others."[8] This could describe the building of per-sonhood not only by the practicing Pure Land Buddhist but by the buddha-to-be Amida in his bodhisattva stage as well.

## NARRATIVE NOT SO GRAND

My reasons for discussing, in a preliminary way, the inter-subjec-tive and narrative bases of identity formation do not include proffer-ing a grand narrative for all Buddhists. Richard Payne has recently attempted to trace a Buddhist grand narrative in brief outline: "This narrative structure would start with a primal condition of ignorance and its consequent suffering, move into an arising of the intent to awaken, and culminate in insight into the emptiness of all conditioned existence and the liberation of all sentient beings."[9]

I do not mean to either champion or oppose such grand narra-tives that seek to be normative, or describe a normative process, for all Buddhists. The narrative of the vow, which I speak of as being involved in the continuing formation of the personhood of Pure Land Buddhists, may well, logically, presume such a grand narrative. But the terms Dr. Payne is using in formulating the grand Buddhist narrative are terms foreign to the thinking of most of the Pure Land Buddhists in the past or at present. You would be hard-pressed to find a significant number of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists at present, for example, who understand their lives in terms of progressing toward "insight into emptiness." What he has said so far on this topic is quite good. He is showing how dif-ferent the narrative behind Buddhist living is from the narrative that informs Christian living: "Rather than the sequence of creation, fall, and redemptive atonement, we have ignorance, intent to awaken, and insight into emptiness."[10] This is a very good attempt at contrasting a Buddhist grand narrative to a Christian version. It can be argued that "insight into emptiness" can describe the fulfillment that will come to Pure Land Buddhists at the conclusion of their journey. However, since very few actually on the Pure Land Path and a miniscule number of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists would think about it this way such a grand narrative is not useful in explaining the construction of personhood by Buddhist practitioners in Shinran's lineage.

I do not really wish to provide my own version of a Shinshū grand narrative because it is beside the real point of this paper. My point is rather simple. Shin Buddhists continue to construct our personhood on the way to enlightenment in the Pure Land. While accepting *anātman* as a denial of a uniquely self-same, spiritual, eternal essence that underlies and accounts for personhood, Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists retain a coherent sense of self and continue to engage in character-building.

Ricoeur also expresses suspicion of forming one grand narrative under which every aspect of character-building could be united. I share the reservations of Ricoeur as summarized by his long-time translator, Kathleen Blamey: "This is primarily because every global, totalizing project is necessarily reductive: a comprehensive philosophy of language would, in principle, resolve the diversity of discourses into an artificial unity and level off the specificity characterizing different language games."[11]

The ways of feeling about the *nenbutsu* path to enlightenment, the phenomenologies of experience of individual practitioners, the ways of being rooted in the fundamental vow of Amida, vary rather widely. Some of the differing sensibilities that are time-honored within Shin tradition would fail to fit together neatly into a single narrative. One Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist may very simply consider the *nenbutsu*, the vocal expression of reliance combined with Amida Buddha's name, in the terms, "[W]hen I call the Buddha's Name, it's the Buddha calling me."[12] Not only the subjectivity of the *nenbutsu* practitioner (*nenbutsu-sha*) is presupposed on this view but a subjective dimension of Amida Buddha is presumed as well. The various ways we see Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists thinking about issues such as the nature of the *nenbutsu*, the meaning of enlightenment in Amida's Pure Realm, etc. are all based on rather straightforward assumptions about personal identity. Although he speaks in terms of the "heart of the persons of true and real shinjin," Shinran's student Kyōshin has a universalistic tendency to his view of what being born into the Pure Land means: "The statement, 'they attain nirvana,' means that when the heart of persons of true and real shinjin attain the fulfilled land at the end of his or her present life, that person becomes one with the light that is the heart of the Tathagata, for his reality is immeasurable life and his activity is inseparable from immeasurable light."[13] This narrative concluding in Oneness is quite different from the perspective of another of Shinran's close disciples, Ren'i, as also expressed in *Mattōshō*: "Whether one is

left behind or goes before, it is surely a sorrowful thing to be parted by death. But the one who first attains nirvana vows without fail to save those who were close to him first and leads those with whom he has been karmically bound, his relatives, and his friends."[14]

This extremely personal take on awakening through the auspices of Amida's Pure Realm and returning to save others closely parallels the oral teaching of Shinran as recorded in Article Five of the *Tannishō*.[15] We see Shinran and Ren'i, who has taken his master's teaching to heart, envisioning the denouement of enlightenment in terms of their relationships to persons for whom they care deeply.

As a practicing Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist I tend to see the various narratives, the various ways of being a Jōdo Shinshū path-traveler, as different styles of basing the ongoing formation of personal character on the fundamental vow of Amida Buddha. Even this narrative structure—experience the vocal *nenbutsu*, e.g., "*Namo* Amida Butsu," as the commitment to universal liberation (*hongan*); receive trusting-confidence (*shinjin*); progressively view the three poisons of greed, hatred, and delusion with distaste; attain nirvana at the moment of death; return to help first those we care deeply for and then all sentient beings—may not be universal in the actual thought and feeling of all Shin Buddhists. My categorizing other Pure Land Buddhists' way of living according to this particular narrative identity does not assume that they see their participation in Pure Land tradition in the way I describe. Despite using such an almost grand narrative in my own understanding of the Pure Land way, I am not advocating the acceptance of such a narrative precisely because I believe that it would, to borrow Blamey's phraseology quoted above, "resolve the diversity of discourses into an artificial unity and level off the specificity characterizing" differing narrative understandings of their spiritual practice by various Pure Land Buddhists around the globe.

Again, I do not intend to formulate my own grand Buddhist narrative along the lines that Richard Payne has begun to work. I am not even suggesting that a single narrative might apply to all Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists' thinking and feeling about their religion. I simply want to remark that there is a natural supposition of the coherence and importance of personal subjectivity in the Pure Land stream of Mahāyāna tradition. This seems especially true in the Hongwanji-ha school to which I belong. As I find the modern accentuation of narrative processes as part of identity formation persuasive, I have spent some time discussing the narratives in the background of Pure Land practice.

## CONCLUSION

It is somewhat embarrassing to present this paper at an academic conference. The IBS Winter Symposium in 2008 has consisted of papers by competent and, in most cases, well-known scholars. I am not a scholar. I am a temple minister with concerns at what I do not mind calling the practice level. My concerns might even be described as pastoral. A Buddhist scholar will find nothing new in what I am saying, nothing challenging, and probably nothing interesting. In conclusion I am saying that the self is a real process that presupposes nothing like a soul to explain its identity. Scholars will rightly say that I am only repeating the Mahāyāna position that the self exists in a conventional sense but is empty of a *svabhāva* or unique essence. At a practice level I think we need to honor the importance of character formation in a way that elevated talk of emptiness and no-*svabhāva* does not facilitate. To say no more than that the self could be said to exist in a conventional sense is not adequate.[16]

The individual Buddhist practitioner must not be led by scholars and meditative adepts to believe that personhood is not real and important. I agree in substance with Musashi Tachikawa: "At present, a human being is grasped as an irreplaceable individual, and it is only through relations among individuals that the formation of the individual can be understood. Buddhism, standing in opposition to such a conception of the individual, leads the individual to extinction and to authentic rebirth. It is when a relevant understanding of the person has been achieved that the concept of the bodhisattva will take on meaning for our own age."[17] In the Jōdo Shinshū tradition the self is taken for granted and treated in a very natural fashion. The remarks attributed to Shinran in Article Five of the *Tannishō* display a discrete self considered to attain enlightenment through the auspices of Amida Buddha's Pure Land of Influence (O Jōdo).

> Having undergone death and immediate awakening to buddhahood, this person returns to earth and/or other conditioned realms and immediately begins to help those with whom he or she has close karmic relations: Were saying the Name indeed a good act in which a person strove through his own powers, then he might direct the merit thus gained toward saving his father and mother. But this is not the case. If, however, he simply abandons such self-power and quickly attains enlightenment in the Pure Land, he will be able to save all beings with transcendent powers and compassionate means, whatever karmic suffering they may be sinking into in the six realms

and the four modes of birth, beginning with those with those with whom his life is deeply bound.[18]

We see here a very concrete, personal focus on attaining enlighten-ment and then helping first those with whom we have a deep connec-tion. This is quite different from the emphasis on liberating all beings without discriminating between those we love and those whom we have no special, positive feeling toward which is more often heard in Mahāyāna discussions.[19] Of special interest to me here is that it is pre-sumed to be the same person who aspires for entry into the transfor-mative realm of Amida Buddha's influence, who enters that realm and who returns with "transcendental powers and compassionate means." Without trying to underpin the unity of that subjectivity with a theo-retical construct like "soul" or "*ātman*" or denying it, Jōdo Shinshū Buddhists move forward on the path to awakening through the aus-pices of Amida Buddha's Pure Land. I wonder if some of our friends in other steams of Buddhist practice may not have confused themselves with too much worrying about how the self can exist without a soul underlying it and accounting for its ongoing unity. I remember the physicist Dr. Michio Kaku remarking that as an undergraduate he ques-tioned how wave phenomena could move through empty space. He was told by the physics professor, "It just does, so get used to it!" This may be a very poor answer to give to physics students. It is because many of them did not accept such dismissive comments that they went on to develop string theory. However, if you ask me how I can be the same person who was a deluded Catholic forty-some years ago, who is now a (deluded) Buddhist and who will be a liberating factor in the enlight-enment of others through the auspices of Amida's vow-power at some future time, I might well answer: "That's how it is, so just get used to it." You may consider this very naive, but it is perhaps what Ricoeur means by secondary naiveté. While realizing how problematic all this is, while accepting that there is no soul, while not knowing how I can be the same subject of experience and action after death that I am now, I naively look forward to participating in the liberation of all suffering and deluded beings—beginning with my personal friends, moving on to assist all gentle persons of good will who are not yet enlightened, and only much later concerning myself with helping persons who embrace discrimination and advocate warfare.

## NOTES

1. Dennis Hirota, *Asura's Harp: Engagement with Language as Buddhist Path* (Heidelberg, Germany: Winter, 2006), 129.

2. Paul Ricoeur, as quoted by his long-time translator, Kathleen Blamey, in her article, "From the Ego to the Self: A Philosophical Itinerary," in *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn (Chicago: Open Court Press, 1995), 598.

3. Gregory G. Gibbs, "Shinjin as a Transformation in Identity," *The Pure Land*, n.s., nos. 13–14 (December 1997): see esp. 62.

4. See Hisao Inagaki, "The Sutra on the Buddha of Infinite Life," in *The Three Pure Land Sutras: A Study and Translation* (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, 1995), esp. 236–253.

5. Ibid., esp. text of the eighteenth vow, 243.

6. Steve Odin, *The Social Self in Zen and American Pragmatism* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996).

7. G. W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J. B. Bailey (New York, NY: Harper Torchbooks, 1967), 229. These days Miller's translation is more in use: "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged." G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 111.

8. Mara Rainwater, "Refiguring Ricoeur: Narrative Force and Communicative Ethics," in Paul Ricoeur, *The Hermeneutics of Action*, ed. Richard Kearney (London: Sage, 1996), 100.

9. Richard K. Payne, "Individuation and Awakening: Romantic Narrative and the Psychological Interpretation of Buddhism," in *Buddhism and Psychotherapy*, ed. Mark Unno (Boston: Wisdom, 2006), 48.

10. Ibid., 50.

11. Paul Ricoeur, as quoted by his long-time translator, Kathleen Blamey, in her article, "From the Ego to the Self: A Philosophical Itinerary," in *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn (Chicago: Open Court Press, 1995), 598.

12. This phrasing of a time-honored Pure Land way of speaking comes from "Gassho to Amida" by Rev. Kenryu Tsuji. Rev. Tsuji's piece is included in many services at Jōdo Shinshū temples in North America and in the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. It seems that other temples, like my own, hand this out in xerographic copy rather than print it in a service book. The precise wording here is from the "Gassho to Amida" used at the Oregon Buddhist Temple, 3720 S.E. 34th Ave., Portland, OR 97202.

13. From the letter traditionally numbered fourteen in the "Lamp for the Latter Ages," *Collected Works of Shinran*, 2 vols. (Kyoto: Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-Ha, 1997), 1:541.

14. Ibid., 1:545.

15. That passage quoted on the next page and attributed in note 18 when compared with Ren-i's gloss of Shinran here verifies that this very person-centered interpretation of birth into the Pure Land and return as an individual buddha who still recalls his or her affection for close associates was, indeed, Shinran's teaching.

16. Anne C. Klein has spoken of the need for Buddhist tradition to take personal history more seriously than it has in the past. (These specific remarks were made at a discussion termed "Buddhist Feminist Dialogue" at the First Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, CA in October 1988.) Her insistence that subjectivity must be an issue in Buddhist philosophizing can be found, among other places, in Anne C. Klein, "Buddhist Understandings of Subjectivity," in *Buddhist Women and Social Justice: Ideals, Challenges, and Achievements*, ed. Karma Lekshe Tsomo (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 24–34. Musashi Tachikawa has also called for a more developed Buddhist theory of personhood. See especially Musashi Tachikawa, "The World and Amida Buddha," in *Toward a Contemporary Understanding of Pure Land Buddhism: Creating a Shin Buddhist Theology in a Religiously Plural World*, ed. Dennis Hirota (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 230–231.

17. Tachikawa, "The World and Amida Buddha," 231.

18. Dennis Hirota, trans., *Tannisho: A Primer* (Kyoto: Ryukoku University, 1991), 25.

19. Discussions with Dennis Hirota at the Hongwanji International Center in 1992 led me to see this aspect of *Tannishō*, Article Five. The interpretation of this passage that I give here is Dennis Hirota's interpretation. I would not want to hold him to all the implications I develop here and I might later draw from his interpretation, but I wish to credit him with the fundamental insight into Article Five, which I rely upon here.

# *Shinjin* and Social Praxis in Shinran's Thought[1]

**Takamaro Shigaraki**
Ryukoku University Emeritus
**Trans. David Matsumoto**
Institute of Buddhist Studies

A PERSON WHO SEEKS an authentic understanding of Shinran's teaching of Shin Buddhism must try to live with *shinjin* in the midst of the turbulent conditions of today's world. Inevitably, that person will come face-to-face with a host of inescapable problems, for seeking to live with *shinjin* means that one must try to determine how to act in today's word, as well as what the nature of one's social praxis ought to be.

Tsuda Sōkichi suggests, regarding this point, that the *shinjin* propounded in Shinran's teaching is in fact isolated from actual life. He states,

> If that is the case, Amida Buddha's salvific activity does not occur in this life. At the same time present-day life becomes separate and disconnected from salvation. This stands to reason, as long as salvation refers to birth in the Pure Land after death. What are not answered, however, are questions such as, "What is the meaning of our present life?" or "By what rules is it to be governed?" . . . Shinran's thought sets forth the logic of Pure Land as the ultimate ground. However, when it comes to a consideration of our own actions or behavior, his thought is quite incomplete.[2]

Tsuda's view is that there is an incompleteness in Shinran's thought, in that it does not fully clarify how, after birth in the Pure Land has been settled, *shinjin* actually relates to everyday life. According to him, the two—*shinjin* and birth—seem to exist in parallel, with no relationship with one another.

In a similar vein, Katō Shūichi states that the religion of Shinran closely resembles the religious reformation developed by Luther and others; yet, at the same time, there are points at which it clearly differs from Protestantism. He discusses this in the following way:

Protestantism gave rise to new ethical values through faith. In contrast, Jōdo Shinshū has done no such thing. The two are similar in the purely religious aspect, that is, in the structure of faith which relativizes worldly value systems and directs one toward the absolute. However, they are totally dissimilar in the cultural aspect, that is, in the return from the absolute to historical society and in the creation of a new value system. If salvation has no relationship to a given person's good or evil actions, then how should that person behave in this present world? One's attitude regarding Amida Buddha is a religious issue; one's attitude regarding other people is an ethical issue. How do these two issues relate to each other?

Using the terminology of the *Kyōgyōshinshō*, in Protestantism there is first the aspect of going and then later the aspect of returning. In Jōdo Shinshū, the aspect of going exists, but there is no special scheme for the aspect of returning afterward.[3]

In other words, Kato suggests that the logic of Protestantism and Shinran's understanding of Pure Land Buddhism are quite similar as to the aspect of going from the secular world to the transcendental (*ōsō*, 往相). However, while the aspect of returning to the secular world—its *gensō* 還相 character—is set forth in great detail in Protestantism, that aspect is lacking in Shinran's thought. As a result, he later goes on to state, Christianity and Shin Buddhism have played very different roles in history. Christianity contributed greatly to the formation of capitalistic society; however, the teachings of Shin Buddhism have not created the ideological background for any social change.

Hisamatsu Shinichi states,

In Shinshū, even though we may have attained *shinjin* in this life, we are incapable of performing any actions in the aspect of returning in our present existence. In addition, attaining *shinjin* is said to mean that one enters the ranks of the truly settled. Thus, in the phrase, "they immediately attain birth," "immediately attain" does not mean "to be born" at all. It only refers to a condition in which "birth is settled." In other words, a *myōkōnin* is said to dwell in the rank of the truly settled, but not in the rank of returning from the Pure Land. A sort of medievalism exists here in Shinshū doctrine. Jōdo Shinshū, therefore, must emerge into a new form, in which both aspects of going and returning can be established in this present life.[4]

Hisamatsu points out that, in Shin Buddhism, even though one has attained *shinjin*, one is not said to have attained birth. It merely means that one's birth has become settled. This is called the stage of non-retrogression, or the rank of the truly settled, but this is not referred

to as a return from the Pure Land to the present world. This, he says, reveals the medieval character of Shin Buddhist doctrine, as well as its incompleteness.

Each of these critiques points to the fact that Shinran's teaching sets forth in a clear manner the supramundane character of *shinjin*, but it does not fully explain its relationship to historical society in terms of the aspect of returning to this secular world. However, can it really be said that this point is lacking in Shinran's teaching of true and real *shinjin*? How might Shinran himself have responded to these concerns? How should those of us who are studying the teaching of Shinran consider this matter? In this paper, I would like to take up the issues raised by these three critiques and offer a brief examination of *shinjin* and social praxis in Shinran's thought.

## THE SUPRAMUNDANE AND MUNDANE NATURE OF *SHINJIN* IN SHINRAN'S THOUGHT

It is my view that *shinjin* in the teachings of Shinran comprises (a) the experience of "true knowing" (*shinchi taiken*, 信知体験) and (b) the experiencing of "truth and reality" (*shinjitsu taiken*, 真実体験).[5]

### The Experience of "True Knowing"

The experience of "true knowing" refers to that ultimate religious experience in which one awakens to or entrusts in and realizes the truth of (*shinchi*, 信知) the primal vow of Amida Buddha. In his *Hymns of the Dharma-Ages*, Shinran states that *shinjin* is "the wisdom of *shinjin*." In notations written next to the Chinese characters for this phrase, he gives the following explanation: "Know that since Amida's vow is wisdom, the emergence of the mind of entrusting oneself to it is the arising of wisdom."[6] Shinran explains this phrase in the *Hymns of the Pure Land* in this way: "Every being is nurtured by this light," and he offers the following notation: "Because we are shown upon by this light, wisdom emerges in us."[7] He also states this in *The Virtues of the Name of Amida Tathagata*, "To entrust oneself to the nembutsu is to already have become a person who realizes wisdom and will attain Buddhahood; know that this is to become free of foolishness."[8]

The attainment of *shinjin*, therefore, involves the arising of wisdom. This means that the person of *shinjin* "realizes wisdom." Stated in a more concrete way, it means that one deeply and truly comes to know the existential state of the self, as well as the import of the Tathāgata's

primal vow. This is the experience of a "twofold deep realization" (*nishu jinshin*, 二種深信), in which a profound understanding of oneself (the certainty of one's falling into hell) and of the vow (the certainty of one's birth in the Pure Land) come to be actualized in identity.

## The Experiencing of Truth and Reality

The experiencing of "truth and reality" refers to that ultimate religious experience in which one encounters or comes into contact with truth and reality.

In the "Chapter on Shinjin" of his principal text, the *True Teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way*, Shinran analyzes the Chinese characters for the word "entrusting" (*shin*, 信) in this way: "In 'entrusting' (*shingyō*信楽), 信 *shin* means truth, reality, sincerity, fullness. . . ."[9] Furthermore, he often equates *shinjin* with the "true mind," as well as the "true and real mind" (*makoto no kokoro*, まことのこころ).[10]

This does not simply mean, however, that the person of *shinjin* apprehends this true mind in its entirety and thereby becomes true and real. Rather, *shinjin* is the experience in which a person, who is incapable of being anything other than false and deluded, encounters or is brought into contact with truth and reality in the midst of such emptiness and falsity. Taken further, this means that the experiencing of truth and reality becomes identical with the experiencing of falsity and delusion. That is, falsity and delusion and truth and reality are realized as contradictory opposites, which are at the same time mutually identical.

Expressing it in a more concrete way, *shinjin*, as the experiencing of truth and reality, means that one lives in contact with the truth and reality of the Tathāgata, while at the same time relentlessly criticizing and rejecting the falsity and delusion of this secular world. Or, stated conversely, in one's battle with falsity and delusion in this secular world, one comes to encounter the truth and reality of the Tathāgata all the more.

Taking it another step further, it might be said that *shinjin* is established where one is able to perceive that the structured norms and value systems of this secular world are limited, false, and deluded, and where one is able to reject and "de-absolutize" them. It is upon this basis that *shinjin* is able to deepen and continue to expand all the more.[11] This is the fundamental nature of *shinjin* in Shin Buddhism.

*Traditional Interpretations of* Shinjin

In traditional Shin Buddhist doctrinal studies, however, *shinjin* has been often compromised, and weakened, by secular values. This trend began shortly after Shinran's death.

Kakunyo (1270–1351) stated that, in the everyday life of the Shin Buddhist *nenbutsu* practitioner, one should inwardly maintain *shinjin*, while outwardly upholding the "the five virtues—humanity, justice, civility, wisdom and faith."[12] These five virtues were the medieval norms of Confucian ethics. Nevertheless, Kakunyo embraced them and taught that such Confucian values, although foreign to Buddhism, were the principles of behavior for the Shin Buddhist follower.

Further, Zonkaku (1290–1373) argued that, since "our empire is the nation of the gods,"[13] the *nenbutsu* practitioner must not forget the benevolence of those gods. He also stated that Amida Buddha is "the guardian Buddha for our country,"[14] in other words, that Amida protects Japan—the nation of the gods. In this way, he fused ideas of *kami* worship with the Shin Buddhist teachings. In addition, Zonkaku advanced the notion that "The Buddha's law and imperial law are a pair of laws,"[15] thereby bringing *shinjin* into a relationship of compromise with the secular authorities and imperial law. Thus, it can be clearly seen how, after the death of Shinran, *shinjin* in Shin Buddhism came to overlap with secular values and non-Buddhist ideologies.

The three tenets of Rennyo (1415–1496) are well known: "*shinjin* is fundamental," "make worldly law primary," and "make humanity and justice foremost." To Rennyo, the latter two were "the regulations established by the founding master."[16] Or, as he states, "People who comply with the above exemplify the conduct of nembutsu practicers in whom faith has been awakened and who aspire to (birth in the Pure Land in) the afterlife."[17]

Rennyo's understanding was that the Shin Buddhist follower should obey worldly laws, as well as Confucian values such as humanity and justice. In other words, for Rennyo the doctrines "make imperial law primary" and "make humanity and justice foremost" represented something more than a merely dualistic union between *shinjin* and worldly laws or Confucian values. Rather, for him, they captured the inner reality of *shinjin* itself, as revealed by Shinran. The person of *shinjin*, inevitably, came to be viewed as one who upholds worldly laws and Confucian values as the first principles in life.[18]

Modern Shin Buddhist doctrinal studies inherited these interpretations of *shinjin* from Kakunyo, Zonkaku, and Rennyo. Its scholars were further influenced by the religious policies that took place under the Tokugawa feudal system. This resulted in even greater rapprochement or compromise between *shinjin* and secular values. Shōkai (1765–1838), for example, wrote that, "All the sutras expound the worldly laws" and "In this latter age, our nation's ruler spreads the law, in place of the Buddha."[19] According to this interpretation, Shin Buddhism was seen as totally centered on the secular laws of the imperial system.

These ideas underwent further development by scholars in the modern era, eventually resulting in the so-called "theory of the two truths: ultimate and worldly" (真俗二諦論, *shinzoku nitairon*). The logic of this view was intended to bring Shin Buddhism into accord with the national order based on the newly-re-established emperor system. It also brought about even greater adherence to secular values. This can be seen, in particular, in the so-called "war time doctrine," which occurred during the Second World War. In that doctrinal development the "theory of ultimate and worldly truths" evolved to a point where it was asserted that one's entrusting in Amida Buddha was identical to placing one's allegiance to the emperor.[20]

These instances clearly tell us that *shinjin* in Shin Buddhism became buried in the midst of the secular world. In particular, this notion of the "two truths: ultimate and worldly" continues to survive, still not completely overcome, even today in the post-war period. On that point, I believe that the extent to which this theory of the two truths continues to have influence will be an important key to determining the direction that future Shin Buddhist doctrinal studies will take.

## A SHIN BUDDHIST RESPONSE TO MODERN-DAY CRITICISM

*Shinjin*, as clarified by Shinran, is established for the first time in the complete, critical rejection of the logic and value system of the secular order. As long as the Shin Buddhist follower lives in the midst of this world, he must live in accordance with the logic and norms of that order. That much should be fully affirmed. However, at the same time, *shinjin* comes to be weakened when one simply follows the logic of that system, without setting one's sights securely upon the goal of the Shin Buddhist path. As long as one's own *shinjin* experience is not subjectively established in opposition to the values of the secular order, one

will be held captive by that system. In such a situation, how could one expect true and real *shinjin* to arise or continue?

It is this complete rejection and de-absolutization of the logic and value system of the secular order, which serves as the bases of our everyday human lives, that is in itself important. In other words, one must come to encounter the truth that "the world is false and deluded,"[21] or "all matters without exception are empty and false, totally without truth or sincerity."[22] Only here can the basis for the genuine realization of true and real *shinjin* be found. Thus, given the fundamental rejection of the secular world's systems of logic and value in Shinran's thought, it is quite natural that conventional systems of ethical norms or principles are not present therein.

It is in that sense that we can accept the suggestions of the three scholars that were introduced at the outset of this chapter. Yet, this should not in any way be deemed as somehow unfortunate, since it does not represent any shortcoming in Shinran's understanding of *shinjin*. On the contrary, because *shinjin* is the experience of true knowing as well as the experiencing of truth and reality, the very absence of ethical norms speaks quite persuasively of the religious purity of Shinran's *shinjin* and of the extent to which it relentlessly continues to confront secular values.

However, we must ask ourselves: To what extent has the nature of *shinjin* been recognized by the traditional doctrinal studies of Jōdo Shinshū or by its sectarian organizations? As we have already seen above, has it not been the case that *shinjin*'s criticism and rejection of secular values have been insufficient during various periods? And at times has there not been an adherence to the worldly ethical systems and political authorities, as well as even a willingness to supplement and support them? Certainly there have been exceptions, but, from a broad perspective, can such statements not be made?

Actually, it is here where we can find the foremost reason that Shin Buddhism traditionally has not been able to construct a logic for affirmative and positive social praxis in the actual world of the present. Living with *shinjin* must involve the complete confrontation with, opposition to, and de-absolutization of the norms and value system of the secular order. As long as this point remains unclear, *shinjin* will be continually weakened and bound up by the secular logic and value system, without anyone even being aware of it. Traditional doctrinal studies and the history of our sectarian organization have repeatedly

given proof of this. Secular values and logic possess that much power; and indeed because of that, continuing to live with true and real *shinjin* is that rigorous. This point must be fundamentally confirmed and deeply borne in mind by anyone who seeks to understand *shinjin* in Shinran's teachings.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHINRAN'S *SHINJIN* IN SOCIO-INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

### *Societal Standpoint of* Shinjin

*Shinjin* is established when one firmly and completely rejects and de-absolutizes the logic and value system of the secular order. Inevitably, then, *shinjin* in the thought of Shinran does have significance in regard to socio-intellectual history.

### *Masses at the Base of Society*

Let us consider this passage from Shinran's *Notes on "Essentials of Faith Alone"*:

> When such shackled foolish beings—the lowly who are hunters and peddlers—thus wholly entrust themselves to the Name embodying great wisdom, the inconceivable Vow of the Buddha of unhindered light, then while burdened as they are with blind passion, they attain the supreme nirvana. "Shackled" describes us, who are bound by all our various blind passions. Blind passions refers to pains which torment the body and afflictions which distress the heart and mind. The hunter is one who slaughters the many kinds of living things; this is the huntsman. The peddler is one who buys and sells things; this is the trader. They are called "low." Such peddlers, hunters, and others are none other than we, who are like stones and tiles and pebbles.[23]

We can surmise that this passage is a commentary on the phrases "foolish beings in bondage" and "the lowly such as butchers and wine dealers," which appear in the *Amidakyō gisho* (Commentary on the Amida Sutra) of Yuanzhao of the Sung dynasty (1048–1116) and in the *Amidakyō gisho monjiki* (Note to Yuanzhao Commentary on the Amida Sutra) by his disciple Chieh-tu (1771–?).[24] Shinran also quotes the same two passages in the "Chapter on Shinjin" of *True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, wherein he appends the following notations to the passage from the latter text. The phrase "foolish beings in bondage" is said to mean "for they are utterly possessed of the two kinds of delusional thinking," while "the lowly such as butchers and wine dealers"

are explained in this way: "Butchers are those who earn their livings by killing. Wine dealers are those who make and sell liquor. Such evil people. . . ."[25]

Shinran's exposition in *Notes on "Essentials of Faith Alone"* generally accords with these commentary passages. However, two points merit attention here. The first is that, in his *Notes*, Shinran says, "'Shackled [foolish beings]' describes us, who are bound by all our various blind passions." In other words, the phrase "shackled foolish beings" is expressed from an interior, spiritual point of view. This can also be seen in his explanation of the phrase in the "Chapter on Shinjin." The "two kinds of delusional thinking" set out in his notation there refer to deluded passions (*bonnō*), as well as deluded views and thoughts. In *Notes,* these undergo a further development in Shinran's analysis so that blind passions come to be those passions that torment the body (*bon*) and those that afflict the heart-mind (*nō*).

In contrast, Shinran's phrase "the lowly who are hunters and peddlers" is explained, as we have seen, as referring to those who kill living things for a living and those who engage in trade. In other words, the phrase "hunters and peddlers" is set forth from the perspective of occupational or social status. Further, in his text, Shinran says that "the lowly who are hunters and peddlers" are "none other than we, who are like stones and tiles and pebbles." Clearly, this corresponds to the phrase "such evil people," which Shinran uses to describe persons in these occupations in his notation to Chieh-tu's text. Thus, to the extent that the phrase "such evil people" refers to "the lowly who are hunters and peddlers," I believe that the phrase "evil people" here does not have any religious or ethical connotation. Rather, "evil people" here is a reference to none other than "us"—those people, such as hunters or peddlers, who lived in the lower classes at the base of society and were "like stones and tiles and pebbles."

This tells us that, as he learned of the primal vow of Amida Buddha, Shinran took as his personal standpoint that of the ruled masses found at the base of society. Clearly, we can understand that Shinran did not adopt the viewpoint of the upper class persons of authority or the rulers of worldly society. Rather, he continually placed himself in the position of the masses who stood in opposition to those upper classes and who lived at the base of society—those who were called "evil people," "who are like stones and tiles and pebbles."

*Non-Persons and True Persons*

Further, Shinran's *Notes on Once-Calling and Many-Calling* contains this passage: "These people: 'these' is used in contrast with 'non-.' People of true and real shinjin are called 'these people.' Those who are empty and transitory, full of doubt and vacillation, are 'non-persons.' 'Non-persons' are rejected as not being persons; they are people of falsity. 'These people' are true persons."[26] This is an explanation of the phrase "these people" (*zenin*, 是人), which appears in the passages of the *Kannen bōmon* (Methods of Meditation on Amida Buddha) by Shan-tao (613–681).[27] "These people" means "true persons"; they are called "persons of true and real shinjin." On the other hand, persons without *shinjin*, that is, those "full of doubt and vacillation," are said to be "non-persons"; they are to be "rejected as not being persons; they are people of falsity."

The phrase "non-person" (*hinin*, 非人) originally appeared in this passage from chapter 1 of the *Myōhōrengekyō* (Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Law): "*Devas*, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kimnaras*, *mahoragas*, persons, non-persons."[28] In the *Yakushi nyorai hongankyō* (Sutra of the Primal Vow of Yakushi Tathāgata) there appears this phrase: "It inflicts injury upon the spirits and physical deities for the sake of non-persons."[29] In other words, "non-person" was a label used to describe unseen, non-human deities, such as the eight gods who were said to protect Buddhism, including *devas*, dragons, *yakṣas*, devils and so on. This trend can be further seen in this passage from the *Nihon reii iki*: "Seven non-persons, each with the head of an ox and a human body, were there. They tied ropes to my hair and captured me."[30]

By the medieval era, the phrase "non-person" was used as an appellation for some human beings. With the arrival of the modern age, it became a reference to those people whose social position was very low, beneath those of warriors, farmers, artisans, and tradesmen. However, during medieval times the meaning of the phrase had not yet become so broad or fixed.

According to the *Zoku Nihon koki*, the phrase "non-person" meant "criminal," as we can see in the following passage: "The criminal Tachibana Hayanari was stripped of his original surname. Given the name of a non-person, he was then sent off into exile to the province of Izu."[31] The phrase is used to refer to "homeless ascetics" in the *Ichigon hōdan*: "There should be those equal in standing to the 'non-person'

dharma-master, for whom academic study was useless."[32] Finally, the *Guwaku hosshinshū* uses "non-person" in reference to beggars: "By refusing to give anything to non-person beggars when they approach your gate, you will make them reject their evil ways."[33]

In other words, on different occasions, the phrase "non-person" was used to describe criminals, homeless ascetics, or beggars. It can be seen that Shinran lived at a time in which "non-person" was an appellation for those without social standing, that is, persons who had been removed or isolated from the social order or class structure of the manorial system.[34] In addition, an investigation of evidentiary records concurrent with the era in which Shinran lived reveals the following records: in the second month of Kangen 2 (1244) a person named Ninjō gave rice gruel to over 1,000 non-persons at Imazato (*Kanshingakushōki*); in the third month of Bun-ei 6 (1269) 2,000 non-persons received offerings at Nehanji (*Nakatomi yūkenki*); in Kagen 2 (1204), when Kimihira of Saion-ji sought to give alms to non-persons, a total of 2,027 non-persons were assembled—170 at Rendai-ya, 150 at Agu-in and Hiden-in, 1,000 at Kiyomizu-zaka, 142 at Ōkago, 376 at scattered locales, 180 at the dwellings of non-persons, and at other places (*Kimihira kōki*).[35]

Thus, we can understand that, during Shinran's time, the phrase "non-person" was a disparaging label given to beggars and others who had been removed or isolated from all levels of the social class system upon which the ruling order was based. It would be only natural that Shinran would also have been conscious of this conventional usage of the term. Thus, while he states that "non-persons are rejected as not being persons; they are people of falsity," we can see that, in that era, the term pointed concretely to beggars and others who lived at the bottom of society. In addition, at that time, the phrase "these people" meant "good persons," that is, people of noble or high status, who stood at the opposite extreme from these kinds of "non-persons" or "evil persons."

Yet, despite that conventional understanding of the time, Shinran states that it is the person of *shinjin* who is a "good person," whereas those who do not entrust themselves to the primal vow, but instead harbor doubt and vacillation, are all "non-persons." This is a complete reversal of the logic of the secular system and ruling order. In other words, no matter how high and noble one might be in the secular class system, if one does not entrust in the primal vow, that person is called a "non-person" or "evil person." Conversely, no matter how despised

as a "non-person" or isolated from society the person of *shinjin* might be in the actual social system, he is one of "these people," that is, a "true person."

*Societal Standpoint and Historical Character of* Shinjin

What we find is that Shinran took a position that critically overturned the logic of the ruling establishment and the secular value system, from a standpoint that placed ultimate significance in the *buddhadharma* and *shinjin*. In this way, *shinjin* in Shinran's thought is set forth from the standpoint of the masses at the lowest levels of society who stand in opposition to the ruling class—in other words, those who are labeled "the lowly who are hunters and peddlers" or "evil persons"; those unnamed human beings, "who are like stones and tiles and pebbles."

Further, when "such evil people" as "we" truly entrust in and realize the truth of the primal vow, then, even though we may be despised as "non-persons," we can truly become "these people"—"true persons." Conversely, no matter how high and noble a position the person without *shinjin* might occupy, that person is nothing more than a "non-person." Shinran speaks of the establishment within *shinjin* of a new subjectivity, in which the existing secular value systems and the ruling order are overcome, and describes a world of independence, which comes to open forth through *shinjin.*

Herein lies the fundamental meaning of Shinran's *shinjin*, which it also can be said has maintained an exceedingly sharp reformative character within the socio-intellectual history. This can be seen in the fact that, in Shinran's time, the ruling authorities repeatedly suppressed the *nenbutsu* movement. This could also be seen in certain aspects of the uprisings by *nenbutsu* followers (*ikko ikki*, 一向一揆), which occurred from the era of Rennyo to that of Kennyo (1543–1592), even though the reasons for the outbreaks were not entirely based on *shinjin.* Further, in the modern era, Shin Buddhism and Nichiren Buddhism in particular were given warnings during the period of religious control and regulation by the authorities of the Tokugawa shogunate. There were also regions in which a prohibition of the *nenbutsu* took place. Later, many issues were raised, under the national polity of the imperial system, in which inconsistencies with the imperial system were found in the passages of Shinran's works. Finally, during the Second World War, an effort to delete portions of scriptural passages also took place.[36]

All of these incidents are persuasive witness to the fact that *shinjin* in the teachings of Shinran carries within it a reformative character that fundamentally transcends the ruling governmental establishment. This character of *shinjin* then becomes the starting point for the logic of social praxis in Shinran's thought.

*SHINJIN* AND SOCIAL PRAXIS IN SHINRAN'S THOUGHT
*The Mind That Aspires for Buddhahood and the Mind to Save Sentient Beings*

In the "Chapter on Shinjin," Shinran offer this perspective on the meaning of *shinjin*: "That characterized by transcending crosswise is shinjin* that is directed to beings through the power of the Vow. It is the mind that aspires to attain Buddhahood. The mind that aspires to attain Buddhahood is the mind aspiring for great enlightenment of crosswise orientation."[37]

As the "mind that aspires to attain Buddhahood," *shinjin* is equivalent, for Shinran, to the *bodhi* mind (Skt. *bodhicitta*; Jpn. *bodaishin*, 菩提心), which is the mind through which one seeks buddhahood for oneself. Thus, to live in *shinjin* means that one directs oneself throughout one's life to the attainment of buddhahood.

At the same time, Shinran also states the following in the same "Chapter on Shinjin": "The mind that aspires for Buddhahood is the mind to save sentient beings. The mind to save sentient beings is the mind that grasps sentient beings and brings them to birth in the Pure Land of peace. This mind is the mind aspiring for great enlightenment."[38] As stated above, one aims at becoming buddha oneself with "the mind that aspires to attain Buddhahood." Yet here, Shinran states that this is at the same time "the mind to save sentient beings." It is the *bodhi* mind, which seeks to save all sentient beings and bring them to birth in the Pure Land. In other words, attaining buddhahood oneself also holds the meaning of bringing others to the attainment of buddhahood.

*Shinjin* is described in this way by Shinran: "True and real shinjin is the diamond-like mind. The diamond-like mind is the mind that aspires for Buddhahood. The mind that aspires for Buddhahood is the mind to save sentient beings."[39] In his *Hymns of the Dharma-Ages*, he also states,

Concerning the aspiration for supreme enlightenment in the Pure Land path,
We are urged to realize the mind that seeks to attain Buddhahood;
The mind that seeks to attain Buddhahood

Is itself the mind that seeks to save all sentient beings.[40]

In other words, *shinjin*, which is "the mind that aspires for great enlightenment," is both the mind "that aspires for Buddhahood" as well as "the mind that saves sentient beings." In notes written next to the Chinese characters of that hymn, Shinran goes on to say this about "the mind that seeks to attain Buddhahood": "The mind deeply entrusting oneself to Amida's compassionate vow and aspiring to become buddha is called 'aspiration for enlightenment.'" He then notes, in regard to "the mind that seeks to save all sentient beings," "Know that this is the mind that desires to bring all beings to buddhahood."[41]

Thus, for Shinran, living in *shinjin* is none other than living with a mind of aspiration—an aspiration for self-benefit (attaining buddhahood oneself), as well as for the benefiting of others (bring all other beings to the attainment of buddhahood). Because *shinjin* is the mind that aspires for great enlightenment, one seeks to attain buddhahood together with all sentient beings.

Shinran also expresses this in a letter: "Shinjin is the mind that is single; the mind that is single is the diamond-like mind; this diamond-like mind is the mind aspiring for great enlightenment."[42] The *bodhi* mind is the mind that aspires for the attainment of unsurpassed, true enlightenment, in which one becomes buddha oneself and seeks to cause others to become buddha. To say that *shinjin* is the *bodhi* mind, then, means that it is the mind that seeks to realize the great wisdom and compassion of the Buddha, in which the bodhisattva practices of bringing benefit to the self and others are perfectly fulfilled. This is the significance contained within Shinran's statement that *shinjin* is "the mind that aspires for Buddhahood" and "the mind to save sentient beings."

That is to say, because *shinjin* is the *bodhi* mind of the Pure Land way, Shinran's path of "attaining buddhahood through *nenbutsu*" or "attaining buddhahood through *shinjin*" thus becomes the path for the perfect fulfillment of practices of self-benefit and benefiting-of-others. Here Shinran demonstrates his own understanding of the Pure Land teachings, in effect transcending Hōnen's Pure Land teaching, which had negated the efficacy of the *bodhi* mind. It clearly demonstrates that Shinran's Buddhist path of *nenbutsu* and *shinjin* found its source in the fundamental principles of Mahāyāna Buddhism and represented a development of the Mahāyāna bodhisattva ideal.

*Birth in the Pure Land*

What does birth in the Pure Land mean in Shinran's thought? Why do we speak of birth in the Pure Land in Shin Buddhism? Clearly in one sense, it is for the sake of one's own emancipation and attainment of buddhahood. That being the case, however, why does one seek emancipation and the attainment of buddhahood? It is most certainly not to seek one's own, solitary peace, happiness, or benefit; nor should it be so. As we have already seen, since the Buddhist path of the *nenbutsu* and *shinjin* is a development of the Mahāyāna bodhisattva path, it can be for no other purpose than the perfection of one's own attainment of buddhahood, together with the salvation of all others. Therefore, correctly, in Shin Buddhism, one should aspire for "birth in the Pure Land" in order to save all sentient beings.

This is expressed in chapter 4 of the *Record in Lament of Divergences*:

Concerning compassion, there is a difference between the Path of Sages and the Pure Land Path.

Compassion in the Path of Sages is to pity, commiserate with, and care for beings. It is extremely difficult, however, to accomplish the saving of others just as one wishes.

Compassion in the Pure Land Path should be understood as first attaining Buddhahood quickly through saying the nembutsu and, with the mind of great love and great compassion, freely benefiting sentient beings as one wishes.

However much love and pity we may feel in our present lives, it is hard to save others as we wish; hence such compassion remains unfulfilled. Only the saying of the nembutsu, then, is the mind of great compassion that is thoroughgoing.

Thus were his words.[43]

Here we can see Shinran's truly unique understanding of compassion. Compassion in the "Path of Sages" refers to one's own compassionate actions in this world. Yet, such actions always have limitations, and one does not have a free hand to do as one desires to save others. However, compassion in the Pure Land Path means first to attain birth in the Pure Land—which is in itself the attainment of buddhahood—and then to perform the activity of directing virtue within the aspect of returning to this world. This alone is thoroughgoing, true compassion. One is able to benefit sentient beings freely, with a heart of great love and compassion.

Shinran's notion of birth in the Pure Land was based upon his deep and honest realization of the limitations of one's performances

of practices to benefit others in this world. That is, the fundamental meaning of birth in the Pure Land lies in that fact that it is for the sake of practicing thoroughgoing compassion and benefiting sentient beings as one desires, with a heart of great love and compassion. This can be well understood by looking at the "Chapter on Realization" of the *True Teaching, Practice and Realization.* Even though the content of the chapter involves the attainment of realization through birth in the Pure Land, a greater portion sets forth the dharmic activity of taking in and saving sentient beings in the aspect of returning to this world.

For Shinran, birth in the Pure Land is solely for the sake of returning from the Pure Land to take in and save sentient beings. One who attains birth in the Pure Land immediately returns to this present world and performs the practices of benefiting others. Accordingly, it is said that not even one person who has attained birth in Amida Buddha's Pure Land dwells there; the Pure Land is a realm in which no one exists.

### Bringing Benefit to Sentient Beings

On the other hand, living in *shinjin* means that one directs oneself throughout life toward birth in the Pure Land. As a reflection of that, one inevitably comes to live with "the mind to save sentient beings," as opposed to the "mind that aspires to attain Buddhahood." That is, one comes to live with "the mind that grasps sentient beings and brings them to birth in the Pure Land of peace" and "the mind which seeks to have all beings become buddha." Here lies the reason why Shinran includes "the benefit of constantly practicing great compassion" (*jōgyō daihi*, 常行大悲) as one of the "ten benefits in the present life," which inevitably arise from *shinjin*.[44] In other words, the life of *shinjin* gives birth, as a virtuous benefit, to an action or activity in which one leads others toward the Pure Land.

Of course, in the life of *shinjin*, such activity has its limitations, especially when compared with the compassionate working that takes place after the attainment of buddhahood. Nevertheless, *shinjin* includes within it this kind of activity, which Shinran refers to as "bringing benefit to sentient beings."[45]

An inquiry into this notion of "bringing benefit to sentient beings" in the writings of Shinran yields sixteen examples, which employ phrases such as, "sentient beings are made to benefit," "beings are made to benefit," "all beings are made to benefit," "benefit sentient

beings," and "benefits beings." These sixteen instances can be categorized according to the subject that brings about benefit to beings:

| subject that benefits sentient beings | no. of examples |
|---|---|
| Amida Buddha | three |
| bodhisattvas of the Pure Land | four |
| Prince Shōtoku | six |
| Master Hōnen | one |
| *nenbutsu* practitioner | two |

Let us now look at the two instances where Shinran uses the phrase "bringing benefit to sentient beings" where the subject is the *nenbutsu* practitioner. The first example is from the *Hymns of the Dharma-Ages*:

> Persons who enter Amida's directing of virtue to beings
> And realize the mind that seeks to attain Buddhahood
> Completely abandon their self-power directing of merit,
> Thus benefiting sentient beings boundlessly.[46]

In this passage, Shinran extols the virtue of the person of *shinjin*, who is able to bring benefit to sentient beings. He says that the person who takes refuge in and enters into the primal vow of Amida Buddha and attains *shinjin* (the mind that seeks to attain buddhahood) will inevitably come to perform the boundless and unlimited action of bringing benefit to sentient beings.

The second example is this passage from *Gutoku's Hymns of Lament and Reflection*:

> Lacking even small love and small compassion,
> I cannot hope to benefit sentient beings.
> Were it not for the ship of Amida's Vow,
> How could I cross the ocean of painful existence?[47]

Here, Shinran laments the fact that he is a person without even the slightest compassion or love, and that it is extremely difficult for him to even think about bringing benefit to sentient beings. Solely by entrusting in the Tathāgata's primal vow, he states, one is able to transcend birth and death, together with others.

The two hymns appear to contradict one another. However, it must be noted that the latter hymn does not simply negate the actions of the *nenbutsu* practitioner who wishes to bring benefit to sentient beings. Instead, it is a hymn of lamentation and confession, which arose from the fact that although Shinran earnestly aspired and acted to bring benefit to sentient beings, he realized his limitations and failures and

came to reflect deeply upon himself. It could be said that through its negation of even his hope to bring benefit to sentient beings, this passage actually proves just how deeply Shinran aspired and endeavored to accomplish it.

Thus, these two hymns are manifestations of Shinran's lament that the life of the person of *shinjin* inevitably gives birth to an unlimited desire to bring benefit to sentient beings. Yet, despite that, as long as these are the operations of one who is bound by deluded passions, there are necessarily limitations to one's ability to bring benefit to sentient beings; ultimately, it amounts to nothing.

What, then, does the notion of "bringing benefit to sentient beings" mean? The short version of Shinran's *Notes on the Inscriptions on Sacred Scrolls* contains the following passage: "'Guiding all living things' (*kemotsu*, 化物) means to bring benefit to sentient beings."[48] In the long version of the same text, we find a similar interpretation: "'Living things': sentient beings. 'Guiding' is to bring benefits to all things."[49] These passages refer to the activity of teaching sentient beings so that they may take refuge in the primal vow. Certainly, this activity is most often attributed to Amida Buddha and the bodhisattvas of the Pure Land. In particular, this can be seen in Shinran's hymns praising Prince Shōtoku's activity of establishing the *buddhadharma*.

However, in the *Eshinni shōsoku* (Letters of Eshinni), Shinran's wife informs us that during the period of his propagational efforts in Kantō he read the three Pure Land sutras "for the sake of bringing benefit to sentient beings."[50] Moreover, "bringing benefit to sentient beings" here appears to means more than simply guiding them to take refuge in the *buddhadharma*. Instead, it is said to refer to acts of conferring worldly benefits in this life. Such activities are said to have included improving the lives of the farming people in the Kantō region who were forced to endure terrible cruelty under the rule of the new samurai government, as well as under their subordinates, the feudal lords, manor lords, and village heads.[51]

I believe that the basic meaning of "bringing benefit to sentient beings" in Shinran's thought is clearly that of teaching and guiding sentient beings so that they may take refuge in the primal vow; it points to, in other words, the promoting and teaching of the *nenbutsu*. However, in a broader sense, it also includes, as an extension to actual life, the conferring of worldly benefits in this present existence.

*Prayers for the World*

In regard to this, we must also take note of a letter, which Shinran wrote to a disciple in Kantō, Shōshin-bō, who had been falsely accused by the Kamakura government as the result of the acts of Zenran, Shinran's eldest son.

> Nevertheless, since the prohibition of the nembutsu (in the past) led to the arising of disturbances in society, on this occasion I hope that everyone will, deeply entrusting themselves to the nembutsu and firmly embracing prayers (for peace in the world) in their hearts, together say the nembutsu. . . . Those who feel uncertain of birth should say the nembutsu aspiring first for their own birth. Those who feel that their own birth is completely settled should, mindful of the Buddha's benevolence, hold the nembutsu in their hearts and say it to respond in gratitude to that benevolence, with the wish, "May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teachings spread!"[52]

The words "prayers for the world" (*yo no inori,* 世のいのり) and "May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teachings spread!" are Shinran's expressions of his ideas of "bringing worldly benefits to sentient beings." As we have seen above, here the activity of teaching the *nenbutsu* is expanded and extended into actual life. With these words, I believe that Shinran is urging Shōshin-bō to choose his own, subjective act and to practice it in the midst of the actual conditions that surrounded him, based upon such "prayers for the world."

## SUMMARY: *SHINJIN* AND SOCIAL PRAXIS

*Shinjin* and the direction of social praxis in Shinran's thought can be summarized in the following way.

Shinran rigorously rejected the norms and value systems of the prevailing secular order. He did not consider the ethics and norms of that order to constitute natural principles, despite the fact that they were usually stipulated as such. Instead, all such matters were criticized and completely rejected. In that sense, therefore, one must acknowledge that there are scant features of any form of social praxis in Shinran's approach to *shinjin.*

Yet, in Shinran's thought, social praxis comes to life within *shinjin,* in the very act of relentlessly criticizing and rejecting those secular norms and value systems. In addition, its posture arises from the standpoint of the ruled masses of people who dwell in the lowest classes at the bottom of society.

In Shinran's teachings, *shinjin* constitutes "the mind that seeks to attain Buddhahood," which is in itself "the mind to save sentient beings." It also has the meaning of "the mind bringing benefit to sentient beings" and the mind that is "constantly practicing great compassion," in that it earnestly teaches and guides sentient beings to take refuge in the primal vow. In addition, as it states in the "Chapter on Shinjin," it is the mind that brings all sentient beings to practice the *nenbutsu*: "If these people encourage each other and bring others to say the Name, they are all called 'people who practice great compassion.'"[53]

Further, as the "mind to save sentient beings," *shinjin* becomes established when one lives in aspiration for birth in the Pure Land, with the sincere goal of trying to save all sentient beings. The actual expansion of this into the "mind that desires to bring all beings to buddhahood" takes place in the form of "prayers for the world," the content of which is captured by the phrase, "May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teachings spread!" "Prayers for the world" represent the extension into real life of the activity of "bringing benefit to sentient beings" and "promoting and teaching the *nenbutsu*." More concretely, this refers to a social praxis that one willfully chooses, at the risk of one's own subjectivity in *shinjin*, and undertakes within the midst of the actual surrounding actual historical and societal conditions.

This is the logic of social praxis in Shinran's thought. Even while he rejects and de-absolutizes the system's norms and values, Shinran advances a truly courageous social practice; it is a praxis of determination, choice, and action. He promotes the performance of actions, which are willfully chosen at the risk of one's very self within *shinjin*. He encourages people to adopt a way of life in which "one realizes *shinjin* oneself and then teaches others to realize *shinjin*" (*jishin kyōninshin*, 自信教人信). He advocates a posture of living, which aims at attaining birth in the Pure Land, together with all other beings. He urges each person to shoulder his or her own individual responsibility in the midst of the real and actual conditions, while being grounded in "prayers for the world," which is the development of that way of living within the present reality. As we can see, this is not a dualistic social praxis; it does not simply flow out from *shinjin*, nor is it a sort of "fragrance" that *shinjin* inevitably emits.

CONCLUSION

The critiques of the three scholars introduced at the outset called into question the absence in Shin Buddhism of anything in the nature of an inevitable return to the secular world after the attainment of *shinjin*. In fact, Shinran speaks of this aspect of returning only with regard to birth in the Pure Land. However, we have seen that the foundation for social praxis in the Shinran's thought is not found in this kind of "return." Rather, it is established where one directs one's life toward birth in the Pure Land.

Nishida Kitarō, whose Pure Land understanding was inherited from Suzuki Daisetsu (D. T. Suzuki),[54] stated that it is the nature of this kind of social praxis "to reflect the Pure Land in this world."[55] This means that one's engagement in social praxis is the actual expression of one's aspiration for birth in the Pure Land, which is itself the perfect realization of practices of self-benefit and benefiting-of-others. Thus, when engaged in such social praxis, one suffers deeply the pain of the three evil courses that appear in this *sahā* world, even as one offers a shadow of the Pure Land to be reflected, even a little, in this actual world.

As we have seen above, social praxis is the extension of the desire of the person living with *shinjin* to "bring benefit to sentient beings." As such, it is an action that is willfully chosen at the risk of one's own subjectivity, in the very midst of the surrounding historical and societal conditions. On the other hand, we have also seen that one's involvement in this social praxis also represents the activity of one's self, filled with blind passions. As such, it will naturally have limitations, giving rise to failure and bringing about deep self-reflection. Through such self-reflection, however, it will inevitably bring about the awakening of *shinjin*, as well as its further deepening and continuation.

The teachings of Shinran clearly point in the direction of a social praxis based in *shinjin*. However, after Shinran's death, the basis for such courageous action came to be suppressed within Shin Buddhist doctrinal studies, as well as by its sectarian institutions. In its place was taught a way of life that adhered to and was bound up within the logic of the existing order. This can be attributed more than anything else to the absence of the kind of complete rejection and de-absolutization of the norms and value systems of the present secular order, which can be seen in Shinran's thought. As a result, a social praxis of choice and action, made at the risk of one's very life in *shinjin* and based in

"prayers for the world," within the midst of historical and societal conditions, has not been fully established in Shin Buddhism.

Thus, the present-day criticism of the weakness of Shinran's social praxis does not indicate that there is a problem within his teachings themselves. Rather, I believe that the problem lies in the fact that, after his death, the true intention and logic of Shinran's teaching were not clearly received or exhibited, but instead came to be covered up.

Those who seek to learn and live within *shinjin* should seriously reflect upon that fact. In addition, we also must sincerely ask ourselves how deeply we consider these "prayers for the world"—"May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teachings spread!"—within the midst of all of the historical and societal conditions which surround us today. We must ask ourselves how rigorously we choose and perform, at the risk of our very selves, actions that are based upon those prayers. I believe that, as we inquire about *shinjin* and social praxis in Shinran's thought, the direction of the inquiry becomes reversed, and our own actual way of existence is all the more relentlessly called into question.

## NOTES

1. This article represents a new translation of the section "Shinran ni okeru shin to shakaiteki jissen (親鸞における信と社会的実践)," in *Shinran ni okeru shin no kenkyū* (親鸞における信の研究) by Takamaro Shigaraki (Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, 1990). The initial rendering, by the same translator, was entitled "Shinjin and Social Action in Shinran's Teaching" and appeared in *Shin Buddhism: Monograph Series* (Los Angeles: Pure Land Publications, 1993), 47–79.

2. Tsuda Sōkichi, *Bungaku ni arawaretaru kokumin shisō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972–1973), chap. 1, 585–586.

3. Katō Shūichi, *Nihon bungakushi josetsu*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Kamogawa Shuppan, 2006), 220–221.

4. Hisamatsu Shinichi, "Jōdo Shinshū hihan," in *Zettai shutaido, Hisamatsu Shinichi chosakushū*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Risōsha, 1970), 376–377.

5. See above, and also Shigaraki Takamaro, *Gendai Shinshū Kyōgaku*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, 1979), 92.

6. *Hymns of the Dharma-Ages*, in *The Collected Works of Shinran*, 2 vols. (Kyoto: Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha, 1997), 1:407; *Shōzōmatsu wasan*, in *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, vol. 2 (Kyoto: Kōkyō Shoin, 1940–), 145.

7. *Hymns of the Pure Land*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:326: *Jōdo wasan, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:486.

8. *The Virtues of the Name of Amida Tathagata*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:656–656; *Mida nyorai myōgōtoku*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:735.

9. *True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, "Chapter on Shinjin," in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:94; *Kyōgyōshōmonrui*, shinkan, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:59.

10. *Lamp for the Latter Ages*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:554; *Mattōshō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:692.

11. See Shigaraki Takamaro, "Shinran in okeru yuishin no shisō," in *Shinran ni okeru shin no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, 1990), 25.

12. *Gaijashō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 3:67.

13. *Rokuyōshō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:418.

14. *Jimyōshō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 3:102.

15. *Hajakenshōjō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 3:173.

16. *Gobunshō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 3:469; see also Minor Rogers and Ann Rogers, *Rennyo: The Second Founder of Shin Buddhism* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991).

17. Rogers and Rogers, *Rennyo*, 186; *Gobunshō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 3:441.

18. See Shigaraki Takamaro, "Shinshu ni okeru Shinzoku Nitairon no Kenkyū," in *Shinran ni okeru shin no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Nagata bunshodo, 1990), 595.

19. Shōkai, *Shinzoku nitai jūgomon*, Tōshahan (Kyoto: Ōtani daigaku kokushi kenkyūkai, 1930).

20. See Shigaraki Takamaro, "Shinshu ni okeru Seiten Sakujo Mondai," in *Kōza Nihon Kindai to Bukkyo*, 6, *Senjika no Bukkyō* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1977).

21. "The world is false and deluded; the Buddha alone is true and real" (*sekenkoke yuibutsuzeshin*): these are said to have been the deathbed words uttered by Shōtoku Taishi, and referenced in the Tenjukoku Shūchō Mandala, an embroidered silk curtain commissioned by his wife after his death and now stored in the Hōryūji temple in Nara.

22. *A Record in Lament of Divergences*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:679; *Tannishō*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:792.

23. *Notes on 'Essentials of Faith Alone*,' in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:459; *Yuishinshō Mon'i*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:646–647.

24. Yuanzhao (Ganjō) (1048–1116), *Amidakyō gisho* (Commentary on the Amida Sutra), *T.* 37-363b11–16; and Chieh-tu (Kaido) (1771–?), *Amidakyo gisho monjiki* (Note to Yuanzhao Commentary on the Amida Sutra), *Manji zoku zōkyō* 1-32-1, 142, right.

25. *True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, "Chapter on Shinjin," in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:109-110; *Kyōgyōshōmonrui*, shinkan, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*,

2:70. Note, however, that in Chieh-tu's original text it states, "three kinds of delusional thinking." Shinran also quotes Yuanzhao's passage from the *Amidakyō gisho* in a work entitled *Amidakyō shūchū*, which is believed to have been written by him during the Yoshimizu period.

26. *Notes on Once Calling and Many Calling*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:479; *Ichinen Tanen Mon'i*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:609.

27. *Kannen Bōmon* (Methods of Meditation on Amida Buddha) of Shan-tao (Zendō) (613–681), *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 1:628.

28. *T*. 9, 2b.

29. *Yakushi nyorai hongankyō* (Sutra of the Primal Vow of Yakushi Tathāgata), *T*. 14, 404b.

30. *Nihon reii iki*, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1967), 70:187.

31. *Zoku Nihon koki*, 28th day, 7th month, 9th year of Shōwa (843), in *Shintei zōho kokushi teikei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1929 & 1964), chap. 3, 141.

32. *Ichigon hōdan*, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957), 3:195.

33. *Guwaku hosshinshū*, in *Nihon shisō taikei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971), 15:20.

34. See Kuroda Toshio, *Nihon chūsei no kokka to shūkyō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), 380–382.

35. See Toyoda Takeshi, *Nihon no hokensei shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1983), 97, for official records as to "non-persons" of the time.

36. Shigaraki Takamaro, "Shinshu ni okeru seiten sakujo mondai," in *Koza Nihon Kindai to Bukkyō*, 6, *Senjika no Bukkyō* (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1977).

37. *True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, "Chapter on Shinjin," in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:108; *Kyōgyōshōmonrui*, shinkan, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:69. Note that in the original the word Shinran uses is *shingyō* 信楽. See *Collected Works of Shinran*, 2:182 for an explanation of the rendering of this term as *shinjin*.

38. *True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, "Chapter on Shinjin," in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:113; *Kyōgyōshōmonrui*, shinkan, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:72.

39. Ibid.

40. *Hymns of the Dharma-Ages*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:403; *Shōzōmatsu wasan*, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:518.

41. See Shinran's manuscript version (*sōkōban*) of the *Shōzōmatsu wasan* in *Shinran zenshū*, wasanhen (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1982), 404.

42. *Lamp for the Latter Ages*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:523; *Mattōshō, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:656.

43. *A Record in Lament of Divergences*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:663; *Tannishō, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:775–776.

44. *A Record in Lament of Divergences*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:663; *Tannishō, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:775–776.

45. See *True Teaching, Practice and Realization*, "Chapter on Shinjin," in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:112; *Kyōgyōshōmonrui*, shinkan, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:72.

46. *Hymns of the Dharma Ages*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:404; *Shōzōmatsu wasan, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:518.

47. *Gutoku's Hymns of Lament and Reflection*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:421; *Gutoku hitan jukkai san, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:527.

48. *Notes on the Inscriptions on Sacred Scrolls*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:491; *Songōshinzō meimon, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:565.

49. Ibid., *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:511; *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:594.

50. *Eshinni shōsoku* (Letters of Eshinni), in *Shinran Shōnin zenshū*, shokanhen (Tokyo: Shinran Shōnin zenshū kankōkai, 1958), 195.

51. See Kasahara Kazuo, *Shinran* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1963), 79.

52. *A Collection of Letters*, in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:560; *Shinran Shōnin goshōsokushū, Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:697.

53. *True Teaching, Practice and Realization,* "Chapter on Shinjin," in *Collected Works of Shinran*, 1:119; *Kyōgyōshōmonrui*, shinkan, *Shinshū shōgyō zensho*, 2:77.

54. See Suzuki Daisetsu, "Gokuraku to Shaba," in *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1968–1971), 6:74.

55. Nishida Kitarō, "Bashōteki ronri to shūkyōteki sekaikan," in *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1947–1953), 11:464.

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# The Metaphor of "Ocean" in Shinran

**Takanori Sugioka**
Ryukoku University
**Trans. Mark Unno**
University of Oregon, Eugene

## 1. PREFACE

This paper examines the significance of the "ocean" metaphor prevalent in the writings of Shinran (1173–1262), the first and foremost teacher of Shin Buddhism, as well as provides some historical background. In Shinran's thought, hearing the call of Amida Buddha's vow is key, as found in such expressions as *hongan no chokumei*, wherein the vow is understood as arising from the ocean of Amida's compassion, *gankai*. As we shall see, the ocean is not just one among many metaphors for Shinran, but a cornerstone of his thought. It evokes the depths of human suffering and the even greater depths of boundless compassion that rises up from the fathomless bottom of the *dharmakāya*, the body of emptiness, the source of the voiceless voice of Amida Buddha, that to which we listen deeply beyond the bounds of our ordinary life and thought.

## 2. THE CONCERN WITH "OCEAN" AND THE PROBLEM OF METAPHOR

Metaphor is etymologically composed of *meta* and *pherein*, meaning "transcendent" and "carry," respectively, signifying literally, "to carry beyond." It is translated in Japanese as *inyu*, "hidden comparison," and is distinguished from the "direct comparison" of "like" or "as" attributed to simile. Metaphor was long studied within the discipline of rhetoric, but Aristotle defined "the converted use of a word (metaphor) as the application of one word to signify another where the former is usually used to mean something else."[1] This meaning of converted use is the general sense of metaphor we have inherited today.

For that reason, we tend to think of metaphor as a decoration or as an embellishment produced by the poetic imagination.

Since the publication of *Metaphors We Live By*, by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, research into metaphors has been transformed in what may be called the New Rhetoric movement. Here metaphor is not regarded as something secondary but as an inherent possibility within language. For example, Lakoff and Johnson state, "Not only within the functioning of language, but in thought and language as well, we find metaphor everywhere."[2] Based on this Ken'ichi Seto states, "Even before the problem of language, metaphor must be understood epistemologically."[3] If metaphor is fundamental to human existence, then it fulfills an essential function in many aspects of human life.

Within religion, we find metaphor filling an essential role not just in scripture but also in rites and rituals. For example, some have described Christianity as a religion of metaphor, but metaphor is also highly significant in Buddhism. The historical Buddha Śākyamuni is often said to have used metaphors in his dharma discourses. In the *Jūnibukyō*, for example, there is the *Avadāna* (*Metaphor Sutta*). Metaphors abound in Mahāyāna sutras and allude to emptiness or explicate difficult points. In the *Nirvana Sutra*, metaphors are classified into eight types, with one of those types indicating that the entire narrative is a metaphor.

Shinran's writings contain numerous metaphors that work in interconnection with one another, but "light" in particular deserves our attention; in fact, "light" serves as a root metaphor across many cultures and historical periods. In Shinran's case, one might say that "light" and "ocean" are two of the key metaphors. For example, at the beginning of the preface to his magnum opus, the *Kyōgyōshinshō,* he states, "The universal vow that is difficult to fathom is the great ship for crossing the ocean difficult to traverse, the unhindered light is the Wisdom Sun that destroys the darkness of ignorance."[4] In this way, he describes the work of Amida Buddha bringing all sentient beings to awakening in terms of "light" and "ocean." It evokes a darkened ocean into which light penetrates to illuminate the entire vista. For the spiritual seeker, this is read not as a distant vision but as a present occurrence with his own life as the scene of transformation. "Ocean" and "light" metaphors convey such a powerful sense.

Not only in this specific passage but in many others, Shinran uses the "ocean" metaphor in such terms as *gunshōkai*, *ichijōkai*, *shinnyokai*, *hongankai*, *daihōkai*, *shinjinkai*, *mumyōkai* (ocean of: sentient beings, one

vehicle, original vow, great treasure, true entrusting, ignorance), and others. According to Ryūkichi Mori, there are 32 different metaphors used in 104 places in his opus.[5] Of course, Shinran is not the only one to use the "ocean" metaphor, but the particular weight of this metaphor for him is evident by the fact that he does not use other common metaphors such as "mountain" nearly as much as other Buddhist thinkers, and that his case is somewhat of an anomaly within his own Pure Land group: even his teacher Hōnen does not use the "ocean" metaphor in his main work, the *Senchaku hongan nembutsu shū*.

It is hard to know how many people actually saw the ocean in Shinran's day. Certainly, it was far fewer than today. In that case, Shinran used "ocean" not as a means of making it easier to relate to in an ordinary sense but because it carried for him the significance of elucidating the fundamental problem of sentient beings and the nature of Amida Nyorai or Amida Buddha.

Even if one does not see the ocean, there is a profound connection between it and human beings. It is said that all of the thirty million species living on earth had their origins in the ocean over 3.8 billion years ago. The ocean is the womb, the "home country," *kokyō*, of all life, and for this reason the salinity of human blood is said to be very close to that of the ocean. Especially in Japan, we have relied heavily on the ocean for our food and for help to come to us culturally from overseas. Cultural interchange has occurred across the water, and Japan's distinctive culture is inseparable from its association with the sea. Even Buddhism arrived on Japanese shores crossing over the Sea of Japan. What is the significance of the ocean as a metaphor with which we are so closely associated? Of course, we must examine the textual context of the metaphor's usage, but first I would like to explore what our usual sense of "ocean" is.

In the *Kōjien* dictionary, the entry for "*umi*" reads:

> 1) Umi. Usually a smaller body of water than yō [used for the Pacific and Atlantic oceans]. The opposite of riku [land, continent], as in kaigan [seashore], kōkai [crossing the ocean], Nihonkai [Sea of Japan]. 2) Vast and large, as in kaiyō. 3) A large gathering that is broad-faced, as in kukai [ocean of suffering], jukai [ocean of trees], unkai [ocean of clouds].[6]

The definitions are by and large the same in other widely used dictionaries and indicate two main usages, that of vastness and that of a large, gathering mass that has the collective appearance of a broad, flat

surface that is undulating. These two facets of meaning can be regarded as complementary opposites, plus and minus respectively, or perhaps as light and dark. These conventional connotations found in common dictionaries, however, only provide a glimpse into the hidden potentiality of "ocean" as metaphor. In Ad de Vries's *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery*, under the entry for "sea," the following is to be found:

> 1) The birth place of the enemy of Yahweh (chaos). 2) One of the three forms taken by the Sun deity. 3) The remains of the water of chaos, showing the beginning of creation. Thus, it expresses the limitless, mystical source of life to which it also returns. 4) Immeasurable truth and wisdom. 5) Sexual desire; collective unconscious. 6) Conscience. 7) The sea as hiding great treasure or human life. 8) Flux, death, time. 9) Eternity. 10) Fertility and barrenness. 11) The locus of activity, expressing the direct enactment of carnal desire. 12) A cool, refreshing place that does not easily accept people. 13) Loneliness. 14) Purification. . . .[7]

The highlights of this entry are: truth, wisdom, conscience, eternity, fertility, purification (plus; light), and sexual desire, death, barrenness, loneliness (minus; dark), showing the dual images of the "ocean" metaphor. None of these are particularly Eastern in character. Giving rise to all of these polar opposites and then returning to unity originates in the Bible. Buddhism tends to negate the existence of an almighty Source that gives rise to all creation. Yet, in Japan certainly, there is the image of an archetypal "Mother" who gives birth to everything. We in Japan also share the senses of (5) sexual desire and (14) purification, as well as the general dual senses attributed above to the ocean metaphor and found in both East and West.

Based on this, we can see the egalitarian, all-embracing, vast characterization typical of the "ocean metaphor," as well as the eternal quality transcending human history and time. Furthermore, the "ocean" is transcendent, silent. On the one hand, it has the ability to purify all defilement and is essentially True. On the other, its limitlessness is associated with desire and is thus associated with evil and darkness.

### 3. SHINRAN'S RENDERING OF OCEAN

Shinran uses "ocean" in two polar opposite ways. First, as seen in the "Preface" cited above, is the aspect of human existence found in such expressions as "ocean difficult to traverse." Second is the metaphor of

the ocean as the working of Nyorai, the Compassionate Buddha. That is, Shinran expresses both practitioner and buddha, *ki* and *hō*, in terms of ocean. On the side of the practitioner (*ki*), he uses such expressions as *gunshōkai*, *shujōkai*, *shōjikai*, *mumyōkai*, and *bonnōkai* (ocean of: collective living beings, sentient beings, life and death, ignorance, and blind passion). On the side of the dharma (Buddha), he uses such expressions as *ichijōkai*, *daichigankai*, *kudokudaihōkai*, *jihikai*, *shinjinkai*, *seigankai*, *shinnyokai*, *hongankai*, *daihōkai*, *shinjinkai*, *mumyōkai* (ocean of: the one vehicle, great wisdom, virtue-treasure, compassion, true entrusting, vow, and true suchness). How does Shinran understand the relation between the two aspects?

Explicitly in relation to the nature of "ocean" Shinran has a section on the "ocean of the one vehicle" in the "Chapter on Practice" of the *Kyōgyōshinshō*. First, he explains the nature of the "one vehicle" as follows. Buddhism is the dharma of the one vehicle, and that dharma is the one buddha vehicle of the vow, that is, the dharma taught by Amida Buddha. Then, he compares this dharma of absolute oneness with the ocean and states,

> As for ocean, the stream-waters of the mixed practices and sundry goods of ordinary beings and sages, handed down since the ancient past, have been overturned. The slanderous Devadatta overturned the ocean-water of ignorance as vast as the sands of the Ganges and realized the truth of the great compassion and wisdom of the original vow, the great treasure-ocean-water of the myriad virtues as vast as the sands of the Ganges. This is called "like the ocean." Know well. As expounded in the Sutra, "The ice of blind passion melts to become the virtuous water." The vow-ocean does not contain the corpses of the middling and inferior sundry goods of the two vehicles [of the *pratyekabuddha* and *śrāvaka*], let alone the hollow, provisional, heterodox, imitated goods of the human and heavenly realms."[8]

This passage makes use of two particular virtues of the ocean: (1) its uniformity (*umi ichimi*, the one taste of the ocean) and (2) the fact that it does not hold corpses. The former expresses its egalitarian quality: regardless of whether or not a pure or defiled stream feeds into it, it manifests the one taste of the ocean. The idea of not containing corpses is usually explained as the elimination of "self-power" (*jiriki*, ego-based) practices. In examining the metaphor, however, it reveals the fundamental (all-inclusive) purity of the "ocean" of compassion. Namely, the vow-ocean has the power to transform and purify all matter of defilement. In this light, the two aspects are really just that,

two aspects of the same fundamental quality of the ocean's transformative power.

What, then, is the structure of this transformation, *tenjō*? In the *Kōsō wasan* (Hymns to the High Masters), in the section on Tanluan, Shinran states,

> Through the benefit of the Unhindered Light
> Is attained the entrusting of vast and majestic virtue
> The ice of blind passion necessarily melts
> To give way to the water of awakening.[9]

The ice of blind passion melts when the true entrusting (*shinjin*) of other-power is grasped. In the same series of hymns Shinran states,

> Karmic sin and hindrance become the body of virtue
> Like ice is to water
> The more the ice, the more the water
> The greater the defilement, the greater the virtue.[10]

"Karmic sin and hindrance" signify blind passion, and "virtue" signifies enlightenment, awakening. On the one hand, as the hindrance disappears, awakening proportionally grows; on the other, they are ultimately one and the same substance, "ice and water." In the *Yuishinshō mon'i* (Essentials of Entrusting Alone), Shinran states, "*Jinen* means 'led to become so.' 'Led to become so' means that the practitioner without any contrivance from the very beginning undergoes the transformation and turning over of all karmic sin past, present, and future. 'Turning over' means that the good is realized without eliminating karmic sin. It is like the fact that all water, once it enters the great ocean, becomes of the same tidal rhythm."[11] For Shinran, *jinen* signifies the working of the power of the original vow of Amida Buddha that is transferred to sentient beings entirely beyond the contrivance of self-power. Shinran evokes the power of *jinen* using the ocean metaphor. The key here is that the foolish, ordinary being's karmic evil is transformed into good without being eliminated. As Shinran explicates *tenjō*, transformation, as occurring in the moment of the attainment of true entrusting, it is necessary to elucidate the structure of true entrusting. That is, in this very moment, when I recognize all of my karmic defilements, in that place is realized the wisdom and compassion of Amida as dynamic activity, as true entrusting bestowed by Amida and leading to the practitioner to truly entrust him or herself to Amida.

## 4. THE INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF THE OCEAN METAPHOR
### *(1) Textual Passages from the Scriptures*

What are the intellectual influences in Shinran's use of the ocean metaphor? As traditionally regarded, the influence of Tanluan's *Commentary on the Treatise on the Pure Land* (*Jōdo ronchū*) can be seen in Shinran's citation of the work that is further cited in the *Larger Sutra of Eternal Life* (*Dai muryōju kyō*) that appears in Shinran's explanation of the one vehicle. This section, originally from Tanluan's "Explanation of the Virtue of the Great Gathering under the Gate of Contemplation" ("Kansatsu monge no daishō kudoku shaku"), states, "'Ocean' signifies the limitless, vast, and profound, all-encompassing wisdom of the Buddha. The fact that it does not hold the corpses of the middling and inferior sundry goods of the two vehicles is compared to the ocean. Thus, it is said, 'Heavenly beings and human beings are immovable, and the multitudes give rise to the pure wisdom ocean.'"[12] Shinran cites this passage just as it appears in the original. Since Tanluan also uses the ocean metaphor, its influence on Shinran is readily apparent. This resonates with other uses of the ocean metaphor found in such Mahāyāna sutras as in the thirty-second fascicle of the *Nirvana Sutra* (*T.* 12, 558c) and the thirty-ninth fascicle of the *Huayan Sutra* (*T.* 39, 209a).

Among these various locus classicae, the *Huayan Sutra* is of particular note. As Toshio Ōta notes, Shinran draws heavily on the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, and states, "From within the Gandavyūha, Shinran selects especially those passages referring to the 'ocean.' Also, Shinran cites the passage where Sudhana meets a 'shipmaster' who leads people across a river. Even more significant is the fact that the worlds of both buddhas and sentient beings is referred to in terms of ocean. For example, it speaks of 'the ocean of the all of the names of the buddhas' and 'the great ocean of the blind passions of samsāra.'"[13] The reference to both the worlds of sentient beings and buddhas in terms of the ocean metaphor is paralleled in Shinran's use and is evidence of the *Huayan Sutra*'s influence on his thought development. One of the special characteristics of Buddhist wisdom and awakening is its purity (purified of discriminations), manifested as the working of the dharma in the *Huayan Sutra*, and expressed through the ocean metaphor. Sentient beings, the foolish beings they are, are bound and defiled by their ignorance and blind passions and destined to wander the six realms of rebirth. Since they fill the cosmos with their innumerable existences, they are likened to

an ocean: "ocean of blind passion," "ocean of confusion," "ocean of love and attachment."

There are other uses of the ocean metaphor in Shinran's thought not found in the *Huayan Sutra*, such as "ocean of great faith," "ocean of true entrusting," and "ocean of original vow." As much as he may have been influenced by the *Huayan Sutra*, we must also turn to other sources for understanding, in particular his experience of exile in the distant province of Echigo.

### *(2) The Ocean Shinran Experienced*

There are no written records of Shinran's daily life in Echigo. Only the five words from the "Afterword" of the *Kyōgyōshinshō* remain: "For five years lived variously."[14] However, Ryūkichi Mori states,

> The world of the Buddha is like the "ocean," and likewise with that of sentient beings. It is not that there are two oceans, let alone the thirty-two kinds described, at least not as separate entities. There is only one "ocean." From Shinran's vantage point on land, the most water he could see would have been the Sea of Japan visible on a clear day all the way to Sado Island from Kota Bay along the Naoetsu coastline. . . . Shinran, seeing the ocean, encountering the ocean, was able to talk with the local fishermen. He saw the valuable process of making salt. This was all new to Shinran, and it disclosed to him a new, previously unknown world.[15]

Shinran had moved far away from the capital of Kyoto, not just geographically but culturally and economically, to this marginal area beset by cold winters where he saw directly the reality of the people living vigorously close to nature. For him, the people of the countryside might have represented the unknown rootless reed-like existences indicated by the *Larger Sutra of Eternal Life*. If this is true, then Shinran may have internalized the sense of *gunshōkai*, "collective living beings," in the image of these reed-like people. We can also see his sense of them in the following passage from *The Essentials of Entrusting Alone* (*Yui shinshō mon'i*): "These fishermen, hunters, and various others are like stones, broken tiles, and pebbles like us."[16] Those who entrust and blend with the surging original vow, that is, those who recognize that "we are like stones, broken tiles, and pebbles" "filled with blind passion," attain great nirvana with the blind passions as they are. "We" who have been cast aside by the traditional approaches to Buddhism are embraced in the salvific light of the spontaneous vow power (*ganriki jinen*) working

to transform the practitioner. It is exactly like the relation between ice and water and is also expressed through the phrase, "transformed into gold."

Shinya Yasutomi, following Mori, states,

> The Sea of Japan in winter can produce enormous waves. Powerful blizzards can turn everything white in minutes, quickly suppressing the activity of all life. The people took refuge in their homes, combating hunger and cold, enduring the winter in stillness. When spring came, the winds would die down, and the sea would become calm again. The limpid sea would stretch out for miles. The people of the sea "would throw their nets and fish to traverse this world [of samsara]." (Tannishō) It is not difficult to imagine that Shinran, who regularly came in contact with both the ferocity and gentleness of Nature, held deep in his consciousness the image of this sea.[17]

As Yasutomi suggests, nature's ferocity and gentleness appear to have helped create Shinran's image of the two aspects of the dharma, of practitioner and Buddha.

Shinran's thought, based on the tradition of Pure Land Buddhism, represents the systematization and logical rendering of his own religious experience. His sensibility was deepened in the contours of Japanese life in nature and helped to develop his distinctive perspective. Through his experience of exile, he came to grasp the "transformation" that is essential to nature through the ocean metaphor. If we are allowed to stretch our imagination and infer further, one might say that this transformation is exemplified in his view of ice and water. The northern region that we call Echigo is snow country such that there are few places in the world where it snows more. This volume of snow is directly related to the fact that Japan is surrounded by the ocean. The snow that falls in winter turns to river water in spring and finally flows out to sea. The more the snow, the greater the flow of the river water. Seeing the dramatic change in the Sea of Japan, Shinran may have been led to express the inconceivable power of transformation in terms of the ocean.

## IN CONCLUSION

Shinran used the "ocean" metaphor in numerous ways. For him, it was not just a simple device to make the teachings easier to understand let alone an aesthetic embellishment. Rather, it is a living metaphor that conveys beyond words the salvific structure of *tenjō*,

transformation, in which the suffering sentient being, so difficult to reach, is embraced never to be let go. Thus, to listen deeply to the vow of Amida Buddha is, for Shinran, to listen deeply to the undulations, the rhythms of the ocean. Then one might hear deep within the suffering cries of sentient beings and the silent, healing surge of the waters of formless compassion.

## NOTES

1. Aristotle, *Poetics: Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, trans. S. H. Butcher (London: Macmillan and Co., 1902), 77–79.

2. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3–6.

3. Ken'ichi Seto, *Rhetoric no ch: Imi no arukeorojī wo motomete* (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 1988), 19–25.

4. *Shinshū shōgyō zensho* 2.2.

5. Ryūkichi Mori, *Shinran zuisō* (Tokyo: Sanichishobō, 1972), 20–23.

6. Shinmura Izuru, ed., *Kōjien* (Tokyo: Iwanamishoten, 1993), 409.

7. Ad de Vries, *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Pub. Co., 1974), 55.

8. *Shinshū shōgyō zensho* 2.39.

9. Ibid., 2.505.

10. Ibid., 2.506.

11. Ibid., 2.623.

12. Ibid., 1.302.

13. Toshio Ōta, "Shinran to Kegonkyō," *Shinshu gaku* 105/106 (2004): 213–214.

14. *Shinshū shōgyō zensho* 2.202.

15. Ryūkichi Mori, *Shinran zuisō*, 20–23.

16. *Shinshū shōgyō zensho* 2.627–628.

17. Shinya Yasutomi, "Umi to ronri: Sōzōryoku to shinkō," *Shinran kyōgaku* 29 (1976): 48–49.

# World Macrohistory and Shinran's Literacy

**Galen Amstutz**
Institute of Buddhist Studies

> *. . . since anyone who criticizes the entire systems of others has a duty to replace them with an alternative of his own, containing principles that provide a more felicitous support for the totality of effects [to be explained], we shall extend our meditation further in order to fulfil this duty.*
> —Giambattista Vico, *La Scienza Nuova*[1]

> *. . . eccentricity, ideology, and idiosyncrasy, can yield significant "remakings" of world history. Eccentricity, namely, recognizing perspectives other than those that conventionally view the world . . . can help historians escape from ethnocentrism. . . . Ideology, more conventionally called theory, is essential if historians are to select and integrate new material. And idiosyncrasy in the interests and backgrounds of historians can often be the source of the re-vision so essential for challenging earlier historical narratives.*
> —Janet Abu-Lughod[2]

## THE ORIGINAL HINT MISLAID?

The question has persisted from the beginning of European contact with Japan in the sixteenth century: What is it about Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism that has offered similarities to Western religious experience, most specifically to Protestant Christianity? The perception or intuition of these similarities has sometimes been systematic and at other times ad hoc. Allessandro Valignano, usually regarded as the most perceptive of the Catholic missionaries, reports that certain Buddhists assert that

> Even though humans commit as many sins as they wish, if only they invoke [the Buddha's] name, saying *Namu Amida but*—which is to say, *sanctissima Amida fotoque* [*hotoke*]—with faith and hope in him and the merits of his accomplishment . . . then by this they will be rendered immaculate and purged of all their sins by the virtue and merit of these *fotoques*, without any necessity to perform other penance or to

involve themselves in other works, for thereby injury would be done to the penances and works which [the buddhas] performed for the salvation of mankind. So much that they hold precisely the doctrine which the devil, father of both, taught to Luther.[3]

What was the global background for this sharpness? The Jesuits were encouraged to make an explicit analogy between religious and moral conditions in Japan and the religious and moral conditions of sixteenth-century Europe because pivotal struggles over the nature of society and political authority were taking place in both parts of the world: ". . . the very same doctrine ["Lutheranism"] has been bestowed by the devil upon the Japanese heathendom. Nothing is changed except the name of the person in whom they believe and trust [Amida Buddha = Protestants' God], and same effect being created among these heretics as obtains amidst these heathen: for these as much as the others are sunk in total carnality and obscenity, divided in divers sects, and living therefore in great confusion of belief and in continuous wars."[4] Later in the Meiji period the general observation of something "protestant" about Shin was frequently renewed.[5]

From certain contemporary points of view, there might be something amusing about such conceptual biases. However, the various sorts of Christian missionaries themselves were quite earnest when they made such analogies or identifications. They had all come from conflicted European or American settings in which the issues of authority, both personal and institutional, coded in terms like "Protestant," were of the greatest significance. Would this not, at some level, seem fundamentally suggestive? Nevertheless, five hundred years after its first contact with the West, and despite the body of evidence for the recurrence of this intuitive reaction to Shin Buddhism—against an historiographical background where "protestant" developments in European cultures (however understood) have been considered highly significant in world history—the consistency of this "protestant" interpretation has never generated an adequate comparative-evolutionary paradigm or explanation for Shin Buddhism.[6] In consequence, in the most broadly significant way—that is from a truly global "etic" historical-comparative standpoint—it can be asserted quite reasonably that no sufficient understanding of what Shin Buddhism is about exists.

Of course such a provocative claim requires various qualifications. Beginning with the Western side of the case, James Dobbins, Minor Rogers, and a number of others have produced essential descriptive

historical sources, for the most part relying on the extensive parallel frameworks of Japanese-language scholarship. There are also interpretative works, especially regarding the West's relative neglect towards the Shin tradition. For example, Shin has attracted the attention of both Elisabetta Porcu[7] and Galen Amstutz,[8] each of whom elucidates parts of the orientalist context that encouraged that inattention. Porcu draws attention to how Zen, overshadowing Shin, has been constructed as the true representative of "Japanese culture" and has achieved symbolic hegemony. Similarly, I have myself tried to evaluate the multiple reasons for historians' and other scholars' inattention to a range of facts about Shin history. In doing so I have argued that the entire context had been sharply politicized due to a still lingering cultural stand-off between Japanese and Western sides, as well as a certain theoretical inability to process information about Shin resulting from attachments to original Indian Buddhism, to the limitations of sociological models, and so on.[9] In the field of comparative religious thought, the modern encounter of Shin with Christianity has led to a whole genre of quasi-theological comparison. That topic, however, will be bypassed here because it can be intellectually misleading, and because there is a meta-theoretical problem for European Protestantism itself (cf. *infra*).

Even the sociologist Max Weber played a significant role in this scene. Weber was not in a position to understand Buddhist doctrine or the historical context fully. Despite these limitations Weber, who established one of the major beachheads for comparative thinking in modern social theory, has been taken seriously in Japan for a long time and actually engaged Shin Buddhism briefly in his writings. This point deserves a short digression.[10] Weber fairly accurately recognized important features of Shin Buddhism from his readings of missionary reports about Japan; he knew it was nonmonastic and rather "bourgeois," and the doctrine reminded him of Lutheranism (not Calvinism).[11] In spite of the last observation, he implied that Shin might have something to do with the history of economic modernization. Later, because Japanese scholars had a continuing interest in Weber, and because Weber's famous Protestant ethic thesis was prone to be read as if universally some kind of "push" from a religious ideology was necessary to stimulate modern economic development in any country, Japanese scholars—reinforced by American scholarship—long were in pursuit of some "functional equivalent" to the Protestant ethic in Japan.[12] As early as during Weber's lifetime itself, Japanese

economists aware of the ongoing debate on the origins of capitalism in European social sciences responded to the so-called "Weber thesis" and were induced to ask the question whether there were any religious or philosophical equivalents to Protestantism in Japan. Thus, at first it had seemed that Weber's idea of a religious ethic might apply (at least potentially) to Shin Buddhism, a question taken up in a 1941 article by Japanese sociologist Naitō Kanji.[13] At the time of his writing Naitō was concerned about the idea that there was no comparability at all between Protestant ethic motivations in Europe and Japanese work behavior. Naitō suggested among other things that the way Shin gratitude was associated with diligence in work and conduct could be similar to an idea of *Beruf* or calling (vocation) in Christian Europe, and that the ethical problem of profitmaking was solved by the *jiri-rita* (profit self, profit others) formula that allowed commerce to be seen as a moral activity. However, Naitō did not describe any of the rationalizing tension famously associated with Calvinism and emphasized by Weber, and as German historian Wolfgang Schwentker footnotes, Naitō's data from sermons and house rules may also have been chronologically peculiar to late Tokugawa and even to the regional Ōmi culture.[14] Furthermore, Naitō was not concerned with any substantial doctrinal justifications in core Buddhist principles, which contrasts with the seriously deep Christian theological approach in Weber's Protestant ethic.

Further interest in exploring the analogy came largely from outside Japan, in Robert N. Bellah's study *Tokugawa Religion* (published in 1957), which picked up on the optimistic modernization theory of postwar American sociology.[15] Bellah adopted the Naitō article for his own analysis and suggested that Shin offered the best functional equivalent of Protestantism. At the same time Bellah attributed to Japanese religion *in general* a stress on diligence, frugality, and moral rectitude, qualities that were "profoundly favorable to economic rationalization."[16]

After Bellah, however, the thesis that Shin served as the functional equivalent to Protestantism as a motivator of economic development (and the whole notion of comparing Europe and Japan on that level) turned out to be inadequate even if suggestive. In part it seemed that Weber's own basis for the allusion had been weak: Weber's real knowledge of Japan had been unclear, and while Weber himself had expressed the perception that Shin was perhaps comparable to Protestantism, he only compared it to Lutheranism, and not to Calvinism—so that

properly speaking one would expect no rational this-worldly asceticism in it anyway. Eventually Japanese scholars could never conclusively confirm any idea of a meaningful Protestant ethic analogue. After the 1950s when scholars sporadically took up the question, they even disagreed if Japan actually possessed any indigenous roots of capitalist modernization; and even if Japan had possessed such indigenous roots, they were usually held to be diffuse and not traceable to any specific religious variable, and certainly not any specific form of Buddhism.[17] To the extent that the discussion was sustained, it eventually focused on a secularized or even *nihonjinron* ethnic version of the "equivalent ethic paradigm," formulated as "in what sense and to what extent did the special character or 'uniqueness' of the Japanese contribute to the successful development of industrial capitalism in Japan?"[18]

More recently, a focused review of the apparent relationship of Shin Buddhism and premodern Japanese economic life confirmed that although Shin doctrine in the narrowest sense does not have any "pro-capitalist" economic recommendations as such, Shin tradition was *de facto* closely allied with Japanese economic history, sometimes quietly paralleling overall developments and other times taking the lead. Moreover, in either mode, Shin in fact became the largest traditional religious institution in what was to emerge, after the Meiji period, as the non-European country that displayed the first truly rapid and competitive ability to adopt and adapt European-style modernization. In that light, a tentative conclusion was that as a synthetic phenomenon Shin fit nicely with the Japanese political economy up to the late nineteenth century. It was in other words institutionally isomorphic with various features of Japanese civilization including privatization, property rights, diffusion of political power, communications, transport and trade, marketization and entrepreneurship, education, social discipline, and a certain rationality.[19] In the end, however, for the purposes of the present argument, the conclusion to be drawn is still that a standard Weberian comparativist approach (focused on modernization and ideology mainly from the perspective of economics per se with a shading from the Protestant ethic thesis) does little to directly explain Shin social history and (as should be apparent) nothing to explain Shinran's original doctrine.

Moving on, but with the "protestant" interpretation of Shin kept in mind as something still requiring explanation, a few other studies have attempted other angles of attack on the analysis of Shin in a

broad historical context. One of these took a free-form stab at descrip-tively lining up in some "phenomenological" detail a variety of factual and structural aspects of Shin Buddhism and European Protestantism around the test category or metaphor of small-p "protestant," in order to identify some similarities and differences in the areas of doctrinal claims, politics, and social history. It seemed that in some areas (Protestantism in the United States, and the subtly suggestive Weberian question about links between religion and economics) the "protestant" analogy somehow gestured at something meaningful, and that Shin could be similarly discussed as a rather "politically" distinct form of Buddhism. At the same time, however, it was a tradition that had deep intellectual and structural differences with the ancient back-grounds of Christian institutions and with medieval Christianity as well as with the Reformation.[20]

Another, second study proposed that the understanding of Shin denominational history among both specialists and non-specialists would greatly benefit from a global social historical and compara-tive perspective. The example given was the stimulation provided by reading the Europeanist Peter Burke on "popular" early modern European culture from a Shin Buddhist perspective, an exercise that energizes recognition of problems of folk and elite coexistence in Shin as well as some ways in which Shin both differed from and resembled European phenomena of the "folk" as identified by Burke. As in Europe (whose reform between 1500 and 1800 Burke discusses), Shin prob-ably also underwent a long historical evolution between ca. 1500 and 1800, during which its influence on parts of Japanese society actually became stronger and more thorough. In Japan as in Europe this evolu-tion was strengthened by socioeconomic changes including a commer-cial revolution, the improvement of material living standards, growth in population, increasing standardization of some kinds of knowledge through literacy, and perhaps even gradually increasing mass political awareness. In Japan as in Europe, however, the powers of reform were limited in terms of real outcomes, and the result towards 1800 was the creation of a new kind of cultural split between the reform tradition and the resilient little (folk/popular) tradition. In its specific case, Shin had some distinctive features that bridged generic Japanese religious interests and a strict or purist version of Mahāyāna Buddhism, most notably Shin's incorporation of a form of ancestor or family religion. From a comparative standpoint, however, Shin cannot be considered

"popular" culture. Instead Shin should be considered an independent reform movement along lines recognizable in European history.[21]

The efforts described above represent primarily Western ruminations. On the Japanese side, apologists and scholars have also long had their own ways of situating the tradition, ones that revealed awareness of the "protestant" comparative issue and the problematic posed by apparent similarities with the development of modern (European) experience. Thus the Japanese have their own etic conceptions of how Shin history might be aligned in such global terms.[22] Some Japanese historians have tried to demonstrate that certain parts of Indian Buddhism (perhaps the very earliest sangha, or some communities of followers around *stūpas*) had a social, devotional, and psychological character that prefigured the character of Shin Buddhism later. According to such a model, then, Shin could be considered not a deviation from, but a restoration of earliest Buddhism.[23] Another idea was the rather literal "Protestant Reformation" analogy, which has been examined in English in connection with the work of Kuroda Toshio.[24] Additionally a related line of thought has been "the original Shinran is our contemporary" interpretation of the founder Shinran, a major twentieth-century Japanese stratagem that James Dobbins has long labeled Shin modernism.[25] Unfortunately all these notions have been shown to be empirically problematic in the forms in which they were and are typically presented.

A comprehensive survey by German Pure Land historian Christoph Kleine has examined how the protestant metaphor for Pure Land Buddhism has served—in its process of long shaping the perception of Pure Land Buddhism dialectically on both the Japanese and Western sides of the world—as probably more counterproductive than productive. The metaphor has tended to be sucked into a Christian quasi-theological discourse instead of being thought through in some broader terms independent of Christianity as such; or quasi-theological discourse has tended to reinforce a Eurocentric idea of progressive religious evolution; or the notion of Amidism as somehow "protestant" has annoyed Indologically-oriented Western Buddhist scholars; and so on.[26]

AN INADEQUATE, FRAGMENTED DEBATE
ABOUT MODERNIZATION AND BUDDHISM

In spite of these various wrong turns, dead-ends, or seeming blind alleys, it should be almost too glaring to note that actually the "protestant" question raised about Shin Buddhism is now, and always has been, an unavoidable modernization question. It is part of the huge historical and sociological debate ongoing since the nineteenth century about "what is modernity?" And indeed, in fact, in the case of Shin, the question does not really involve some quaint backwoods "faith" religion of Japanese yam farmers, but rather a messy, sophisticated, and often ill-defined stew of issues about "progress," development, institutionalization, cultural evolution, and the role of religious ideas in Japanese civilizational (and global) history altogether.

Unfortunately, however, the various spotlights, probes, feints, and deconstructions mentioned above—whether pertaining to orientalism; Christian theology; the false Reformation analogy; the non-existent functional equivalent for the Protestant ethic; or the growing body of factual, objective description itself—so far do not quite add up. They do not coalesce into a positive "logic" that would motivate historians to put Shin Buddhism where it might possibly belong, as one of the globally significant actors on the stage of the world's cultural history of modernization. As already noted, after nearly a century and a half Shin Buddhism still poses an unresolved paradigm problem for historians and comparativists—leaving a significant explanatory vacuum. The resultant effect is striking, for example, in the handling of Shin in the Tokugawa period. This was an era during which Shin was clearly one of the major growth phenomena of Japanese culture and was clearly laying groundwork for Meiji modernization, but both Japanese and non-Japanese historians (except for those more or less representing and specializing in "sect history") have almost not been able to deal with it at all.[27] Similarly absent has been any satisfactory theory of "evolutionary" relationships even with other Buddhist traditions across Asia that might fit into a larger scheme of comparative civilizations. Oddly too, rather than trying to account better for the various features that hint at that inconsistent but unmistakable "protestant" or (proto-) modern sensation experienced in the case of Shin, more attraction has typically been found in the quest to revise or debunk exaggerated apologetic claims for the modernity of Shin.[28] So, from this perspective, Shin Buddhism remains still five hundred years after

"first contact" a conceptually "stranded" religious tradition. This persistent lack of a more useful historical conceptual framework in which to situate Shin certainly must be one of the factors in the well-known blurriness or effacement of its image.

Clearly what is needed is a robust positive theory about what happened in Shin Buddhism that might tie it to a larger, possibly developmental, modernizing, comparative view of world history. Is there not something that links together facts such as Japan's progressive civilizational history, Shin's large role, and Shinran's distinctive *tariki* emphasis that distinguished it from earlier Buddhist doctrines? Can it make sense that there was really a radical disconnect between Shin Buddhism and the overall protomodern/modern character of Japanese culture that is universally accepted? Or have historians, whether Japanese or non-Japanese, simply not quite succeeded in delivering a comprehensive theory about why Shinran emerged and why his ideas were as successful in the long run in Japan as they were? To address such questions, Shinran needs to be placed in some broad picture involving both Buddhist history and (on an even larger scale) the development of *mentalités* in Asia and the world overall. In short, it needs an adequate meta-theoretical handle developed out of some wider-ranging etic perspective.

However, it is not easy to handle Shin from the standpoint of modernization theory. To begin with, modernization is inherently a vast, fluid, and politicized field of concerns, difficult even when the examination is confined to the European context (or perhaps any world context at all). Many important themes in standard modernization theory do not apply directly to historical Shin Buddhism per se, for example debates on the existence of "civil society" in China past or present, or current discourses about secularization and religious globalization. Contemporary political science or anthropological issues often do not retroject themselves to the past even if the topic is long-term world-systems. And as already suggested, "Protestant" has never really been a standard category of comparison, and even in the Christian/European setting it is often missing a common higher-level meta-theoretical interpretation. Its understanding is confined to Christian theological language, rather than seeking to evaluate what "protestant" might mean in the context of what is happening to the whole "cultural information system" in some more generalized way. Most importantly, treatment of Shin history to date lacks enough ambitious academic

precedents of the right kind. Shin simply has not been worked into large-scale historical narratives adequately, neither inside nor outside Japan. It has been so successfully kept off the historical stage by the variety of interpretations just discussed that it has been unavailable to, or almost totally ignored by, recent generalists who deal with world-systems and global comparativism. This is in rather sharp contrast with the boldness of Weber.

Against such obstacles this article will sketch an argument that two aspects of contemporary comparative theory operating in the areas of modernization and culture may enable a viable interpretation of Shin that is more fundamentally satisfactory. The first, more preparatory aspect will refer to the historiographical critiques and reorientations that have enabled the current consciousness of world-systems and multiple modernities that is widespread among social scientists. The second, more substantial aspect will refer to the historical anthropology of literacy (especially as represented by Walter Ong) that may enable the establishment of comparative perspectives on the complexity of knowledge regimes.

## WORLD HISTORY HAS BEEN REORIENTED

Although in general the study of Shin Buddhism appears to remain gloriously unfazed by it, in the last forty years the world historiographical landscape has vastly changed because of major shifts of imaginative approach. These shifts operate under several different discourse rubrics: world-systems (especially for economics), multiple modernities (especially for sociologists), anti-Eurocentrism and postcolonialism (for polemicists), and horizontally integrated macrohistory (for some cultural historians). Each of these can be succinctly noted.

The world-systems approach originally investigated the sources of European economic advantage in the last few centuries—the problem that French historian Fernand Braudel famously characterized as the "Gordian knot of world history."[29] From the nineteenth century onwards, and monumentally engaged by Max Weber, there has been a vast interest in explaining why some countries compete more successfully than others. In that context a key challenge has become how to understand a long-term historical global landscape characterized by wide-ranging cross-boundary trade. The recognition that Europe has been (was?) (temporarily) superior only in recent centuries has had an extensive effect on de-centering Europe in images of world history. The

best known exponents of this movement have included historians such as Janet Abu-Lughod, Emmanuel Wallerstein, Andre Gunder Frank, Kenneth Pomerantz and others.[30] To offer a few examples, the famous series by Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century* incorporated this influence, focusing on European data but making gestures towards the non-European world as well. Braudel saw basic economic activity the world over as similar because it arises from efforts to solve similar elementary problems. Felipe Fernández-Armesto's popular *Millennium: A History of the Last Thousand Years*[31] consciously decentered Europe, presenting its period of historical advantage as temporary, possibly based on the adventitious "Atlantic centuries" when Europe (whether or not it had some preexisting cultural advantages) could exploit an unequal interaction with the Western Hemisphere. Similarly, such a rising "systems" orientation caused the prominent historian William H. McNeill to reorient some of his earlier interpretations in *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of Human History*.[32]

Japan has occupied a large place in this debate. On one hand, a school of historical analysis has existed in postwar Japan that developed an independent theory of a world-system of capitalism (which actually preceded and anticipated Wallerstein et al.). This school pursued a world history of "urban everyday life" and a global "relational history."[33] On the other hand, even though the dominant world historiography was long Eurocentric, from any point of view Japan has long been recognized as having some kind of special position in the world evolution of capitalism and economic success. John Powelson, for example, summarized a view that there were certain special, and crucial, parallels between northwest Europe and Japan. According to Powelson, in each of these regions power was relatively flexibly dispersed among negotiating economic actors who could achieve a productive balance without being oppressed or controlled by a top-down sovereign power ("a free market in institutions"). The Japanese case was marked by factors such as pluralism in early agriculture, relative diffusion of early political power, acts of power leverage by peasants and merchants, a history of practices of compromise, peasant rebellions, corporate guilds, wage labor, money, banking and credit, strong technical traditions, and entrepreneurship.[34]

Along with such world-systems history there has developed the multiple modernities discourse, which occurs especially in the context of contemporary economic development theory. This accepts

some notion of global modernity at the same time that it questions the notion that any single type of modernization can be or will be the end point of transitions out of premodern social conditions. This discourse often accepts that the origins of "modernity" as a concept may indeed be European, and that formerly it was arguable that modernity was an ideology of nineteenth-century European social science. At the same time, however, modernity at present is a world-wide if highly varied sociopolitical conversation that is concerned with both unity and diversity. According to this approach, various general (but variable) patterns of "modernity" can be neutrally observed, such as religious-secular separation, legalization of society, urbanization, philosophical treatments of society, and so on.[35] Such a conception of multiple modernities has produced among other things an important contemporary discussion of what is happening to religions under the impact of globalization and how it ought to affect research on religion.[36]

The reconfigurations of the historiographical landscape associated with the above are naturally associated with a powerfully ratcheted-up critique of Eurocentrism, which is prominently represented (to take a single leading example) by the works of the historical anthropologist Jack Goody. In several books Goody takes up specific themes or cases in which Eurocentric claims about historical dominance or priority or superiority over Asia should be undermined. His examples include rationality in mental processes; bookkeeping and accounting; the success of the medieval and early colonial Indian economy; the relationship of competitiveness and family structures; or notions of individualism.[37] In *The Theft of History* Goody has extended his overview to various non-economic cultural behaviors where Eurocentrism has promoted negative biases in the empirical recognition of non-Western traditions. The distortion of empirical facts created by Eurocentrism he describes as a series of "thefts" of conceptual control or attention, imposing Eurocentric interpretive dominance. Such unduly manipulated realms of discourse include conceptions of time and space; the invention of classical Mediterranean Antiquity as the prime source of human progress; overemphasis on European feudalism as a developmental stage; the pejorative fiction of "Asian despotism"; a Eurocentric view of the world evolution of science, technology, and information systems; "civilization" as a European monopoly; historical emergence of capitalism as centering on Europe (the most important of these developmental debates for historians); universities in history; and

even values such as humanism, democracy, individualism, emotional-
ity (including love), and progress.[38] Polemics against Eurocentrism of
course have been influential for decades. When the historian Ricardo
Duchesne from the pro-Eurocentrism side pushed back against Asia-
centric revisionism gone to excess, he still noted that as early as the
1970s prominent historians such as McNeill were already in the pro-
cess of giving up overt Eurocentric interpretation, by borrowing from
anthropology and adopting interactive systems views of long term
civilizational changes.[39] In schools this reorientation has gone under
the rubric "World History" and at times has been part of a contest
between the newer teaching of World History versus the older teach-
ing of Western Civilization.

Anti-Eurocentrism is further linked to the broad academic dis-
course of postcolonialism, which is full of revisionist implications
about perceptions of culture in general. To cite Arif Dirlik, a contem-
porary sociologist of modernization:

> The postcolonial understanding of culture is deconstructive and
> historicizing. Moreover, postcolonial insistence on understanding
> modernity in terms of relationships is an important antidote to the
> mutually distancing implications of [essentialist] culturalist under-
> standings of modernity. This requires, however, that postcolonial
> criticism should overcome anxieties about totalities, and return anal-
> ysis to the systemic understandings of difference in which postcolo-
> nial criticism has its origins. A postcolonial criticism that wallows
> in identity politics merely feeds into the culturalism (and politi-
> cal conservatism) of contemporary understandings of modernity.
> Reconceptualizing modernity as global modernity may help over-
> come some of these problems in allowing recognition of the dialectics
> of modernity in its globalization. Global modernity bears upon it the
> mark of European origins in its formulation (as must any reference to
> modernity). On the other hand, it is also less bound to those origins
> than such concepts as postmodernity or globalization.
>
> . . . the concept of "global modernity" (in the singular) [is] a way
> to understand the contemporary world. It suggests that the concept
> helps overcome the teleology implicit in a term such as globaliza-
> tion, while it also recognizes global difference and conflict, which
> are as much characteristics of the contemporary world as tenden-
> cies toward unity and homogenization. These differences, and the
> appearance of "alternative" or "multiple" modernities, it suggests,
> are expressions, and articulations, of the contradictions of modernity
> which are now universalized across, as well as within, societies.[40]

Such innovations and displacements encourage historians to look towards the question of "horizontally integrative macrohistory"[41] expressed in terms of cultural as well as economic development. This means that historians must pay attention to global cultural "trade systems" and flows, along with instances of parallel evolution. Representatives of such trends in cultural studies are scholars such as Goody and Victor Lieberman. The latter, taking up the standard question, "Why was Asia different? Why was Europe exceptional?" suggests that the (European) categories normally chosen for the inquiry pre-govern the conclusions possible. He argues that non-Eurocentric criteria for revisionism are needed instead. In this context, he specifically does not just want to simply shift Japan from one polarized side of the inquiry to the other, i.e., merely to move Japan to the "European" side in a binary Europe vs. Asia conceptual structure.[42]

Lieberman proposes that there existed ca. 1450–1830 a broad Eurasian pattern of localized societies coalescing into larger units in various ways that were idiosyncratic but still comparable. He calls these combinings "roughly synchronized political rhythms."[43] Lieberman points out how they involve features such as territorial consolidation, administrative centralization, social regulation, and inconsistent, irregular cultural integration. The dynamics of such rhythms included economic growth, especially under conditions of fragmented power, monetization, mobility, and literacy, as well as military competition and state direction. The de facto outcome was recognizably synchronized chronologies across Eurasia, although no overarching teleology should be imputed to the patterns.[44] Similar arguments are made for example by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, who wants to emphasize the interfaces among the local, regional, and super-regional dimensions of societies.[45]

Such above sorts of history, then, as well as additional discourses such as the anthropology of cultural flows, point to horizontal world-system perspectives not only for economics and technology but also for cultural information systems. They especially point to literacy and information regimes as will be noted below. As summarized by one historian, the challenge is to achieve a postcolonial world history that is non-Marxist, non-Eurocentric, and "ecumenical."[46]

## THE REORIENTATION OF HISTORY INVITES
## NEW APPROACHES TO JAPANESE BUDDHISM

However, does all this movement in thinking about world history really have anything to do with Shin Buddhism? Many of the discussions referenced above may seem completely tangential, for a number of reasons. First, like most other such comparative cultural revisionist studies to date, Goody's work, for example, has only a smattering of references to Japan. Second, in the course of asking why some countries are rich while others remain poor, or why our historical perception of economics may be so distorted and one-sided, contemporary postcolonial developmental/modernization theory may draw out characteristics of Japan without casting light directly on religion or Buddhism. This is the case, for example, with Powelson or Jones. In general the world-system thinking that focuses heavily on economics and anti-Eurocentrism has not so far penetrated very deeply into the details of Japanese cultural history. Third, to find the "theft of history" theme in religion one must go to the tradition of writers such as Tomoko Masuzawa, Timothy Fitzgerald, Russell McCutcheon, and perhaps before that Jonathan Z. Smith, who have pointed out the role of Christian conceptual dominance in the construction of the discipline of religious studies. These authors, however, still operate from within the framework of that dominance, and do not consider Buddhist perspectives as a serious alternative. Fourth, Japan has not been a main victim of historiographical discrimination. Eurocentrism and orientalism have only been partially applied to Japan. This is because in various economic and political dimensions Japan has not always been perceived orientalistically by Europe, but also as a serious roughly-equal coexisting power.[47] In the final analysis, then, in a manner replete with ironies, Shin Buddhism has simply resided at the margins. For the purposes of all the broad-ranging comparativists of the type cited here, Shin Buddhism has remained so obscure that it is not worked into the arguments in any form. In contrast to Goody's "theft of history," Shin history and ideas were never even stolen!

Nevertheless, these various lines of discourse—world-systems, multiple modernities, anti-Eurocentrism, postcolonialism, or horizontally integrated macrohistory—create an altered atmosphere of expectation or conjecture. This has opened the way to fresh imaginings about comparative cultural history. Global history suggests that societies (starting with economics but extending to culture) are likely

to be synchronically, "horizontally" connected over wide areas and periods. Multiple modernities encourages decentering, ambiguity, and the notion that there are many possible paths to complex development. Postcolonialism, Eurasianism, and anti-Eurocentrism warn against automatically privileging the West, while serving to reinforce one's expectations about the possible sophistication (both globally influenced, and indigenously invented) of all kinds of Japanese culture. Currently such an altered atmosphere can be seen in the work of the historians of Japan who have been most alert to the problems indicated by the call for a "horizontally integrated macrohistory" involving cultural questions. A recent example for Japan is the work of Elizabeth Berry; she does not focus on religion, but has raised intricate questions about the nature of the Tokugawa period's "information regime."[48]

In brief, then, the argument that Shin Buddhism should be more present in a broad picture of world modernization ensues from the following:

- Europe has become decentralized in perceptions of world history for a long time already; the decentralization extends to culture.
- Due to interconnections and parallelisms in development (including both trade and culture) there are good reasons to expect and look for synchronic similarities across regions.
- Japan has always been recognized as an exceptional "quasi-European" case.
- Shin was one of the major cultural phenomena of premodern Japan.

### ONG'S INTERIORIZATION THESIS OF LITERACY, WITH INTEGRATED MACROHISTORY IN THE BACKGROUND

To argue this is not to say that the West's time of intellectual dominance is over, that the new century will belong to Asia and to Asian scholars who will transform the social sciences, calling attention to societies too little studied in the past. It is to say something more significant and less controversial: that the social scientific studies of the future are likely to take into greater account societies and religions, traditions and practices still too little known today, concealed from the West by many factors, not least the general unfamiliarity with the languages of the Asian world of yesterday (and today).[49]

Recent world history opens up to us the potential for a historical anthropology of Shin Buddhism that elucidates much deeper macro-historical integrative links to the evolution of global civilization than have been exploited so far. The basic perspective on this question proposed here derives from facets of the literacy thesis[50] on the complexity of information regimes. The most relevant basic set of such notions comes from literary scholar Walter Ong, especially in his classic work *Orality and Literacy*.[51] Ong had a great deal to say about the interrelation of the two modes of communication, orality and literacy. What we will concentrate on here, which is of greatest interest in the context of Shin, is the idea of a transition to an increased "interiorization" of consciousness spurred by literacy.[52]

Noting that literacy was a late phenomenon of human history that reshaped consciousness in significant ways, Ong attempts to specify how it differed from the earlier history of strictly oral communication. According to his famous thesis, writing restructures consciousness. This occurs because it invents a new world of autonomous discourse, i.e., one detached from concrete social settings of oral communication, in the process becoming "utterly invaluable and indeed essential for the realization of fuller, interior human potentials."[53] Writing starts by being regarded as an instrument of secret and magic power, but as it heightens consciousness and furthers interior transformation, it eventually abstracts and sharpens a kind of precision and analysis. Thus "writing makes possible increasingly articulate introspectivity, opening the psyche as never before not only to the external objective world quite distinct from itself but also to the interior self against whom the objective world is set." The reflectiveness of writing "encourages growth of consciousness out of the unconscious."[54] "Writing and reading . . . are solo activities. . . . They engage the psyche in strenuous, interiorized, individualized thought of a sort inaccessible to oral folk. In the private worlds they generate, the feeling for the 'round' human character is born—deeply interiorized in motivation, powered mysteriously, but consistently, from within."[55] Writing allows intertextuality.[56] As human consciousness has evolved through writing and dependency on writing it has made an "inward turn."[57] In summary, the literate mind is more analytical, innovative, objective, logical, and abstractive. In the case of Europe, all these tendencies existed before print, but print greatly accelerated them.[58]

The general thesis that literacy causes significant changes in cognition is widely accepted by scholars. For the purpose of emphasizing the specific point about a shift to psychological interiorization, Ong's articulation is the most usefully explicit. However, literacy also has been a longtime focus in the research of anthropologist Jack Goody. In Goody's analyses, writing is conducive to formalization and logic; it supports complex law and bureaucracy; it greatly affects religion by decontextualizing, universalizing, and de-ethnicizing, and it is conducive to individualism and particularism of experience. At the same time it reduces tolerance for variation (oral religion is much more flexible), so that change in written culture tends to come about by conflicted reform rather than by incremental adaptation. In Europe (where there existed a strong association between the Reformation and printing) printing had the effects of fixing texts, reinforcing authorial identity, undercutting parochialism, cultivating systematization and indexing, and encouraging science.[59]

The specialness of the case of Europe always needs to be highlighted in such discussions because there the relatively abrupt advent of printing is widely regarded as having a quick, radical effect on consciousness. In the famous evaluation by Elizabeth Eisenstein,[60] print culture had some specific cognitive qualities that altered methods of data collection, storage and retrieval of information, and communications networks. In its wake the dissemination of information was greatly accelerated, leading to an explosion in the generation and accumulation of knowledge (especially in science). Its other influences on knowledge included standardization and replicability, reorganization of information (rationalization, codifying, cataloging), improvements and corrections to editions and sources of data, enhanced preservation and fixity of information allowing for accumulative comparison and change, and amplification and reinforcement of established categories. Crucially, under the heading of movement towards modern forms of consciousness, somehow the new era of printing was associated with an enhancement of individual subjectivity, self-definition, and self-expression. All were associated with phenomena such as the production of an abundance of self-help books and practical guidebooks.[61]

In Europe, in the case of religion, printing "reset" the entire stage for the Reformation. Luther's movement (starting with the "Ninety-Five Theses") exploded because Protestant interests were able to use printing as a mass medium against the established church. Christian

dissent had existed long before but print gave it a greater and more indelible reach over a much larger area. Print had major impacts on the Roman Church too, especially in terms of standardizing and disseminating its own materials in response (sermons, hagiography, pedagogy). On all sides printing accelerated textual study of the Bible and of course dispersed the actual text of the Bible, including (especially on the Protestant side) versions in the vernacular. Protestant doctrines created a pressure for reading. Meanwhile, of course, the effect of dissemination was also splintering and differentiation.[62]

The literacy approach has been applied in detail to the evolution of Christianity in Europe. The notion of a psychological shift away from the material to the inward and spiritual is fairly common in European Christian studies along with reflections on the impact of literacy and printing. Donna Ellington[63] argues for example that both Catholic and Protestant traditions changed in the wake of the Reformation. The sermon literature on the Virgin Mary demonstrates a broad shift from emphasizing the body to emphasizing the soul, as well as from the material and concrete to the inner life of individuals. Those trends were directly connected with literacy and literate modes of thought developing in the sixteenth century. In that period occurred a transition from oral-dominated to more literacy-influenced modes of communication and consciousness (although Europe still remained a world of complex interactions between written and oral). Further directly related was a growing private sense of self (though at least in this European Christian case, this self was also a result of increased demands by church and state for conformity and codes of control). In religion preaching had an inherent communal aspect, but the written word at the same time inherently tended to individualize and privatize communications. In the case of Mary, from a starting place in the earlier bodily, concrete sacramental nature of Mary worship, there was a shift to seeing Her as one's very personal deity. In Marianism, if orality and sound were associated with physical closeness, text was associated more with sight and distance. Mary's starting roles as intercessor and mediatrix and food giver stood on the physical side, but post-Tridentine Catholicism would emphasize Mary's self-controlled, private, enclosed, contemplative, passive side. Thus when later Catholic tradition (influenced by Loyola and Jesuit teaching) defended Mary, it was a changed Mary of high self-awareness and interior piety, emphasizing the superiority of Mary's soul over her body and her spiritual

motherhood. "Catholic preachers, therefore, appropriated the same personal, inward piety that so influenced the Protestant movement. . . . Catholic religious practice and understanding underwent a transformation which had begun by the latter part of the fifteenth century and continued through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This transformation involved the cultivation of a more individualized and interiorized understanding of Christianity that ultimately left no aspect of piety untouched.[64]

Continuing with the case of Europe (where almost all the scholarly research and reflection on this problem has been concentrated), and going beyond literacy in the narrowest senses, it is also well understood that other broad aspects of that continent's changing informational and civilizational circumstances led to an advancing psychological interiority. Specifically this refers to the gradual onset of decentralized social and economic politics favored individualization, differentiation, and complexity in inner mental life. Such observations are commonplace in the description of European history, and have been additionally explored by means of the concepts of public and private.[65] The genre of "private life" research is concerned with the history of differentiation in society and consciousness. Its approach is multidisciplinary, covering fields ranging from political theory to religion to printing to literature. According to these studies, a key marker of the arrival of greater public-private differentiation is the expansion of print and publication along with literacy, resulting in the "increasingly private devolution" of information. In general, "private life" questions are not about overt political theory or governance; they are questions about domestic housing design, codes of personal behavior, education of children, clothing, refuges of intimacy such as gardens, gift exchanges, property and property rights, male-female relations, marriage, sexuality, parent-child relations, family relations, childhood, canons of aesthetic taste including food, crime, festival life, literature and its practices (diaries, family records), friendship, neighborship, kinship, sensibility about the body, voluntary associations, death ritual, and above all conceptions of selfhood.[66]

In Europe it has been obvious that certain thinkers will anticipate such developments in complexity that will take very long periods of time to fully manifest themselves (e.g., Aristotle's ideas on politics, or Augustine's on personal interiority in Christianity). And (just as the orality-literacy theorists stress in the case of the growth of literacy)

the public-private, differentiation approach is not any simplistic evolutionary or modernization theory, especially of a linear type. Rather, the question aims to reveal carefully qualified, gradual, multidimensional processes that extend over long periods of time. Nor should any "history of private life" be confused with the "constitution of the individual as subject" in any strict philosophical, political, or psychological sense, or with any libertarian caricature of individualism.

When we come to the context of religion, then, at its broadest the category of "private" is thus not about Near Eastern monotheistic theology, but instead it is about complexity per se. Therefore a "protestant" shift, to the extent that we can speak of one, is not towards any crude "individualism" so much as a gradual, long-term movement in sensitive balances between single self and community. In other words, there occur complex transitions of explicitness in the dialectical formation of the spheres of state and local, individual and communal, or household and village. The Reformation promoted "secularization" by an "explicitation" that purified religion by separating it out from its cultural matrix, a process that gradually focused on the individual, especially as clan patriarchalism was undermined.[67] In sum, in Europe "Protestantism" is at the meta-level not a matter of Christian theology, it is a question of altered information structures.

## THE CONCEPT OF A "LONG REFORMATION"

One further point should be particularly underlined. The scholars of the above literacy and privatization theses emphasize that the changes in consciousness they point to were not deterministic, were inconsistent, and took a long time to result in gradual effects on the societies in question. In this context of the long view, recent scholarship on the European Reformation emphasizes broad similarities between Protestantism and the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Such similarities include the importance of attending to the practical effects of reform ideas (effects going beyond theological abstraction), changes in ritual practice, the very lengthy implementation of reform, the ongoing dialectics between popular and reform religion, and the difficulty of ever even evaluating the "success" of the Reformation.[68] In Europe the relation between local folk religions and official Christianities remained inconclusive for centuries, so much so that one line of argument holds that European common people were not truly Christian prior to the Reformation (with doubts persisting after as well) and

that their religion was just a paganism and magic with a veneer of Christianity. Moreover, regarding the success problem, some historians have remained skeptical that even the Reformation ever became fully successful in effecting fundamental or revolutionary change and that popular piety never came close to meeting the high goals of the reformers.[69]

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BACKGROUNDS OF THE SHIN CASE:
LITERACY AND BUDDHISM, BOOKS AND JAPAN

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The dominant global scholarship on the above problems has addressed Buddhism only in relatively tangential ways, but a certain amount of relevant thought is available. Regarding literacy, Buddhism as an organized tradition was in the estimation of most scholars surely the product of writing. According to the survey of Daniel Veidlinger,[70] media of communication have always been important in Buddhism and have always presented a key issue for the monastic tradition, since the Pāli canon, including the *Vinaya*, was transmitted orally for about four hundred years. Writing was known in the time of Asoka, but was not used at that point to record Buddhist texts. Thereafter, however, the use of books evolved and created a distinct literate cultural life within Buddhism. Here the effects included loss of control over information and the development of varied uses for manuscripts, including both cultic uses (as ritual objects) and discursive uses (as words actually read for content). Because information stored as writing may reach people through secondary orality, oral and written modes continued to flow back and forth into each other. Buddhist chronicles from Southeast Asia suggest a creeping development from strictly oral transmission to more and more literacy over time. There is evidence for traditional convictions among Buddhists about the use of memorization as a way to deeply infuse knowledge in the mind, despite awareness of the practical difficulty of keeping a memorizing tradition going without the security of a written format. Thus even after writing, traditions of oral textual transmission remained strong and writing did not displace orality. Thai chronicles suggest that writing was probably still overshadowed by orality at the time of Buddhism's transmission to northern Thailand. Occasionally some monks seem to have seen written books as challenges to their own authority and influence as key mediators of the Buddha, and thus the historical pattern is one of different competing monastic groups with different attitudes towards

written texts. Contemporary written texts have continued to have multiple purposes, such as satisfying donor desires for making merit, the creation of knowledge about Buddhism, and reading and studying in monastic education. In sum, different groups have long approached the written word differently and in relation to varied social and religious roles.[71]

Together with such broad perspectives on the blending of literacy and orality in "orthodox" monastic Buddhism in Asia, we also know a good deal about literacy and books in Japan—although not nearly as much as would be desirable for this topic. Following the masterful survey of Peter Kornicki,[72] it can first be observed overall that premodern Japan (at the same time that a rich oral life has always flourished) was essentially a bookish culture because of the tremendous influence of Buddhism and Confucianism. The bookishness reflected a complex internationalized East Asian cultural production that was not monocultural or monolingual.

A political aspect of this productivity in Japan was of great importance. Namely, aside from a brief episode in modern times (i.e., from the 1880s to 1945) no historical government ever seriously interfered with the transmission or production of books. The Tokugawa period in particular was a bookish culture with a substantial distance between a free-form world of commercial (and religious) publishing and the state. (Tokugawa supervision seems to have been negligible in comparison to other early modern states, with even little positive sponsorship of various types of canon formation.) Of course, modern critics have pointed out that printing and literacy do not per se lead to spread of power or growth of knowledge, but are always channeled by systems of authority. Kornicki remarks that "in pre-modern Japan language and hence literacy are inextricably tied to systems of state control and determine access to élite culture."[73] At the same time though, especially in the Tokugawa period, culture was nevertheless more and more rendered into the accessibility of print language. The complexity of the writing environment effectively blurred any simple binary distinction between literate and illiterate. Eventually the Tokugawa actually featured a "plurality of print languages each with their own demands, conventions and social and cultural boundaries" that were not directly correlated to a single educational or cultural hierarchy.[74]

As for religion in particular, within East Asian Buddhism many features long supported publishing. Such features included the absence of

antipathy towards the idea of printing sacred texts, which were not the word of God; the early use of printing as a major part of magical ritual; the practical need for visual contact with the texts, since they were Chinese translations that could not be made oral; and the political fact that no one group was in authority over the textual traditions. Printing before 1600 was dominated by Buddhist institutions and yet also not centralized, and Buddhism never monopolized the use of printing like Christianity did in Europe in the Middle Ages. In the Japanese publishing explosion of the early seventeenth century, the range of types of books became extremely wide.  Buddhist books (along with Sinological classics et al.) were offered among the many products for the commercial market. The first book printed in Japanese *kana* rather than in Chinese had been a Pure Land Buddhist book, a collection of sayings of Hōnen (1321, the *Kurodani shōnin gotōroku*), and the continued production of such printed material was a feature of Pure Land throughout. The Tokugawa period's Buddhist printing has yet to be extensively studied, but it was clearly a substantial proportion of the output of commercial publishers in the seventeenth century. The noted Zen preacher Suzuki Shōsan (1579–1655) observed the great popularity of printed Buddhist books in his day, and lists of the Buddhist books always precede the rest of the listings in categorized seventeenth-century catalogues (in the oldest surviving such catalog, from the 1660s, the Buddhist books occupy the first 117 of the 266 pages). Among such catalogs, for Shin Buddhism there was for example a *Jōdo shinshū shōgyō mokuroku* (1752) and a *Shinshū kyōten shi* (1780), the latter a study guide that includes biographical information about the authors and short explanations of the contents. The Buddhist proportion of the market gradually declined towards the nineteenth century but remained significant at least in Kyoto, whose publishing activity in fact probably equaled that of Edo for much of the Tokugawa era.

It is clear that reading was still long tied to oral modes of communication and also that manuscripts long continued to coexist with print. The extent of active literacy, outside of Zen monasteries, in the whole Kamakura and Muromachi periods is blurry. However, literacy dramatically increased in the Tokugawa period, especially in connection with the rise of governmental record-keeping. The local schools known as *terakoya* dramatically increased in numbers, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century. Peasant literacy is difficult to gauge, but the existence of books such as Miyazaki Antei's agricultural

handbook *Nōgyō zenshō* (first published in 1697) suggests widespread functional ability. Literacy was higher in some regions than others, but it is well known that foreigners who visited Japan in the nineteenth century before 1868 were often surprised by the rate of literacy.[75]

European historians in the Eisenstein tradition observe that printing as a technical innovation had a strong and rapid impact on literacy in Europe. In Japan there was no such dramatic dividing line, but rather the evolution of the information system seems to have been more organic and gradual. The technical capacity by itself for printing did not kick off any information revolution. Also, blockprinted books retained the "calligraphic personality" of authors, in Kornicki's view reinforcing a general Tokugawa bias towards the particular rather than the universal in culture.[76]

## WAS SHINRAN'S THOUGHT A PHENOMENON OF PRODIGIOUS "HYPERLITERACY?"

In any case, from such evidence the argument is strong that premodern Japan had a complex knowledge and information regime comparable to Europe's or China's during contemporaneous periods. It is also clear that from the prehistoric beginnings through the nineteenth century Buddhism was fully involved in that regime. While this picture is deeply suggestive from the standpoint of the Ong thesis, it does not obviously provide any conclusive etic explanation why it might be in Shinran's case—at a seemingly early point in the twelfth century[77]— that his thought evinced its well-known turn to marked interiority and autonomy.[78] Of course it is a truism that something seriously new was going on in Shinran when he manifested a certain conceptual transcendence of the varieties of Buddhism available to him in his time. Shinran's spiritual odyssey began with his departure from Mt. Hiei and its rich, multi-dimensional inherited traditions. A deeply rooted emic tradition of apologetics for this departure included Shinran's sense of personal spiritual powerlessness, the *jiriki* emphasis of Tendai tradition, disgust with power politics, the strains of celibacy, *mappō* pessimism, or a craving for social equality. (Alternatively, critics attribute it to a complete loss of grasp of principles of basic Buddhist orthodoxy!) An even more interesting follow-up question, however, is why Shinran was apparently also dissatisfied with the numerous other life options available in the Kamakura Buddhist world *after* he left Hiei. Since medieval Japanese Buddhism was apparently as loose, multi-stranded, and

multidimensional as the Buddhism in traditional Tibet[79] or in China, why did Shinran feel he had to make a radical break from *almost every choice* around him? In the medieval Japanese context, with all of its seeming options for Buddhist practice both inside and outside existing institutions, why did Shinran come up with a radical new substitutionary creative system? Perhaps standard explanations yield an underestimation of the extent to which, quite beyond sectarian apologetics, there really is an originality and unprecedented quality to Shinran, a quality even stronger than the sectarian tradition actually wants to admit.

The more robust explanation offered here requires etic attention to the macro-historical context. To start with, the existence of a long-running decentralized social politics that has favored differentiation and complexity in inner mental life (if not quite the same individualism as in European tradition) is now close to being commonplace in the evaluation of premodern Japanese history. Second, in the background of Shinran's cultural experience in Kamakura-period Japan surely was a contemporary expansion of literacy. The revival of systematic communications (including commercial trade) with China during its Sung-period flourishing, which was undertaken by the late Heian court under the influence of Taira interests, led to a renewed surge of intellectual activity. In China itself, the Sung was an exceptional period for both economics and scholarship, and many examples of Chinese book production made their way to Japan and stimulated Japanese printing and scholarship. The spread of literacy produced a proportionate spread of semi-literacy and the dissemination of information via secondary orality.[80]

From such a perspective, the arising of Shinran's ideas in Kamakura Japan can be seen in conjunction with the evolution of literacy and the associated experiential shifts that were beginning to force a new interiority on the educated inhabitants of late Heian Japan. Shinran's transformation was not random; it was a response to a new psychological, existential crisis that motivated, for example, the contemporary interest in the (surface) doctrine of *mappō.* In one obvious sense, the ideas of both Hōnen and Shinran (not to mention certain predecessors such as Genshin) were derived in an intensely textual manner. Technically speaking both men obtained their ideas about *nenbutsu* largely from books, that is, from their independent reading and appropriation of Buddhist literature, not from a received tradition of living

practice passed down from prior living teachers per se. And especially with Shinran we also further seem to see a profounder stage in the process of an evolving literacy in Japan. The early literate rationality (according to Ong's model) that overdraws and oversimplifies the complexity of experience, and perhaps even helps bring out the conscious self in the very initial stages, seems to proceed to a later literacy that needs to go back towards and into an unconscious. This later, evolved unconscious, however, is not the exterior, visionary one of the ancient shaman, but now one deepened and layered in a protomodern kind of interiority.[81]

The proposition thus advocated here is that Shinran and the later Shin tradition gradually and cumulatively, far from being "simplifications" of Buddhism, were products of literacy and all that is implied by literacy. Would it then not be meaningful to describe Shinran's thought as hyperliterate, reflecting Ong's conception of a literacy-generated complexity of mind in which some kind of "tipping point" was achieved initially in Shinran's experience? Again, needless to say, the conception that Shinran moved Buddhism in a more extremely interiorized direction has long been the "orthodox" interpretation of Shin texts.[82] It should be made explicit that this sort of approach is not reductionist—it is not to propose that Shinran's experience was some "mechanical" product of literacy—but rather that Shinran's thought was a sophisticated, synthetic response to a general sense of crisis brought about loss of a plausibility of earlier modes of Buddhism. That plausibility was lost due to underlying changes in the whole information regime of Japanese civilization.

The argument for an evolved interiority in the case of Shin is reinforced by how it was associated with additional expressions of interiority that gradually distinguished it to a meaningful extent in relation to other forms of Japanese Buddhism. These present quite obvious similarities to shifts in consciousness in early modern Europe of the kind evaluated by Ellington. One of these expressions was Shin's turn to the relatively nonvisual (in the sense of non-imagistic) in Buddhist communications. Famously, the most preferred representation of the teaching (the *honzon*) in Shin was not a sculpture or a picture, but the verbal phrase composed of Chinese characters *Namo Amida Butsu* (to take refuge in Amida Buddha).[83] Whatever the complex histories of literacy in other kinds of Buddhism, other traditions (at least in Mahāyāna) were actually more concretely imagistic than

Shin.[84] This phenomenon was reflected in the Shin sense that enlightenment would be an internal experience without specified external expression, i.e., without predetermined conceptions of what would be expressed in terms of the physical body. Shin's second tendency then was to internalize, abstract, and simplify ritual. A third related aspect of interiorization was Shin's famous turning away from polytheistic animism and magic in the larger religious environment in favor of concentrating on its own inward "devotional" perspective.[85] In the end Shinran's thought catalyzed (at least ideally) a whole combination of elements. These included the shift to (ultimate) involuntariness psychology; delegitimation of the conventional institutional model (based in *vinaya*); a template of a spiritually egalitarian community; an increase in subjective selfhood and a certain "political" autonomy of the individual; a rethinking of the traditional canon via literacy; an internalization of orientation; and a simplification and internalization of symbolic representation and communication.[86]

OUTLINING SHIN TRADITION OVER THE CENTURIES
AS A "LONG REFORMATION" TOWARDS PERSONAL INTERIORITY
IN AN EXCEPTIONALLY LITERATE SOCIETY

It must be granted that to a large extent the argument in the case of Shinran himself has to be theoretical and conjectural because of the paucity (outside of Shinran's own works) of corroborating historical data in the early stages. Shinran's move was highly prodigious, in the sense of being chronologically far ahead of the majority development of consciousness in the Japanese economy and society around him.[87] However, the later historical data also suggest that such a "big picture," macro-historical, etic interpretation, even if speculative for Shinran, is clearly sustained for the long-running Shin tradition that derived from Shinran's ideas. The argument is supported by those analogies with the patterns of literacy, complexification, and the public-private differentiation, which have been best studied in the case of Europe. The strangeness of overlooking such a complex, nuanced *longue durée* modernization narrative in the case of Shin—or indeed in the case of any kind of Asian Buddhism—is that such narratives are obvious to Western historians and sociologists in disciplines outside of religion.[88]

Of course the working out of various themes in Japan was significantly different than in Europe. Certain themes seem to be similar between the two regions. We might consider "protestant separation"

in religion and state; print culture; complex interplay between communal and individual dimensions of religious life; ambiguity in (patriarchal) family organization; the emergence of private property; or differentiating effects of elaborated market economies. On the other hand, numerous other themes were decidedly different. Missing in Japan were explicitly theorized discourses on political representation (this was hugely different in Europe, such that the absence of explicit democratizing theory in Japan before Meiji has been vastly misleading). The discourse on women and sexuality was much less obsessive in Japan. The aims of literary genres were different, especially the novel (the narration of private life had a much more prominent literary history in Europe).

Otherwise, however, picking up the hints from recent European scholarship suggests the following line of analysis. First, there is no problem with the notion that the basic ideas of Shinran could reflect serious cognitive reform, even if the innovations were in a sense far ahead of their time.[89] Second, in terms of broad expectations, it is a misconstruction to think that reform ideas did have or could have widespread immediate impact on the inner thinking of any large numbers of people. It has taken European scholars a while to adapt to the idea of modest evidence about long-term, subtle changes in practical religious mentality as a result of Reform thought. Similarly, it is going to take scholars of Japan and Shin Buddhism a while to adapt to the idea that Shin's most widespread impact occurred in the Tokugawa period, extending perhaps even into the twentieth century. Third, the Shin religious culture (or cultures) should not be oversimplified, for reasons of institutional apologetics, into an image of some frozen, standardized Shin orthodoxy set in a dichotomy against some putative eternal foundational essence of a uniform, "generic" Japanese religion. Some have described the pluralism of Japanese religion as a "buffet." Shinran's interiorized *tariki* Buddhism was always set against this buffet and needs to be reevaluated as a long-term, never perfected, hybridizing process of cultural persuasion. It was initiated, but no more than initiated, by Shinran and retained and continues to retain geographical, temporal, and intellectual variations.

Looked at the above way, using standard factual data from standard sources one can sketchily describe a capsule "*tariki* history" of Japan formulated in terms of a "long reformation" that falls into

a series of loose stages. Such a sketch possesses a plausibility going beyond conjecture.

(a) Responding to the pressures of a changing civilization, the elite-educated Shinran developed a *tariki* formulation of doctrine. It expressed a realization of a subconscious and a newly different individuation and internalization of Buddhism, accompanied by a de-emphasis on ritual and neutralization of precepts. In his writings, Shinran produced the idiosyncratic, hyperliterate *Kyōgyō shinshō* but also material (*wasan*) for new kind of general ritual use.

(b) However, there is no reason for his own lifetime and for perhaps several centuries afterwards to think that more than a handful of people ever understood Shinran's doctrine well. It was inconceivable for many to do so against the pervasive background of mixed *shinbutsu* and folk religion. Shinran's own son is understood to have misrepresented the teaching. At the same time, it was perhaps widely possible to pick up from Shinran's thought the more literal surface ideas of equality, nonmonasticism, and some kind of Pure Land birth. A little later, though both of the men seem to have understood the reform nature of Shinran's teaching, great-grandson Kakunyo was the staunch defender of original Shinranian difference but Zonkaku the great-great-grandson was the early promoter adapting and popularizing the ideas so that boundaries with other streams of Buddhism were blurred. The most successful temple centers in the early generations were Takada-ha and Bukkōji-ha. These have been considered, if the later Honganji position is taken as standard, as divergent interpretations that were somewhat off the mark of Shinran's austere core idea. Most significantly, during the first two hundred years, Shinran's ideas in any form reached an extremely small sector of the Japanese population.

(c) During the economic and political transformations beginning in the late fifteenth century, Rennyo was able to turn a corner by establishing a popular rhetoric that was ambiguous because his Pure Land interpretation could overlap with folk ancestralism. At the same time, Rennyo's language was yet still capable of conveying the more sophisticated Shinranian message and was also relatively sharply differentiated from most of the religious language and practice around it in Japan in the fifteenth century. Evidence about the inner intellectual circles of Shin is limited, but it appears that a high-level, if small-scale, intellectual tradition of reading and interpretation had been maintained. Plenty of ambiguities about the nature of the general audience

reception remain, but Rennyo's works began to be published by block-printing in the sixteenth century. (However, compared to Europe nothing so dramatic in terms of media revolution happened.) As membership jumped, Shin Buddhism became more unified around Honganji, but the political side of Shin teaching began to have unintended side effects in the form of the *ikkō-ikki* local political autonomy movements, in which the religious understanding per se remained highly unclear.

(d) Despite the *ikkō-ikki* activity and the politico-economic growth of the late sixteenth century, by 1600 still only a small fraction of the Japanese population, supporting only maybe two hundred or so well-established temples, was involved with Shin. However, the policy of the Tokugawa *bakufu* to require some temple membership of every resident of Japan (the *terauke* system), which was promulgated in conjunction with an intense spate of economic and population growth, led to a huge membership increase. By about 1700 the two Honganjis had about eight thousand well-established temples. Probably the religious understandings of the majority of new members remained as ambiguous as ever, as people joined temples for many reasons, not always including deep religious interest. Shin religious leadership was confronted with an enlarged challenge of getting members to hew to its official ideology of austerity and interiority, thus in a new context setting Shin teaching against the world of folk/vernacular religion that surrounded it.

(e) Incremental growth in membership continued during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but as the membership eventually settled down, Shin solidified and developed more and more as an intellectual tradition. Educated ministers became much more numerous and their training more systematic. By the mid- to late Tokugawa period the practice of replicating or rehearsing Shinran's hyperliteracy became the essential intellectual core of the ministers' education. As clerics, they subsequently tried to transmit to members as much of this orientation as they could. Meanwhile diffuse literacy and knowledge among the general public grew independently: in this new context Shin Buddhism acquired a close relationship with publishing. Regularized versions of Shinran's higher-level ideas began to be persistently delivered to a large cumulative audience. Perhaps a significant mass of Japanese members really began to catch up with Shinran's interiority ca. 1750–1850! Still, viewed locally, Shin culture was in some areas folkish, in other areas orthodox and austere. By 1850, Shin had

around ten thousand well-established temples that had built a subculture in Tokugawa Japan.

(f) The era of Meiji reform that was stimulated by Westernization and globalization considerably, perhaps fundamentally, recontextualized the Shin tradition. Goaded by modern Christianity and science, religious reformers received a new impetus in their ancient battle with Japanese folk religion and promoted a surge of purified, intellectualized Shin teaching. Such ambitions set up damaging tensions within the membership that persisted through the twentieth century. On the other hand, Shin leaders were walled in by modern political and cultural nationalism, leading to missteps such as dreadful World War II policies and reactionary intellectual isolationism that undercut the legitimacy of the tradition in the later twentieth century. In the postwar period another new set of circumstances existed, now involving accelerating general secularization of consciousness and/or postmodernist religious individualism in a society flooded with information. For the first time, the postwar period weakened the former cultural authority of Shin Buddhism *qua* traditional institution.

To recapitulate in conclusion the most important single point of such a summary: Shinran's conceptions in their "fully interiorized" form only influenced a large number of people gradually, inconsistently, incompletely, and over a long period of time. This sort of perspective on cultural history, of course, whether in Europe, Japan, or anywhere else, requires an incremental imagination and a long-range vision replete with nuance. It is not conducive to simplistic, caricatured, decontextualized, or short-term views of Shinran's ideas or the institutional tradition that more or less organized itself around them. This *longue durée* evolution accounts for the particular, not-fully-consistent mix of coexisting interpretations and cognitive styles that has marked Shin tradition up to the present.[90] Such an observation ought to be merely a truism that one would actually expect to be applicable to other forms of Buddhism or in fact to any complex religious tradition.

## BRIEFEST OF CODAS

The kind of modeling that needs to be made about Japan and Japanese Buddhism has been better accomplished for European history. The history of the latter was unquestionably characterized by a rise in interiorized self-consciousness over the course of a long period of development. The intellectual discovery of the unconscious that we

think of as modern followed that rise as the self-awareness finally rose into conceptual view. According to one survey, from around 1750 a shift began in emphasis from static toward process concepts of experience, probably due to the growing intellectual influence of biology. Subsequently, the notion of unconscious mental processes became conceivable by 1700, topical by 1800, and effective by 1900, emerging as "an unavoidable inference from experience." Along the way, from various perspectives the rising unconscious mind was interpreted according to various orientations and vocabulary. It was treated by mystics as the link with God; by Romantics as the link between individual and universal powers; by early rationalists as a factor operating in memory, perception, and ideas; by post-Romantic thinkers as organic vitality expressed in will, imagination, and creation; by dissociated "self-conscious man" as a realm of darkness and violence; by physical scientists as some product of unknown physiological factors; by monistic thinkers as the prime mover, the source of both order and novelty; by Freud as inhibited memories ruled by the pleasure principle, usually forgotten or inaccessible; or by Jung as some pre-rational realm of collective myth and religious symbolisms. The point is that decades or even centuries before Freud, European thought had been saturated with reflections and speculations on the nature and existence of mental complexity, including the subconscious.[91]

If with more acute awareness and expectations we drill down again below the surface in premodern Japan, what we can certainly find there too is evidence of a gradually increasing literacy, differentiation, personal interiorization, and related consequences. These factors are the essential matter of Shin Buddhism at least in its true "Shinranian" modality, even if the Japanese record does not seem as rich in quite the same way as the European.

Shin Buddhism in Japan actually seems to be baffling to some not because its theory of knowledge is Christian, but rather because its implicit tendencies to psychological complexity departed to some extent from other, earlier kinds of Buddhism and were partly parallel in their evolution to developments particularly in the Euro-American sphere. How could this be misunderstood? Merely because it has not been expected in the case of Asian Buddhism. Yet in principle the operation of Buddhist teaching in a highly complex, differentiated, "modernizing" or "protomodernizing" society has to be somehow unlike its operation in early Indian tribal society, or a Southeast Asian caste

society, or a Chinese Confucian society—no matter what abstract the-
ories of Buddhist philosophical interdependence or universality may
exist in the background.

Of course, it may be asked skeptically, does a revised explanatory
paradigm for Shin like that suggested above have any significant impli-
cations for the future reception of and engagement with Shin Buddhism
outside of Japan? Probably not! To the mind of this researcher, one of
the persistently intriguing things about the comparative problem in
Shin Buddhism is why it has drawn so little interest from the scholarly
community in general. Not to put too fine a point on it, *to not be interested
in the "protestant" problem in explaining Shin Buddhism is approximately
equivalent to not being interested in the broad topic of modernization—which
is roughly the same as not being interested in the past three or four hundred
years of systemic global history. And yet, is it an exaggeration to suspect that
this peculiar disinterest may in fact be true of many Buddhologists and many
historians of Japanese religions?*

Unfortunately, by too often dismissing the Shin tradition and fail-
ing to adequately pick up the hints offered from the very beginning of
the encounter by the protestant analogies, modern Western Buddhist
scholars have put themselves in a peculiar position. They have too far
discounted a major form of Asian Buddhism that was of key impor-
tance in an Asian civilization and which displayed a level of complex
differentiation in consciousness equal to that in the leading Western
societies. It is most odd, but perhaps no non-Japanese outside of Japan
has ever taken the Shin tradition quite as seriously as the Jesuits did
four hundred years ago!

## NOTES

1. Giambattista Vico, *La Scienza Nuova* (orig. pub. 1725); quoted from Leon
Pompa, *The First New Science*, ed. Giambattista Vico (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 2002), 57.

2. Janet Abu-Lughod, "The World-System Perspective in the Construction of
Economic History," *History and Theory* 34, no. 2 (1995): 86.

3. Allessandro Valignano, *Historia*, 160–161; trans. in George Elison*, Deus
Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard,
1973), 43.

4. Valignano, *Historia*, 161; trans. in Elison, *Deus Destroyed*, 43–44. For a discus-
sion of Europeans and Shin during the Christian Century, see Galen Amstutz,
*Interpreting Amida: History and Orientalism in the Study of Pure Land Buddhism*

(Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 44–49.

5. Amstutz, *Interpreting Amida*, 55–81, 123–140.

6. It should be specified that this analogy for Shin Buddhism goes on quite separately from a discourse about modern "Protestant" Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, which has been explored by authorities such as Richard Gombrich and Gananath Obeyesekere in *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 216–217.

7. Elisabetta Porcu, *Pure Land Buddhism in Modern Japanese Culture* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008).

8. Amstutz, *Interpreting Amida*.

9. A more recent study has further expanded the argument that the peculiar political circumstances of modern Shin have caused it to subordinate and distort its own self-understanding in order to meet the requirements of securing a modern Japanese identity for a modern Japanese audience (especially under conditions created by *early twentieth century* Western intellectual traditions). Galen Amstutz, "Kiyozawa in Concord: A Historian Looks Again at Shin Buddhism in America," *Eastern Buddhist* 41, no. 1 (2010).

10. The career of Weber in Japan has been tracked in the magisterial research work of Wolfgang Schwentker. See especially Wolfgang Schwentker, *Max Weber in Japan: Eine Untersuchung zur Wirkungsgeschichte 1905–1995* (Tuebingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998); and Wolfgang Shwentker, "The Spirit of Modernity: Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* and Japanese Social Sciences," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 5, no. 1 (2005): 73–92.

11. Relevant passages have been translated into English several times. See Max Weber, *The Religion of India*, trans. and ed. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958), 278–279; Karl-Heinz Golzio, "Max Weber on Japan: The Role of the Government and the Buddhist Sects," in *Max Weber in Asian Studies*, ed. Andreas E. Buss (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 90–101; Amstutz, *Interpreting Amida*, 70–71.

12. The larger difficulty is of course that Weber's intention in the Protestant ethic thesis is itself a hugely problematic and controversial issue. The original argument was quite theological and entered the worlds of Lutheran, Calvinist, and some other streams of theology in considerable detail, the idea being that certain features of Calvinist thought—individualism, predestination and the sense of election, the necessity to express election (state of grace) through this-worldly profit-oriented economic activity, the consequent sense of calling modified from Luther's thought, and pervasive anxiety—gave capitalism a drivenness and hyper-rationalism that were unique among world traditions and helped account for Euro-America's world-beating economic aggressiveness. According to some scholars, probably that argument should always have

been seen as hypothetical, self-referential, and constructed, not as an actual historical explanation testable against facts. See Peter Breiner, "Weber's *The Protestant Ethic* as Hypothetical Narrative of Original Accumulation," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 5, no. 1 (2005): 11–30.

13. Naitō Kanji, "Shūkyō to keizai rinri—Jōdo shinshū to Ōmi shōnin" (Religion and Economic Ethics: Shinshū and the Ōmi Merchants), *Shakaigaku (Nihon shakaigaku nenpō),* 8 (1941): 243–286.

14. Schwentker, *Max Weber in Japan,* 168–172. Naitō (1916–?) was a somewhat obscure sociologist active in the 1950s mainly noted for a couple of books on history and sociology and Japanese society.

15. Robert Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1957).

16. Schwentker, *Max Weber in Japan*, 272–282. Atypically, Serikawa Hiromichi-Hakutsū, in *The Modernization of Japan and Her Religious Ethics: On Ohmi Merchants in the Early Modern (Edo) Period* (Tokyo: Taga-Shuppan, 1997), tried to make a case for Ōmi *shōnin* behavior as a type of early modern rationalization along Weberian lines, which is duly problematic, but the author helpfully listed fifteen categories of the merchants' economic/moral spirit: abstinence and diligence, spirit of social service, honesty, forbearance, spirit of harmony, stable growth, trade practices profiting both oneself and others, sound management, mathematical accuracy in business practice, quality control over goods, religious faith, consciousness of the ancestors and the public alike, responsibility to one's own business first, profit as blessing, and law-abidingness.

17. See Ogasawara Shin, *Kindaka to shūkyō—Makkusu Vēbā to Nihon* (Kyoto: Sekai shisōsha, 1994), 60–88. Empirical survey research by James A. Dator in the 1960s concluded about the essential religious question: "the strong cultural values of diligence, hard work, and the rest need not derive from anxiety or a sense of sin in the face of a transcendental referent" (James A. Dator, "The 'Protestant Ethic' in Japan," *Journal of Developing Areas* 1 [1966]: 23–40, cited in Schwentker, *Max Weber in Japan*, 37). Nevertheless, the relationship of Shin and economic activity is mixed up with larger questions about modernization in general. Ogasawara noted that Shin never really attained any dominant political weight in Japanese civilization so that it could be a primary explanation of modernization. Ogasawara concluded that there are elements of Shin that resemble the role played by Protestantism; however, Shin could not and did not play the central role played by Christian Reform in Europe; it did not grow enough to invade the core of the society and achieve the hegemony that Reform developed in Europe. (Nor was it strong enough, on the other hand, to obstruct modernization in any way.) Shin's Tokugawa inheritance was one of finding its own space inside the compartments of the Tokugawa system but not of any revolutionary threat to that enclosing system.

18. Shwentker, "The Spirit of Modernity," 75.

19. Galen Amstutz, "Notes on Shin Buddhism and Economic Growth in Pre-modern Japanese History: Can the Relationship Be 'Religiously' Interpreted?" *Shinshugaku: Journal of Studies in Shin Buddhism* 116 (2007): 1–40.

20. Galen Amstutz, "Shin Buddhism and Protestant Analogies with Christianity in the West," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 1 (1998): 724–747.

21. Galen Amstutz, "From Kyōdanshi to Internationalized Comparative Social History: An Example from Reading Peter Burke on 'Popular' Culture," *Shinshugaku: Journal of Studies in Shin Buddhism* 111–112 (2005): 1–11.

22. This may be compared with the defense of Christian Protestantism. Of course from the emic or internal point of view there exists a classical Shin interpretation of itself as the culminating product of a long, self-contained "Pure Land tradition" in which Shin doctrine stands as a *sui generis* (and superior and progressive, yet in many ways strangely ahistorical) form of Buddhist teaching that crowns Mahāyāna; that interpretation is well-known but is not comparative in the sense sought here.

23. E.g., Akira Hirakawa, *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).

24. James C. Dobbins, "Envisioning Kamakura Buddhism," in *Re-Visioning "Kamakura" Buddhism*, ed. Richard K. Payne (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 24–42. The debates over Kamakura Buddhism might almost be understood as a reprise, in the context of Japan with Japanese scholars as contestants, of battles between Marxian and Weberian thought from Europe. Tomoko Yoshida has studied in detail how two major modes of interpretation derived from Europe—Weber via Robert Bellah, and Marx via Kuroda Toshio—have both rendered accounts of Shin Buddhism, but both have been problematic. Tomoko Yoshida, "Kuroda Toshio (1926–1993) on Jōdo Shinshū: Problems in Modern Historiography," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 33, no. 2 (2006): 379–412.

25. James C. Dobbins, *Letters of the Nun Eshinni: Images of Pure Land Buddhism in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

26. Christoph Kleine, "Der 'protestantische Blick' auf Amida: Japanische Religionsgeschichte zwischen Orientalismus and Auto-Orientalismus?" in *Religion im Spiegelkabinett: Asiatische Religionsgeschichte im Spannungsfeld zwischen Orientalismus und Okzidentalismus*, ed. Peter Schalk (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2003), 145–193.

27. This has so far remained the case even when, along recent revisionist lines, the great civilizational importance of Buddhism in the Edo period is re-recognized. See Orion Klautau, "Against the Ghosts of Recent Past: Meiji Scholarship and the Discourse on Edo-Period Discourse on Edo-Period Buddhist Decadence," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 35, no. 2 (2008): 263–303.

28. E.g., in various works by Robert Morrell, James Ford, James Dobbins, George Tanabe, Ian Reader, and Clark Chilton.

29. Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15ᵗʰ–18ᵗʰ Century: Volume II: The Wheels of Commerce* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 134.

30. For a survey, see Jack Goody, *Capitalism and Modernity: The Great Debate* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2004).

31. Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Millennium: A History of the Last Thousand Years* (New York: Scribner, 1995).

32. William H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of Human History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003).

33. Shigeru Akita, "World History and the Emergence of Global History in Japan," *Chinese Studies in History* 43, no. 3 (2010): 84–96.

34. John P. Powelson, *Centuries of Economic Endeavor: Parallel Paths in Japan and Europe and Their Contrast with the Third World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994). See also Eric Jones, *Growth Recurring: Economic Change in World History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

35. For such discussions, see for example Michael Woolcock, "The Next 10 Years in Development Studies: From Modernization to Multiple Modernities, in Theory and Practice," *European Journal of Development Research* 21 (2009): 4–9; Raymond L. M. Lee, "Reinventing Modernity: Reflexive Modernization vs Liquid Modernity vs Multiple Modernities," *European Journal of Social Theory* 9, no. 3 (2006): 355–368; and Björn Wittrock, "Modernity: One, None, or Many? European Origins and Modernity as a Global Condition," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (2000): 31–60.

36. For example, Robert W. Hefner, "Multiple Modernities: Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism in a Globalizing Age," *Annual Review of Anthropology* (1998): 83–104; Christian Smith, "Future Directions in the Sociology of Religion," *Social Forces* 86, no. 4 (2008): 1561–1589.

37. Jack Goody, *The East in the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); interestingly, pp. 31–33 touch on the rationality of traditional Buddhist doctrinal discourse in Japan.

38. Jack Goody, *The Theft of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

39. Ricardo Duchesne, "The World Without Us," *Academic Questions* 22, no. 2 (2009): 138–176; and Ricardo Duchesne, "Asia First," *Journal of The Historical Society* 6, no. 1 (2006): 69–91.

40. Arif Dirlik, "Global Modernity? Modernity in an Age of Global Capitalism," *European Journal of Social Theory* 6, no. 3 (2003): 275–292; citations on 289, 275.

41. Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 255.

42. Victor Lieberman, "Transcending East-West Dichotomies: State and Culture Formation in Six Ostensibly Disparate Areas," in "The Eurasian Context of the Early Modern History of Mainland South East Asia, 1400–1800," special issue, *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 486.

43. Ibid., 469.

44. Ibid., 463–546.

45. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," in "The Eurasian Context of the Early Modern History of Mainland South East Asia, 1400–1800," special issue, *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–762.

46. Jerry H. Bentley, "Myths, Wagers, and Some Moral Implications of World History," *Journal of World History* 16, no. 1 (2005): 51–82.

47. One of the contradictions of Japanese studies is that viewed from the standpoint of economics or political science, Japan has never really been considered a "stranded tradition."

48. The Tokugawa saw certain kinds of integration (of information networks, the polity, markets, urbanization, transportation, education) but a multiplication of diversity too, resulting in a complex kind of social cohesion. A conclusion that pertains to Honganji is that a robust "public" sphere (neither negligible nor overwhelmingly strong, though not one aiming at serious political democracy) can coexist with an authoritarian state. Mary Elizabeth Berry, "Was Early Modern Japan Culturally Integrated?" in "The Eurasian Context of the Early Modern History of Mainland South East Asia, 1400–1800," special issue, *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997); and Mary Elizabeth Berry, "Public Life in Authoritarian Japan," *Daedalus* 127, no. 3 (1998): 133–165.

49. Shmuel Eisenstadt, Wolfgang Schluchter, and Björn Wittrock, preface to *Public Spheres & Collective Identities*, ed. Shmuel Eisenstadt, Wolfgang Schluchter, and Björn Wittrock (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), ix.

50. This consideration of literacy does not focus on the intra-religious studies debate concerning the dialectical, complementary, interactive roles played by written vs. oral versions of religious language (William Graham *inter alia*). Clearly Shin along with other Buddhist traditions had such interplay, and in the case of Buddhism it was further salted by the idea of the two truths (any informational formation could be seen in terms of its false [static] dimension or its true [dynamic, inessential] dimension). Instead, the comparative historical issue here is that literacy allows the buildup of more complex, layered, networked, involuted worlds of human consciousness and cultural content.

51. Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (orig. pub.

1982; repr., London: Routledge, 2002).

52. This topic is profoundly absent in Japan, where Ong is known but not cited, and of Goody's many books in relation to the literacy problem, only *Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) has ever been translated into Japanese (Goody's work on Eurocentrism is also almost completely unknown in Japan). Neither of these (according to informants) are ever cited in connection with Buddhism. There may well be a historical angle to the lack of interest: it was mainly in Europe that a self-conscious legacy of discourse about literacy existed; see Nicholas Hudson, *Writing and European Thought 1600-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

53. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 81.

54. Ibid., 145.

55. Ibid., 150.

56. Ibid., 131.

57. Ibid., 174–176.

58. For related lines of discussion see also Jack Goody, *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Jack Goody, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Jack Goody, *Domestication of the Savage Mind*; and Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).

59. On both Ong and Goody, see the critical survey by Khosrow Jahandarie, *Spoken and Written Discourse: A Multi-Disciplinary Perspective* (Stamford, CN: Ablex, 1999); on Goody see 80–87 and 102–106. For other critical reviews see David R. Olsen and Michael Cole, eds., *Technology, Literacy, and the Evolution of Society: Implications of the Work of Jack Goody* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, 2006); and David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance, eds., *Literacy and Orality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). It should be stressed that the scholars of the literacy thesis are not hard-edged determinists about any effects of writing or printing; literacy is just one conditioning factor in a culture.

60. Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

61. Ibid., 225–272.

62. Ibid., 43–159, 303–378. Eisenstein pointedly objects to how Weberian tradition has neglected the role of printing, i.e., the fundamental information

regime, in shaping the modernization changes with which it has been concerned; see 378–421.

63. Donna Spivey Ellington, *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul: Understanding Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001).

64. Ibid., 186, 243.

65. Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, eds., *A History of Private Life*, 5 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987–1991); Roger Chartier, "Introduction: Forms of Privatization," in *A History of Private Life*, ed. Ariès and Duby, 3:163–165; and Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

66. See *passim* in Ariès and Duby, eds., *A History of Private Life*; e.g., Nicole Castan, "The Public and the Private," 3:403–445.

67. McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity*, 33–39, 54; Yves Castan, François Lebrun, and Roger Chartier, "The Two Reformations: Communal Devotion and Personal Piety," in *A History of Private Life*, ed. Ariès and Duby, 3:69–109 (the authors discuss the rebalanced private-communal relationship in European Christianity after the Reformation).

68. Jeffrey R. Watt, preface to *The Long Reformation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company), ix–xi.

69. Watt, introduction to *The Long Reformation,* 1–9. Such conceptual challenges suggest that just as the permanent foundational essence for the entirety of Japanese religion has been promoted as "Shintō," the permanent foundational essence for the *entirety* of European religion could equally well be promoted as *Druidism.* But how many apologists for Europe take that position seriously? Two main questions from this historiographical perspective that are especially relevant to Shin Buddhism in Japan are these: What actually happened with popular religion when reform ideas came on the scene? And, how and when can an episode of reform be accounted a "success?"

70. Daniel M. Veidlinger, *Spreading the Dharma: Writing, Orality and Textual Transmission in Buddhist Northern Thailand* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006).

71. On textuality in premodern Theravāda, see also Anne M. Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). Theravāda Buddhism was dynamic and changed shape in the early modern period. The reformulation had to do with changing "textual communities" and new forms of commentary and education and emphasis that *both* lay and monks should engage texts (139–196, 202). Such eighteenth-century changes prefigured the later

nineteenth- to twentieth-century Theravāda reforms (although of course pre-modern Lankan Buddhism retained the monk-lay structure and also patronage and other earlier types of interactions with the king's government and aristocrats).

72. Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); see also William M. Bodiford, "The Medieval Period," in *Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*, ed. Paul L. Swanson and Clark Chilson (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 163–183.

73. Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 32. This observation may be somewhat misleading in the Shin Buddhist context, however.

74. Ibid., 33.

75. See also Richard Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

76. Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 20–29.

77. However, this was contemporaneous across the world with the changes in Europe described by Stock in *The Implications of Literacy*.

78. And an intimately related problem is the following. Given due recognitions of the similarly rather complex evolutions of literacy at least in China and perhaps some spots in Southeast Asia, an obvious modernization question would be: Why did no Shinran-like Buddhist thinker emerge in China or Southeast Asia before the twentieth century? Other than reiterating that the long-term civilizational politics of Japan seem to have differed somewhat, in the manner that was abruptly revealed in the Meiji period, this article makes no attempt to address the question directly at present.

79. Georges B.J. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 38–41.

80. Paul M. Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 4th ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), 83–84; Bodiford, "The Medieval Period."

81. Such a notion of interiority, implicitly recognizing an inaccessible subconscious, is highly compatible with certain emphases in contemporary cognitive science. At least for modern people, most brain activity is unconscious; influences on the subconscious from culture, individual experience, and genetics are extremely diverse, complex, and untransparent; over a period of time (probably quite long) unconscious patterning can be tweaked (but rarely more than tweaked) by what can be provisionally and ambiguously interpreted as "conscious volition." Yet even the "volitional will" springs forth from the subconscious. (Introductory presentations include Guy Claxton, *The Wayward Mind: An Intimate History of the Subconscious* [London: Abacus, 2005]; Tor Norretranders, *The User Illusion: Cutting Consciousness Down to Size* [New York: Penguin, 1997]; or Frank Tallis, *Hidden Minds: A History of the Unconscious*

[London: Profile, 2002].) Conventional or classic Buddhist thought was surprisingly limited in its recognition of anything resembling the (inaccessible) cognitive subconscious. The proposition that through meditation the subconscious can be comprehensively and directly known is a huge claim that is not supported by the findings of modern cognitive science. The interiority associated with literacy involves an increasingly rich human experience of consciousness linked to increasingly elaborated sociopolitical environments that yield more and more complexity "inside" the theater of individual minds (with less of the complexity expressed on the "outside"). For a longer argument see Galen Amstutz, "Shinran's 'Evolved Interiority' in Outline," in *Scholars of Buddhism in Japan: Buddhist Studies in the 21st Century: The Ninth Annual Symposium for Scholars Resident in Japan*, ed. James Baskind (Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2009), 21–47.

82. Close reading of Shinran's texts is not the goal here, but it would seem that the time is ripe for considering the texts in terms of critical concepts such as intertextuality. Manuscript culture had already taken some intertextuality for granted, but Shinran pushed this to a new level for premodern Buddhist writing. Inasmuch as the context is Mahāyāna Buddhism and Mahāyāna textcentrism—no phonocentrism or logocentrism is necessarily involved, and Derridean deconstruction need not be applied—the ontological flavor of premodern Buddhist Pure Land thought in Japan at its best (when it entails a combination both of high literacy and emptiness sensibility) has no parallels in Europe or perhaps any other Asian country either.

83. Mark Blum, "Rennyo Shōnin, Manipulator of Icons," in *Rennyo and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism*, ed. Mark L. Blum and Shin'ya Yasutomi (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 109–134.

84. In contrast, for example, to all kinds of tantric traditions. On the visual see Malcolm David Eckel, *To See the Buddha: A Philosopher's Quest for the Meaning of Emptiness* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); and David L. McMahan, *Empty Vision: Metaphor and Visionary Imagery in Mahayana Buddhism* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002).

85. For the probable European analogue here, see Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin, 1971).

86. That is, until the current twentieth- and twenty-first century phase of global Buddhist development, in which Shin-like ideas and institutions are being independently reinvented repeatedly.

87. A heuristic analogue on the Christian side might be the intense (but similarly culturally premature) interiority of Augustine, whose pioneering inwardness continued to be worked out gradually in Christian teaching for the next sixteen hundred years.

88. It appears again that the development of modern Japanese historical

thought (especially thought about religion) has inappropriately shut out an important slice of ideas from contemporary European method. Although a good number of Japanese scholars are interested in political theory and of course in Marxism through the twentieth century, the "private life" or "public-private" discourse seems to be little exploited; major works by Ariès and Duby or by Habermas have not been translated into Japanese and are practically unknown, except perhaps among historians of Europe. The idea of gradually emergent individuation is a basic assumption of Shin modernism and its (often ahistorical) studies of Shinran the founder, but is otherwise weak in inquiries into pre-Meiji Japanese religion. Historians who have constructed a narrative of Japanese religious history have ignored these wider, more abstract (sociological, systems theory) implications of the idea of a "protestant" species of religiosity existing in Japan.

89. As Stock and many other historians have shown for European Christianity, reform ideas developed inside the medieval church long before they blossomed as oppositional institutions and theologies during the Reformation.

90. For a view of how this polysemy works out in terms of one dimension of Shin "belief," see Galen Amstutz, "Steadied Ambiguity: The Afterlife in 'Popular' Shin Buddhism," in *Practicing the Afterlife: Perspectives from Japan*, ed. Susanne Formanek and William LaFleur (Wien: Verlag der Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften / Beitraege zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens, 2004), 137–160.

91. Lancelot Law Whyte, *The Unconscious before Freud* (New York: Basic Books, 1960); citation, 64.

# The Daoist Facet of Kinpusen and Sugawara no Michizane Worship in the *Dōken Shōnin Meidoki:* A Translation of the *Dōken Shōnin Meidoki*

**Takuya Hino**
Columbia University

*DŌKEN SHŌNIN MEIDOKI*[1] (道賢上人冥途記, Record of Dōken Shōnin's Experience of the Other World; hereafter *Meidoki*) is a medieval Japanese Buddhist narrative that appears in the section concerned with the fourth year of Tengyō (天慶; 941) in the *Fusō ryakki*[2] (扶桑略記, Abbreviated History of Japan). The *Meidoki* relates Dōken Shōnin's[3] (道賢上人, or Nichizō Shōnin, 日蔵上人; 905–985[?]) experience of the other world, which began while he was practicing on Kinpusen[4] 金峯 山 on the first day of the eighth month of the fourth year of Tengyō, during which he found that he was suddenly unable to breathe and subsequently died. On his journey in the other world, he made a pilgrimage through the three realms and six paths of transmigration under the guidance of Zaō Gongen 蔵王権現, who was acting as the guardian deity of Kinpusen.[5] He met Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten (日本太政 威徳天, Virtuous and Powerful Deva of the Japanese Cabinet: the dead spirit of Sugawara no Michizane, 菅原道真; 845–903) in the Pure Land of Kinpusen, and he learned of the reasons why Michizane had become an angry spirit and why the people of the capital had incurred his wrath, which manifested most often as natural disasters. He also saw Emperor Daigo (醍醐天皇; 885–930, r. 897–930) suffering in hell; the late emperor expressed his remorse for the evil acts he had committed, including exiling Michizane. Upon his return from the other world, Dōken Shōnin explained that social and physical upheavals were being caused by the ill will of the angry spirit of Michizane and other discontented spirits. Finally, through various rituals and supplications, the anger of Michizane was pacified and peace prevailed throughout the country.

Although the *Meidoki* was included in the in the *Fusō ryakki* (specifically, in the section on the fourth year of Tengyō), it is not clear when and by whom it was written. While more investigation is needed in order to conclusively determine the temporal provenance of the *Meidoki*, sometime between the eleventh and twelfth centuries seems like a good bet.

There are three substantiating pieces of evidence for this assertion. First, in the fourth year of Shōreki (昌暦; 993) Emperor Ichijō (980–1011, r. 986–1011) granted the angry spirit of Sugawara no Michizane the title Dajō Daijin. The name given to his angry spirit in the *Meidoki*—Nihon Daijō Itoku Ten—seems to be a combination of the title granted by Emperor Ichijō and certain *mikkyō* conceptions of deities. If this is correct, then the *Meidoki* must be a post-993 composition.

Second, Ōe no Masafusa (大江匡房; 1041–1111)[6] effected a transformation in the perception of the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane whereby the latter, previously thought of as an *onryō* 怨霊, came to be perceived of as a *goryō* 御霊. In addition, Masafusa, drawing on the model of the Daoist immortal, depicted Sugawara's spirit as an eternally abiding deity of learning. And it is Masafusa's Sugawara no Michizane, an immortal *goryō* who watches out for scholars, who appears in the *Meidoki*, thus suggesting that the latter text had to have been composed after the writings of Masafusa.

Finally, capping the period of authorship on the other end is Jien's *Gukanshō* (愚管抄, The Future and the Past), which was written in the first year of Jokyu (承久; 1219)[7] and contains references to the *Meidoki*. Taken together, these data give us the following range: 993–1219, i.e., roughly the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

As for the question of authorship, it is clear that Dōken Shōnin did not compose the *Meidoki* by himself. Rather, the work seems to have first been composed by Dōken Shōnin's disciples or others close to him who practiced esoteric rituals on Kinpusen in order to secure worldly benefits. Later, during the mid-Heian period, monks performing Tendai-related mountain practices revised the *Meidoki*, primarily in the form of inserted *setsuwa*-style phrases and passages. These revisions were partially aimed at asserting Tendai 天台 control over Kinpusen, though Kōfuku-ji and Daigō-ji managed to retain their possession of the mountain throughout Japanese history.

This tale contains two important themes. First, there is the image of Kinpusen as a destination and place of practice for religious virtuosi.

Such religious significance was based on Kinpusen's metal deposits, which in turn based on the importance of metal in a Daoist, and, to a lesser extent, *mikkyō*, religious framework. Although Kinpusen came to be a point of amalgamation of various religious rituals and beliefs, including elements of Japanese mythology and *yin-yang* theory, the Daoist religious elements took precedence on Kinpusen, and the mountain can therefore be viewed as a hub of pre-medieval Japanese Daoist theory and praxis. In this regard, the five phases theory[7] must be taken in account in any consideration of the religious aspects of Kinpusen.

Second, the *Meidoki* presents the reader with depictions of the worship of Sugawara no Michizane as Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten. The manner by which Sugawara's angry spirit transformed into Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten in turn reveals a fascinating example of *honjisuijaku* and *hongaku* discourses at work in Heian Japan, particularly as these intellectual historical trends relate to Japanese conceptions of angry spirits.

In the pages that follow I shall discuss these two themes in turn and, by doing so, highlight the oft-ignored Daoist elements in Japanese religion, on the one hand, and contribute to our understanding of the manner in which theories about angry spirits were influenced by Buddhist intellectual trends, on the other.

## THE DAOIST ELEMENTS AT KINPUSEN

Kinpusen came to hold great religious importance due to its rich deposits of metals. As is well known, in the Daoist framework, which was certainly well established in Japan (if not at an institutional level, then certainly at the theoretical and practical levels), metal, as one of the five elements, is essential for the practice of Daoist alchemy. The importance of the metals in Kinpusen, though, must be understood in the context of mining in early Japan, which I shall briefly outline before continuing.

Even before the Nara period (710–784), mining knowledge and techniques had already been introduced to Japan from China and Korea. While some Buddhist statues and coins were brought over from China and Korea, many Buddhist statues (such as the great image of Buddha at Nara) and copper and silver coins were actually domestic products, created from metals from Japanese mines. From early on, Chinese and Korean immigrants and monks from the mainland who had acquired and accumulated mining techniques and experience

through successive generations introduced their knowledge to Japan. Some initially employed their mining skills in or around the capital, but many later shifted to areas of known deposits or moved about the island searching for minable veins.

The importance of metals during the Nara period was twofold: political authorities sought minerals for the production of coins, an enterprise of great political importance, and religious authorities coveted metals for making Buddhist statues.[8] This is besides farmers, of course, who had come to depend on iron tools to cultivate the badly neglected land.

Due to the high value of metals, mining was tightly controlled by the government. The first official permission to mine was issued in the first year of Taihō (大宝; 701), when the Imperial Prince Osakabe (Osakabe Shinnō, 刑部親王; ?–705; the ninth son of Emperor Tenmu, 天武天皇; ?–686; r. 673–683) and Fujiwara no Fuhito (藤原不比等; 659–720; the second son of Fujiwara no Kamatari, 藤原鎌足; 614–669) signed a document allowing the mining of gold, silver, copper, mercury, and iron. Thereupon, under tight imperial regulation, minerals were sent to the capital from various places (e.g., Iyo Province 伊予, Tanba Province 丹波, Chichibu Province 秩父) for the production of statues and coins. This marked the beginning of the growth of what would prove to become a vibrant industry: mining and its concomitant metallurgical activities.

In addition, the offering of metals came to be extremely potent sources of power in the religious and political arenas. The *Shoku Nihongi* (続日本紀, Continued Chronicles of Japan; 797), for example, records numerous donations of minerals to the imperial court,[9] indicating both this material's political value and prevalence. Besides coin and statue production, the collected minerals were used as medicine intended to foster good health, longevity, and worldly success, and they were further refined to be used as face powder by the imperial family and high-ranking officials. These instances suggest that offerings of metals were integral to cultural exchange between the court and peripheral regions as well as to political relations between capital-based interests and the court.

Depictions of miners first appear in early collections of narratives and poems, such as the *Nihonkoku genpō zen'aku ryōiki* (日本国現報善悪霊異記, Miraculous Stories of Karmic Retribution of Good and Evil in Japan, a.k.a. *Nihon ryōiki,* 日本霊異記; 822–824), the earliest Japanese

collection of Buddhist tales. One tale in particular is set at a state-owned iron mine in Aita district, Mimasaka Province (美作国英多郡, present-day Okayama Prefecture), during the reign of Empress Abe, and tells of a provincial magistrate who drafted ten workmen to dig out iron ore.[10] The story substantiates the historically verifiable fact that miners and mining remained continuously under the control of the comprehensive criminal and administrative codes, the *Taihō ritsuryō* 大宝律令,[12] and that workers' skills were employed for the benefit of the imperial court.

Compiled some eighty years hence, the *Kokin wakashū* (古今和歌集, A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern; 905), in a poem in the section of songs for *kami* ceremonies, portrays the local mountain folk (*yamabito*, 山人) as mining specialists who mine iron ore and gives us the impression that mining was a vibrant industry in mountainous regions.[11] Likewise, the *Shoku Nihongi* contains the following passages: "the Prince Shihinshiki [Shihinshiki Shinnō 四品志紀親王] was given the mines (*kana,* 鉄穴) in Ōmi region 近江 on the third day of the ninth month of the third year of Taihō";[12] "the Prime Minister Fujiwara no Nakamaro [藤原仲麻呂; 706–764; Dashi Fujiawa no Emi ason Oshikatsu, 太師藤原恵美朝臣押勝] was given the mines (*kana,* 鉄穴) in Asai 浅井 and Takashima 高嶋 districts of the Ōmi region on the twenty-fifth day of the second month of the six year of Tenpyōhōji 天平宝字."[13]

It is important to note that the fact that depictions of the mountain-dwelling miners appear in the early collections of narratives and poems indicates their prominence in the collective imagination of the time (or at least the imagination of the literate classes), which in turn suggests their general importance to the *ritsuryō* system under which this elite stratum of society flourished.

While the economic activities of miners, as previously mentioned, were regulated by the court, because this population resided far from the center of control, it had a certain degree of freedom and leverage. The centrally-located imperial and religious authorities thus had to take various measures to ensure the continuity and solidity of their relationship with these peripherally-located communities in order to maintain the supply of increasingly indispensible metals during the Nara and early Heian.

One of the most famous mining regions during this time was Kane no Midake, now called Kinpusen. Peculiar to this territory was the fact

the miners there felt that the mountain should be a sacred and purified place, suitable for religious practices and rituals.

Early knowledge of Kinpusen's mineral deposits is made evident by the fact that the mountain was called Kane no Midake or Kano no Mine in pre-modern Japan ("*kane*" denoting minerals such as gold, silver, copper, and iron). Descriptions of Kinpusen as the Peak of Gold (Kane no Midake) first appear in pre-modern collections of poems and narratives. For example, the *Manyōshū* (万葉集, Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves; 759) notes that "It is always raining on Midake no Take (Gold Peak) at Yoshino,"[14] and the *Meidoki* states that "Kinpusen was the highest of mountains. Its top was completely flat and shining with bright gold light." The *Eika monogatari* (栄華物語, A Tale of Flowering Fortunes; twelfth century) describes a scene in which Fujiwara no Michinaga (藤原道長; 966–1027) obtained the merit of local deities for prosperity of descendants.[15] These descriptions clearly helped to establish the mountain as a sacred peak of gold.

Kinpusen, as a "gold peak," was a liminal space, in between the purity of heaven on the one hand and the terrain below and secular society on the other. Accordingly, Kinpusen is described as a boundary zone that is neither purely religious nor secular. People created small temples and shrines in order to worship bodhisattvas, buddhas, and local deities, and, in addition, there were undoubtedly people who acquired religious skills and rituals as they practiced on Kinpusen. These religious specialists' teachings encouraged mountain worship and a view of mountains as sacred places where bodhisattvas and deities dwell. In the case of the cult of Kinpusen, Zaō Gongen and local deities were enshrined and worshiped at local temples and shrines in order to protect the mining lands and activities.

One of the most famous stories about Kinpusen as a peak of gold tells of a numinous occurrence at Ishiyamaji 石山寺 in the *Genkō shakusho* (元亨釈書, A Genkō's Era History and Biographies; 1322). The story demonstrates that people in pre-modern times clearly recognized Kinpusen as a gold mountain protected by a local deity.[16] In another story, found in the *Uji shūi monogatari* (宇治拾遺物語, Stories Gleaned at Uji; thirteenth century), Kinpusen is depicted as a golden mountain, and we are told that gold extracted from Kinpusen cannot be used due to the fact the mountain's mineral deposits are protected by the spirits of ancestors and the recently-deceased.[17]

Besides the religious and political importance of the golden peak's metals, Kinpusen also appealed to the capital's elite, both religious and secular, because they depended on the waters of the Kinpusen. Kinpusen shrine 金峯社, a local shrine, was probably located on top of Kinpusen and was dedicated to the tutelary deity of mountain mining: the male and female deities of golden mountains (Kanayamahiko 金山彦 and Kanayamahime 金山姫, respectively). With regard to the origin of these spirits in Japanese mythology, the *Nihon shoki* (日本書記, Chronicles of Japan; 720) and the *Kojiki* (古事記, Record of Ancient Matters*;* 712) notes that human vomit in particular contains magical powers and that people should pay close attention to Kanayamahiko.[18] Clearly, Kanayamahiko is an impure (*kegare,* 穢れ) being that, in the legendary accounts, was forced out of the imperial court and came to play an important role as an "outsider" in Japanese mythology. Through editing of the *Nihon shoki* and the *Kojiki*, these male and female deities of golden mountains were somewhat redeemed and were able to shed the image of poor outcasts with which they were associated in the early myths. Their merits and demerits vis-à-vis the imperial court clarified, officials in the department of divinities under the *ritsuryō* system enshrined them as mining deities associated with the court.

Male and female deities of golden peaks, enshrined as guardian deities for their respective mountain territories, thus came to be acknowledged and legitimized as mining deities within a politico-religious context determined by the imperial court. Consequently, the Kinpu shrine received official ranks three times: first in the second year of Ninju (仁寿; 852),[19] then in the third year of Ninju (853),[20] and a third time in the first year of Jōgan (貞観; 859).[21] Later, the female deity of golden peaks became a popular mining deity and, having spread to other mining communities, came to be localized in various places. While the Kinpusen deities did enjoy official recognition as guardian deities of mining areas acting on behalf of the imperial court, they tended to be seen as unpleasant or evil deities (for example, *konjin,* 金神) and were consequently never treated as deities of the highest rank in local mythologies.

During the early medieval period, Kinpusen was often called a place of *tan* 丹. According to the early Heian-period *Wamyō ruijushō* (和名類聚抄, Classified and Annotated Japanese Names for Things; 934), which combines features of both a dictionary and an encyclopedia, the archaic word *tan* means *tansa* 丹砂 (or *tansha*) or *shusha* 朱砂 (sulfide

of mercury).[22] And in the *Manyōshū*, the archaic word "*tan*" appears as the name of a mining clan, "*Nifu,*" and also denotes mercury, or a vein of mercury.

Sulfide of mercury was an essential mineral for making medicines (*tan,* 丹) for good health, a tradition brought by immigrants who introduced continental culture and technology. Indications of sulfide of mercury for medical use are found in the *Shoku nihonkōki* (続日本後紀, Late Chronicle of Japan, Continued; 869) and the *Sandai jitsuroku* (三代実録, Actual Records of Three Regions; 901). An obituary of Emperor Ninmyō (仁明天皇; 810–850, r. 833–850) appearing in the *Shoku nihonkōki* entry for the twenty-fifth day of the third month of the third year of Kashō (嘉祥; 850) reads as follows:

> I [Emperor Ninmyō] had a lump in my abdomen when I was seven years old. At the age of eight, I had a pain in the pit of my stomach and had a bad headache. Moreover, three years after the coming-of-age ceremony for a boy in the old days, I began to suffer from a pain in my chest. Due to distress caused by the pain, at the beginning I suffered. It was like fulguration. At the end, the pain was getting worse and worse. It was as if a sword was being thrust into my abdomen. Then I took seven-energy pills (Ch. *Qiqiwan,* 七気丸). It was like hot aster ginger tea, and the medicine initially had an immediate effect on me. Although I later felt that the medicine was heavy, the medicine had no effect on me. Emperor Junna (淳和天皇; 786–840, r. 823–833) was concerned. The Emperor Junna said, "In the old days, I also had this disease. Various treatments had no effect on me. I longed for cinnabar (Ch. *Jinyedan,* 金液丹) and quartz (Ch. *Baishiying,* 白石英). Medical practitioners prohibited it for medical use, but I took it. Eventually, I was cured of my affliction. From what I understand of your current disease, you cannot be cured of the disease by taking medical herbs. You should take cinnabar. If some common medical practitioners were to ask [about the risk of taking cinnabar], I would make an objection, saying that it is unacceptable.[23]

This passage shows that Emperors Junna and Ninmyō willingly ingested alchemical medicines as cures because they longed for immortality and eternal youth. Moreover, an obituary of Fujiwara no Yoshimi (藤原良相; 813–867) in *Sandai jitsuroku* entry for the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Jōgan (貞観; 867) notes that "Emperor Ninmyō once kneaded the five-stones[24] (Ch. *wushi,* 五石) and ordered Yoshimi and his aides to try the medicine."[25] The medicine made from these minerals was believed to be effective in the improvement of

weak constitutions. Minerals such as cinnabar and quartz were valued for their medical properties. It is thought that Kinpusen, as Kane no Midake, was well known as a location for prospecting for these precious metals.

I return now to the aforementioned use of the word *tan* 丹 as denoting a particular mining family. Now, the Nifu River flows through Kinpusen. One of the Nifu families lived near Kinpusen and possessed renowned mining skill.[26] Near the Nifu and Yoshino Rivers are located the Nifu shrines in which a female deity called Nifuduhime 丹生都比売 was enshrined; this set of shrines eventually became categorized as one of the twenty-two shrines that became recipients of imperial support during the Heian period. These shrines were originally built in prosperous mines and were related to the Nifu family.

Another imperial connection is as follows. The chronicle records show that the imperial court and capital aristocracy made offerings of both divine horses and official messengers to the Nifu shrines in order to pray for increases and decreases in rainfall.[29] In the Daoist five phases schema, metal, represented by the color white, generates water. What seems clear is that the belief that the offering of a white horse of the dispatch of official messengers to Kinpusen would produce water was founded on a conception of Kinpusen as playing the part (either symbolic, real, or both) of metal in the aforementioned theory. These connections—besides demonstrating the existence of a strong connection between natural resources, the imperial court, and a particular system of beliefs and religious activities—highlight the Daoist elements integral to certain practices undertaken at Kinpusen.

Here I would like to consider the relationship between religious practices and the mining industry. Gold and mercury were valued as precious materials for religious rituals in particular because many religious practitioners used such minerals for the purpose of transforming their body of flesh into one made of gold, a process that was supposed to result in immortality and a sort of eternal youth. For those engaged in such practices, Kane no Midake was a well-known and popular place to obtain the gold or mercury necessary for their endeavors. For the most part, the substance used in these rituals was pure mercury, which easily reacted with other substances and had the characteristics of changing and recurring. This close relationship between religious rituals and veins of mercury had the affect of binding esoteric worship to mountains during the early pre-medieval period.

### *HONJI SUIJAKU* IN *HONGAKU SHISŌ*

The syncretism of buddhas and local deities (*honji suijaku,* 本地垂迹) occurred in the context of original enlightenment thought (*hongaku shisō,* 本覚思想) during the Heian period. The syncretism of buddhas and local deities and original enlightenment thought had a great impact on the popularization of Buddhism in local regions and the growing belief in angry spirits, particularly in an esoteric context. Religious practitioners, who worked as official and unofficial monks for the imperial court and local government, propagated Buddhism and established local temples and shrines. These kinds of religious activities at the local level created a movement whereby an amalgamation of buddhas and local deities was developed, a process that tended to attenuate tensions between the capital and periphery.

The aforementioned concepts developed systematically within the Tendai school. Eryō (恵亮; 812–860), a Tendai monk who served Emperor Seiwa (清和天皇; 850–880, r. 858–876), wrote a petition asking permission to use two monks in his services for local deities at Kamo 賀茂 and Kasuga 春日 on the twenty-eighth day of the eighth month of the first year of Jōgan (貞観; 859). In the petition he explained the close relation between bodhisattvas, local deities, and humans by recourse to *honji suijaku* theory, specifically as the latter theoretical framework was understood in the context of original enlightenment thought.[30]

Some of the *honji suijaku*-related notions used by Eryō can be found in the sixteenth chapter ("Life Span of the Thus Come One") of the *Lotus Sutra,* which introduces the idea that the Buddha's life is in fact much longer than the perceived eighty years of the historical Buddha. Although never this explicit, the *Lotus Sutra* seems to posit an eternal Buddha. The chapter presents us with the dual notion of the Buddha's "original and traces," which corresponds to two differing conceptions of the Buddha: (1) the idea of an absolute and perfect original Buddha, the implication being that Śākyamuni was in fact enlightened eons ago; (2) the idea of traces, which appear as provisional manifestations (e.g., as Śākyamuni, who to the unenlightened eye seemed to have achieved enlightenment from a state of non-enlightenment). In other words, the Buddha, whose lifespan is immeasurable, has existed in this world for a very long time and appeared as a provisional manifestation (i.e., the historical Buddha) in order to save all sentient beings. According to this line of thinking, the death of the Buddha was a skillful trick intended to lead all sentient beings to the attainment of buddhahood,

but the fact of the matter is that the Buddha eternally presides over this world. Accordingly, the Buddha, who is eternal, temporarily manifested in this world as an actual figure, Śākyamuni. This notion led in turn to the development of the essential elements of the buddha-body theory in the *Lotus Sutra*, and it played a very important role in the popularization of Mahāyāna thought as found in the *Lotus Sutra*, a way of thinking based on dualistic doctrines (e.g., "essence and phenomenon," "ideality and actuality"). "Original," then, is the essence that manifests in the world in the form of a particular deity.

In addition, local deities were closely related to the Nara and Heian-periods cult of angry spirits (*goryō shinkō,* 御霊信仰), which entailed the enshrinement of local deities for the purpose of pacifying the spirits of those who had been accidentally killed and, in their postmortem form, wreaked havoc on the capital by way of natural disasters and other calamities.[31] Monks characterized angry spirits as the esoteric *vidyarāja* and pacified them with esoteric rituals. Chōen (長宴; 1016–1081), a Tendai monk and head monk (*bettō,* 別当) of Gangyōji 元慶寺, explained the *daiitokuhō* (大威徳法, "rituals of the great powerful") in the *Shijū jōketsu*[32] (四十帖決, Forty Sheets of Promises; eleventh century) as follows: "The teachings of the thirteenth day of the sixth month of the third year of Kantoku (寛徳; 1046): Rituals of control are acquired by rituals of the five great honored ones. It is likely not heard that [rituals of control are] applied to the other rituals of buddhas and bodhisattvas. Rituals of control applied to Acala and the Great Powerful of five great honored ones are well-known practices."[33] The cult of Tenjin, in which people enshrined the dead spirit of Sugwara no Michizane[34] (菅原道真; 845–903), who manifests as the Great Powerful in the *Meidoki*, is a typical example of the use of esoteric rituals to pacify angry spirits.[35] This manner of ritual fostered the creation of local deities and angry spirits, each of whom represented a new "*kami*" in accordance with *honji suijaku* categories. The case of angry spirits as it played out in an intellectual milieu characterized by the merging of the *honji suijaku* and *hongaku* theories generated a new phenomenon, namely, that of humans transforming into local deities. The fact that local deities exorcised angry spirits made possible the amalgamation of Buddhist teachings and local deities.

The principle of *honji suijaku* as it developed in relation to *hongaku* theory involves three concepts: (1) "originals" (dharma-body), (2) "traces" (reward-body), and (3) "originals and traces" (response-body).[36]

In light of the concepts of "phenomenon" and "actuality," Sugawara no Michizane was thought to express the "essence" and "ideality" of a buddha. This conception, with its two phases of "phenomenon" and "essence," led to the original enlightenment-inspired presupposition that humans have the potential to become buddhas or deities. In this manner, Sugawara no Michizane, according to the conceptual premise of original enlightenment thought in conjunction with notions of "essence" and "phenomenon" as defined in *honji suijaku* theory, came to be thought of as either a bodhisattva or a deity.

The *honji suijaku* framework was based on the interpretation of deities at local shrines as particular buddhas and bodhisattvas. In the late seventh century, when Buddhism was introduced into local powerful clans, this ideology gradually began to develop at Jingūji 神宮寺 (*not* Jingū, 神宮), a temple that served a local shrine. Emperor Shōtoku (称徳天皇; 718–770, r. 764–770) states in an imperial edict issued on the twenty-third day of the eleventh month of the first year of Tenpyō Jingo (765): "People keep deities away from buddhas because they think that these deities should not be amalgamated with buddhas. However, according to the sutras these deities are guardians who adore buddhas and protect Buddhist teachings." From the time of Emperor Shōtoku onward, the process of syncretizing buddhas and local deities was expedited with the help of the imperial court. Descriptions of Jingūji and rituals related to the syncretism of buddhas and local deities first appear in the *Shoku Nihongi*.[37] In due course, Jingūji grew to become an official large-temple, and the theoretical framework characterized by syncretism of buddhas and local deities came to pervade both official Buddhist groups (and local temples and shrines) and the thinking of religious virtuosi. Up until the end of the eighth century, when Jingūji became an official temple, local shrines were often assigned officially and unofficially ordained monks for the purpose of performing Buddhist rituals and prayers for the local deities. The deities at local shrines were regarded as manifestations of Buddhist deities, reinforcing the idea that local deities were manifestations of Indian Buddhist divinities or of Śākyamuni.[38] Official and unordained monks at local shrines generated Buddhist faith among local populations by teaching them that the virtues of local deities came from a particular buddha or bodhisattva. The syncretism of buddhas and local deities was thus established at the level of shrines and temples, not at a national level. The syncretism of buddhas and local deities permeated the local

shrines and temples primarily through the activities of unofficial, ordained monks and lay believers until the end of the ninth century, at which point official large-temples in Nara began attempting to attract large numbers of lay believers in order to expand their territory and extent of influence at the local level. The interpretation of local deities as particular buddhas or bodhisattvas slowly began to spread from one region to the next.

Sueki Fumihiko, a scholar of Japanese Buddhism, has identified four kinds syncretism between buddhas and local deities, which reflect four different relationships between the two parties: (1) the *kami* were suffering beings who wanted to hear the Buddhist teachings; (2) the *kami* served as guardians of the dharma and thereby became bodhisattvas; (3) the *kami* were seen as new *kami* developed through the influence of Buddhism; and (4) the *kami* were seen as the forms that bodhisattvas took in Japan.[39] Ever since the introduction of Buddhism at the local level, local deities had begun to be interpreted as guardian deities. During the middle of the eighth century, people enshrined local deities and prayed to them for worldly success and to pacify dead spirits that brought natural disasters. Especially in a state governed according to fixed statutes, people hoped and expected to become local deities in order to protect their regions.

A tale in the *Nihon ryōiki* (entitled "On Being Born as a Monkey for Keeping Men from Seeking the Way") recounts the efforts of a deity seeking Buddhist teachings.[40] Due to past karma whereby the deity, in its previous existence as a monkey, had obstructed people's hopes to pursue the bodhisattva path, the former monkey, who in the present tale is a deity of a local shrine, wanted to hear the *Lotus Sutra* and thereby attain buddhahood. Fortunately the deity was able to hear recitation of the *Lotus Sutra* by a monk. Thereupon the deity attained buddhahood and the area of which he had been the guardian deity grew calm and devoid of troubles. Although the government official, as a ruler who brought Buddhism to the provinces, governed and controlled the local, the local clan, as a semi-independent unit that continuously enshrined deities for local benefits, never fully complied with government orders. It was thought that due to the suffering caused by witnessing such tensions and conflicts between the capital and the local, local deities went to Buddhist teachings for comfort and voluntarily began to transform into buddhas and bodhisattvas.

On the other hand, another tale in the same collection (entitled "On Paying for and Freeing Turtles and Being Rewarded Immediately and Saved by Them") tells of a rare event.[41] Mitani Temple was established so that those who had escaped calamities could make vows there to local deities. This local temple was the same type as Jingūji at Ise, where people enshrined benevolent deities who protect the Buddhist teachings.

In the pages above I have endeavored to clarify some significant aspects of the *Meidoki* as well as the historical backdrop against which those aspects must be understood. In particular, I highlighted the Daoist elements of Kinpusen-related thought and praxis (and especially the manner in which they were based upon the presence of metal deposits in Kinpusen) and discussed the syncretism of buddhas and local deities in relation to original enlightenment thought in the cult of Kinpusen during the Nara and Heian periods. On the one hand, we have seen that Kinpusen was important to the non-elites living outside the capital: not only was it a point of exchange and amalgamation between varying traditions of Japanese and continental religion (e.g., esoteric Buddhism, Daoism), but it was also the residence of miners, hunters, potters, and so forth. On the other hand, I have also demonstrated the mountain's importance for the wielders of political and religious power in the capital. Thus, Kane no Midake was a place of continuous activity for local mountain inhabitants, a numinous locale for the village and town dwellers, and a sacred mountain for the imperial court and religious practitioners in the capital and the capital's five adjacent regions. In addition, Kinpusen provides us with one example of the way in which the relationship between *honji suijaku* thought, original enlightenment thought, and belief in angry spirits interacted. In this case, this dynamic, affected as well by esoteric Buddhist theory, resulted in an early example of what would prove to be a common religious phenomenon in Nara and Heian Japan: the transformation of humans, particularly the angry spirits of humans, into *kami*.

APPENDIX

*Dōken Shōnin Meidoki*[42]
*(道賢上人冥途記, A Record of Dōken Shōnin's
Experience of the Other World)*

*Fusōryakki* (扶桑略記, vol. 25)
Spring of the third month of the fourth year of Tengyō [天慶;
941], the year of junior metal-ox (*kanoto-ushi,* 辛丑).

According to the *Dōken Shōnin Meidoki*:
I, Dōken (now named Nichizō, 日蔵), a disciple [of the Buddha],
first entered Kinpusen[43] 金峯山 in the spring of the second month of
the sixteenth year of Engi [延喜; 916] when I was twelve years old. I
took tonsure at Hosshinmon Chinzanji 発心門椿山寺 and put on cleri-
cal robes.[44] I pledged not to consume salt or grains. I practiced in soli-
tude on the mountain for six years. However, I heard that my mother
was struck down by a serious illness and that [she missed me so much]
she could not stop crying. . . . Therefore, in the spring of the third
month of the twenty-first year of the same era [921], I left the moun-
tain and returned to the capital. Since then, I have returned to the
mountain once a year to practice diligently [for the three-month rainy
season retreat].[45] Since the spring when I first entered the mountain
until the fall of this year [941], twenty-six years have already passed in
which I have faithfully practiced on this mountain.
    In recent years, however, numerous disasters have struck this
country. Seeing and hearing about them, I felt that I was near death.
Moreover, I was frightened by evil visions in my dreams. [The offices
of] Tenmon [天文, Astronomy] and Onmyō [陰陽, *Yin-Yang* Studies]
continually reported ominous signs.[46] Therefore, in order to gain
the spirit-power (*reigen,* 霊験), I forswore my life in the capital and
climbed this mountain. I entered deeper and deeper [into the moun-
tain] in order to strengthen the power of my devotion and spiritual
practice. The purpose [of my practice] was, first, for the welfare of the
entire country, and, second, for the realization of my own spiritual
aspiration.[47] Moreover, for twenty-one days,[48] without uttering a word
or eating any food, I single-mindedly meditated on the Buddha.
    On the afternoon of the first day of the eighth month of the fourth
year of Tengyō [941], while performing a ritual, I suddenly experienced
a high fever. My throat and tongue dried up and I was unable to breathe.

I thought to myself, "Since I have already vowed not to speak, how can I call on anyone [to help me]?" I cried and then breathed through my mouth. As I was thinking about this, I stopped breathing.

At the moment I died [in this world]; I was standing on the outside of the mountain, carrying only a Buddhist sutra, just as I had been when I entered it. While looking to the four directions, trying to decide which way I should go, I was [suddenly back] inside the mountain. A Buddhist monk came [from inside]. In his hand he held a golden bottle from which he poured water for the disciple [Dōken]. The taste of it penetrated to the marrow of my bones. It was sweet and good. Then the Buddhist monk said, "I am Vajrapāṇi [Shūkongōshin, 執金剛神].⁴⁹ I have always resided in this cave in order to protect the teachings left by Śākyamuni Buddha. Responding to your Reverence's [Dōken's] years of dharma offerings to me, I have gone to the Himalaya Mountains (*sessen,* 雪山) to bring this water that I have just offered to you. . . ." Also, there were dozens of *deva-kumāra* (*tendōji,* 天童子; divine youths) standing and waiting, each holding a large lotus leaf filled with various kinds of food and drink.⁵⁰ The Buddhist monk said, "They are the twenty-eight guardian deities (*nijūhachi bushū,* 二十八部衆)."⁵¹

Shortly, a monk of great virtue descended from the top of a rock to the west. He immediately extended his left hand and took the disciple's [Dōken's] hand. He led me to the rock and made me climb to the top of it. [The mountain was] covered with one hundred feet of snow. When I reached the peak and looked out, I saw the entire world before my eyes.⁵² This mountain was the highest of all mountains. Its top was completely flat and shining with bright golden light. There was a golden peak on this side [north side of the mountain], and there was a dais adorned with the seven precious jewels.⁵³ The monk reached the dais and took a seat. The great monk said, "I am Zaō Bodhisattva (Zaō Bosatsu, 蔵王菩薩), an incarnation of Śākyamuni. This land is the Pure Land of Kinpusen. Your life is about to end. Therefore, you must practice good deeds, racing against what remains of your life. It is difficult to be born as a human being. You must not do evil deeds."

The disciple of the Buddha [Dōken] replied, "Although I am an ignorant being, I am determined to offer my life [for the dharma]. However, if I begin building a practice hall⁵⁴ (*dōjō,* 道場), I am afraid that I will be dead before construction is completed. Please tell me how long I will live. Also, I beg you to teach me in which buddha I should take refuge, and what teaching I should practice in order to extend my life."

The Bodhisattva then took out a short talisman, wrote eight words on it, and presented it to me. The characters read as follows:

> Sun-Storehouse Nine-Nine Year-Month King-Protection.
> [*nichi-zō ku-ku nen-getsu ō-go,* 日蔵九九、年月王護]

The Bodhisattva said,

> Disciple of the Buddha, your life will be dispersed like a floating cloud hanging over a mountain. [When a cloud is] floating up in the sky, it easily disperses. Your life is also like that. If you practice in the mountains, [your life will become] very long. If you live in a village and become lax in your practice, [your life will be] cut short. "Sun-Storehouse" (Nichi-zō, 日蔵) is the name of the Honored One about whose teaching you asked me. In accordance with the teaching of the Honored One, you should change your name immediately. "Nine-nine" (*ku-ku,* 九九) is [the number] for your remaining life. "Year-month" (*nen-getsu,* 年月) is [the unit] of the length of life. "King-protection" (*ō-go,* 王護) means the protection [of the Honored One]. With me as this guardian bodhisattva [Gohō Bosatsu, 護法菩薩] acting as your master, you should receive the pure precepts.[55]

At that moment, a natural light began to brightly illuminate the place in five colors. The Bodhisattva said, "Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten[56] [日本太政威徳天, Virtuous and Powerful Deva of the Japanese Cabinet, i.e., Sugawara no Michizane, 菅原道真] is coming." Immediately, from the empty space beyond the mountain to the west, millions of people began to appear. It was a like a scene of an enthronement ceremony for a great king. The number of the attendants, guardians[57] (*kenzoku,* 眷属), demons[58] (*irui,* 異類), and other beings[59] (*zōgyō,* 雑形) was too great to count. Some looked like Vajrapāṇi[60] (Kongōrikishi, 金剛力士). Others looked like thunder gods[61] (*raijin,* 雷神), *pretas*[62] (*kiō,* 鬼王), or *yakṣas*[63] (*yashakami,* 夜叉神). They all looked very frightening. Each carried bows and arrows, swords and spears, and countless sickles and sticks. When the Dajō Ten 太政天 was about to leave the scene, he saw the disciple of the Buddha and said, "I want to show this disciple of the Buddha my residence, which is named the palace of the Dai Itoku 大威徳. May I take him back?"

The Bodhisattva gave his permission. We immediately rode together on [the back of] a white horse and traveled many hundreds of miles. [We arrived] at a large pond. In the pond, there was a large island about one hundred *li*[64] wide. On the island, there was a platform about eight inches squared. On the platform was a lotus flower. On

the top of the lotus flower there was a jeweled pagoda. A copy of the *Lotus Sutra* was enshrined inside of the pagoda, and on the eastern and western sides [of the sutra] hung a set of the Ryōbu Mandala 両部曼荼羅. The magnificence of the Buddhist sutra was beyond description. Also, looking to the north, I saw a great castle shining brightly. It was the palace of the Dajō Ten. Innumerable guardian attendants (*kenzoku*) were all waiting inside [of the palace] and protecting [it for him]. The Dai Ten 大天 said,

> I am the Kan Shōfu [菅相府, the Prime Minister Sugawara (no Michizane)] of the country from which your Reverence has come. The deity in the Trāyastrimśa[65] (Tōri Ten, 忉利天) has given me the name of Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten 日本太政威徳天. At first I grieved deeply because of the anguish of parting from my loved ones,[66] and I was displeased. As a consequence, I wanted to make the emperors and their retainers suffer, harm their people, and destroy the entire country. I became the master of all plagues and disasters. I first contemplated this while I was still alive, shedding tears as I did so. I wanted to be sure to destroy that country by submerging it in the ocean. Then, eighty-four years later, I planned to establish a country and build my castle there. However, bodhisattvas like Samantabhadra[67] (Fugen, 普賢) and Nāgārjuna (Ryūmyō, 龍猛) were there, and they enthusiastically propagated the esoteric teachings. Because I liked these teachings very much, one-tenth of my deeply seated enmity from my past was reduced. Moreover, by the power of their compassionate vows the bodhisattvas in their transformed bodies (*keshin bosatsu*, 化身菩薩) manifested themselves as divine spirits.[68] Some presided in mountains and forests and others on seashores or riversides. They continuously applied all their wisdom powers to heal me [of my enmity]. As a result, I have yet to bring any serious harm [to the country]. Nevertheless, 168,000 evil spirits, who are my guardian attendants (*kenzoku*), have caused harm everywhere. Even I have difficulty restraining them; how much more so the other deities.

The disciple of the Buddha said, "The people in my country, high and low alike, have called you Karai Tenjin[69] [火雷天神, Heavenly Deity of Fire and Thunder]. They have respected you just as they worship the World-Honored One [Śākyamuni Buddha]. Why is your mind so angry?"

Then Dajō Ten replied,

> [People in] that country have branded me as the great angry bandit. Who respects such a one? Besides, Karai Taiki Dokuō[70] [火雷大気毒王, King of Fire-Thunder and Poisonous Air] is the name of my third

messenger. Until I attain buddhahood, I shall never forget this evil mind of old. If there is anyone who holds the same official rank [in the court] that I had when I was alive, I will make sure to put a curse on him. However, today, I will make a promise to you, Reverend Sir [Dōken]. If there are people who believe you, [then] hold up my words, erect my statue, recite my name, and reverently offer their prayers to me; I will surely answer your prayers [on their behalf]. However, I see the sign of a short life in your face. Please practice diligently and do not be lax.

The disciple of the Buddha said, "The Bodhisattva on Kinpusen gave me this short talisman. But I still do not understand the meaning of the passage."

Then Dajō Ten Buddha interpreted the meaning and said,

The "sun" (*niche,* 日) is Mahāvairocana (Dainichi, 大日). The "store-house" (*zō,* 蔵) is the Matrix-Storehouse (Taizō, 胎蔵). The "Nine-nine" (*ku-ku,* 九九) is [nine times nine, which is] eighty-one. The "year" (*nen,* 年), therefore, is eighty-one years. And the "month" (*getsu,* 月) is eighty-one months. The "king" (*ō,* 王) is Zaō. "Protection" (*go,* 護) [indicates] that he is guardian. By taking refuge in the Mahāvairocana Tathāgata and practicing the great teaching of the Matrix-Storehouse, the number of years of your remaining life will be eighty-one. If you practice according to the teaching, your life will be extended by nine-times-nine years [eighty-one years]. However, if you do not repent and are lax, your life will be shortened to nine-times-nine months [eighty-one months]. [While you are practicing] you are under the protection of Zaō. As of today, you should change your name and call yourself Nichizō. Be brave, practice diligently, and do not be lax.

The disciple of the Buddha [Nichizō] humbly received the order [of the Dajō Ten] and returned to Kinpusen. There I reported this story [to Zaō Bodhisattva]. Then the Bodhisattva said, "I sent you there so that you may know the root cause of natural disasters in the world." In addition, Mantoku Ten 満徳天 [the spirit of Uda Emperor, 宇多] said,

The Nihon Dajō Ten 日本太政天 is Kankō 菅公 [Sugawara no Michizane]. His guardian attendants, 168,000 poisonous dragons, evil demons, deities of water and fire, thunder and lightning, the director of the wind, the master of the rain, and other poisonous, harmful, and evil deities are spreading all over the country and causing great disasters. The good deities who have been protecting the country are no longer able to stop them. Also, in the summer of the eighth year of Enchō [延長; 930], imperial officers such as Kiyotsura [清貫, Fujiwara

no Kiyotsura, 藤原清貫] and Mareyo 希世 [Taira no Mareyo, 平希世] were struck down [by lightning]. This heavenly fire was caused by his third messenger, Karai Taiki Dokuō. The flesh and six internal organs of our King of the Engi era [Emperor Daigo, 醍醐天皇] became influenced and collapsed. As a result, the king died. Also, many great temples, such as Sūfuku[ji] 崇福寺, Hōryū[ji] 法隆寺, Tōdai[ji] 東大寺, Enryaku[ji] 延暦寺, and Danrin[ji] 檀林寺, were destroyed by fire. These incidents were also caused by the messenger from heaven. As in the case of evil deities, our king of the Engi era alone will receive the punishment for the offenses of destroying the dharma and harming lives, just as the waters of all rivers are consumed by one great ocean. Furthermore, the power of the other guardian attendants is equal to that of Karaiō [火雷王, the king of fire and thunder]. Some caused landslides on the mountains and earthquakes. Others destroyed palaces and damaged other things. Some caused storms of wind and rain that were harmful to people and property. Others spread plagues and other fatal diseases. And some instigated minds to [engage in] rebellion and insurrection. However, the deities of Kinpu, Hachiman[72] 八幡, and others, including myself, adamantly refused them permission to act any further. Consequently, they were no longer able to act freely.

[When he had finished] his instructions to me, he showed me the way to return. The disciple of the Buddha [Nichizō] entered a cave and was promptly resuscitated. It was at the hour of the tiger [4 a.m.] on the thirteenth day of the eighth month of the fourth year of Tengyō [941]. Thirteen days had elapsed since I had passed through the gate of death. I just barely regained my life to be able to record my experiences of the other world.

The following is an additional note of my dream [from] when I was inside the gate of death. While the Bodhisattva of Kinpu was showing the disciple of the Buddha [Nichizō] the realm of hells, we came upon an iron cavern. There was a house with a thatched roof, and four people were inside. Their figures looked like burned ashes. One of them was wearing a robe, but it covered only his back. The other three were naked and were squatting on red-hot charcoal. The overseer of hell said, "The person wearing the robe is the Engi Emperor [Emperor Daigo] of your Reverence's country. The other three naked men are his ministers. The lord and his vassals are receiving their suffering together."

When the lord [Engi Emperor] saw the disciple of the Buddha, he invited me over and said,

I am the son of Nihon Kongōkaku Daiō [日本金剛覚大王, Great King of Japan of Diamond- (or Adamantine-) like Awakening, i.e., Uda Emperor]. Nevertheless, I am now suffering in this iron cavern. The Dajō Tenjin 太政天神, his mind filled with enmity, has been destroying the *buddhadharma* with fire and harming sentient beings. All of the karmic retributions created by his evil deeds have been falling upon me. Because I am the root cause of his anger, I now bear these sufferings. The Dajō Ten is Kanshin [菅臣, Minister Sugawara (no Michizane)]. Due to the power of his virtue in previous lives, he has become one of the Dai Itoku no Ten [大威徳乃天, Most Powerful and Virtuous Heavenly Deities]. Meanwhile, I made my father— the dharma king—walk treacherous paths and suffer great mental anguish. That was my first offense. In the palace I sat myself in seats of higher honor, while I made my father sit on the ground, causing him anguish and tears. That was my second offense. Although the wise minister [Sugawara no Michizane] was innocent, I mistakenly exiled him.[71] That was my third offense. I clung to the throne too long, creating anger among the people and destroying the dharma. That was my fourth offense. I caused my enemy [Sugawara no Michizane] to harm other sentient beings through his enmity against me. That was my fifth offense. These five are the main sources [of my sufferings]. There are immeasurable additional charges [against me]. I receive suffering without respite. How painful! How sad! Remember my words as I have told them to you, and convey my message to the Emperor [Suzaku, 朱雀]. Ask him to relieve me from this painful suffering as soon as possible. . . . Also, tell the Regent and Prime Minister [*sesshō daijin,* 摂政大臣; Fujiwara no Tadahira, 藤原忠平] to erect ten thousand *stūpas* in order to remove my suffering.

## NOTES

1. Another version of the *Meidoki,* entitled *Nichizō yumeki* (日蔵夢記, Story of Nichizō's Dreams and Visions; hereafter *Yumeki*) is found in the eleventh volume of the *Kitano Literature* (*Kitano bunsō,* 北野文叢), edited by Sōen 宗淵, a priest at the Kitano shrine. Parts of the *Yumeki* are cited in several texts, such as the "Picture Scroll of the History of Tenjin" ("Tenjin engi emaki," 天神縁起絵巻) and *Record of an Oracle of Kitano Tenjin* (*Kitano Tenjin gotakusenbun,* 北野天神御託宣文), both compiled in the Kamakura period. The *Yumeki* describes Dōken Shōnin's experience of the other world in a fashion similar to that of the *Meidoki*, but there are some differences in the details, and the *Meidoki* is roughly two-thirds the length of the *Yumeki*. Despite their similar content, the *Meidoki* is much simpler with regard to descriptions and explanations contained therein. However, as the *Fusō ryakki*, in which the *Meidoki* is embedded, became more well known as a piece of historical writing, the *Meidoki* came to

be more widely known than the *Yumeki.* There continue to be varying opinions as to which one was written first.

2. The *Fusō ryakki*, edited by Kōen Shōnin (皇円上人; 1074–1169), is a historical record that begins with the mythical Emperor Jinmu 神武天皇 and terminates with the reign of Emperor Horikawa (1079–1107, r. 1086–1107). Kōen Shōnin, a grandchild of Fujiwara no Shigefusa 藤原重房, was born in the fifth year of Eikyū (永久, 1073) in Tamana, Higo Province (presently Tamana district in Kumamoto Prefecture), and learned both exoteric and esoteric Buddhism at Kudokuin 功徳院 on Mount Hiei 比叡山. Hōnen Shōnin (法然上人; 1133–1212), founder of the Jōdo school, was counted among Kōen's disciples.

3. Dōken Shōnin was born in Engi 5 (延喜; 905). By the age of six, he was already undertaking the secret of fasting on water. He shaved his head, becoming a Buddhist monk at Hasshinmon Chinzanji 発心門椿山寺 on Kinpusen in the spring of the second month of Engi 16 (916) when he was twelve years old. He pledged not to consume salt and grains and undertook ascetic practice for several years. After training for six years on the mountain, he learned that his mother had become sick and he returned to the capital. From then on, he resided at Tōji 東寺 and studied esoteric Buddhism under Ryōrin 良燐. After Dōken Shōnin experienced his otherworld journey in Tengyō 4 (941), he followed an oracle of Zaō Gongen 蔵王権現 and took the new name Nichizō. He received the initiation for transmitting the dharma (*denpō kanjō,* 伝法灌頂) at Tōji in Tenryaku 11 (天暦; 957). While his death is recorded as Kanna 1 (寛和; 985), it is commonly believed that he lived until he was one hundred years old and was a legendary wizard, capable of performing miracles, who dwelled in the mountains.

4. Kinpusen (Mount Kinpu), sometimes referred to as Kane no Midake 金の御岳, is located in Yoshino, in present-day Nara Prefecture.

5. Zaō Gongen is a deity who has been worshipped on Kinpusen since the end of the ninth century. He is regarded as the manifestation of Zaō Bodhisattva and is associated with mountain practitioners and esoteric Buddhist practice. According to the Shugendō tradition, Zaō Gongen is the manifestation of Śākyamuni Tathāgata, Sahasrabhuja, and Maitreya Bodhisattva who appeared to the tradition's legendary founder, En no Ozuno, as the latter was praying for his own protective deity. In the *Meidoki*, Zaō Gongen, whom Dōken Shōnin met on Kinpusen while being guided by Vajrapāṇi, transformed into Kongō Zaō Gongen and served as the protector of Kinpusen. Moreover, Zaō Gongen was regarded as a guardian deity of Cintāmaṇicakra and was in addition associated with the belief in and devotion to the mother-child deity (*boshinshin shinkō,* 母子神信仰).

6. Ōe served as a lecturer for emperors Gosanjō (後三条天皇; 1034–1073, r. 1068–1072), Shirakawa (白河天皇; 1053–1129, r. 1072–1086), and Horikawa

(堀河天皇; 1079–1107, r. 1086–1107). He longed to establish a Daoist academy of learning based on the Sung model.

7. *Gukanshō* 3. Masako Okami and Akamatsu Toshihide, et al., *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 86 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1964), 157. "As to the Kitano's incident, although it was true, no one places complete reliance on the *Story of Nichizo's Dream and Vision*." Jien's references resulted in the *Meidoki*'s rise in popularity among Buddhist monks as well as among the aristocracy more generally during the beginning of thirteenth century.

8. The five phases theory (the five elements being wood, fire, earth, metal, and water) attributes a generative and destructive, or controlling, character to each element: on the one hand, each element produces another, while on the other, each controls another. These relationships are as follows: wood generates fire, fire generates earth, earth generates metal, metal generates water, and water generates wood. With regard to the controlling character, water controls fire, fire controls metal, metal controls wood, wood controls earth, and earth controls water.

9. The great image of Buddha at Asuka 飛鳥 (presently Nara Prefecture) was cast in the seventeenth year of Suiko (推古, 609). The Buddhist statues at Hōryūji 法隆寺 were cast in the thirty-first year of Suiko (623). Copper and silver coins (*wadō kaichin,* 和銅開珎) were produced and used in the first year of Wadō (和銅; 708). The great image of Buddha at Nara was cast in the fourth year of Tenpyōshōhō (天平勝宝; 752).

10. There are many descriptions in the *Shoku Nihongi* that attest to the practice of offering minerals to the imperial court: (1) Inaba Province (the eastern part of modern-day Tottori Prefecture) presented copper on the fifth day of the third month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698); (2) Ōmi Province (modern-day Shiga Prefecture) presented alum on the eighth day of the sixth month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698); (3) Iyo Province (modern-day Ehime Prefecture) presented tin twice, once on the seventeenth day of the seventh month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698) and again on the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698); (4) Suō Province (the eastern part of modern-day Yamaguchi Prefecture) presented copper on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698); (5) On the twenty-eighth day of the ninth month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698), Ōmi Province presented blue face powders (chemical compounds of sulfate and ferrous sulfide); Ise Province (modern-day Mie Prefecture) presented red and yellow face powders (a chemical compound of sulfur and mercury); Hitachi Province (modern-day Ibaraki Prefecture), Bizen Province (the southeastern part of modern-day Okayama Prefecture), Iyo, and Hyūga Province (modern-day Miyazaki Prefecture) presented red face powders; Aki Province (the western part of modern-day Hiroshima Prefecture) and Nagato Province (the

northwestern part of modern-day Yamaguchi Prefecture) presented blue and green face powders (copper oxide); and Bungo Province (modern-day Ōita Prefecture) presented red face powders (sulfide of mercury); (6) Ise Province presented tin on the fifth day of eleventh month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698); (7) Tsushima Isl. (modern-day Nagasaki Prefecture) presented gold on the fifth day of the twelfth month of the second year of Monmu Tennō (698); (8) Shimotsuke Province (modern-day Tochigi Prefecture) presented yellow face powders on the fourth day of the third month of the third year of Monmu Tennō (699); (9) Chichibu District, Musashi Province (the western part of modern-day Saitama Prefecture) presented natural copper (domestically produced: Jpn. *wadō*) on the eleventh day of the first month of the first year of Wadō (708); (10) Ōmi Province, Dazaifu (modern-day Fukuoka Prefecture), and Inaba Province created copper coins and presented these coins twice, once on the twenty-sixth day of the seventh month of the first year of Wadō (708) and again in the first month of Wadō (710). For more information, see the *Shoku Nihongi.* Kazuo Aoki et al., *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 12 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989), 8–163.

11. *Nihon ryōiki* 3:13. Osamu Izumoji et al., *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 30 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996), 146–148.

12. These codes were based on Chinese political theory and remained the basis for civil administration in Japan until the Meiji period (at least in theory, if not always in practice).

13. *Kokin wakashū* 1076. Noriyuki Kojima and Eizō Arai, et al., *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 5 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989), 326.

14. *Shoku Nihongi* 3. Katsumi Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1989), 19.

15. *Shoku Nihongi* 24. Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 2, 268.

16. *Manyōshū* 3293 and 3294. Noriyuki Kojima, Masatoshi Kinoshita, and Akihiro Satake, et al., *Kanyaku Nihon no koten* 5 (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1985), 433.

17. *Eiga monogatari* 8. Hiroji Matsumura and Yutaka Yamanaka, et al., *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 75 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1967), 253–253.

18. *Genkō shakusho* 28. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 31 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 423. "A monk at Ishiyamaji created Emperor Shōmu's palace (Tōdaiji at Nara). He cast a fifteen-meter Vairocana bronze statue. There was need for much gold leaf. At this time, there was no gold in this country. Ryōben Hōshi gave his opinion to the Emperor (Emperor Shōmu). He said, 'Kinpusen in Yamato Province is a place of gold.' He prayed to Kongō Zaō to request gold in order to gild the bronze statue. However, there was no response. Therefore, he entered Kinpusen and made a vow. In his dream, Zaō Gongen answered, saying that there is no gold to gild the bronze statue."

19. *Uji shūi monogatari* 2. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 18 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 29–30. "Once upon a time, someone found gold bullion on Kinpusen. He stole the gold from Kinpusen and created seven or eight thousand gold leaves. Then, he donated these gold leaves to gild the monumental statue of Buddha at Tōji. However, when people used these gold leaves, the name '*kane no midake*' came to the front on these gold leaves. His theft was found out. He was punished and imprisoned for ten days."

20. *Nihon shoki* 1. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 13–14. *Kojiki* 1. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 7 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 9–10.

21. *Nihon montoku tennō jitsuroku* 4. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 42.

22. *Nihon montoku tennō jitsuroku* 5. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 53.

23. *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 2. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 17.

24. *Wamyō ruijushō* 3:10 and 11. Kanzō shiryō henshūkai et al., *Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan zō kichō tenseki sōsho. Bungaku hen*, dai 22-kan (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1999), 246–247.

25. *Shoku nihonkōki* 20. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 238–239.

26. The five-stones are ancient Chinese medicines made of five minerals: stalactite, sulfur, quartz, fluorite, and loess.

27. *Sandai jitsuroku* 14. Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 222.

28. The Nifu family, one of the powerful local mountain clans in pre-medieval Japan, was a mining clan of Korean immigrants from Paekche (346–660; Jpn. Kudara, 百済). They mined mercury and used the extracted mineral in the production of face powders and medicines intended to bring about good health and long life, a medical tradition brought by immigrants from the continent. They also introduced advanced mining techniques, methods for casting gold Buddha statues, and the knowledge of how mercury could be used to make statues and alter fitting of gold. (To gild Buddha statues, people had to combine gold with mercury and then smelt these materials together.) In pre-medieval Japan, mercury was indispensible for the casting of gold Buddha statues and the production of face powders and medicines used by the imperial family and religion practitioners. The local mountain people were in fact, then, Chinese and Korean immigrants who had brought advanced mining technologies and, in addition, a host of continental deities who were subsequently worshipped in these Chinese and Korean mining communities.

29. Many descriptions of offering divine horses or dispatching officials to Nifu

shrines are found in the chronicles. These appear in the entries for: (1) the twenty-ninth day of the fourth month of the second year of Emperor Monmu (698) (*Shoku nihongi* 1; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 12, 10), (2) the seventeenth day of the fifth month of the second year of Tenpyōjingo (766) (*Shoku nihongi* 27; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 15, 122), (3) the thirteenth day of the fifth month of the eighth year of Hōki (777) (*Shoku nihongi* 34; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 16, 38), (4) the eighth day of the eight month of the eight year of Hōki (777) (*Shoku nihongi* 34; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 16, 42), (5) the tenth day of the fourth month of the seventh year of Enryaku (788) (*Shoku nihongi* 39; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 16, 402), (6) the fourteenth day of the eighth month of the nineteenth year of Enryaku (800) (*Nihon kiryaku* 13; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 275), (7) the seventeenth day of the fifth month of the twentieth year of Enryaku (801) (*Nihon kiryaku* 13; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 276), (8) the eighth day of the sixth month of the fourth year of Daidō (809) (*Nihon kiryaku* 14; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 290), (9) the second day of the seventh month of the tenth year of Kōnin (819) (*Nihon kiryaku* 14; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 308), (10) the twenty-seventh day of the eighth month of the sixth year of Tenchō (829) (*Nihon kiryaku* 14; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 328), (11) the twenty-eighth day of the seventh month of the tenth year of Tenchō (833) (*Nihon kiryaku* 15; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 338), (12) the eighth month of the second year of Jōwa (835) (*Nihon kiryaku* 15; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 344), (13) the twenty-ninth day of the fifth month of the third year of Jōwa (836) (*Nihon kiryaku* 15; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 348), (14) the nineteenth day of the eighth month of the fourth year of Jōwa (837) (*Nihon kiryaku* 15; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 352), (15) the tenth day of the fourth month of the sixth year of Jōwa (839) (*Shoku nihonkōki* 8; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 86), (16) the seventh day of the eighth month of the sixth year of Jōwa (839) (*Shoku nihonkōki* 8; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 90), (17) the ninth day of the sixth month of the seventh year of Jōwa (840) (*Shoku nihonkōki* 8; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 90), (18) the sixth day of the seventh month of the ninth year of Jōwa (842) (*Shoku nihonkōki* 12; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 135), (19) the thirteenth day of the eighth month of the tenth year of Jōwa (843) (*Shoku nihonkōki* 13; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 161), (20) the twenty-second day of the seventh month of the fourteenth year of Jōwa (847) (*Shoku nihonkōki* 17; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 200), (21) the twenty-third day of the fourth month of the second year of Saikō (855) (*Nihon montoku tennō jitsuroku* 7; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 3, 73), (22) the third day of the seventh month of the eighth year of Jōkan (866) (*Nihon kiryaku* 17; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 432),

(23) the nineteenth day of the fifth month of the thirteenth year of Jōkan (871) (*Nihon kiryaku* 17; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 451), (24) the seventeenth day of the eighth month of the sixteenth year of Jōgan (874) (*Sandai jitsuroku* 26; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 346), (25) the second day of the seventh month of the seventeenth year of Jōgan (875) (*Sandai jitsuroku* 27; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 364), (26) the fourth day of the sixth month of the first year of Gangyō (877) (*Sandai jitsuroku* 31; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 406), (27) the thirteenth day of the seventh month of the seventh year of Gangyō (883) (*Sandai jitsuroku* 44; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 539), (28) the thirteenth day of the seventh month of the first year of Ninna (885) (*Nihon kiryaku* 20; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 10, 519), (29) the seventh day of the eighth month of the second year of Ninna (886) (*Sandai jitsuroku* 49; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 616), (30) the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the third year of Ninna (887) (*Sandai jitsuroku* 50; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 636), (31) the sixteenth day of the seventh month of the fifth year of Tengen (982) (*Nihon kiryaku* 7; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 146), (32) the twenty-first day of the fifth month of the first year of Eien (987) (*Nihon kiryaku* 7; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 160), (33) the twenty-fifth day of the fourth month of second year of Shōryaku (991) (*Nihon kiryaku* 9; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 171), (34) the thirteenth day of the sixth month of the fifth year of Shōryaku (994) (*Nihon kiryaku* 9; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 178), (35) the twenty-third day of the sixth month of the third year of Chōtoku (997) (*Nihon kiryaku* 10; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 188), (36) the eighth day of the eighth month of the second year of Kankō (1005) (*Nihon kiryaku* 11; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 209), (37) the nineteenth day of the eighth month of the fourth year of Kankō (1007) (*Nihon kiryaku* 11; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 215), (38) the sixteenth day of the fifth month of the third year of Kannin (1019) (*Nihon kiryaku* 11; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 251), (39) the fifteenth day of the ninth month of the sixth year of Chōgen (1033) (*Nihon kiryaku* 14; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 285), (40) the second day of the sixth month of the second year of Tengyō (939*)* (*Honchō seiki* 3; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 35), (41) the twelfth day of the sixth month of the second year of Tengyō (939) (*Honchō seiki* 3; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 36), (42) the thirteenth day of the eighth month of the second year of Tengyō (939) (*Honchō seiki* 5; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 51), (43) the sixth day of the ninth month of the second year of Tengyō (939) (*Honchō seiki* 5; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 58), (44) the seventeenth day of the ninth month of the first year of Shōryaku (990) (*Honchō seiki* 9; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 11, 153), (45) the fourth day of the sixth month of the fifth year of Shōryaku (994) (*Honchō seiki* 13; Katsumo Kuroita,

*Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 191), (46) the sixth day of the third month of the first year of Kōwa (1099) (*Honchō seiki* 22; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 302), (47) the twenty-ninth day of the eighth month of the fifth year of Kōwa (1103) (*Honchō seiki* 23; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 341), (48) the eighteenth day of the ninth month of the fifth year of Kōwa (1103) (*Honchō seiki* 23; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 341), (49) the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month of the first year of Kōji (1142) (*Honchō seiki* 25; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 395), (50) the twenty-fifth day of the second month of the second year of Kōji (1143) (*Honchō seiki* 26; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 423), (51) the twentieth day of the seventh month of the third year of Kyūan (1145) (*Honchō seiki* 33; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 559), and (52) the second day of the eighth month of the first year of Ninpei (1151) (*Honchō seiki* 40; Katsumo Kuroita, *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 9, 780).

30. A prayer said: "The study in classics that leads to things has actuality and authority. A bodhisattva, appearing as traces, [manifests in the forms of] the king or *kami*. For this reason, a holy king governs the country and certainly relies on the secret help of *kami*. The way of *kami* that terminates the bond [to afflictions] depends only on the wisdom-sword of the tamer" (*Sandai jitsuroku*, 3; Katsumo Kuroita et al., *Shintai zōho kokushi taikei* 4, 37).

31. According to Murayama Shūichi, at least fifteen ceremonies for angry spirits (*goryō-e,* 御霊会) were performed at Shinsen'en 神泉苑 in the fifth year of Jōgan (貞観; 863): (1) Nagayaō (長屋王; 684–729) in the first year of Tenpyō (天平; 729), (2) Fujiwara no Hirotsugu (藤原広嗣; d. 740) in the twelfth year of Tenpyō (740), (3) Tachibana no Naramaro (橘奈良麻呂; 721–757) in the eighth year of Tenpyōshōhō (天平勝宝; 756), (4) Funadōō (道祖王; d. 757) in the first year of Tenpyōhōji (天平宝字; 757), (5) Fujiwara no Nakamaro (藤原仲麻呂; 706–764) in the eighth year of Tenpyōhōji (764), (6) Wakeō (和気王; d. 765) in the first year of Tenpyōjingo (765), (7) Agatainukainoaneme (県犬養姉女; date unknown) in the second year of Tenpyōjingo (766), (8) Dōkyō (道鏡; d. 772) in the third year of Jingokeiun (神護景雲; 769), (9) Emperor Kōnin's (光仁天皇; 709–781, r. 770–781) wife and son in the sixth year of Hōki (宝亀; 775), (10) Hikami Kawatsugu 氷上川継 in the first year of Enryaku (延暦; 782), (11) Fujiwara no Tanetsugu (藤原種継; 735–785) and Prince Sawara (早良親王; d. 785) in the fourth year of Enryaku (785), (12) Prince Iyo (伊予親王; d. 807) in the second year of Daidō (大同; 807), (13) Fujiwara no Nakanari (藤原仲成; 774–810) and Fujiwara no Kusuko (藤原薬子; d. 810) in the first year of Kōnin (弘仁; 810), (14) Tomo no Kowamine (伴健岑; dates unknown) and Tachibana no Hayanari (橘逸勢; 782–842) in the ninth year of Jōwa (承和; 842), and (15) Funya no Miyatamaro (文室宮田麻呂; dates unknown) in the tenth year of Jōwa (843). Murayama Shūichi, *Honji suijaku* (Kyoto: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1974), 72–91.

32. *Shijū jōketsu*, a fifteen-chapter work written by Chōen in 1049, is the record of rituals of the Tendai school.

33. *Shijū jōketsu*. *T.* 2408, 75.0918c14–c17.

34. A great source of distress for the Heian imperial court was the growing belief in the angry spirit of Sugawara no Michizane. It was held that due to Michizane's exile after his failed political rivalry with Fujiwara no Tokihira (藤原時平; 871–909) during the reign of Emperor Daigo (醍醐天皇; 885–930, r. 897–930) and his subsequent and by all accounts miserable death in Dazaifu 太宰府, the former politician became an angry spirit and thereupon brought natural disasters and unnatural deaths to many people, especially aristocrats who had been instrumental in Michizane's exile.

35. Another example was the enshrinement of Gozu Tennō 牛頭天王 (the divine cow-headed king) at Gionsha 祇園社 to avert various calamities and natural disasters.

36. *Zhu Foshuo Weimojie jing. T.* 1775, 38.0327b01–b05. "In general, the commonly accepted explanation among people is that all 'originals' are beyond contemplation or conceptualization. Borrowing the seat from the king of brightness, begging fragrant soil for food, touching chiliocosms by hand, holding dry form in the abode: these are all 'traces' beyond contemplation or conceptualization. Yet, to teach the obscured gate is difficult and the response of the Buddha is not the same. If there is no essence—no 'original,' [that is]—then [the form of a certain deity] as a phenomenon—as a 'trace,' [that is]—does not appear. If there are no phenomena—no 'trace,' [that is]—then the essence—the 'original,' [that is]—does not exist. Although there are differences between 'originals' and 'traces,' 'originals' and 'traces' are inconceivably the same."

37. The passages in the *Shoku Nihongi* are as follows. (1) The twenty–third day of the seventh month of the second year of Tenpyō Jingo (766): "[Emperor Shōtoku] sent the imperial messenger and enshrined a one-*jō* 丈 six-*shaku* 尺 [about 5 meters] Buddhist statue in the temple of Ise ōkami 伊勢大神 [Ise Jingūji]" (*Shoku Nihongi* 27; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 15, 129); (2) the eighth day of the first month of the first year of Jingo Keiun (神護景雲; 767): "[Emperor Shōtoku declares an imperial edict: Monks] in the five provinces and on the seven main roads must perform the repentant rituals of Kichijō Ten (吉祥天; Skt. Lakṣmī) for seventeen days at various provinces of Kokubunkonkōmyōji 国分金光明寺 [Kokubunji, 国分寺]" (*Shoku Nihongi* 28; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 15, 149); (3) the sixteenth day of the eighth month of the first year of Jingo Keiun (767): "[Emperor Shōtoku declares the imperial edict]: As a result of the repentant rituals of Kichijō Ten, there was a large sign of a heavenly cloud that simultaneously manifested as the three treasures, various deities, and deities of the heavens and

the earth" (*Shoku Nihongi* 28; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 15, 173); (4) the eighteenth day of the ninth month of the first year of Jingo Keiun (767): "Yahata Hime Jingūji 八幡比売神宮寺 [Usa Hachimangū 宇佐八幡宮 in Bizen Province 備前國] was established" (*Shoku Nihongi* 28; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 15, 18); (5) the sixth day of the eighth month of the third year of Hōki (宝亀; 772): "Jingūji in Watarai Province was relocated to Watarase 渡瀬 in Iitaka 飯高 Province" (*Shoku Nihongi* 32; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 15, 385); (6) the first day of the second month of the eleventh year of Hōki (780): "Ise Jingūji should be again relocated to some other place due to a curse caused by angry spirits" (*Shoku Nihongi*, 36; Kazuo Aoki, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 16, 129).

38. As Teeuwen and Rambelli state, "Particularly important to the *honji suijaku* discourse were the following elements: Japanese, Chinese, and Indian religions, mythologies, and literatures used as a rich repertory of characters, image, and styles; the theme of the Three Counties (India, China, and Japan), with India playing a preeminent role; versions of a cosmic hierarchy, going from an absolute Buddha (depending on the tradition, Dainichi, Śākyamuni, or Amida) down to Japanese, human figures (such as Shōtoku taishi, Kōbō Daishi, or even Hōnen), or even Japanese wild animals and ghosts; doctrines of salvation (the modality and degree of intervention in this world of buddhas and bodhisattvas through the medium of kami), usually—but not always—based on the philosophy of original enlightenment (*hongaku*); ideas about ways of interacting with the sacred that ranged from religious rituals to artistic production (poetry, music, etc.) to labor and everyday activities" (Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambeli, *Buddhas and Kami in Japan* [New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003], 51).

39. Sueki Fumihiko, *Chūsei no kami to hotoke* (Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha, 2003), 17.

40. *Nihon ryōiki* 3:24. Osamu Izumoji, et al. *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 30 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996), 163–165. "'I was the king of a state in the eastern part of India. . . . Although I did not suppress the practice of the teaching, preventing men from following monks was a sin. This is why I was reborn as a monkey and as the *kami* of this shrine. Please stay here and recite the *Lotus Sutra* so that I may be released from this life.' The monk said, 'Then you must make offerings.' The monkey answered, 'I have nothing to offer.' . . .The monkey said, 'Though the government officials gave the rice to me, the person in charge of it regards it as his own and would never let me have it for my use.'"

41. *Nihon ryōiki* 1:7. Osamu Izumoji et al., *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 30 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996), 18–19. Dhyāna Master Gusai came from Paekche. When that country was invaded, an ancestor of the governor of Mitani district in Bingo Province was put in charge of reinforcements and

sent to Paekche. At that time the present governor's ancestor vowed that if he came home safely he would build a temple dedicated to the deities of heaven and earth. He managed to escape harm's way. Thereupon, he invited Dhyāna Master Gusai to return to Japan with him. Mitani-dera is the temple that was founded by this master, and both monks and laymen felt awe and reverence upon seeing it.

42. *Dōken Shōnin Meidoki* (A Record of Dōken Shōnin's Experience of the Other World) is revised and annotated in two books: Makabe Toshinobu, *Shinto taikei: Jinjahen jūichi Kitano* (Tokyo: Kitano Shinto Taikei Hensankai, 1978), 77–80; Kurosaka Katsumi, *Shintei zōho kokushi taikei dai jūnikan: Fusō ryakki* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunsha, 1932), 219–222. I have also consulted the contemporary Japanese translation by Kawane Yoshiyasu, *Tenjin shinkō no seiritsu: Nihon ni okeru kodai kara chūseihe no ikō* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 2003), 168–174.

43. Kinpusen is located in the southern part of the Ōmine mountain range and is one of a set of five high peaks, the others being Mount Yoshino (Yoshinosan, 吉野山), the peak of Aone (Aonegamine, 青根ヶ峰), the rock of Shisun (Shisuniwa, 四寸岩), the Great Sky (Daitenjō, 大天井), and the peak of Sanjō (Sanjōgatake, 山上ケ岳).

44. Hosshinmon Chinzanji was located within Kinpusenji 金峯山寺. Hosshinmon is one of the gates of Kinpusen. Practitioners regard the Hosshinmon as a gate to the other world or the buddha-world and believe that their spiritual acuity would be improved simply by passing through this gate. Chinzanji's name was changed to Chikurinin 竹林院 in the Muromachi period 室町時代.

45. *Varṣa* (Jpn. *ango*) was a religious practice in which practitioners confined themselves to the mountain for a period of three months (from the sixteenth day of the fourth month until the fifteenth day of seventh month).

46. Tenmon was a technology for reading the good or bad omens of natural phenomena and was a course of study in the Onmyōryō 陰陽寮, a department within the *ritsuryō* 律令 government. Onmyō are the ancient Chinese interacting principles of *yin* and *yang* and are relevant in the study of astrology and meteorology, calendar production, pyro-plastromancy, and the selection of good land.

47. The term "welfare of the entire country" is the same idea as the "protection of the nation." In order to calm national disturbances, practitioners in the Japanese esoteric Buddhist tradition invoked supernatural power by burning small pieces of wood on an altar.

48. The text says "three seven days," i.e., twenty-one days.

49. Vajrapāṇi is a deity that protects the Buddha's teachings with a *vajra* implement (*kongōsho,* 金剛杵).

50. Deva-kumāra is a type of deity who protects the Buddhist teaching and who is usually depicted as a youth.

51. These deities are the "family" (Skt. *parivāra*; Jpn. *kenzoku,* 眷属) of Sahasrabhuja.

52. According to the classical Buddhist worldview, this realm consists of four main lands, which surround Mount Sumeru. The entire universe can be described as three thousand worlds. This realm is a buddha-land. In the *Meidoki*, the Pure Land of Kinpusen is the center of this world.

53. The seven precious treasures (Skt. *sapta-ratna*) are: gold (Skt. *suvarṇa*), silver (Skt. *rūpya*), lapis lazuli (Skt. *vaidūrya*), crystal (Skt. *sphaṭika*), shell-fish (Skt. *musāragalva*), coral (Skt. *lohitamuktikā*), and agate (Skt. *aśmagarbha*). However, there are many different kinds and orders described by Buddhist sutras. The term *sapta-ratna* appears often in the early Pure Land sutras and in the *Lotus Sutra*.

54. "Practice hall" (Skt. *bodhi-maṇḍa*; Jpn. *dōjō*) referred to the place where Śākyamuni attained enlightenment. Subsequently, it has come to refer to any place of Buddhist training.

55. The guardian bodhisattva is a deity who protects Buddhist sutras. Vedic deities such as Brahmā (Bonten, 梵天) and Śakro Devānām Indra (Taishaku Ten, 帝釈天) were appropriated and charged with the protection of Buddhist sutras. The guardian bodhisattva serves and protects priests and practitioners of esoteric Buddhism and Shugendō 修験道. The guardian bodhisattva also appears in pre-modern Japanese collections of Buddhist tales.

56. There are several forms of this term referring to Sugawara no Michizane as a deity: (1) Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten, (2) Dajō Itoku Ten, (3) Dajō Ten, (4) Dai Itoku Tenjin 大威徳天神, (5) Dai Itoku no Ten, (6) Dai Itoku Ten, (7) Dai Ten 大天, and (8) Dajō Tenjin 太政天神. It is not certain which form of this Nihon Dajō Itoku Ten was popular at the time of Dōken Shōnin.

57. The guardians (Skt. *parivāra*; Jpn. *kenzoku*) are members of the house-holds of buddhas and bodhisattvas, e.g., the twelve guardian deities of Bhaiṣajyaguruvaidūryaprabha, the eight great heavenly youth of Acalanātha, and the twenty-eight good deities of Sahasrabhuja.

58. The demons are ogres, hungry ghosts, and beasts who belong to the three kinds of evil and dwell in the lower three of the six realms of transmigration.

59. The other beings are various figures of deities.

60. Vajrapāṇi, also referred to as Niō, protects the *buddhadharma*.

61. The thunder god is a deity personifying natural phenomena. Farmers worshiped the thunder god as a sort of nature deity. In esoteric Buddhism, the thunder god is portrayed as a wind-deity and as Śakro Devānām Indra (Taishaku Ten, 帝釈天; the Vedic deity of thunder).

62. *Pretas* are hungry ghosts.

63. *Yakṣa*s are *parivāra* of Vaiśravaṇa and protectors of the north.

64. One *li* is about four kilometers.

65. Trāyastrimśa is the second of six heavens in the realm of the desire world: (1) four deity kings, (2) Trāyastrimśa, (3) Yāma, (4) Tuṣita, (5) Nirmāṇarati, and (6)Takejizai Ten. Trāyastrimśa is on the top of Mount Sumeru. There are four peaks, and each peak has eight heavens, giving us a total of thirty-two peaks. By adding Śakro Devānām Indra, the total comes to thirty-three deities.

66. This is one of the eight sufferings as defined in Buddhist teaching.

67. Samantabhadra is the bodhisattva, well-known for his acts of charity, supporting Śākyamuni Tathāgata along with Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva.

68. The bodhisattvas in their provisional manifestations are essentially bodhisattvas who have altered their forms in order to help sentient beings.

69. Karai Tenjin (the fire-thunder deity) is one of the common names for Sugawara no Michizane's angry spirit. People believed that fire and thunder were Tenjin's instruments of retribution.

70. Karai Taiki Dokuō (King of Fire-Thunder and Poisonous Air) is another name of Karai Tenjin.

71. Hachiman (or Yawata) refers to Iwashimizu Hachiman 石清水八幡. Hachiman was a Korean deity, brought from the Korean Peninsula by immigrants. He initially had only a local following but was popular from early on. Hachiman was granted the title of Gokokureigen Iryokujintsu Dai Bosatsu 護国霊験威力神通大菩薩 or Gokokureigen Iryokujintsu Daijizaiō Bosatsu 護国霊験威力神通大自在王菩薩 by the imperial court and was popularly referred to as Hachiman Dai Bosatsu 八幡大菩薩. In the second year of Jōgan (貞観; 860), Daianji 大安寺 Gyōgyō 行教 enshrined Usa Hachiman 宇佐八幡 at Iwashimizu in Yamashiro 山城 Province and named it Iwashimizu Hachimangū. The Usa family in Kyūshū 九州 enshrined Hachiman as its tutelary deity (*ujigami,* 氏神). Around the same time he was identified as the spirit of the legendary Emperor Ōjin 応神天皇. The Hachiman cult spread in the central provinces during the Nara period after Hachiman gave support to Emperor Shōmu's (聖武天皇; 701–756, r. 724–749) efforts to construct Tōdaiji and cast the large Vairocana Buddha statue.

72. Sugawara no Michizane was exiled by Emperor Daigo to Dazaifu 太宰府 in the fourth year of Shōtai (昌泰; 902).

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# The Taoist Priest (*Daoshi*) in Comparative Historical Perspective: A Critical Analysis[1]

**Russell Kirkland**
University of Georgia

WESTERN SCHOLARS HAVE, for the most part, not yet begun to analyze such simple conceptual issues as that of the distinction between a "priest" or "priestess"—that is, a person authorized to perform certain religious roles within a given social setting—and a "monk" or "nun"—that is, a person who carries out certain spiritual practices, within or without a cloistered setting, with or without having undergone actual ordination. Modern scholarship has yet to produce a complete or balanced picture of the roles and functions of *daoshi* throughout Chinese history. The *Daoism Handbook*, edited by Livia Kohn, can be considered, in many regards, the state of the art in Taoist studies today.[2] But though it contains chapters on Taoist ordination, ritual, etc., it does not specifically address monasticism or priesthood, whether as institutions or as conceptual abstractions. Examination of most other twenty-first-century works on Taoism leaves us unclear not only about what the characteristics of "a Taoist" are, but also about the ideals to which such a person is devoted, and the relationship between the two.

Religions, and their ambient cultures, commonly employ a particular term for a person who is regarded as embodying fully the religion's ideals—for example, a "saint." The term "saint," however, is generally not reserved for a holder of any specific religious office, and to qualify as a "saint" a person does not even have to be currently alive. In fact, most persons regarded as "saints" are no-longer-living persons who, during life, held no formal ecclesiastic office.[3] Such terms are thus quite distinguishable from terms that designate individuals who play specific roles within the religion and/or within its ambient culture and society.

Such terms are also clearly distinguishable from terms employed to designate an order of beings who are, by their nature, trans-human, indeed unembodied. For instance, the Christian tradition has its

"angels," and it is generally assumed that a person's entry into the religious life in a social or institutional sense does not, in any meaningful sense, lead such a person to eventual attainment of the status of "an angel."

The indigenous Chinese terminology pertaining to the corresponding concepts associated with Taoism are, it appears, roughly equivalent. The category of "angel" is approximated by the Chinese term *xian* (*hsien*), which was traditionally mistranslated as "immortal," as though the primary characteristic of such beings is that they do not undergo death.[4] Since Christians do not use the term "immortal" for those transcendent beings whose normal state is beyond the empirical world of form, one might wonder why we should not simply render the term *xian* as "angel"—at least a rough equivalent. But the objection might be that while Christians who pursue the religious life most diligently are seldom if ever imagined to be engaged in practices that might allow them to "become an angel," there have been numerous Chinese minds (including, or even perhaps even predominantly, non-Taoist Chinese minds) that have imagined that Chinese culture (and, to a certain extent, the Taoist tradition more particularly) offers a range of practices that indeed offer a diligent person a theoretical, and perhaps even a practical, possibility of attaining the status of a *xian.* For that reason, some scholars of the last generation began rendering the Chinese term *xian* as "transcendent"—a term that allows us to apply it either to a disembodied being who has never been human, or to a human whose religious practice has been so exceptionally fruitful as to transform him or her into such a being—who, being not subject to any of the conditions of the mortal state, may be called "immortal." Also, the *xian* is clearly distinguishable from "a saint," for the latter is a status that cannot, during life, be effectively earned or attained: it is an honorary status, conferred *post mortem* by leaders of a religious organization who have decided to offer a particular person the cultural status of "saint" in order that his or her life and deeds might become considered exemplary, for present and future living persons to emulate in their effort to fulfill the tradition's ideals most fully.

What follows here is part of a larger project, an exploration of Taoist terms and titles more generally. In addition to having terms that correspond roughly to such English terms as "priest," "monk," and "saint," Taoism, like other religions, has a variety of ranks and titles, which are of distinguishable types. Some are titles that are given to a living

person, by living contemporaries within a specific institution, to signify that he or she is authorized to perform a specific role within their religious community (for example, as an abbot or a rector). Others are master-titles that signify that a given person has authority over other duly recognized religious figures (for example, a bishop, a monsignor, a cardinal, or a pope). Then again, there are honorific titles, which suggest great respect and deference, but actually specify no particular duties or privileges and correspond to no particular rank within the religious community, either in social terms or in historical terms. In Tang times, Taoists used the term *lianshi* (煉師, "refined master/mistress") and even the term *tianshi* (天師, "heavenly master") as such loose and general honorifics.[5] Another term, used by Tang Taoists in just such a sense, is the term *xiansheng*, which once connoted a master of religious matters, but passed down into modern Chinese culture as the everyday term for a male adult person—equivalent to the terms "mister," "sir," or *monsieur*. Within the Taoist tradition, however, all such titles, formal or informal, have been used to certify that the person to whom they are applied is someone whose life has a substantial religious significance. In Tang times, the terms *tianshi* and *lianshi* seem to have been considered available for assignment by any given literatus to any given illustrious personage of past or present; whereas the term *xiansheng* seems to have been regarded as a title of honor that was most typically bestowed upon a distinguished religious figure—during life or posthumously—by the imperial court.

Such facts, however, do not appear in the general literature concerning Chinese culture or society. Whereas Westerners' use of terms like "angel," "saint," "priest," or "pope" generally reveal, and cause, little social or historical confusion, these issues of terminology are in fact of the most vital significance for the study of Taoists, for as we enter the second decade of the third millennium (as dates are now calculated not only by Christians, but by most Asians—regardless of religious identity), these matters remain fundamental for any serious discussion of "Taoist practice" or "Taoist belief."[6]

While the terminology employed by Taoists over the centuries has not yet been fully explored, the representation of such terminology in the writings of some Western scholars has actually obfuscated such matters, rather than clarify them. Those scholars include such erudite twentieth-century luminaries as Henri Maspero, Isabelle Robinet, and Kristopher Schipper. It is true that those scholars did much—and in Schipper's case,

is still doing much—to add to our historical and conceptual knowledge of Taoism. And it is certainly true that each of them endeavored diligently to make sense of the data of Taoism that was known to most scholars of their day. But significant interpretive problems are posed by any effort to integrate data that originated in different periods, in different social and cultural contexts. And some of the pertinent writings of Maspero, Robinet, and even Schipper seem, upon careful inspection, to use data from one historical setting as though it were continuous with—and therefore useful for explaining—data from a quite disparate social or historical setting. By conflating modern phenomena—for example, data from the Zhengyi tradition that endures in Taiwan today—with data from ancient or medieval texts, such scholars have inadvertently perpetuated anachronistic conceptual amalgams that are, in the final analysis, deeply misleading. In addition, some writers have often confused *literary images* concerning "Taoists" with actual historical data. Even the compilers of China's "standard histories" typically conflated known Taoist leaders with members of a category like "hermits"—most of whom never even met an actual Taoist, much less represented any Taoist community. Furthermore, some such presentations have confused even the scholars of the present generation—much less today's students, who will be tomorrow's scholars—by thoughtlessly using certain terms and titles as though they were simply interchangeable with other terms and titles.

For instance, at the close of the last the millennium, the only reliable historical overview of Taoism was Isabelle Robinet's *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*.[7] Robinet begins her book with a chapter entitled "Definitions and Controlling Concepts." But in that chapter, she uses the term "Taoist" *both* as an utterly ahistorical abstraction *and* as a synonym for the term "Taoist priest." For example, in one section, she writes as follows: "Because they are cyclical, the Taoist time and the Taoist world permit a new beginning, a rebirth. . . . In this dynamic world, which he himself has built, the Taoist sits at the center, as a kind of demiurge, a creating spirit: by locating, connecting, identifying, and naming, he gives meaning to the cosmos. . . ."[8] In reality, I doubt that anyone can name a single specific Taoist practitioner, at any moment in Chinese history, who actually fits such a "definition." The writings of all Taoists that are known to me would not even seem to have been produced by people who would even have understood themselves, or any of their living associates, in any such terms. But we can certainly

allow for a certain degree of imprecision when a scholar is attempting to generalize about an entire tradition, especially when writing for the general educated public, as Robinet was doing.

On the other hand, elsewhere in the same chapter, Robinet—like many Western scholars of the twentieth century—uses the term "Taoist" as a synonym for "Taoist priest." For instance, she writes: "A creative power in his chamber, a prince in his body, the Taoist officiating at a ritual also plays a role like that of a sovereign and his representatives in the empire. . . . The Taoist, as we shall see, does the same thing in his liturgy. The Taoist's exorcistic function originally belonged to the government. . . ."[9] So is every "Taoist," one wonders, a person who is entitled to—much less expected to—*perform a liturgy*? So any reader of that passage would logically conclude. However, in another place, Robinet writes: "The Taoist world is above all the world of nature rather than that of society. Taoists are renowned for this. Often hermits in distant mountains, they are the ones who taught the Chinese to appreciate landscapes with the feelings that we recognize as Chinese."[10] So if these passages all "define" for us how we are to think of the persons designated as "the Taoist," we can apparently conclude that the hermits who live in distant mountains must also somehow play "exorcistic functions." Or is it, rather, that the Taoist performs his exorcistic functions and then goes into the mountains to appreciate the landscape there? Are we to conclude that a person who does not appreciate natural landscapes will somehow have trouble performing a liturgy? Or does one perform a liturgy most properly while in the mountains, dwelling as a hermit?

The fundamental issue is whether we are all talking about the same thing when we seek to communicate with each other about "what Taoists believe" or "what Taoists do." For example, one need not be Roman Catholic to understand that the ranks of ecclesiastic functionaries—up to the Pope himself—are specifically defined ranks that pertain to specific roles that particular men, and occasionally women, have been authorized to play on behalf of the Catholic Church. The specificity of such roles, and of the corresponding terminology, is fully distinguishable from the less clearly specified roles that the Catholic faithful understands to be the activities of the men and women of past ages who are recognized as "saints." The Church seems to have always taken implicit pride in the fact that the category of "saint" has never been directly tied to the categories of the Catholic clergy. History abounds

with "saints" who exemplified the highest ideals of and for human life, yet who held no ecclesiastical office at all. Were it not for that long-standing distinction, the Church would have had little opportunity to hold up any women as religious exemplars. Indeed, the highest female luminary in the Catholic tradition—St. Mary, the mother of Jesus—is a perfect example: neither she nor any other member of Jesus' family was ever portrayed as having undergone ordination as a "priest": that most elementary ecclesiastical rank—like the more exalted ranks of "bishop," "archbishop," "cardinal," and "pope"—have in fact always remained unyieldingly closed to even the most illustrious woman, no matter how "saintly" she may have been recognized as being. Hence today, Benedict XVI is laboring assiduously to elevate his predecessor, John Paul II, to the rank of a "saint"—a rank that can never formally be attained by any Christian during his or her lifetime.

By comparison, there has been historically plenty of discomfort among faithful Christians when discussing the words or deeds of an individual who embraces beliefs and values at variance with those of the majority of Christians, past and present. Indeed, some men and women who regarded themselves, and were sometimes regarded by many others, as "good Christians," were tied to a post and set afire to die a horrible flaming death by persons who held pointedly different beliefs about the criteria by which we ought to define who, exactly, is "a good Christian" and who is not. Fortunately, no examples come to mind of Taoist "heretics" being flambéed for their deviant ideals or practices—a fact that, I shall argue, is neither a historical accident nor proof that Taoists are "more spiritual" than Christians, but merely a happy consequence of different cultural traditions regarding the way "religious identity" is construed.

Such atrocities of bygone days as burning heretics at the stake (now repudiated by virtually all Christians of all denominations) have, both in generations past and even in our own day, been exploited by "leading intellectuals" who hate Christianity and indeed hate "religion": those modernist elitists point to such atrocities as incontrovertible evidence that "religion" per se is not merely foolish, but dangerous to human civilization. In reality, of course, such "intellectuals" are woefully under-educated about the actual facts of life regarding the world's religions: even a first-year undergraduate at nearly any Western college can take a course in which he or she learns that in most Asian lands—among Buddhists, Hindus, Confucians, and Taoists,

for instance—no one has ever been burned at the stake for "heresy." Nor are "Crusades" or "wars of jihad" common elements of the religious history of the lands where those traditions hold sway.

But the more fundamental issue for students of such religious traditions is whether, on even a theoretical level, there *could be* such a thing as a Buddhist or Taoist "heresy." The fundamental issue is this: Are there "doctrines" that are so characteristic of "Taoism" that a person who does not see fit to adhere to them somehow fails to qualify as a representative of "the Taoist faith"? For if so, we could use such facts to forge clear definitional distinctions between "Taoist ideas" and the ideas of others who cannot seriously be held to represent "Taoism" per se. For example, in the mid-twentieth century the leading Western expositors of "Taoism" were writers like H. G. Creel and Holmes Welch, who taught generations a highly warped concept of Taoism grounded entirely in the biases and cultural conflicts inherent to Western intellectuals' disdain for *all* "religion"; without bothering to analyze the social or historical data, Creel maintained (1) that "true Taoism" consisted originally of certain abstract naturalistic notions produced from the heads of long-dead "philosophers" who had written such classical texts as *Lao-tzu* (*Laozi*) or the *Tao te ching* (*Daode jing*); and (2) that—just as Protestants and modern secularists maintained that Jesus was a wise and good man whose noble teachings were not truly represented by the centuries of "degenerate" Roman Catholic practitioners of Christianity—the "true successors" of the sagely authors of the *Daode jing* were most certainly <u>not</u> the centuries of Chinese practitioners of *Daojiao* (the term for Taoism used in China by Taoists and non-Taoists alike). Rather, the Confucianized translators of "Chinese Thought" for the twentieth-century English-speaking world (e.g., Fung Yu-lan, Wing-tsit Chan, Theodore deBary, and H. G. Creel) dismissed all the practicing Taoists of imperial and post-imperial China as "superstitious" and "degenerate." This anti-religious mania that was embedded in Western Sinology as a methodological axiom taught generations of Western minds that the "true successors" of the supposed "philosophical Taoists" of antiquity were elite, educated men who were "above" such vile "superstition"—poets, "Zen masters," landscape painters, and men who wrote texts about metaphysical concepts like "Non-Being." Notably, according to this anti-Taoist re-definition of Taoism, there were no women at all among the "true successors" of Laozi.

From the perspective of the Confucian/academic doyens of modern Sinology, the men and women who actually founded modern China's leading Taoist organization—such as Wang Zhe, the putative founder of the Quanzhen (Ch'üan-chen) monastic order—were ignored as unworthy of consideration at all. Wang was a highly educated member of twelfth-century China's landed gentry, but twentieth-century Sinology ignominiously dismissed eight centuries of very spiritual (and often highly educated and politically well-connected) Taoist men and women. Ironically, while such men and women in 1950s China were struggling to preserve their traditions, and their own lives, from the secularistic radicals then laboring to exterminate all forms of religious practice, the Westerners who were teaching other "free" Westerners about "Chinese religion" not only denied the significance of those Taoists' struggle, but also denied the respectability of the ideals and practices that those Taoists were struggling to preserve.

During the last quarter-century of the twentieth century, Western Sinologists did begin teaching the public that Taoism was not just an ancient "school of philosophy," but also an enduring religious tradition. But during that period, few Westerners could gain admittance to the mainland to observe and learn from the living Taoists there: Westerners could gain access only to the Taoists practicing in Taiwan, where a very sacerdotal, liturgical organization called Tianshi, "the Heavenly Masters," predominated. Only within the past decade have any Western scholars begun publishing expositions of the state of "Taoism" during the Qing (Ch'ing) dynasty (1644–1911).[11] At the end of the twentieth century, hardly anyone in the West had even heard of Quanzhen Taoism—a monastic order in which men and women live as monks and nuns in a setting comparable to (and in part inspired by) the monastic sangha of Buddhists. And though the Tianshi priests represented "living Taoism" only on the island outpost where Western scholars—denied access to the "living Taoists" of the entire mainland—could "do fieldwork," the Quanzhen monastic order managed to survive just beyond the political fringes of Mao's China, in Beijing as well as at the traditional mountain centers of premodern Taoist religious practice. Hence, the traditions and practices of the men and women who actually practiced Taoism, considered themselves "Taoists," and were considered to be "Taoists" by non-Taoist members of Chinese society—those traditions and practices are only now, in the past ten years or so, beginning to be explained to Westerners in terms that

suggest that Westerners, and Asians alike, ought to attempt to learn about them.

The study of Buddhism in the West has a very different history, of course. And Westerners were also given a very misleading understanding of the contents of "Buddhist tradition." One such misunderstanding concerned the role and status of the men and women whom Buddhists recognized as authentic representatives of their tradition as it was, and should be, practiced within any given community. For instance, as a college student, I learned that the Buddha had established a monastic community called the sangha, and had established a set of highly specific regulations (*vinaya*) to govern the lives of the men and women whom the monastic community formally admitted to their ranks—the men ordained as "monks" (Skt. *bhikṣus*) and the women ordained as "nuns" (Skt. *bhikṣuṇīs*). But I also saw that in most Western writings, even by leading authorities on Asian cultures, the persons mentioned as representatives of Buddhism within, say, Chinese or Japanese society were generally called Buddhist "priests." No college professor, and no textbook, ever explained why the term "priest" was, or should be, used for East Asian Buddhists (e.g., Ch. *zeng*; Jpn. *so*), when our understanding of South Asian Buddhism was always that the Buddha had established a *monastic* order.

Anyone raised in any Christian land knows that a "monk" or "nun" is a person whose training, standing, and social roles are quite different indeed from those of a "priest." And the significance of that difference is particularly apparent to any woman, for the terms "monk" and "nun" suggested at least some nominal possibility of equality for women to participate in the religion, despite the fact that no woman was ever allowed to become a "priest."

It also went without saying that anyone familiar with Christianity would understand that a person did not necessarily have to become a "priest"—or even a "monk" or a "nun"—to be accepted, by everyone, as "a Christian." Indeed, throughout history, the overwhelming majority of Christians were men or women who had never even imagined the possibility of attempting to earn the status of a Christian "monk" or "nun," and certainly very few ever earned the rank of "priest." Indeed, from the very establishment of "the Christian religion," there was a clear understanding that certain individuals would be authorized to speak to others so as to correct misunderstanding and misbehavior in regard to the practice of their faith. And historically, it was precisely

because of the presence of rigorous, highly specialized ecclesiasti-
cal structure among the community of those who considered them-
selves as, and were considered, "Christians" that the Roman emperor
Constantine realized that he could essentially marry his imperial gov-
ernment to the Christian church and thereby gain effective control
over the lives of the Christian multitudes who lived in his hitherto
mixed-pagan realm. Few of the "pagan" religious communities that
flourished within the Roman world (e.g., that of the Mithraists or of
the devotees of Isis or other popular goddesses) provided any such rig-
orous social structure. So as Rome declined in "the West," Constantine
extended its putative political sovereignty for many centuries by
effectively outlawing all other religious organizations, as well as the
element of Christian thought that had been most successful *outside of*
that ecclesiastic structure—the Gnostic understanding of Christ as the
revealer of wisdom that is open for any person to achieve by attain-
ing full understanding of the spiritual nature of all reality and indeed
of one's own personal identity. Regrettably, the political success of
Constantine's program to make himself the sovereign over all his
subjects' religious life led to the death (at times, a flaming death) for
those who considered themselves Christian following a template that
was quite comparable to that which has always informed nearly all of
Buddhism. For centuries, Gnostic Christians aspired to attain a Christ-
like spiritual identity by acquiring the same wisdom that their many
Gnostic gospels taught them that Christ had revealed. But no worldly
potentate could effectively appropriate or exploit religious institutions
to control the life of a person whose religious identity was understood
as an effort to "become a Christ." Only at the fringes of today's aca-
demic world are there scholars who teach their audience the fact that
Buddhist ideas were known and respected in those ancient communi-
ties where Greco-Roman society overlapped with the Buddhist world.
The fact that there were Buddhists in Alexandria interacting with the
Christian "father" named Clement, or that texts like the *Milinda-pañhā*
were being composed to explain Buddhist beliefs to Hellenistic minds,
are nearly unknown to modern minds.

However, nearly all Westerners who have taken a course on
Buddhism do learn a few very important facts that serve as touchstones
for comparing Christian belief and practice with that of most Buddhists.
One such fact is the idea of "the bodhisattva path." Another is the East
Asian belief—prevalent especially in Japan—that a diligent practitioner

can "become a buddha in this very lifetime," *sokushin jōbutsu.* Such notions—elements along a broad spectrum of widespread and long-lasting models for Buddhist practice—have one fundamental element in common: like the ancient teachings of Gnostic Christian texts, these Buddhist teachings assume that the tradition's founder was important not primarily because of any element of his historic life or death, but rather because that founder opened a door that anyone can himself, or herself, step through, by developing a higher and fuller understanding of reality and attaining the same wisdom that the founder had himself attained. Once that belief was in place, the only question was that of determining the precise practice one must engage in in order to facilitate one's ascent to the beatific state that had been achieved by the great exemplar who founded our great religious tradition.

Again, one might ask here, once again, what such facts could have to do with the issue of what, exactly, "a Taoist" is. The fundamental problem that requires clarification is as follows. In the modern world—in Asia and the West alike—the word "Taoist" has been used so indiscriminately that meaningful discussion of, say, the extent to which twenty-first-century Taoists are doing what Taoists of any given century in the past did, cannot take place until we can all dispel a range of misleading—and at times quite silly—representations of "what Taoists believe." If the monastic life of eight centuries of Taoist men and women remains buried under the carpet while interpreters try to explain "Taoism" only in terms of "ancient philosophers" selling "non-action," or hereditary male priests performing Tianshi liturgies while *hoi polloi* watch passively (and put a few drachmas into a collection plate, as it were, to feed the priests who do all our religious activity *for* us), then what is being written or taught about "Taoism" will be quite worthless.

I am writing here not to disparage the mistaken notions of dilettantes. We may all take for granted that the notions cherished or expounded by dilettantes are nearly always mistaken, in regard to any topic, in any field of endeavor. Rather, what I do intend to do here is to address notions of "what Taoists do" that have been written and published not by dilettantes, but by leading scholars in the field of "the study of Taoism" at the turn of the millennium.

Let us begin with a set of very simple questions on the basis of the wide-ranging exposition just concluded: Is there, in a strict sense, such a thing as "a Taoist priest"? If so, to what extent, and in what ways, is

such a person to be differentiated from "a Taoist monk" or "a Taoist nun"? To what extent, in what ways, and for what reasons, have the roles of "a Taoist priest," "a Taoist monk," or "a Taoist nun" changed over time? Yet more importantly, to what extent are such figures historically differentiated from any particular type of *layperson*? One can certainly be "a Christian" or "a Buddhist" without undergoing ordination as a priest. But as the twenty-first century opened, one can read the writings of some leading specialists without coming away with any coherent answer to the question, "Can one be 'a Taoist' without undergoing ordination as 'a priest'?" Who, in fact, decides whether any given person is, in fact, someone whom we ought to call "a Taoist priest"?[12] What are the personal qualities, or social roles, that we ought to expect of a person who holds the title of "priest"—and what are the personal qualities, and social roles, that we ought to expect of a person who holds the title of a "monk" or "nun"? Are there specific activities, or religious practices, that we ought to expect to see being performed by one but not by the other? And even more importantly, are there specific activities, or religious practices, that we ought to expect to see being performed by a Taoist "priest," "monk," or "nun" that we ought never expect to see being performed by a Taoist layperson?

Many twentieth-century scholars (and some today) have written as though there has never been any such thing in China as a specific religious identity for any group or individual: we are often told that "religion" in China, as in Japan, is "diffused"—not "institutional," as in Christianity or Islam; hence, we are often told, individuals in those Asian lands may engage in various ceremonies, or think various thoughts, that *might* have historically derived from some specific religious tradition, without such facts demonstrating that that person wishes to be, or ought to be, identified with any such specific tradition. For instance, over the course of Chinese history, it became fairly common (at least as compared to the premodern or modern West) for individuals (including some Quanzhen Taoists) to believe that all persons undergo rebirth—a belief that derives quite specifically from Buddhist beliefs, rather than from Confucian or Taoist beliefs. Yet, we have always been told that when we hear a Chinese person speaking of rebirth, we are certainly not to conclude that that person holds a Buddhist religious identity, rather than a Confucian or Taoist identity. And it is certainly true that over the past thousand years, there were frequent efforts among political and cultural leaders to convince the

Chinese public that "the Three Religions are one," i.e., that the ideal of "becoming a Sage (*shengren*)" is somehow analogous with, if not identical to, the ideal of "becoming a Buddha" or "becoming a Transcendent (*xian*)." And there are certainly prominent examples of works of "Taoist literature," indeed Taoist scripture, in which such equivalences are expressed as ideals to be accepted by "Taoist" readers.

However, it is also quite true that over the course of the same centuries, within the same societies, there were assiduous efforts by men and women in China to articulate and fulfill the ideals for a follower of "the Taoist tradition" as distinguished from (if seldom opposed, in any hostile sense, to) "the Buddhist tradition" or "the Confucian tradition." That is to say, there were, century after century, men and women in China who desired to do what was most likely to lead a person to attain the ultimate ideal for a human being, in the sense of becoming a Transcendent, or a Realized Person (*zhenren*)—*not* in the sense of becoming a Buddha or a Confucian "Sage."

And more importantly for a sound comparative understanding, for none of those men or women was "becoming a Transcendent" or "Realized Person" (*zhenren*) a *theoretically impossible goal*—the way that it would be for a person who claims Christian religious identity to say that "I wish to do what is necessary for me to develop myself so that I may someday, perhaps, become 'a Christ.'" For no Christian—at least since the extirpation of the Gnostic "heresy"—has it ever been a thinkable goal that one should seek to practice the religious life to the point that one might "become a Christ." But for followers of Taoism, as for Buddhists, it was not only thinkable, but actually quite important, that one should seek to put into practice a model of religious practice that was appropriate for attaining the ultimate spiritual goal: becoming a Transcendent or a Realized Person.

And moreover, the determination of the characteristics of such an ideal person, and of the precise religious practices most conducive to the eventual attainment of such an ideal, was the subject of periodic discussion among Taoists—not all of whom were ever ordained into any specific ecclesiastic religious organization. Nor did any Taoists, to my knowledge, ever insist that "unless you leave home and follow me"—i.e., abandoning one's family and wholly renouncing one's natural social/political community, the way that the Mohists of pre-Han China were expected to do—one would have no hope of attaining the ultimate spiritual goal. Western Sinologists of the twentieth century

taught us that when Buddhism arrived in China, there was heated debate (represented by the late-Tang Confucian Han Yu) about the fact that "becoming Buddhist" would seem to demand that one deny one's family (and by extension, one's ruler—a peculiarly Chinese extension of social values), thereby becoming "no longer really Chinese." Yet, the Sinologists who taught such things kept mum about whether Chinese men (or women—never really present in the minds of twentieth-century Western Sinology at all) felt that by becoming a Taoist monk one might also, somehow, be violating one's cultural heritage. That is, of course, because those Sinologists had been taught to think that the term "Taoist" referred properly only to the ideas of certain classical "philosophers," not to any actual men or women practicing religion in imperial China.

In addition, we may now consider the fact that China's Taoists never underwent the sustained argument about the viability of "the bodhisattva path," for monastics and/or for laypeople, that the Buddhists of India underwent. Our historical Indian sources for the study of the first few centuries of Buddhist institutions are scant. Our picture of what happened in those centuries is informed mostly by speculation upon the implications of words found in texts of indeterminable date—in comparison, perhaps, with the implications of certain artifacts, of uncertain date, that may have come down to us from such early communities. What we generally hear, and what our students are generally taught, is that the Buddha insisted upon a very strict monastic code—more strict than that which the Chinese found utterly unpalatable when the Mohists insisted that one could not "be a Mohist" while continuing to live among one's natural family and paying allegiance to one's natural ruler. It is a commonplace concerning the introduction of Buddhism into China that "Chinese society" itself was repulsed by the idea of "renunciation" implicit in the Indian model of "the Buddhist monastic community." There may have been certain comparable elements among the earliest "Celestial Master" (*Tianshi*) movement in late-Han China. But our historical sources for that community are just as scarce, and just as difficult to date, as our historical sources for India's early Buddhist community. And the discontinuities between that movement and the later traditions of China's *Daojiao* are quite shocking indeed—and were to the Taoists (like the fifth-century aristocrat Lu Xiujing) who first attempted to codify the sacred literature of their tradition. In the first version of Taoism's so-called "canon"

(the "Three Caverns," "Sandong"), the writings of the Celestial Master movement were conspicuously excluded, thereby demonstrating that any argument that that movement was "central" to Taoism (an argument made by several leading late-twentieth-century Western specialists) is quite opposite to the definitional thrust of the men and women who developed China's indigenous religious traditions into a society-wide religion that won respect and participation by centuries of rulers and literati, rather than the exclusionary cult of the Tianshi, which offered no explanations of life to interest intellectuals, and no model of religious practice for personal spiritual self-development (*xiulian*) other than cultic liturgical activities at the behest of an all-male hereditary leadership.

So among the Taoists of medieval China, as among the Buddhists of ancient India—and indeed as among the early Christian community—only speculation and generalization from materials of dubious pertinence allow us to say what the people within that community actually argued about when it came to *the formulation of their specific spiritual ideals* and their ideas of *how specific practices might theoretically conduce to the attainment of those ideals.*

But one thing is almost universally believed about the early evolution of "Buddhism." That is that "at the beginning," the only acceptable model for how one practiced the Buddha's teachings was a *monastic* model, which required each practitioner to renounce one's home and family—not in old age, after having had children and having raised them to adulthood and children of their own, as in standard Hinduism per se, but rather at the moment that one *heard* the teaching and decided to heed it by renouncing one's ordinary social roles in favor of total immersion in a new and wholly artificial set of social roles. Indeed, the generic term for anyone who showed interest in that first Buddhist community was a śrā*vaka*, a "hearer" of the dharma. That term—a vague one suggesting acceptance of the dharma's validity, but no actual commitment to any given lifestyle, monastic setting, or modes of religious practice—was clearly distinguishable from the term for "monk" or "nun"—*bhikṣu/bhikṣuṇī.* And it certainly suggests no "priestly" role. Yet, it was also not a term for a lay Buddhist per se, for *bhikṣus* and *bhikṣuṇīs* were also certainly *śrāvakas*: taking monastic order did not involve renouncing some putative *śrāvaka* status.

In later Buddhist literature, these terms come into clearer focus. For example, a Mahāyāna scripture from South Asia that had a tremendous

impact in China and Japan was the *Lotus Sutra* (*Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*). In the *Lotus Sutra*, the *śrāvaka* was sharply distinguished from the (presumably rival) models of (1) the *pratyeka-buddha* (a person who lives by all the Buddha's teachings in pursuit of the same ideals—but without practicing within the monastic community, and thus worthy of denigration for presumptive "selfishness"), and (2) the bodhisattva (a person who lives by all the Buddha's teachings, either within or outside of any specific monastic community, but who pursues the universalistic "salvation" of all sentient beings, and hence is regarded (in this and related texts) as higher than either the allegedly more selfish *śrāvaka* or *pratyeka-buddha.*

Such materials make it clear that there were sharp disagreements, among numerous parties, as to whether the monastic life was truly essential for living the Buddhist life in expectation of achieving the highest goal, as well as in regard to the nature of that goal itself. Some thoughtful Buddhists apparently held that one could attain the theoretical goal only by adopting a very strict monastic lifestyle, which had been mandated by the founder himself, as all parties clearly seem to have agreed. But others—just as influential—took just the opposite view. One such example was the composer of the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*, whose eponymous protagonist demonstrated that a layperson (*upāsaka*) who fulfilled the tradition's spiritual values—in this case, most notably, "compassion" (*karuṇā*)—was said to rank *higher* among the "pantheon" of notable Buddhist figures than even the "cosmic bodhisattvas" (*mahāsattvas*) whose karmic achievements have freed them from the necessity of birth as an embodied being. These ideas bring us to the verge of the teachings of the Pure Land tradition, which are all based on the story of how a bodhisattva of a bygone era, Dharmākara by name, was to transform the lives of millions of sentient beings for eons to come by devoting himself to the ideals of "the bodhisattva path." He did so with such special salvific efficacy that his eventual attainment of Buddhism's ultimate theoretical goal, "complete perfect awakening" (*samyak-saṃbodhi*), also resulted in the creation not only of a "Pure World," Sukhāvatī, where any sentient being has a chance someday to be reborn, but also of a salvific mechanism designed carefully and effectively enough so as to make is possible for any sentient being with "a sincere mind/heart" to gain "rebirth" there instantaneously, while yet still alive in one's present body. Shinran refined (and in his view, corrected) such basic beliefs, by turning back

to Amitābha's "original vow" (*hongan*), rather than to the idea that one can attain "rebirth" (*ōjō*) by sincere performance of the "single-practice *nenbutsu*" (*senjaku nenbutsu*), as his teacher Hōnen had maintained.

At this point, we have a wide-ranging comparative perspective from which to think productively about the terminology that Taoists over the century devised to designate the various spiritual ranks conceivable for Taoist practitioners of various descriptions, as well as the terminology that Taoists adopted as formal ecclesiastic ranks and offices. It was Taoists of the early medieval period—most specifically, well-educated male aristocrats such as Lu Xiujing—who first began to try to get the Teachings of Tao (Daojiao) "organized" so as to prove more impressive and resilient as a body of teachings and practices— especially as compared to the body of teachings and practices then known as the Teachings of (the) Buddha(s), Fojiao. By the fifth century, when Lu in the South and others in the North (most famously Kou Qianzhi) began such efforts to "organize" their religious traditions, the cultural complex that we call Buddhism had won respect and acceptance at all levels of the then-divided Chinese society, both North and South—most importantly among the rulers and aristocrats of both regions.

To those rulers—the men who, to some degree, controlled Chinese society through their political and economic power—it was clear that Buddhism was an old, rich, varied, but highly organized tradition, which could be used by rulers to achieve a variety of political and economic goals. One Southern ruler, for instance, the Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty, reportedly "gave himself as a slave" to a nearby Buddhist temple, thus forcing his ministers to empty the imperial treasury to "buy him back." Meanwhile, other rulers periodically turned to the vast "monastic estates" (an ironic designation to be sure) as potential sources of revenue: then, as in many modern societies, both religious institutions and the men who ran them were exempt from general taxation on property. So while no Chinese ruler ever managed to achieve what Constantine achieved—i.e., take total control of a vast religious community as a means of taking total control of his far-flung realm—those rulers certainly made repeated efforts in that direction. At least one self-appointed Taoist "leader," Kou Qianzhi, labored to persuade one ruling house (that of the Wei dynasty established by the non-Chinese Toba people) to institute Taoism as a kind of state religion.[13]

By Tang times, the risks—and opportunities—for exploiting rulers' political ambition in efforts to bolster the standing of one religious group over another religious group led to a series of imperially staged "debates," and a genre of polemical literature in which Buddhists launched diatribes at Taoists and vice versa.[14] Of course, the very idea of a Taoist deriding anyone for "wrong thinking," much less for "improper religious practice," is somewhat ironic: other than the Tianshi denunciations of other forms of Taoism as unworthy (both during early medieval times and in twentieth-century Taiwan), Taoists have been no more inclined to polemics than Buddhists have been. But during the early Tang, a Taoist master who professed to know and love Buddhist teachings just as well as his own had no choice but to obey an imperial order that he stand on a stage and denounce Buddhists to their faces, just as Buddhists were ordered to do against Taoists.

And the consequences of such debates were, at times, the imperial proscription of the entire religious organization of the men whom the emperor decreed to be the "loser" of the debate, as happened when the Mongol emperor Qubilai Khan ordered the entire existing Taoist "canon"—the massive 7000-plus-volume Quanzhen compilation—to be burned, a desecration that permanently destroyed much of the literary heritage of Quanzhen Taoism. Fortunately, the rulers of earlier Tang times—even the redoubtable Empress Wu Zetian, who formally abolished the Tang dynasty and replaced it with the short-lived house of Zhou—never took such extreme measures against any religion. And even a formal imperial "proscription" of a given religious organization never really led to its demise—only to a need for it to reformulate itself on terms more acceptable to the existing government. Moreover, when Empress Wu passed, and the Tang house was restored, the fortunes of organized Taoism were restored: though Tang rulers—like nearly all Chinese rulers, from the first imperial dynasty to the present day—endeavored to maintain authority over all religious organizations, the Tang emperors claimed lineal descent from the legendary "Laozi," and were always happy to provide patronage to any Taoist—or even semi-Taoist—who could be presented to the public as a supporter of their dynasty.[15]

Still, both the evidence of history and the evidence of the Taoists' voluminous collection of sacred literature (the *Daozang*) demonstrate that efforts to organize "Taoism"—whether on the part of emperors like those of the High Tang era or on the part of Taoist "leaders" themselves

(even Kou Qianzhi or Lu Xiujing)—were never even remotely success-ful: unlike the Christian Church, which became effectively unified in doctrine, practice, and social organization by the fourth century, there was never any single "Taoist church," and no doctrine or practice was ever considered "heretical" by any (save perhaps some political figure trying to create a false impression that he and his coterie represented "all Taoists").

Yet, the *Daozang* does contain a number of texts that reveal the minds of certain individuals or groups who liked to *think about* their tradition in a unified, organized manner. Though the texts that they produced never became a socially or politically effective "charter document," it is instructive to examine how they present the categories of Taoist func-tionaries—the men and women who represented Taoist tradition and ideals within the Taoist community itself—as well as how they pres-ent the highest imaginable exemplars of Taoist ideals—the "saints" or *mahāsattvas* of the Taoist religious imagination.

It is intriguing that the Taoists who decided to write about such matters often seem to have been people who made no real distinctions between "those living men or women who act as leaders within our religious community" and "those beings—embodied or disembodied—who represent the highest imaginable personification of our ideals." For example, an undated text from the late fifth or the sixth century—the *Lingbao chujia yinyuan jing* 靈寶出家因緣經 (HY 339[16])—lists seven ranks of Taoist notables:

1. the libationer (祭酒, *jijiu*)
2. the home-dweller (在家, *zaijia*)
3. the home-leaver (出家, *chujia*)
4. the mountain-dweller (山居, *shanju*)
5. the recluse (幽逸, *youyi*)
6. the spiritual transcendent (神仙, *shenxian*; sometimes called "immortals")
7. the heavenly perfected one (天真, *tianzhen*).[17]

To all appearances, the first five figures indicate ordinary living per-sons, distinguished not by their personal qualities (spiritual or oth-erwise) but simply by what we might call lifestyle choices. The last two, however, are terms that are generally understood as references for non-mortal beings, who may at times appear in our world but are certainly not trapped in bodies, so to speak. From the perspective of Western religions, such as Christianity, it is difficult to understand

how such beings could be linked together meaningfully on the same list. As noted above, for instance, Christians only recognize someone as "a saint" retrospectively—though part of the requirement for such recognition is that such a person must have demonstrated "miraculous powers," e.g., of healings that cannot be performed by the most skilled medical specialists. Both the Taoist "spiritual transcendent" (*shenxian*) and the "heavenly perfected one" (*tianzhen*) would seem to correspond more closely to the Western concept of "the angel." Indeed, in Han-dynasty texts (i.e., before "Taoism proper" began to develop) Chinese writers and artists seem to have imagined *shenxian* as winged beings, who can move back and forth between our own realm of existence and a more sublime realm, sometimes imagined as off in the distance horizontally (e.g., on Mt. Kunlun in the far west, or on the legendary isle of Penglai off in the east). However, the term "heavenly perfected one" seems, by its nature, to denote a being whose "proper home" is, in some sense, vertically above ours.

Most Christians give scant thought to the practical implications of "where angels come from," except perhaps when telling children that a loved one who just died has "gone to heaven to be with the angels." But perhaps for that very reason, it is almost unthinkable for a Christian to sit down and try to think seriously about the question of whether "I, too, could become an angel, and if so, how?" In the Christian world-view, "becoming an angel" seems always to be assumed to require death—and no one really wants to die. At any rate, "the Christian message," for adults at least, has almost never been "Let us tell you how you, too, can become an angel."

For Buddhists, however—as for Taoists—such issues are not only thinkable, but indeed quite central. In an Indian Buddhist context, anyone can "become a *śrāvaka*," in a sense apparently comparable to how Westerners think anyone can "become a Christian": such a person is a living person, whose fundamental lifestyle and social standing are not necessarily altered at all, but whose spiritual orientation, and dedication to the tradition's beliefs and values, has become meaning-fully changed. The Mahāyāna concept of "becoming a bodhisattva" is merely a few steps beyond: someone who has heard the dharma takes a vow to live selflessly, with compassion for all sentient beings, devel-oping him- or herself, life after life, until he or she finally attains full buddhahood.

So not all religions share the common Western assumption of an ontological gulf between the state of an embodied mortal and the state of more sublime beings: for some, attaining some kind of transcendent state is assumed to be quite possible for any living person at any moment. However, what remains is not only the question of "how," but the issue of what social role, if any, such a person may justly be expected to play, if he or she begins working toward, and achieving, such a transcendent state.

And when we add to the general Mahāyāna worldview the "radical" new implications that Shinran added, the issue becomes more complex, but more fruitful for comparative contemplation. Before Shinran, it was generally assumed (a) that anyone who intended to devote himself fully to the Buddhist life must take ordination, and (b) that a Buddhist priest must remain celibate. But Shinran saw the most vital elements of Buddhism to lie in what the individual allows to happen within himself, through the movement of *shinjin*, "the sincere mind," that has been endowed upon all sentient beings by the Buddha Amida. For Shinran, then, living the Buddhist life most fully and meaningfully had nothing to do with celibacy. Reportedly declaring himself "neither monk nor layman," Shinran married, and the fact that he and his wife Esshin-ni had children was quite significant for the historical evolution of Jōdo Shinshū (since their daughter Kakushin-ni was instrumental in helping to establish the Hongwanji in Kyoto). Shinran thus added to the diversity of acceptable "lifestyle arrangements" for Buddhists, within a historical and scriptural context that had long included laymen and women as exemplars of and for the Buddhist faithful.

Similarly, the range of Taoist functionaries and exemplars listed in the *Lingbao chujia yinyuan jing* includes "the home-dweller" (*zaijia*) as well as "the home-leaver" (*chujia*), demonstrating that for Taoists of that period there was no *unacceptable* lifestyle for persons committed to Taoist ideals and values. Specialists in Taoist studies might wonder about other issues. For one thing, that list appears in what is denominated a Lingbao 靈寶 text, though it employs terms like *jijiu* ("libationer"), long associated with the archaic Tianshi 天師 organization. Moreover, the *Lingbao chujia yinyuan jing* nowhere includes terms for religious functionaries that often appear in late-imperial Taoism, such as *fashi* 法師 ("ritual master"). Hence, one quickly sees that the text's list bears no relation to the ranks and offices of Taoist functionaries familiar to scholars who study later periods.

Most particularly, this list nowhere mentions the category of religious functionary known, through most of Taoist history, as the *daoshi* 道士. Since the list appears intended to include all imaginable categories of "the faithful"—lay as well as clerical, mortal as well as transcendent—what do such texts tell us about how Taoists understood the nature of the roles that "a Taoist" can, should, or must play in the course of his or her efforts to live "the Taoist life" most fully?

By the early Tang period, we begin to find texts that seek to explain the Taoist community's expectations for its primary religious functionary, the *daoshi*. This issue warrants careful attention because of the rampant confusion that has plagued modern Western scholarship regarding the precise meaning of the term *daoshi* within the Taoist tradition per se and within Chinese society more broadly.

Broadly speaking, what Taoist specialists have said to date about the supposed referent of the term *daoshi* usually mirrors their general conceptions of the nature and contours of Taoism itself. And those conceptions have usually been expressed in terms of what those scholars have thought that their audience needs to hear about Taoism in order to understand it properly.

For instance, in his now-dated book, *The Taoist Body*, the most highly regarded European scholar of Taoism, Kristofer Schipper—himself an ordained Zhengyi 正一 Taoist priest—declares: "[The] *tao-shih . . .* has no community, or rather, is not the spiritual leader of a congregation. His position is in no way comparable to that of our Catholic or Protestant clergy."[18] Certainly, there is a kernel of truth in that statement, for a Taoist priest—of any period or sub-tradition—is certainly not *identical*, in roles or functions, to a Catholic priest of any period. As we have seen, at an early date the Catholic Church was compelled by secular authority (the Roman emperor Constantine) to adopt a highly formalized set of explanations of and for every aspect of Christian life and practice. And the creed associated with the Nicene Council at which Constantine forced unambiguous, unexceptioned unity upon *The* "Christian church" was only one of an ongoing series of creeds by which Christians, to modern times, have presented "settled answers to all possible questions" regarding how people can, should, or must practice Christianity. At no time in Chinese history have Taoists ever even made an attempt to hold "councils"—as even the earliest Buddhist communities of India did—at which competing points of view would be verbally contested until unanimity was, at least nominally, agreed—or until, lacking such,

one religious sub-community formally divorced itself from others who held different views. So while there were points in history at which Christians, and even Buddhists, felt it necessary to convene to cavil until the social body either resolved its disputes or re-configured itself on the basis of unresolved-and-unresolvable disputes, nothing of any such kind ever happened among the Taoists of China.

And yet, it seems quite reasonable and appropriate to use the term "priest" for comparable functionaries of such different traditions, so long as no one imagines that all religious communities have an identical history or structure. After all, Westerners commonly write, without much anguish or trepidation, of "Shintō priests," though the officiants at Shintō liturgies could hardly be confused with the officiants at Anglican rites in America or Catholic rites in Spain. And though Shintō today has certain elements of "unity," those are merely the remnants of a state-imposed unification during the Meiji Reform of the nineteenth century (when Japanese leaders realized that unification would be necessary if their land was not to fall victim to the colonization that Westerners had brought to other Asian lands, including China—whose loss in the Opium Wars led to a victimization from which the nation is even today seeking finally to put behind them).

Another element of the confusion in these matters is that scholarly understanding of the Taoist priesthood has been heretofore hampered by the marginalization of Taoist priests in late-imperial and modern China. After all, scholars studying the Buddhist or Christian priesthood—from virtually any social setting—have always been able to observe, and interact with, many living persons who are themselves such priests—from the ordinary cleric who fulfills only standard roles to the outstanding exemplars of the tradition's highest ideals. But until the closing years of the twentieth century, students of Taoism seldom had such opportunities, for historical, social, political, and cultural reasons. The paucity of such contact has impoverished, and sometimes skewed, scholarly depictions of the *daoshi*.

Moreover, most modern Chinese—especially the educated elite (once forced to adhere to "Confucian" identity—then forced to adhere to Marxist, or at least secular, non-religious identity) have looked upon all practitioners of living Taoist traditions with disdain. In the West, Protestants and non-Christian alike have most usually held Catholic nuns in high regard, and priests as well. But in modern China, there has been no general social agreement that those who wear Taoist formal

vestments, of whatever kind, are worthy of respect by *all* members of society—Taoist or not. Today, the social standing of Taoist clerics may be characterized more as ambivalent than as disdainful. But the youth of China today see for themselves a range of social roles and opportunities to earn self-respect as well as the respect of the rest of their society, and indeed of the rest of the world—but that range of social roles and opportunities seems not to include "Taoist monk or nun" as a particularly high goal for growing boys or girls to aspire toward.

Because of that social ambivalence within modern Chinese society (i.e., since the Opium Wars), virtually all Westerners came to see "Taoist priests" as characters fit only for disdain. In fact, as soon as Westerners completed the "breaking and entering" begun in the Opium Wars, they began depicting Taoist leaders as "popes," and thus as worthy of all the same contempt and disdain that both Protestants and secularists so vehemently dumped onto all representatives of "popery."

The effects of that gross misrepresentation have not yet been purged from Taoist studies in the West. It has sometimes resulted in depictions of the Taoist priesthood that are focused solely upon data from past eras, or upon sociological data or anthropological fieldwork (with scholars thus equating the Chinese community of any given locale with the small-scale pre-industrial non-literate societies of Pacific Islands or the Amazon). One rarely finds depictions of the ordained representatives of organized Taoist traditions that demonstrate how those representatives, past and present, can be understood as fulfilling the deepest spiritual ideals of the Taoist heritage.

In addition, most Western presentations of the Taoist priesthood continue to privilege the institutions of the Tianshi and Zhengyi traditions. Zhengyi priests today, like the Lingbao liturgists of the Six Dynasties, still conduct liturgies, like the *jiao* 醮 and *zhai* 齋, which are intended to protect, order, and sanctify the local community. But the Zhengyi tradition actually represents only one important variation among Taoist religious institutions.[19] Overemphasis on its institutions—imagined to represent a Church that has maintained itself from antiquity to today, just like the Catholic Church—became endemic to the Western field of Taoist studies primarily because mainland China was virtually inaccessible to Western scholars throughout the twentieth century, making fieldwork difficult except in regions like Taiwan, where Zhengyi traditions heavily predominated.

The privileged importance bestowed upon Zhengyi traditions in modern scholarship has obscured several fundamental facts about the Taoist priesthood more broadly. For instance, during the Tang dynasty, women were duly ordained as *daoshi*, and women clerics continue to participate in modern Quanzhen 全真 liturgy, on a basis comparable to that of men.[20] Only in the twenty-first century have scholars begun to illuminate the lives of Taoist "nuns" in the modern world and throughout Chinese history.[21] The very fact that there have *ever* been women officiants in Taoist liturgy was obfuscated in twentieth century Western scholarship by the attention given to the fact that in modern Zhengyi traditions, "hereditary *tao-shih* are always men," as Schipper says.[22]

In addition, the socio-political marginalization of Taoism in late imperial times seems to have led to a decline in the number of *daoshi* who participated openly in the cultural and intellectual activities of the educated elite. During the Taoist heyday, in Tang times, many *daoshi* were highly educated, composed a wide range of scholarly and literary secular and religious works, and were often honored by rulers and *ru* scholar/officials alike.[23] The founders of the Quanzhen, or "Complete Perfection" tradition—which has been the dominant form of Taoism in China for centuries—were educated members of the "gentry" class. And there remained "literati Taoists" in later ages, though the facts of their lives, thought, and writings have heretofore been all but ignored among most Western scholars—particularly in the Francophone and Anglophone communities.[24]

In modern times, the ideal of *daoshi* as members of the socio-cultural elite endures in most of Chinese society. As Schipper says, "The *tao-shih* belong to the lettered class; they are minor notables."[25] But in fact, throughout the late-imperial period, "literati" *daoshi* seldom achieved celebrity, among the Chinese intelligentsia or among early Western visitors.[26] That is because the antagonism toward Taoism of late-imperial regimes, and of Cheng/Zhu "Neo-Confucians," drove centuries of intellectuals away from the Taoist priesthood, and suppressed public awareness of the work of those Taoists who did take part in "elite" activities.[27] The Taoist traditions of late-imperial times remain woefully understudied and underappreciated.[28] Only in 2007 did there appear a good study of Taoism in late-Qing times, a detailed analysis by Vincent Goossaert.[29] A companion-piece by Xun Liu on Taoists in late-Qing and early Republican Shanghai just appeared in

2009.[30] Further study of "literati Taoism" in imperial China—particularly in the later periods—will enhance our awareness of the full range of political, intellectual, and cultural activities in which *daoshi* engaged over the centuries.[31]

But to what extent, and in what ways, are the values and ideals of "literati Taoists," in premodern and modern times, specifically tied to participation in the Taoist priesthood? Such questions did not seem to occur to Isabelle Robinet, whose explanations of what "the Taoist" is led us either to a cleric who performs liturgical ceremonies or to a mountain-dwelling lover of "Nature," but never to an educated member of the Chinese gentry or aristocracy who lived among, and was held in high regard by, non-Taoists of the same social class.

However, such questions did occur to John Lagerwey, one of today's leading European scholars of Chinese religion. In his 1987 book, *Taoist Ritual in Chinese Society and History*, he wrote: "[T]his book will ask, at the end as at the beginning, what is Taoism? But it will respond to this very general question from the very specific standpoint of the liturgical specialist, no, even more explicitly, from the stance of the married Taoist priest (*huo-chü tao-shih* [火居道士], 'hearth-dwelling Taoist'), whose position is normally hereditary. This is the Taoism of China's plains and people. There is another Taoism, that of (often) mountain-dwelling mystics, of wanderers and visionaries, of alchemists, poets, and philosophers."[32] So if that passage is accurate, there are two kinds of "Taoism," but apparently only one kind of *daoshi*: a male, married liturgist, whose position is hereditary, and who is not to be understood as someone whose life or activity overlaps, in any truly meaningful sense, with that of "mystics, . . . alchemists, poets, and philosophers." Though figures of the latter kind were, Lagerwey concedes, "Taoist," they were certainly not "Taoists," at least not in the strict social sense that he privileges.

But what if history should show us a *daoshi* who was also demonstrably a poet? There were indeed such individuals, like the Tang poet Wu Yün, who was ignored by most twentieth-century Sinologists, but is now the subject of a detailed monograph by Jan de Meyer.[33] There were, in fact, even illustrious Taoist women poets, such as Cao Wenyi (fl. 1119–1125), whose life and works remain almost wholly unexamined.[34]

Or what if history perhaps shows us a *daoshi* who was also an "alchemist"? Indeed, the Shangqing 上清 luminary Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 fits just such a description.[35] Of course, one could quibble over

the definition of "philosopher," and one *must* demand such definitional specificity if one is going to use such an egregiously vague term as "mystic."

But apparently Lagerwey's 1987 formulation solved the confusion in Robinet's ambiguous usage of the term "Taoist" by postulating a dichotomization—though one that the Taoists of China do not themselves ever seem to have recognized, at least not on any consistent or enduring basis. That is to say, the actual Taoists of China cannot be demonstrated to have ever found a reason to say, "I am a liturgist, not a poet," or "I am a ritualist, not a philosopher." To argue that "a Taoist" is, and can be, understood *only* as a liturgical official is contrary to the abundant facts of Chinese history and society—past and present—and of the texts that Taoists themselves composed and collected in the course of their activities *as* Taoists.

I furthermore question whether every Taoist is, as Robinet and Lagerwey seem to wish to have us believe, necessarily *male*. Our evidence seems quite clearly to prove otherwise, for women have not only been participants in Taoism from at least the Han period onward, but they have actually played specific acknowledged roles—even as laity—and were, in many forms of Taoism, actually ordained as *priests—daoshi*—on virtually the same terms as men were.[36] Robinet's depiction of "the Taoist" certainly leads us to imagine otherwise, and Lagerwey's definitional premises are utterly at odds with such data.

Just as Robinet's presentation muddles our understanding of the social, historical, and institutional realities involved, it also muddles our minds by using the term "Taoist master" as an apparent synonym for what she otherwise terms "the Taoist." Her book's index, revealingly, has a cross-reference: "Priest, see Master." When one looks up the listing for "Master," one finds that it reads "Master (*tao-shih*)," and refers us to the pages in which the above passages were found.

To be fair, in perpetuating such terminological confusion Robinet was simply continuing a scholarly tradition that includes even the first great pioneer in the Western study of Taoism, the estimable Henri Maspero. Maspero wrote, for instance, as follows:

> The Taoist life, crammed with meticulously detailed practises, was incompatible with worldly life. Still, Taoism quickly became a universal religion leading to the salvation of all the faithful alike, rich or poor, religious or men of the world, so that there were two degrees in the religious life. Some were content to take part in collective ceremonies through which one's sins were washed away and a happy

destiny was prepared in the other world. These were the Taoist People, *daomin* 道民. To these participatory observances, the second group added scrupulous observances of personal religion combined with physiological techniques, seeking after an exalted rank within the hierarchy of the immortals: these were the Taoist Adepts, *tao-shih*.[37]

Passing over some of the questionable assertions—not to mention the apparent anachronisms—within this passage, I shall simply note the oddity of the term "Taoist Adepts," and its usage here as a *translation* for the term *daoshi.* It is quite instructive that neither Maspero nor Robinet are altogether happy presenting the term *daoshi* to their readers in *its primary historical sense*—that is, as a term that simply translates as "Taoist priest or priestess." In one passage, Maspero says: "in Tang times the communities of married *tao-shih* had disappeared, and all the Taoist *guan* [abbeys] were filled with celibate monks or nuns."[38] In another passage, however, he writes: "The Taoist clergy is composed not only of monks, *tao-shih*, or even nuns, *daogu* 道姑, but also of lay masters, *shigong* 師公."[39] So a *daoshi*, if one trusts Maspero here, is to be understood to be an "adept" who is married rather than celibate while also being celibate rather than married, and so both is, and is not, properly termed a "monk," but is apparently not to be termed a "priest," and *certainly* not a "priestess."

Some of this terminological confusion is sorted out by Kristofer Schipper in his book, *The Taoist Body*.[40] But Schipper's presentation of what the term *daoshi* really does mean is often hard to understand in terms of anything that either Maspero or Robinet told their readers. For instance, Schipper tries to distinguish the *daoshi* from another kind of figure, the *fashi*, whom he variously describes as a "magician," a "shaman," or a "barefoot master," drawing upon twentieth-century data from Fukien and Taiwan.[41] He distinguishes explicitly between the *fashi* and "those who are called *tao-shih*, and who are, properly speaking, the true Taoist masters." He translates the term *daoshi* as "Dignitaries of the Dao," and adds, with a candor unseen in the statements of Maspero or Robinet, the following quite sensible disclaimer: "another element obscures the situation for us: if the designation *tao-shih* is widespread, it is not always very easy to understand to what it corresponds."[42]

Such would, it seems, appear to be quite true, *if* one is seeking to define such terms solely on the basis of twentieth-century social

realities in Taiwan and nearby coastal regions, as Schipper was trying to do. Unlike Maspero or Robinet, Schipper is trying to distinguish *daoshi* from non-*daoshi* by looking around in Fukien and Taiwan to see what distinctions, if any, the people living there in the twentieth century tended to make. It is therefore quite difficult to recognize in Schipper's *daoshi* anything that corresponds to Robinet's statement that Taoists were often "hermits in distant mountains . . . who taught the Chinese to appreciate landscapes."

Unlike Robinet, but like Maspero, Schipper works to explain the data that he found in southeastern China in the late twentieth century in relation to the historical data of the early "Heavenly Master" organization in late Han times. For instance, Schipper says: "From the early times of the independent local communities of the Heavenly Masters' movement, the *tao-shih*, men and women, were married people. Traditionally, and even today, marriage is one condition for becoming a Great Master. Taoist monks are the rare exception. Rather than his way of life, then, it is his liturgical function, his role as a ritual specialist, that defines the position of the *tao-shih*. To be a Dignitary of the Dao is first of all to fulfill an office."[43] But here, Schipper is doing something that neither Maspero nor Robinet attempted to do: he is attempting to explain the term *daoshi* in terms of actual social realities, in terms of something that living people, in communities that recognize certain individuals as *daoshi*, actually say and do.

Yet, while Schipper attempts to derive his explanations of the nature and functions of the *daoshi* from empirical data derived from ethnological observation, he simultaneously attempts to pin those explanations to the historical data of the early Tianshi tradition. Such an effort is understandable, given that he is working from the (now clearly outdated) premise that the Zhengyi priests of southeast China and Taiwan today are a direct continuation of the institutions purportedly established by Zhang Daoling in the year 142.[44] Consequently, Schipper's attempts to explain what a *daoshi* is corresponds to what I would be doing if I took the data of what a Catholic priest does today in Boston or Barcelona, along with the data of what a priest did in texts dating back to the early centuries of the Christian church, and used the overlapping elements as constitutive of my definition of the Christian "priest"—without giving due weight to the vital distinctions among all those social and historical settings, or giving any weight to the data found in other social and historical settings.

Schipper's method leaves us with several problems, particularly leading to such confusions as in the following passage:

> Today hereditary *tao-shih* are always men, whereas many who become masters by vocation are women. But this situation does not derive from Taoist principle. The liturgical tradition of the Heavenly Masters grants women a status identical in every respect to that of men, and a mastership [n.b.: not "a priesthood"] is accessible to both. . . . Even today the hereditary transmission legitimizing the officiants may be passed on through the maternal as well as the paternal line. The disappearance of female secular *tao-shih* is simply the result of a modern society that requires a masculine presence in transactions with lay organizations such as guilds.[45]

Schipper introduces here a wholly new term, "secular *tao-shih*." That neologism seems quite odd to those of us for whom the term "secular" is generally understood to denote "non-religious." Schipper, however, seems to be using the term "secular" to mean a person who has some religious identity, but who lives "out in 'secular society'"—i.e., within the general community—rather than within a monastery. But his statement here that "female secular *daoshi*" have disappeared seems hard to square with his statement that "hereditary *daoshi* are always men, whereas many who become masters by vocation are women." Here, I am unclear whether the word "masters" in the last clause is meant to refer to non-*daoshi*—that is, perhaps to the *fashi* whom Schipper characterizes as a "magician," a "shaman," or a "barefoot master"—or whether the word "masters" here is meant to suggest *daoshi* who become *daoshi* by vocation, rather than by birth. In order to maintain his equation between twentieth-century social data from southeastern China and the historical data of the early-medieval "Heavenly Masters," Schipper has to make some such distinctions, which do not seem to hold up very well as historical generalizations.

One must grant that much additional research has been done since Schipper's book was first published in 1981. So we should allow for the fact that the Schipper of today is much more informed about some of the historical data of Taoism than the Schipper of a generation ago.[46] Though the data of Taoism during Tang times, for instance, remains incompletely digested, even by today's specialists, the research conducted in recent years certainly does allow us to make some well-substantiated statements about what the term *daoshi* meant in the Six Dynasties and Tang periods, not only within texts composed and preserved among Taoists themselves, but also in non-Taoist texts of those

periods. And such material is replete with data that demands to be considered in this discussion.

For instance, the notable *daoshi* of Tang times—from Wang Yuanzhi 王遠知 to Du Guangting杜光庭—were, in *no* significant regard, "hereditary *daoshi*": *all* of them, male and female alike, were literally what Schipper chooses to identify as "*daoshi* by vocation," though a few may have had other such "*daoshi* by vocation" among their ancestors.[47] The only "lineage" that was important to Taoists of that era was a Chan-like "spiritual lineage," by which leaders like Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 could be presented as an "heir" to the *dao* of Tao Hongjing—certainly not to his genes. And actually, such "Taoist lineages" were mostly fabrications of late Song times and later ages, including the Longmen 龍門 "lineage" of Qing times, by which the literati Taoists of that period sought prestige by claiming a historical "descent" from the Quanzhen founders of the twelfth century. Further, in those days there was no commonly employed distinction—either among Taoists or among non-Taoists who wrote about them—between a "secular *daoshi*" and a "*religious daoshi.*"

Nor do the historical facts show that "the *tao-shih*, men and women, were married people" in those days. In Tang times, marriage was certainly not required, or even expected, of *daoshi.* Nor did the great *daoshi* who wrote tomes on Taoist practice in those days—such as Sima Chengzhen—even mention such issues as whether "a Taoist" should or should not be married. To judge by their writings, and by the known biographical data of such people's lives—including that of the female *daoshi* Huang Lingwei 黃靈微—such *daoshi* could, and did, live in whatever domicile they wished, and marriage was not necessarily a part of their lives at all. Yet, such people were demonstrably <u>called</u> *daoshi*—in Taoist and non-Taoist texts alike. And many of them were demonstrably authorized to conduct such liturgies as *jiao* and *zhai.*

A prime example was the wonder-worker Ye Fashan (葉法善, 631–720), an extremely famous figure of the High Tang period. The pertinent data, which is abundant and now well-studied, indicates that Ye Fashan was hardly a *daoshi* in any "typical" social or institutional sense. Yet, he was indeed identified as having a *daoshi*, even within a memorial edict issued in the name of the Tang emperor Xuanzong 玄宗.[48]

So on the basis of such facts, it is quite difficult to perceive any attempt by Tang Taoists to articulate, much less to enforce, any specific

distinctions regarding who is, or is not, a *daoshi*—at least not along the lines that Schipper proposed to find running through the history of Taoism.

It is only in the last few years that we have begun to be able to discuss, with any real precision, what the Taoists of the Six Dynasties or Tang period may have regarded as "the normally accepted sense" of a term like *daoshi*. One focus of such discussion is a text generally called the *Fengdao kejie* 奉道科誡, sometimes dated to the sixth century, but now thought to date to the seventh. That text was explicated, rather imperfectly, by the German scholar Florian Reiter, in his 1998 book, *The Aspirations and Standards of Taoist Priests in the Early Tang Period*.[49] A better translation is a 2004 book by Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Monastic Manual*.[50] By examining such texts, and comparing and contrasting them with data from other sources and other periods, we can reach a somewhat better idea of what Taoists of different periods *actually* meant by the term *daoshi*, and a better idea of what they regarded as the characteristics of a priest or priestess within their tradition.

Earlier, I mentioned idealized rankings of religious categories that appear in late Six-Dynasties texts, like the *Lingbao chujia yinyuan jing.* The fact that those rankings were often highly *idealized*—rather than a description of actual responsibilities or activities of actual men and women—is revealed from the fact that *no* such categories seem to *persist* throughout the ages. Tang texts like the *Fengdao kejie*, and Zhang Wanfu 張萬福's *Chuanshou sandong jingjie falu lueshuo* 傳授三洞經戒法籙略說 of the year 711, distinguish the *daoshi* per se from lower functionaries, such as various classes of *fashi* 法師 ("ritual masters") and *dizi* 弟子 ("disciples").[51] But the specifications for each such "class" varied from text to text. And since some "classes" extended even to transcendent beings—beings who do not exist within physical bodies on earth—it remains unclear how much such formulations ever really reflected, or even affected, actual practices, or even standard expectations, for living Taoist practitioners. In other words, those texts reveal that Taoist writers in different historical settings wrote about such things *not* in order to specify how some monolithic "Taoist community" defined and enforced clerical institutions, but rather how one particular community, or perhaps even more likely, *one particular writer*, in one particular generation and one particular locale, thought that it makes sense to *think about* such things.

The fact that such texts are more an idealization—perhaps in the mind of a single individual—than a reflection of any social or historical realities should hardly be surprising. After all, the term *daoshi* is first attested in Han-dynasty texts. In some, like the *Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露 (attributed to the Confucian thinker Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, second century BCE), the term *daoshi* appears as a vague appellation for idealized persons of ancient times—that is, as a literary figure, vaguely comparable to the *Zhuangzi*'s idealized "Perfect Person" or "Complete Person." Other Han texts, however, like the *Hanshu*'s 漢書 biography of Wang Mang 王莽, seem to use the term *daoshi* for living people with uncommon abilities—i.e., as a synonym for the term *fangshi* 方士.[52] The Han usage of the term *fangshi* seems to suggest that it denoted specialists in knowledge and activities that lay beyond the pale of ordinary civilian or technical officials.[53]

The imprecise use of the term *fangshi* exceeds even the ambiguities of the term *daoshi.* For instance, in his discourse on the imperial *feng* 封 and *chan* 禪 rites, the Han historian Sima Qian 司馬遷 mentions five individuals who "practiced the Way of Expansive Transcendence (*fangxian* 方僊). They shed their mortal forms and melted away, relying upon matters involving spiritual beings (*guishen* 鬼神)." [54] We have no way of knowing precisely what activities such men may have engaged in, knowing whether Sima Qian really had an accurate understanding of any such activities, or knowing whether his phraseology here is really intended to be descriptive (that is, theoretically providing a means to deduce the men's activities) or merely evocative. He is clear that they "shed their forms" in some sort of transformation that took them out of mortal embodiment—a concept that makes sense in terms of the later concept of *shijie* 屍解 ("mortuary liberation").[55] But it is unclear what he means by the nebulous statement that these men "relied upon matters involving spiritual beings." And it is even more unclear what he meant by the statement that the men practiced the "Way of Expansive Transcendence." The passage seems to suggest that the men in question practiced some sort of *fangshi* techniques that involved *xian* 僊, but exactly what that term means remains open to all manner of speculation. Were they, perhaps, men who practiced techniques that would allow mortals to *turn into xian* 僊 [仙]? The last line might be read as supporting such an idea. Or were they, rather, men who engaged in practices that allowed them to communicate or connect with *xian*, possibly in pursuit of some different goal (for example,

healing, auspication, or knowledge of deeper dimensions of reality)? Moreover, would the Han-Court Astronomer/Historian Sima Qian have truly understood, or even cared about, such hypothetical distinctions? The safest course of interpretation is to read the lines as a general evocation of ideas that Sima understood imperfectly, or as a conflation of unrelated ideas from diverse provenances that sounded interesting, if unintelligible.

At any rate, throughout Han times the term *daoshi* resonated very broadly with such ideas, thus constituting a very general designation for "someone who has special knowledge and abilities in regard to the spiritual realm." Based on such usages, formulators of later Taoist institutions—in the fifth and sixth centuries CE—forged the term *daoshi* into something of a technical term, which thereafter served as their standard designation for any living person, male or female, who had been ordained into a specific, elevated rank of the clergy (that is, as distinguished from participants in less respectable "local cults").

At the moment, the history of that coinage remains virtually unstudied. The institutions of the Taoist priesthood itself evolved slowly and fitfully. From the earliest days of the Tianshi organization, male and female participants alike had been ranked hierarchically, and certain terms, like the term "libationer" (*jijiu*) seem to have been reserved for leaders rather than for lay practitioners. By the fifth century, Taoist leaders like Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 in the north and Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 in the south saw their tradition's ranks as being muddled and disordered when compared to the ranks of Buddhist contemporaries.[56] They therefore began trying to standardize and elevate the clergy of the "Teachings of Dao" (*Daojiao* 道教).

The organizational efforts of such Taoist leaders during the late Six Dynasties are now beginning to be studied systematically. And it now seems that twentieth-century attempts to define "the *daoshi*" simply in opposition to "the celibate monk" have little basis in the Taoist institutions of medieval times. One important contribution to our efforts to understand this element of Taoism's evolution is a recent study by Livia Kohn, *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism.* In it, Kohn traces Taoist monastic institutions to the community established by Kou Qianzhi (365–448), which she compares and contrasts with the Taoist communities at Louguan 樓觀 in the north and Maoshan 茅山 in the south. She endorses Michel Strickmann's finding that "it would . . . be 'very wrong to think of [the Taoist community at] Mao Shan as a truly "monastic"

centre,' where celibate monks or nuns lived according to a strict rule in a tightly knit religious community." Regarding Louguan, she says, "How far they were a celibate community with a formal organization that could be truly called 'monastic' is not clear." But she argues that Kou Qianzhi's "theocracy" established a pattern that "remained valid [for the monastic organization] throughout medieval Daoism."[57] According to Kohn's thoughtful and well-informed analysis, "in medieval Daoism—as in medieval Chinese Buddhism and in Zen Buddhism even today—there was no radical distinction between priests and monastics. . . . Daoist monastics rose from the ranks of lay priests and had priestly status throughout, enhancing and modifying their ritual and meditation expertise to include more advanced spiritual practices and methods for personal attainment. . . . This shows that Daoist monasticism is not, as Kristofer Schipper has suggested, 'an aberration of true Taoism.'"[58]

Another detailed study of such medieval Taoist texts is Stephen Peter Bumbacher's 2000 book, *The Fragments of the Daoxue zhuan.*[59] After an exhaustive exploration of that late sixth-century collection of Taoist biographies, Bumbacher reports: "no single way of life is given priority over the others. Taoists can be happily married, regarding their wives as 'equal partners' and taking care for their children. . . . Or they may leave wife and children altogether. . . ."[60] Such findings correlate well with what we now know about Taoism in Tang times, when "there was no single religious model, and there was thus no single model for the role that a practitioner of Taoism should play in society."[61] Therefore, even in regard to men and women who were acknowledged as fulfilling certain technical specifications to qualify as a *daoshi*, "institutions and procedures may have varied by abbey, by region, and by period."[62]

Such being the case, if the roles and functions of the *daoshi* cannot be defined in the terms that were suggested by Western scholars of earlier generations, is it possible today to offer any sound generalizations regarding such roles and functions? I would say yes, in the following terms. During the late Six Dynasties period, Taoist "organizations" existed in the form of regional centers established under the vague umbrella of the ecumenical cultural construction denominated "the *Daojiao*," which to some as-yet-not-fully-studied sense corresponded to a cultural tradition that provided a sense of shared religious identity to individuals who did recognize distinctive *sub-traditions* tied to specific texts and rituals, such as Shangqing ("Highest Clarity"), but seldom

competing sects that denied the validity of each other's teachings or practices.

Since the Tang period, all Taoist organizations have commonly used the term *daoshi* to denote an ordained cleric of high standing. In relation to the broader "secular" community, such a person, in Reiter's words, "represented Taoist culture on a professional basis."[63] Within the Taoist community itself, the designation *daoshi* was generally reserved for a person

    (1) who has mastered
        (a) specific efficacious knowledge identified and expressed
             as pertaining to "the *dao*," and
        (b) the ritual skills whereby such knowledge can be put into
             effect in the world; <u>and</u>
    (2) who has therefore been authorized by some local organiza-
        tion to employ such knowledge and skills for the benefit of
        the community.

The precise nature of such "knowledge and skills" was determined by the traditions of the specific religious community that authorized and conducted the ordination.

It is also safe to say that, from the late Six Dynasties to the present, both the Taoists of China and the non-Taoists around them have used the term *daoshi* to designate religious specialists of Taoist organizations, as distinguished from any individuals whom they identified either (1) as specialists of other recognized traditions, such as Buddhism, or (2) as specialists of non-recognized traditions, such as local cults. Since the latter distinction seems to have been difficult for some non-Taoists to grasp, Taoists periodically took pains to distinguish themselves from the officiants of "cults," which they deemed less sophisticated or less admirable.[64]

In such connections, the term *daoshi* denoted a religious specialist who (1) was properly initiated and trained in the noble traditions of the *dao*; (2) was operating under the auspices of a reputable and duly instituted organization; and (3) was regarded as deserving the respect of *all* members of society—including scholars, officials, and the rulers themselves. A person who lacked the proper initiation or training, or was not operating under duly instituted authority, was identified by Taoists as someone alien to their tradition. That distinction endures within Chinese communities around the world to the present day. As a result, the social status of *daoshi* per se usually remained high, though

their other characteristics—including such factors as marital status— often varied and were regarded as not factors that warranted rigid regulation.

Further research, and careful thought, will be necessary to fill out this picture, to show how the varying concepts and roles of the *daoshi* evolved through Chinese history from antiquity into the present age.

## NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Southeast Early China Roundtable, Charlotte, NC, 2001. Brief extracts appear in Russell Kirkland, s.v. "*daoshi*," in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio, 2 vols. (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 1:326–329.

2. Livia Kohn, ed., *The Daoism Handbook* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

3. An excellent exploration of such matters in Katherine Young's introduction to *Women Saints in World Religions*, ed. Arvind Sharma (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000). See my review in *Journal of Chinese Religions* 29 (2001): 349–352.

4. Regarding the figure of the *xian*, see, e.g., Russell Kirkland, "The Making of an Immortal: The Exaltation of Ho Chih-chang," *Numen* 38 (1991–1992): 214– 230; and the major new study by Robert Ford Campany, *Making Transcendents: Ascetics and Social Memory in Early Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009).

5. Cf. Russell Kirkland, "Chang Kao: Noteworthy Tang Taoist?" *Tang Studies* 2 (1984): 31–36.

6. Even the orthographical issue of whether we should write in English and other alphabetic languages to refer to China's main indigenous religious tradition as "Taoism" (as nearly everyone did until the "normalization" of international relations between "mainland China" and other nations began during the 1970s), or as "Daoism," a nonsensical neologism that many Western non-Taoists now insist we are all required to employ, is an issue that is contingent upon the broader matter that I am addressing here, i.e., who qualifies to be regarded as "a Taoist," either for purposes of a specific intellectual debate or as a sociological criterion. I retain the traditional English spelling for a number of reasons, the most telling of which is that "Taoist" is the spelling maintained by <u>Taoists themselves</u> today, even in mainland China: the Chinese Taoist (not "Daoist") Association, which operates the Chinese Taoist (not "Daoist") College, is an affiliate of the International Taoist (not "Daoist") Association. If the Taoists of the People's Republic of China officially call themselves "Taoists," does it make any sense for anyone to write about them (much less Taoists outside of the PRC) as "Daoists"?

7. Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, trans. Phyllis Brooks (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997). Most notably, the book does not address developments in Taoism after the fourteenth century. In recent years, Livia Kohn published an overview that covers the entire sweep of Taoist history, as well as a variety of thematic matters: *Taoism and Chinese Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Three Pines Press, 2001; rev. ed. published in 2004 as *Daoism and Chinese Culture*). Other recent overviews of Taoism are James Miller, *Daoism: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003) (see my review at http://www.daoiststudies.org/dao/content/daoism-short-introduction, accessed 31 January 2011); and Russell Kirkland, *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004). An extensive review by Nathan Sivin of these and other twenty-first-century works on Taoism is in press at *Religious Studies Review* 36, no. 1.

8. Robinet, *Taoism,* 15–16.

9. Ibid., 22.

10. Ibid., 20.

11. See Monica Esposito, "Daoism in the Qing (1644–1911)," in *Daoism Handbook*, ed. Livia Kohn (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 623–658; and Vincent Goossaert, *The Taoists of Peking, 1800–1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

12. "The field" was quite successfully purged of certain very silly arguments when the late Michel Strickman published his harsh, but quite well-founded and very helpful, critique of Michael Saso's book, *The Teachings of Taoist Master Chuang* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), in which Saso endorsed, for scholarly and public use, the contemptuous calumnies preached by the "master" in question about Taoists of other orders than his own. See Strickman, "History, Anthropology and Chinese Religion," *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies* 40 (1980): 201–248.

13. In the West, this event is best-known from the influential article by Richard B. Mather, "K'ou Ch'ien-chih and the Taoist Theocracy at the Northern Wei Court, 425–451," in *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion*, ed. Holmes Welch and Anna Seidel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 103–133. Cf. Livia Kohn, "The Northern Celestial Masters" in *Daoism Handbook*, ed. Livia Kohn (Leiden and New York: Brill Academic Publishers, 2000), 283–308.

14. See, e.g., Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao: Debates among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

15. See, for instance, Russell Kirkland, *Taoists of the High T'ang* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1986), and Russell Kirkland, "Dimensions of Tang Taoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium," *T'ang Studies* 15–16 (1997–1998): 79–123.

16. Dujian Weng, *Daozang zimu yinde* (Combined Indices to the Authors and Titles of Books in Two Collections of Taoist Literature), Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, no. 25 (Beiping [Beijing]: Yenching University Library, 1935).

17. See Charles D. Benn, *The Cavern-Mystery Transmission: A Taoist Ordination Rite of A.D. 711* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991), 185–186n41.

18. Kristofer Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, trans. Karen Duval (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 57. See my review, Russell Kirkland, "Cultivating Stillness: A Taoist Manual for Transforming Body and Mind," in *Religious Studies Review* 21 (1995).

19. See Russell Kirkland, "Resources for Textual Research on Premodern Taoism: *The Taoist Canon* and the State of the Field in the Early 21st Century," *China Review International* 14, no. 1 (2007): 33–60.

20. See Catherine Despeux, "L'Ordination des femmes Daoïstes sous les Tang," *Études Chinoises* 5 (1986): 53–100; and Russell Kirkland, "Huang Ling-wei: A Taoist Priestess in Tang China," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 19 (1991): 47–73.

21. See Russell Kirkland, "Women in Taoist History," in *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*, 135-44; Suzanne Cahill, *Divine Secrets of the Daoist Sisterhood: Du Guangting's "Record of the Assembled Transcendents of the Fortified Walled City"* (Magdalena, NM: Three Pines Press, 2006); Shin-yi Chao, "Good Career Moves: Life Stories of Daoist Nuns of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century," *Nan Nü* 10 (2008): 121–151; and Wan-li Ho, "Daoist Nuns in Taiwan: A Case Study of the Gaoxiong Daede yuan," *Journal of Daoist Studies* 2 (2009): 137–164.

22. Schipper, *The Taoist Body,* 58.

23. See Kirkland, *Taoists of the High Tang.*

24. Among the few scholars who have focused on such matters is Judith Berling. See her "Paths of Convergence: Interactions of Inner Alchemy Taoism and Neo-Confucianism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 6 (1979): 123–148; "Channels of Connection in Sung Religion: The Case of Pai Yü-chan," in *Religion and Society in Tang and Sung China,* ed. Patricia Ebrey and Peter Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 307–333; and "Taoism in Ming Culture," in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 8: The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part 2,* ed. Denis Twitchett and Frederick Mote (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 953–986. See also the writings of Liu Ts'un-yan, such as "The Penetration of Taoism in the Ming Confucian Elite," *T'oung-pao* 52 (1970): 31–103, and "Taoist Self-Cultivation in Ming Thought," in *Self and Society in Ming Thought,* ed. Wm. T. DeBary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 291–331.

25. Schipper, *The Taoist Body,* 57.

26. An examination of "Literati Taoism" appears in Kirkland, *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*, 120–126.

27. See Russell Kirkland, review of *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, ed. Wm. deBary and Irene Bloom, 2 vols., rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), in *Education About Asia* 7, no. 1 (2002): 62–66. Further discussion of these issues appears in my paper, "Рассмотрение антидаосских предубеждений западной синологии Rassmotreniye antidaoisskikh predubetshdenii tsapadnoi sinologii [Probing the Anti-Taoist Biases of Western Sinology: Toward a Globalisation of Taoist Studies]," in *Religiotsno-filosofskoe nasledie Vostoka v germenevticheskoi perspektive* (Religious and Philosophical Legacy of the East: Hermeneutical Perspectives), ed. Evgeny Torchinov (Saint Petersburg, Russia: Peterburgskoe Filosofskoe Oschestvo, 2004), 69–81.

28. The first full overview of Ming Taoism did not appear until 1998: see Berling, "Taoism in Ming Culture"; a comparable contribution, by Pierre-Henry Debruyn, appeared in *Daoism Handbook*, ed. Livia Kohn (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 594–622. The first full overview of Qing Taoism did not appear until Monica Esposito's entry "Taoism in the Qing," in *Daoism Handbook*, ed. Livia Kohn (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 623–658.

29. Vincent Goossaert, *The Taoists of Peking, 1800–1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2007).

30. Xun Liu, *Daoist Modern: Innovation, Lay Practice, and the Community of Inner Alchemy in Republican Shanghai* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009).

31. These matters are treated more fully in Russell Kirkland, "'Literati Taoism': Re-Imagining the Social and Intellectual Matrices of Premodern Taoism," in *Daojia yu Daojiao: Dierjie guoji xueshu yanjiuhui lunwen ji* 道家與道教:第二屆國際學術研究會論文集 (The "Taoist School" and the Taoist Religion: Proceedings of the 2nd International Academic Conference) (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2001), 2:292–298.

32. John Lagerwey, *Taoist Ritual in Chinese Society and History* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), xiii. Cf. his entries on "Taoist Priesthood" and "The Taoist Religious Community" in *Encyclopedia of Religion,* ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 11:547–550 and 14:306–317.

33. On the life of Wu Yün (d. 778) see T. H. Barrett's entry in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio, 2 vols. (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 2:1048–1049; Kirkland, *Taoists of the High Tang*, 96–111 and 324-342; Jan De Meyer, *Wu Yün's Way: Life and Works of an Eighth-Century Taoist Master* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006). Studies of Wu's poetry also include Edward Schafer, "Wu Yün's 'Cantos on Pacing the Void'," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 41 (1981): 377–415, and "Wu Yün's Stanzas on 'Saunters in Sylphdom,'" *Monumenta Serica* 35 (1981–1983): 1–37; and Paul Kroll, "Lexical Landscapes and Textual Mountains in the High Tang," *T'oung Pao* 84 (1998): 62–101.

34. See Kirkland, *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*, 143.

35. See Michel Strickmann, "On the Alchemy of T'ao Hung-ching," in *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religions*, ed. Holmes Welch and Anna Seidel (New Haven: Yale, 1979), 123–192.

36. Daniel Overmyer has surveyed a variety of pertinent texts, including a fifth-century Tianshi text that lays out the specific expectations for women lay Taoists in five particular life situations. See Daniel Overmyer, "Women in Chinese Religion," in *From Benares to Beijing: Essays on Buddhism and Chinese*, ed. Koichi Shinohara and Gregory Schopen (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press, 1991), 91–120.

37. Henri Maspero, *Taoism and Chinese Religion*, trans. Frank A. Kierman, Jr. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 32; cf. the usage of such terms in pp. 266–268, etc. See more generally Russell Kirkland, review of *Taoism and Chinese Religion*, by Henri Maspero, trans. Frank A. Kierman, Jr., *Journal of Asian Studies* 42 (1982–1983): 395–397.

38. Maspero, *Taoism and Chinese Religion,* 50.

39. Ibid., 81.

40. Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, 63.

41. Ibid., 48–49.

42. Ibid., 56.

43. Ibid., 56.

44. For an analysis of that premise, see Russell Kirkland, s.v. "*tianshi,*" in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), and Kirkland, "Dimensions of Tang Taoism," 96. The historical evidence demonstrates quite clearly that the modern Zhengyi Taoists' claims of continuity with the early Heavenly Master movement is no more than a pious fiction created in Song times to justify one local group's claims of importance. The fabrication of Chan lineages during the same era, as well as of a later Lung-men lineage continuous with that of early Quanzhen Taoism, demonstrate that from Tang times onward Chinese religious organizations often sought social and political legitimacy by means of such baseless claims. One can also see that such efforts often succeeded. A fuller examination of this issue, and its lingering effects in the twenty-first-century literature, is Kirkland, "Resources for Textual Research on Premodern Taoism."

45. Schipper, *The Taoist Body,* 58.

46. See, e.g., Kristofer Schipper's concise historical summary, "Taoism: The Story of the Way," in *Taoism and the Arts of China*, ed. Stephen Little (Chicago and Berkeley: Art Institute of Chicago and University of California Press, 2000), 33–55.

47. One might think of Zhang Gao 張高 as an exception here, but his actual

ancestry has not yet been critically studied, and in any case his historical significance was virtually nil.

48. See Russell Kirkland, s.v. "Ye," in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio, 2 vols. (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 2:1154–1155; Kirkland, "Tales of Thaumaturgy: Tang Accounts of the Wonder-Worker Yeh Fa-shan," *Monumenta Serica* 40 (1992): 47–86; and "A World in Balance: Holistic Synthesis in the *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi*," *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies* 23 (1993): 43–70. Robinet (*Taoism,* 20 and 187) incorrectly gives Ye's name as "Ye Fashang."

49. Florian Reiter, *The Aspirations and Standards of Taoist Priests in the Early Tang Period* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998). See Russell Kirkland, review of *The Aspirations and Standards of Taoist Priests in the Early Tang Period*, by Florian Reiter, *Journal of Chinese Religions* 28 (2000): 235–237.

50. Livia Kohn, *The Daoist Monastic Manual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). See also Livia Kohn, "The Date and Compilation of the *Fengdao Kejie*, the First Handbook of Monastic Taoism," *East Asian History* 13–14 (1997): 91–118; and T. H. Barrett, "The *Feng-tao k'o* and Printing on Paper in Seventh-Century China," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 60, no. 3 (1997): 538–540.

51. See Benn, *Cavern-Mystery Transmission,* 72–98. John Lagerwey ("The Taoist Religious Community," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade [New York: Macmillan, 1987], 14:313), cites "(a) text compiled at imperial behest around 712, the *Miao-men yu-ch'i . . .* [which] distinguishes between hermits and those who 'leave the family' on the one hand, and libationers and those who 'live at home,' on the other." That text (HY 1115) was Shi Chongxuan 史崇玄's introduction to the *Yiqie Daojing yinyi* 一切道經音義. See Kirkland, "Dimensions of Tang Taoism," 92.

52. Such, at least, would seem to be suggested by the pertinent entry in the *Zhongwen dacidian* 中文大辭典(9:14427), and the derivative entry in Li Shuhuan 李叔還's *Daojiao dacidian* 道教大辭典, 598: they both say that the term *daoshi* "broadly (*fan,* 泛) designates a gentleman (*shi,* 士) who possesses Dao." For an exploration of the meaning of the term *dao,* and the sense in which a person can "possess" it, see my entry "Dao" in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, 1:304–309.

53. See Kenneth J. DeWoskin, *Doctors, Diviners, and Magicians of Ancient China: Biographies of Fang-shih* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

54. *Shiji* 28.1368–1369. There is no easy explanation for the juxtaposition here of the term *fang*—connoting some knowledge/practice that extends beyond ordinary human activity—and the term *xian*—referring to beings who dwell beyond ordinary human space and can travel freely between that space and other realms.

55. See Russell Kirkland, "*Shijie*," in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio, 2 vols. (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 2:896–897.

56. A study pertinent to such matters is Stephen Bokenkamp, "Lu Xiujing, Buddhism, and the First Taoist Canon," in *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200–600*, ed. Scott Pearce, Audrey Spiro, and Patricia Ebrey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 181–199.

57. Michel Strickmann, "A Taoist Confirmation of Liang Wu-ti's Suppression of Taoism," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 98 (1978): 471; quoted in Kohn, *Daoist Monastic Manual*, 11. The quotes regarding Louguan and Kou Qianzhi come from Livia Kohn, *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 41 and 40, respectively.

58. Kohn, *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism*, 40 and 34. Kohn's presentation of such matters in regard to Kou's community is strikingly parallel to Berling's presentation of "The Ten Standards for Taoists" (*Daomen shigui,* 道門釋規) of the forty-third Heavenly Master, Zhang Yuchu 張宇初 (1316–1410); see Berling, "Taoism in Ming Culture," 955, 961.

59. Stephen Peter Bumbacher, *The Fragments of the Daoxue zhuan* (Frankfurt/ Main: Peter Lang, 2000). Russell Kirkland, booknote in *Religious Studies Review* 27 (2001): 314.

60. Bumbacher, *Fragments of the Daoxue zhuan*, 525.

61. Kirkland, "Dimension of Tang Taoism," 90.

62. Ibid., 91.

63. Reiter, *Aspirations and Standards of Taoist Priests in the Early Tang Period,* vii.

64. See R. A. Stein, "Religious Taoism and Popular Religion from the Second to the Seventh Centuries," in *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion*, ed. Holmes Welch and Anna Seidel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); and Kristofer Schipper, "Vernacular and Classical Ritual in Taoism," *Journal of Asian Studies* 65 (1985): 21–51.

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# *Pì xiè jí* 闢邪集*: Collected Refutations of Heterodoxy* by Ouyi Zhixu (蕅益智旭, 1599–1655)[1]

**Trans. Charles B. Jones**
The Catholic University of America

## INTRODUCTION

During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Jesuit missionaries came to China. Among the most renowned of these was Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), or *Li Madou* 利瑪竇 in Chinese, but he was only one man among many European (primarily Italian and Portuguese) Jesuits to go into the Chinese mission field. By the end of the seventeenth century, there were 140 or so missionaries in China, and despite some objections to their presence and activities, occasional expulsions, and local resistance, the imperial court generally allowed them to stay and work.[2] While they made some converts to Christianity, they also ran into much opposition from the Confucian bureaucracy; objections from this quarter have been well documented.

What has been less well-studied is the Buddhist reaction to the Jesuits' message. The first sustained study of Buddhist responses was produced in the late 1960s by Douglas Lancashire in a double issue of the *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia*.[3] More recently, a monograph has come out by the Swiss scholar Iso Kern containing German translations of several major Buddhist anti-Jesuit writings (including the present document).[4] In English, works by Standaert and Criveller may be consulted as well.[5]

In the case of the Buddhist confrontation with the missionaries, a distinct dynamic came into play. While Confucians could speak from the high position of administrators of social structures and guardians of public morals, the Buddhists had no such official power. In fact, Buddhism had much in common with Catholicism at the time, and Confucian polemics often lumped the two together for condemnation.

Both were foreign religions; both centered on celibate elites; both were critical of society. However, sometimes similarity breeds keener competition rather than cooperation and common cause because the competitors are vying to fill the same "market niche." In addition, the fact simply remains that Buddhism and Catholicism are two very different religions with real disputes.

## GENERAL ISSUES AND THEMES

This work is notable for its depth of engagement with the Jesuits' literature. During the late Ming period, few specifically Buddhist criticisms of the Christian missions appeared, and of those that have been anthologized in the collection *Po xie ji* (破邪集, Anthology of Refutations), the majority consist of xenophobic and patriotic polemics with no real depth. As Zhixu says in the introduction to the present work, it was lamentable that no one had seriously engaged the Jesuits' writings in order to refute them systematically, save one pamphlet that had unfortunately gone out of print: "Only the book *Assisting the Holy Dynasty in the Refutation* [*of Heterodoxy*] (聖朝佐闢, *Sheng chao zuo pi*) has been enough to make the party of heretics tongue-tied, but regrettably it has not enjoyed wide circulation, and since then the disciples of Ricci and Aleni have become very numerous, and the wind of heterodoxy grows ever hotter" (pp. 11771–11772).

In order to correct this deficiency, Zhixu read four of the Jesuit publications as noted below and responded to them in detail. While in many cases he merely refutes isolated phrases without regard to context, in other instances his comments show a serious study and demonstrate a growing understanding of Catholic and Western thought outside the circle of Christian converts.

For example, Zhixu objects to the Christian use of the Chinese term "Heaven" (*Tian*, 天) as a designation for their deity. He shows himself very aware that the Jesuits, through this terminology, sought to bolster their argument that Confucianism during the Classical period (that is, the time of Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi) had been monotheistic, implying that a conversion to Christianity would constitute a return to the original spirit of the tradition of the *ru* (*rujiao*, 儒教). Zhixu responds in section five of the "Further Investigation" by citing the various words that denote some aspect of the ultimate reality in the Confucian classics and demonstrating how they are incompatible with the Jesuits' idea of God. For scholars who wish to see how the

Jesuit accommodationist strategy was received by educated Chinese, this is invaluable.

Other sections of Zhixu's response also shed valuable light on the comparison of Chinese and European thought. For example, Zhixu does not accept the idea that anything can have a beginning but not an end. In section 23 of the "Further Investigation," he argues at great length against the proposition that the human soul, alone among all other phenomena, has a beginning (since it is created by God) but not an end (since it is destined for immortality). In his Buddhist/Confucian framework, either something is eternal or it is impermanent. If it is eternal, then it has no beginning and no end. If impermanent, then it has both a beginning and an end. Buddhist texts in particular make this claim, as it is the difference between a phenomenon being either "unconditioned" or "conditioned." The assertion that the human soul has a beginning but is nevertheless permanent after it has been created appears to him to hybridize the unconditioned and the conditioned in a way that makes no sense within a Buddhist framework, and so he rejects it as patently absurd.

In section 24 of the "Further Investigation," Zhixu rejects the Catholic claim that the creator of all things is Himself independent of all causes. After citing a passage from the work of Giulio Aleni in which God is likened to the root of a tree upon which its trunk, branches, and leaves depend, Zhixu snorts that even a tree's root still depends upon the earth; upon what does the Lord of Heaven depend? This brief dismissal is supported by the unspoken Buddhist assumption that the world consists of an interlocking network of things that are simultaneously the cause and effect of each other with no single, primal, uncaused cause.

Finally, one aspect of Zhixu's critique of the Jesuits may seem very strange until it is put into a tactical perspective. The text is attributed to one Zhong Zhenzhi 鍾振之, a Confucian scholar, with occasional contributions from a Buddhist Chan master named Jiming 際明. The preface is by a Buddhist monk named Shi Dalang 釋大朗. Nowhere does the name Ouyi Zhixu appear. There are even conversations between Zhong and Jiming reported at the beginning of the text and an exchange of letters between them at the end. Despite this multiplicity of voices, they are all in fact Zhixu himself. Zhong Zhenzhi was his secular style-name, and both Jiming and Dalang were among several monastic names that he used.[6]

Another curiosity that may appear separate but in fact is intimately related to this is the absence of any specifically Buddhist argument or textual citation anywhere in the text. For example, in section 28 of the "Further Investigation," Zhixu asserts that "we Confucians" do not venerate buddhas and bodhisattvas. This is not unique; Buddhism is casually mentioned and dismissed in other parts of the text. For the most part, the arguments are aimed at the scholar-official class and are bolstered exclusively by citations from Confucian classics.

In fact, the issues of Zhixu's many names and his apparent disavowal of Buddhism are closely related. As Ma Xiaoying notes,[7] Buddhists and Christians, in their competition with one another, both vied for the support of the Confucian bloc to gain advantage. As a result, Zhixu knew that he could not couch his refutation of the Jesuits' teachings in purely Buddhist terms; the Confucians would ignore it. Hence, he wrote under his lay name, specifically his style-name, a name that would have been given him upon passing the first level of Confucian examinations. He hoped that this tactic, along with the exclusive citation of Confucian classic literature in support of his arguments, would help him to turn the Confucians away from the Jesuits.

This prompts the question: to what extent is this really a Buddhist response to the Jesuits? Despite the lengths to which Zhixu goes to hide his Buddhist identity, there is still an overt Buddhist presence in the text in the form of his other, monastic *nom de plumes*. In addition, many of his arguments are based on Buddhist rather than Confucian presuppositions, and these are easily spotted by someone with knowledge of Chinese Buddhist thought. This will be pointed out in my commentary within the translation itself.

## THE TEXTS

The text upon which I have based this translation is found in *Ouyi Dashi Quanji* (蕅益大師全集, Collected Works of Great Master Ouyi).[8] This text is referenced by page within the translation. For comparison, I also used a Japanese edition published in 1861. This was reprinted in 1972 in the Japanese Editions of Chinese Classics series with notes by Shibata Atsushi 柴田篤.[9] This edition features *ofurigana* and other markups that greatly aided in the translation.

This text is treated, with translations of short extracts, in Gianni Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China: The Jesuits' Presentation of Christ from Matteo Ricci to Giulio Aleni*.[10] According to Criveller, the

"Preliminary Investigation" was occasioned by Zhixu's reading of a Jesuit pamphlet by J. da Rocha and Xu Guangqi entitled *Tianzhu shengxiang lüeshuo* (天主聖像略說, Short Explanation of the Sacred Images). The second part of the tract, the "Further Investigation," is aimed at three other Jesuit works:[11]

> Matteo Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (天主實義, *Tianzhu shiyi*)
> João Soerio's *Brief Account on the Religion of the Lord of Heaven* 天主聖教約言
> Giulio Aleni's *Learned Conversations of Fuzhou* 三山論學紀

Since Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* has already been published in an English translation by Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu, I have not re-translated Zhixu's quotations from it except as necessary to preserve consistency or because Zhixu himself read it differently; in the latter case, leaving the Lancashire-Hu translation unchanged might make Zhixu's replies appear irrelevant.[12] When Zhixu quotes from any of the other texts, I have translated the passages myself only after consulting the original works in which they appeared. This procedure allowed me to comment on Zhixu's usage of the quotations. Where English translations appear of the Confucian sources to which Zhixu appeals for support, I have quoted them as appropriate. However, there are instances in which a direct quotation of these translations would not fit the context here. Differences in English translation equivalents or the fact that Zhixu reads the passages differently from the English translators would yield only nonsense. In such cases, I have provided my own translation. In all cases, the sources of the translations are noted. Finally, throughout the process, I consulted Kern's German translation closely, but I did not base my translation on it. While his critical notes were very helpful and saved me a good bit of time, I re-checked everything myself and made changes as necessary.

### *PÌ XIÈ JÍ* 闢邪集: *COLLECTED REFUTATIONS OF HETERODOXY*
#### [p. 11771] *Preface to the Engraved [Edition of] Collected Refutations of Heterodoxy*

In the dharma there is no heterodoxy or orthodoxy; heterodoxy or orthodoxy reside with people. After the final nirvana of the Buddha Kāśyapa,[13] the periods of the true dharma and the counterfeit dharma[14] passed away, and the language of permanence, bliss, self, and purity[15]

became the ninety-five types of heterodox teaching.[16] [The Buddha] Śākyamuni emerged in the world and thereupon refuted them with [the teachings of] impermanence, suffering, no-self, and impurity. [Their] schemes[17] were washed away, and the holy truths manifested. Arriving at the *sala* trees [he] entered nirvana and again proclaimed true permanence.[18] This is what is meant by "his illness was elimi-nated, not the dharma." Coming to the present day, Buddhist teachings have again become almost heresy (*waidao*, 外道). Thus, there are men like Matteo Ricci (Li Madou, 利馬竇)[19] and Giulio Aleni (Ai Rulüe, 艾儒略). On a pretext, they came from the great West [Europe], adopted the designation "Confucian learning" (*rushu*, 儒術), and attacked the teachings of Śākyamuni as their folly. They style their [own doctrine] the "Teaching of the Lord of Heaven" (*Tian zhu jiao*, 天主教)[20] or the "Learning of Heaven" (*Tian xue*, 天學). The Buddhist clergy rose up *en masse* to revile them, but this led only to their own defamation. Only the book *Assisting the Holy Dynasty in the Refutation [of Heterodoxy]* (*Sheng chao zuo pi*, 聖朝佐闢)[21] has been enough to make the party of heretics tongue-tied, but regrettably it has not enjoyed wide circulation,[22] and since then the disciples of Ricci and Aleni have become very numerous, and the wind of heterodoxy grows ever hotter.

The layman Zhong Zhenzhi 鍾振之 has accordingly [p. 11772] in his fear written the "Preliminary Investigation" ("Chu zheng," 初徵) and "Further Investigation" ("Zai zheng," 再徵) and sent them to Chan Master Jiming 際明禪師.[23] Jiming laughed and said,

> Śākyamuni Tathāgata received the repudiation of the six hereti-cal masters, after which [his] teaching of the Way fared greatly. Master [Seng]zhao's[24] *Treatise on the Immutability of Things* received Kongyin's[25] refutation, and [this] raised it before the [people of the] world, who only then knew to study it. How do I know that these two men, Ricci and Aleni, are not inconceivable bodhisattvas who have come here riding the power of great vows especially to encourage the *buddhadharma*? Thus, it is nothing over which disciples of Śākyamuni need be indignant or debate. Only let the layman [i.e., Zhong] uphold the study of principle (*lixue*, 理學),[26] uphold public morality (*shidao*, 世道), and these will be your refutation. One may primarily defend Confucius and Mencius and secondarily help to illuminate the *buddhadharma*.

Finally, it fell to Mengshi[27] to evaluate [the text] and arrange for the carving of the printing blocks, and he asked the monk Gao'an [Dalang][28] to add a preface. The monk Gao'an read it through and also

read the two exchanges of correspondence between the author and the Chan master in order to evaluate them.[29] He said,

> It is good that these two gentlemen Ricci and Aleni were able to pretend to put forward absurd theories in order to touch on the true vehicle. It is good that layman Zhenzhi is able to use the principles of Buddhism to argue Confucian principles. It is good that Chan master Jiming is able to debate by means of not debating and then send [p. 11773] his argument to Mengshi for critique. Ricci and Aleni are inconceivable! Zhenzhi is inconceivable! Mengshi is inconceivable! Jiming is especially inconceivable! Inconceivable heterodoxy! Inconceivable orthodoxy! Inconceivable speech! Inconceivable silence! A public case (*gongan*, 公案)[30] is fully present: By the characteristic of heterodoxy enter into orthodoxy. By the characteristic of orthodoxy enter into heterodoxy. Know that speech is silence; know that silence is speech. This is in the one who has eyes!

Written by the monk Dalang of Gao'an on the Yue Creek on Tianmu Peak in the autumn of the *guiwei* year (1643).

### I. The Preliminary Investigation

[p. 11775] Preliminary Investigation into the Learning of Heaven (*Tian xue chu zheng*, 天學初徵) by Yishi 逸史[31] Zhong Shisheng 鍾始聲, courtesy-name (*fu* 甫) Zhenzhi 振之 of Jinchang 金閶 [i.e., Suzhou], with critical notes by Mè\engshi 夢士 Cheng Zhiyong 程智用, courtesy-name Yongjiu 用九 of Xin'an 新安[32]

Master Zhong studied the *Book of Changes* by the seashore of Zhenze 震澤.[33] A certain guest came knocking at his cottage to ask,

> I have heard that for the last twelve or thirteen years, you have taken personal responsibility for the eternal lineage of learning, refuting Buddhism and Daoism [lit., "the Buddha and Laozi"] and defending the way of the sages [i.e., Confucianism]. Today [you] are over thirty years old! But is it enough not to [ever] take a peek outside your window, to have no exchanges with famous personages or great men, and furthermore to never even think of putting yourself in the service of the ruler and bring the benefits of peace to the world? Moreover, have you not heard that in recent generations there is this Catholicism (*Tianzhujiao,* 天主教[34])? Its people came from Europe. They took one look at our Chinese books and were able to understand them in depth. They could also refute Buddhism and respect

Confucianism. This is to comport deeply with the master's[35] thinking. Could we discuss them together?

Master Zhong was pleased and said, "Is there such a thing? Since they have come from Europe with a bias against Buddhism and [p. 11776] have become partial to Confucianism, does this mean that there is an opportunity to take our darkened sagely way [i.e., Confucianism] and renew its brilliance? I wish to hear their teaching." The guest then took out the pamphlet *Short Explanations on the Sacred Images*[36] to show him. Master Zhong read it from start to finish. He then reviled it and said: "Bosh! These are nothing more than heretical barbarians! Overtly, they attack Buddhism, but covertly they crib from its chaff. They feign reverence for Confucianism, but in reality they are throwing its teaching-lineage into chaos. Please [let me] take this occasion to attack them with their own teachings."

[**First objection:**] They say: "The Lord of Heaven is the great Lord (*Zhuzai*, 主宰) who at the beginning gave rise to heaven, earth, the spirits, humanity, and all things."[37] But one may ask: Does this great Lord himself have the quality of form or not? If he has the quality of form, then what gave rise to him? Also, if heaven and earth did not yet exist, where did he abide? If he did not have the quality of form, then he is what we Confucians call the Great Ultimate (*Taiji*, 太極). The Great Ultimate is also the Ultimateless (*Wuji*, 無極). How could one say it have love or hate? How could one say it wants people to worship and obey it? How could one say it allots fortune and punishment? This is the first of their absurdities (*butong*, 不通).[37]

[**Second objection:**] Moreover, the Great Ultimate is simply the principle that enfolds *yin* and *yang*. For this reason, when it stirs, it is *yang*; when it is at rest, it is *yin*. *Yin* and *yang* can both reach extremes of either good or evil. Therefore, the responsibility for regulating and assisting the two [p. 11777] is man's alone.[38] Confucius said, "It is man who makes the Way great."[39] He also said, "Humanity (*ren*, 仁) is from the self."[40] Zisi said [in *The Doctrine of the Mean*], "Let the states of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish."[41] The *Book of Changes* says, "When he precedes Heaven, Heaven is not contrary to him."[42] If, as they say, all creation is to be attributed to the Lord of Heaven, then since he is able to create spirits and humans, why did he create not only the good spirits and people, but the bad spirits and people as well and accumulate this inheritance

through the ten thousand generations? This is the second of their absurdities.

**[Third objection:]** Also, [with regard to] that Lucifer (露際弗爾) that the Lord of Heaven created, why was he given such great power and ability? If [the Lord of Heaven] did not know that he would give rise to such great pride and conferred them [i.e., power and ability], then He was not wise. If He did know that [Lucifer] would give rise to great pride and still conferred them, then He was not kind [*ren,* 仁]. Unwise or unkind, yet still [He is] called the Lord of Heaven. This is the third of their absurdities.[43]

**[Fourth objection:]** Again, Lucifer was already punished by being sent down to hell but is also allowed to secretly tempt people in this world. This is not like when Shun punished the four rogues; [on the contrary,] it is enfeoffing the arrogant.[44] This is the fourth of their absurdities.

**[Fifth objection:]** Moreover, since heaven and earth [p. 11778] and the myriad things are all the creations of the Lord of Heaven, then he should have chosen to make things that would benefit them and not choose to make things that would harm them, or, having made these [harmful things], should have eliminated them. Why would [the Lord of Heaven] create this body of flesh, these customs (*fengsu,* 風俗), and the demons as our three enemies without being able to eliminate them?[45] When a good earthly artisan makes an implement, he makes it beautiful. If the image is not beautiful, then he abandons it. Why would not the most great, most venerable, most spiritual, most holy true Lord not be like a good craftsman? This is the fifth of their absurdities.

**[Sixth objection:]** Confucius said, "Does Heaven say anything?"[47] Mencius said, "Heaven does not speak. It simply showed its will by his personal conduct and his conduct of affairs."[48] Now it is said that in olden times Heaven handed down the Ten Commandments. Thus, in what way does it differ from the *Celestial Book* of the Han-Song imperial sacrifices to Heaven and Earth?[49] Nothing exceeds this in deluding the world and insulting the people. This is the sixth of their absurdities.

**[Seventh objection:]** Moreover, the Lord of Heaven "took birth as a man, and transmitted the great Way."[50] Where did He live prior to descending to take birth? If in heaven, then the Lord of Heaven would depend on heaven to have a place to live, so how could one say that the Lord of Heaven created heaven? If one says that as He created heaven he needed [p. 11779] heaven as a place to live, like a man constructing

a room while living in that room, then prior to creating heaven where would He live? If He does not depend upon anything, then He is like the Great Ultimate (*Taiji*). It does not correspond to the Great Ultimate in depending upon a heaven while rewarding and punishing human beings, and it does not correspond to the Great Ultimate in taking birth as a man. This is the seventh of their absurdities.

**[Eighth objection:]** Also, after taking birth as a man, did His original body (*benshen*, 本身) remain in heaven or was it absent? If absent, then heaven was without its Lord. If present, then [their doctrine] overlaps with the Buddhist doctrine of the two bodies of the Buddha, that is, the true and the response (*zhen ying er shen*, 真應二身), but without reaching the wondrous illusion of their myriads of transformation bodies.[51] This is the eighth of their absurdities.

**[Ninth objection:]** Also, they assert that the Lord of Heaven redeemed the faults of all the world with His own body, which is especially absurd. Now the Lord of Heaven is incomparably venerable, and His mercy is boundless. Why not just pardon people's faults directly; why is there the need to redeem people's faults with [His own] body without having examined to see from whom they are redeemed? This is the ninth of their absurdities.

**[Tenth objection:]** Further, if He is able to redeem people's faults by means of His own body, why was He not able to make them refrain from incurring faults in the first place? This is the tenth of their absurdities.

**[Eleventh objection:]** Furthermore, since they say that [God has] redeemed [p. 11780] the faults of people for ten thousand generations,[52] but now it appears that if one commits faults one will fall into hell, then the redemption is not complete. This is the eleventh of their absurdities.

**[Twelfth objection:]** We Confucians say that the sagehood of Yao and Shun was not able to cover their sons' evil. Filial sons and compassionate grandsons cannot change the fault of You and Li.[53] Therefore, "From the emperor down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person as the root."[54] But now that the Lord of Heaven is able to redeem men's faults, people can do all the evil they please and wait for the Lord of Heaven to redeem them in his mercy. This is the twelfth of their absurdities.

**[Thirteenth objection:]** The teachings and rules that have been handed down [by the Jesuits] say that there is only one true Lord who

created things and who is greatest and most praiseworthy. He wants humanity to worship and make offerings to Him and to utterly do away with heaven, earth, the sun and moon, and all the stars.[55] How is this different from what the Buddhists call "I alone am honored" (*wei wu du zun*, 唯吾獨尊)?[56] They covertly imitate [the Buddha's] sayings while publicly anathematizing him. This is the thirteenth of their absurdities.

[**Fourteenth objection:**] Even though the Buddha said, "I alone am honored," he still asserted that heaven, the earth, the sun, moon, and stars, all shine back upon the world, and there are protective spirits possessing great merit who bless and protect humanity, and it is fitting to think about repaying their kindness. But these days [the Jesuits] say that one should not [p. 11781] offer [them] worship and sacrifices, thus [manifesting the greater] evil of seeking name and advantage on their own authority than the Buddhists did. This is the fourteenth of their absurdities.

[**Fifteenth objection:**] Having disallowed the doctrine of rebirth, they still say that peoples' souls (*linghun*, 靈魂) partake of immortality; it has a beginning but not an end. Thus, [souls] accumulate and become many; where is there room to put them? This is the fifteenth of their absurdities.[57]

[**Sixteenth objection:**] If one asserts that heaven and hell are both great and can both accommodate [human souls], then how is this different from the doctrines of the Buddhists? This is the sixteenth of their absurdities.[58]

[**Seventeenth objection:**] Also, they claim that the "great trichiliocosm of the Lotus Calyx World" that the Buddhists teach has never been seen by people, and thus is ridiculous. But who has ever seen the heaven and hell that they teach? This is the seventeenth of their absurdities.[59]

[**Eighteenth objection:**] Also, they assert that although heaven and hell have never been seen, they are still real principles. So, how would one know that the "three thousand lotus calyx" is not a real principle and bitterly refute it? This is the eighteenth of their absurdities.

[**Nineteenth objection:**] They also assert that, "At the moment at the end of life, having then heard and followed God's teaching, one can still repent, reform, and [one's sins] will be turned away."[60] Then this is exactly the same as what the Buddhists say about the ten recitations (*shi nian*, 十念) at the end of one's life. If what you say is true, then what the Buddhists say is also true. If you say [p. 11782] "in dependence on

the Ten Commandments,"[61] then what the Buddhists say must also be supported from the ten precepts.[62] [If] you say "truly bringing forth from one's own body and mind,"[63] then the Buddhists also say, "truly bringing forth from one's own body and mind." If you say that "By the power of the repentance of a true mind and right intention one will expiate [sin] and not dare sin again,"[64] then the Buddhists also say, "By the power of the repentance of a true mind and right intention one will expiate [sin] and not dare sin again."[65] They steal everything from the Buddhists and then say it's all not true. This is the nineteenth of their absurdities.

[**Twentieth objection:**] Also, the Buddhists specialize in making clear how all the myriad phenomena (*wan fa*, 萬法) are mind-only, and that therefore all ordinary phenomena (*fan shi*, 凡事) depend only upon the One Mind. Since you [Jesuits] have made specially clear that all the myriad phenomena are only [created by] the Lord of Heaven, then it suffices that ordinary phenomena depend only upon the one Lord of Heaven. So how do you use [the argument that] things come forth from one's own body and mind? If you continue to want things to come forth from one's own body and mind, then the power is not exclusively with the Lord of Heaven. This is clear.[66] This establishes the Lord of Heaven on a delusion. This is the twentieth of their absurdities.

[**Twenty-first objection:**] You want to attack the "two houses of Buddhism and Daoism,"[67] so you need to detail the root of their illness; only then will they be convinced. Now if you say that they [Buddhists and Daoists] "want people to give some of their wealth in alms, prepare some vegetarian fare, burn some [p. 11783] paper money, and all this will count as merit,"[68] then I'm afraid that those two [i.e., Buddhists and Daoists] will not necessarily be convinced. And if you moreover keep teaching people to make offerings and worship before the sacred images (or icons) of the Lord of Heaven, then how are you any different [from Buddhists and Daoists]? This is the twenty-first of their absurdities.

[**Twenty-second objection:**] We Confucians say that all things comprise the one Great Ultimate (*Taiji*); "That which Heaven confers on them we call their nature."[69] Because of this, each person can take their place in the Mean. The highest and humblest ranks therefore can inspire awe without being disordered. Thus, the emperor worships the Lord on High (*Shangdi*, 上帝); princes sacrifice to the mountains, rivers, and gods of soil and grain (*sheji*, 社稷); high officials perform

the five offerings (*wu si*, 五祀); and the gentry make offerings to their ancestors. [But] now [the Jesuits] have said that the Lord of Heaven is the greatest and most venerable, and they go on to tell every family to serve [Him] and in every household to honor [Him]. How does this differ from images of the Buddha and Laozi?[70] Yet they go unreasonably commending themselves as different. This is the twenty-second of their absurdities.

> *Comment*: Here, the criticism is twofold. First, that in having everyone worship the greatest deity regardless of social position, the Jesuits are denying the Confucian ideal of a harmonious, hierarchical social order. If the Lord of Heaven is at the apex of divinity, then only the emperor should worship Him. Second, their teachings do not differ from those of Buddhists and Daoists in this respect, so they have no originality or uniqueness.

Thus, I say: [The Jesuits] openly argue against Buddhism while secretly imitating it; they falsely [claim to] respect Confucianism while in reality they are destroying it. Expel their people, destroy their books, and forbid their icons throughout the land; are they not to be considered traitors to China? I hear that their heretical followers are intelligent debaters. [If] there are any who can answer this investigation, then I will make another.

## II. The Further Investigation

[p. 11785] Further Investigation into the Learning of Heaven (*Tianxue zai zheng*, 天學再徵) by Yishi 逸史 Zhong Shisheng 鍾始聲, courtesy-name (*fu*, 甫) Zhenzhi 振之 of Jinchang 金閶 [in Suzhou], with critical notes by Mengshi 夢士 Cheng Zhiyong 程智用, courtesy-name Yongjiu 用九 of Xin'an 新安

After Master Zhong wrote his "Preliminary Investigation into the Learning of Heaven," a guest read it and laughed, saying, "Really! How reckless you are! You have only just heard the doctrines of [the Lord of] Heaven; you have not yet penetrated them deeply. You quickly found some so-called 'absurdities,' and you critiqued them. The master should read further the *Xilai yi* (西來意), *San shan lun xueji* (三山論學記), and the *Shengjiao yueyan* (聖教約言).[71] Then, what is absurd will be with you and not with them." [So] Master Zhong obtained them and read them carefully and afterwards inquired into them as follows.

**[Section 1]** They say:

[Now, when we observe] the supreme heaven we see that it moves from the east, while the heavens of the sun, moon, and stars travel from the west. [E]ach thing follows the laws proper to it, and each is secure in its own place. If there were no Supreme Lord to control and to exercise authority, would it be possible to avoid confusion? For example, when a boat crosses a river or the sea and is enveloped by wind and waves, if there is no [p. 11786] danger of its foundering and the passage is made in safety, one can be sure there is someone with his hand on the tiller who knows his seamanship, etc.[72]

The "Investigation" says: This is a matter of a boat crossing a river or a sea. Each boat has to have a tillerman, but I have never heard that the tillerman universally operated the movements of all boats. Moreover, it is not the case that those who steer boats are also the ones who build boats. Can one say that in heaven there is one Lord, and that He both created and moves [all things]?

**[Section 2]** They say: "Material things cannot come to completion of their own volition, but must have a cause external to them to bring them to fruition. A tower or a building cannot rise of its own accord, but is always completed at the hands of artisans. . . . Heaven and earth cannot come into being by their own will, but arise from the Lord of Heaven, etc."[73]

The "Investigation" says: This is just about artisans building buildings and residences. [But artisans] must have orders [from someone] to complete the work. As to the Lord of Heaven completing heaven and earth, who ordered it? Workmen complete buildings and residences; they cannot then be the lords of those buildings and residences. How can he who completed heaven and earth also be the Lord of heaven and earth?

**[Section 3]** They say: "[T]he things in this world are exceedingly numerous, and if there were no supreme Lord to keep and maintain order among them, they would inevitably [p. 11787] disperse and be destroyed. . . . Therefore, each family has but one head, and each nation has but one sovereign. . . . A man has only one body, and a body has only one head," etc.[74]

The "Investigation" says: It is all right to say that a single body does not have two heads; one cannot say that besides a single body with a single head there are not other bodies and other heads. It is all right to say that a single family does not have two heads; it is not all right to

say that outside of this single family with its single head, there are not other families with other heads. It is all right to say that a nation does not have two sovereigns; it is not all right to say that outside of this single nation with its single sovereign there are not other nations and other sovereigns. It is also all right to say that heaven does not have two Lords; is it all right to say uniquely that outside of this one heaven with its one Lord there cannot be other heavens with other Lords?

Moreover, although a body has only one head, the head must be produced along with the four limbs and the whole body;[75] the head does not produce the four limbs and the whole body. Although a family has only one head, this head of the household must come into being along with the dependents, children, and servants; the head of the family does not produce the dependents, children, and servants. Although a nation has only one sovereign, the sovereign must come into being along with all the ministers, officers, and people; the sovereign does not produce the ministers, officers, and people. Thus, although [p. 11788] one heaven only has one Lord, he must come into being along with the spirits, demons, people, and things; can one say that this Lord produces the spirits, demons, people, and things?

> *Comment*: This is a specifically Buddhist argument. In the first place, Zhixu criticizes Ricci for apparently thinking there is only one cosmos and that therefore there can only be one Lord of it. In Buddhist cosmology, there are multiple worlds, and so there could well be multiple Lords in each one, even though each world could indeed have only one Lord. In the second place, Zhixu sees Ricci as positing a pre-existent Lord who is self-sufficient and creates all things without in turn being affected by them. To this, Zhixu opposes the Buddhist doctrine of interdependence in which lines of causality move in all directions at once. The Lord of Heaven could not be what he is independently of creation, and, therefore, creatures create him as well as vice versa. Neither of these points could be propounded from a strictly Confucian perspective, and it is noteworthy that Zhixu cites no Confucian text here.

**[Section 4]** They say: "The Lord of Heaven is not heaven and not earth. [His] loftiness and intelligence are much more extensive and much more ample than that of heaven and earth. He is not a ghost or a spirit; His spiritual essence transcends all ghosts and spirits. He is not a man; He totally surpasses all sages and men of wisdom" . . . "He lacks

any beginning and any end," [and] "No place can contain Him, and yet there is no place where He is not present," etc.[76]

The "Investigation" says: Since there is no place that He does not fill, then He is not only in heaven, but also in hell. He not only fills heaven and earth, but He is also in the places of spirits, ghosts, people, animals, grass, trees, and various impurities. If one says that He is high in heaven, the most exalted, with none higher, then one does not fulfill the meaning of being present everywhere. If one says that he pervades every place, then one does not establish the substance of being most exalted. Or perhaps one salvages this by saying that the Lord of Heaven is revered like the sun in the sky, whose light goes everywhere. Although it pervades in this fashion, it does not lose its exaltation, and although venerable, its light goes out from the source to pervade [everywhere]. Now, the "Investigation" further says: [p. 11789] This is still to have a place, direction, borders, and image. The sun has form, and it is said that the Lord of Heaven made it. So if the Lord of Heaven has form, then who made Him?

**[Section 5]** They say: "Our Lord of Heaven is the Sovereign on High (*Shangdi*, 上帝) mentioned in the [ancient Chinese] canonical writings,"[77] and then they go on to quote what several Hymns [of Zhou (i.e., the *Odes*)] say, what the *Yijing* transmits, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, and so on, in order to prove their case.

The "Investigation" says: How profound is their ignorance of Confucian principles! That which our Confucians call "Heaven" is of three types.[78] The first is the one upon which one gazes and is vast and hazy (*cangcang,* 蒼蒼). The words, "is only this bright shining spot, but when viewed in its inexhaustible extent"[79] mean just this.

The second is the Heaven that is the controller of the world who superintends the good and punishes the bad. This is what is called *Shangdi* in the *Odes*, the *Yijing*, and *Doctrine of the Mean*. They [i.e., the Jesuits] only know this and nothing more. This Sovereign of Heaven (*Tiandi* 天帝) only rules the world; he did not create the world. He is like an earthly ruler who only rules the people; he does not create the people. To absurdly think that he is a Lord who creates people and things is a great absurdity.[80]

The third is that which inherently has the nature of numinous brightness (*ling ming,* 靈明), which has no beginning and no end, which is neither produced nor extinguished. This is called "Heaven."

The primordial source of heaven, earth, and the myriad things [p. 11790] is called "destiny" (*ming,* 命). Thus, when the *Doctrine of the Mean* says, "What Heaven has conferred [also *ming,* 命] is called the nature,"[81] it is not [referring to] the bright and hazy sky, nor to "Heaven" in the sense of the Sovereign on High. "Confer" here is not that which means "by specific instruction,"[82] nor is it understood to mean "to endow." Confucius said, "At fifty, I knew the decrees [also *ming,* 命] of Heaven,"[83] truly and deeply proving this fundamental nature.

> *Comment*: The word *ming* 命 has several valences, which can cause confusion. It can mean "destiny," and it can mean "to order" or "to confer," as a king might issue orders or confer benefits. Zhixu's point here is that, when one encounters the word *ming* in Confucian texts, one should understand it as "destiny," that with which one is born and constitutes part of one's nature. The Jesuits, by equating the Heaven that confers one's nature with the Christian God, have illegitimately ascribed to Heaven the kind of ability to bestow by decree that a sovereign might exercise, and they thus have not understood Heaven in an authentically Confucian way.

We also call it "the mean" (*zhong,* 中). Thus it is said, "While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be the mean."[84]

This is "the mean"; it is the great root of everything under heaven. It is also called "change" (*yi,* 易), and thus it is said, "Change is without thought and without purpose; in quiescence, it causes everything to move. It responds, and thus can penetrate all under heaven."[85]

It is also called "innate knowing [of the good]," and thus it is said, "Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere."[86] It is also called "not seeing, not hearing" (*bu du, bu wen,* 不賭不聞), and it is also called "alone." Thus it is said, "[The superior man] does not wait till he sees things to be cautious, nor till he hears things to be apprehensive" [and] "Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself, when he is alone."[87] This is what Confucius meant by the words "Be in awe of the decrees of Heaven."[88] It is also called "mind," and thus it is said, "The great end of learning is nothing else but to seek for the lost mind."[89] It is also called "self" (*ji,* 己), and thus it is said, "What the superior man seeks is in himself"[90] [and] "Is the practice of humaneness from a man himself, or is it from others?"[91] It is also [p. 11791] called "myself" (*wo,* 我), and thus it is said, "All things are already complete

in ourselves."[92] It is also called "sincerity" (*cheng,* 誠), and thus it is said, "When intelligence comes from sincerity, this is called 'nature'"[93] [and] "Sincerity is the way of Heaven."[94] This is truly the primal source of heaven, earth, and the myriad things, and it is truly without joy or anger, without creating or acting, lacking in rewards or punishments, and having no sound or odor. And yet how effulgent is the power of the Mean in Heaven's nature![95] Principle (*li,* 理) and primal material (*qi,* 氣), substance (*ti,* 體), and function (*yong,* 用) are all complete.

> *Comment*: In neo-Confucian thought, both of these pairs of terms relate a quiescent and an active element that work together to produce all the things in creation. Zhixu is emphasizing that the *Taiji*, unlike the Christian God as he understands it, does not actively create from outside the world, as a potter making a pot, but rather is a dynamic, creative process within the world that manifests in endless transformations according to patterns.

Thus it is said, "[In] change there is the Great Ultimate; this produced the two modes,"[96] etc. But although it says "[In] change there is the Great Ultimate," still, the Great Ultimate is nothing but this change. It is like the nature of wetness, which is water, and yet water completely is this wetness. Although it says, "The Great Ultimate produced the two modes [*yin* and *yang*]," still, the two modes [*yin* and *yang*] completely are the Great Ultimate. Although it says the two modes [*yin* and *yang*] produced the four images (*si xiang,* 四象), still, the four images are also completely the two modes. Although it says, "The four images produced the eight trigrams," the eight trigrams are also completely the four images. They multiply together into the sixty-four [hexagrams], and the sixty-four multiplied together become the 4,096. Among these 4,096, if you take as an example a single hexagram or a single line (*yao,* 爻), there are none that are not in their entirety the eight trigrams, or in their entirety the four images, or in their entirety the two [p. 11792] modes [of *yin* and *yang*], or in their entirety the Great Ultimate, or in their entirety the principle of Change. It is as when one touches one wave of the great ocean, there is nothing in its substance that is not entirely water and entirely wetness. As to "nature," it is also like sprinkling water, silver, or pearls; they all remain round [or complete, *yuan,* 圓]. Thus, as for Heaven, ghosts and spirits, and humans all being able to see the whole of the Great Ultimate, and the principle of Change in every affair (*shi,* 事) and thing (*wu,* 物). If in Heaven, then it is called

the Sovereign on High; if in ghosts and spirits, then it is called spiritual brightness; if in humans, then it is called the sagely person upon whom devolves the right of governing, transforming, and leading.

Now let us suppose that prior to the division of Heaven and Earth there was one who was most spiritual and holy called the Lord of Heaven. Such a being would have the power to govern and there would be no disorder; he would be good and there would be no evil. Also, why [would there be any need to] wait for subsequent powers of spirits or philosophies of sages to trim, complete, or supplement its features? People also would not "combine their virtue with [that of] Heaven and Earth" or "precede Heaven and yet Heaven is not contrary to him"![97] How could they know that we Confucians are the line that "continues Heaven ['s teaching] and establishes morals (*ji tian li ji*繼天立極)"?[98]

> *Comment*: Zhixu's argument here is against the Christian notion of Heaven as an omnipotent, law-giving, and thus perfectly virtuous God. He is saying that such a God would have no need to create humanity in order to cooperate in bringing about peace and virtue. He opposes this with the Confucian idea that humanity takes the Heavenly Way and instantiates it in society, thus bringing it to perfection in practice. If, as the Jesuits say, God's virtue is already perfect even before creation, then creation seems pointless and there is nothing for humanity to do or contribute.

**[Section 6]** They say: There are three levels of souls. The lowest is called the vegetative soul [*shenghun,* 生魂] and is the soul of grass and trees. The middle level is called the sentient [p. 11793] soul [*juehun,* 覺魂] and is the soul of birds and beasts. These two [kinds] are both extinguished; they also say [that these two kinds of soul] have both a beginning and an end. The highest is called the intellectual soul [*linghun,* 靈魂], that is, the human soul. This soul is not extinguished; they also say that it has a beginning but no end.[99]

The "Investigation" says: The intellectual differs from the sentient in having a beginning but not an end. The sentient is [supposedly] different from the vegetative, so how is it that they both have a beginning *and* an ending? Moreover, as to their assertion that birds and beasts have the sentient but not the intellectual soul and that only humans have the intellectual, we can see foolish people in the world who think only about [their] desire for drink, food, and sexual desires. They don't know about anything else, so how do they differ from birds and beasts?

We can see righteous dogs and righteous monkeys in the world who give up their lives to save[100] their masters, who censure officials and penetrate principle.[101] How do they differ from human beings? Thus, Mencius further says: "That whereby man differs from the birds and beasts is but small. The mass of people cast it away, while superior men preserve it."[102] How can one ignorantly distinguish them as one having an end, the other not having an end?

**[Section 7]** They say: "Where in the teachings of the Duke of Chou and Confucius . . . is there a person who cares to show disrespect to the empress and emperor[103] and to insist that he is as worthy of respect as him?[104] If an ordinary citizen asserts that he is as noble as the emperor, can he avoid being guilty of a crime? If people in the world are not permitted recklessly to compare [p. 11794] themselves with the king of this world, how can they regard themselves as being the same as the Heavenly Sovereign on High?"[105]

The "Investigation" says: That common people would not dare to mimic [their] emperor and king is "names and ranks"; that they do not dare to reproach the emperor and king is "virtuous nature." Thus it is said: "At court there is nothing like nobility . . . and for helping one's generation and presiding over the people, there is nothing like virtue."[106] It is also said: "When it comes to the practice of humanity, one should not yield even to his teacher."[107] It is also said: "From the Son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root."[108] In this way, King Wen [of the Zhou] was a prince over the people, whose "purity was unceasing,"[109] and could be worthy of Heaven. Confucius was a commoner (*pifu,* 匹夫), and yet his handing down the ancestral doctrines and regulations[110] is not called *lèse majesté.* Moreover, as to a father's producing a son, who would not want their own son to be able to equal them? Since this "Lord of Heaven" is to be considered a "Great Father" that truly gives birth to people, then how could he not want people to be his equal?

**[Section 8]** They say: "The minds of the wise embrace heaven and earth and contain the myriad things; [but] these are not the real substance of heaven, earth, and the myriad things. . . . If still water or a bright mirror were to reflect all of the myriad things, and thereupon we said that the bright mirror and still water equally possessed heaven and earth, that is, were able to produce them, how would that be admissible? . . . The Lord of Heaven is the source of the myriad things and is

able to produce the myriad things. If [p. 11795] people were the same as Him, then they should also be able to produce them."[111]

The "Investigation" says: The reflections in still water or a bright mirror are the myriad things. The mirror or the water are here; the myriad things are there; there is a distinction, and there is a boundary [separating them]. Thus we know that they are reflections and not the substance [of what is reflected]. This is "the mind . . . contains heaven, earth, and all the myriad things." [But] can you [really] point to the mind's boundaries and distinctions as you can [that of] the mirror or water? If [one asserts that] the mind has no form and is not able to produce the myriad things, it be [the case] that the Lord of Heaven, who also lacks form, would be unable to produce the myriad things. If [it is true that] the Lord of Heaven lacks form and yet is able to form forms, then how is the mind alone unable to form forms while lacking form?

> *Comment*: This question would be of particular interest to Zhixu as a Buddhist monk. In the text of *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* that immediately precedes the passage that Zhixu quotes, Buddhist concepts of the mind's role in creating reality are specifically criticized.[112] Zhixu would of course want to answer this, but, consistent with his strategy of representing himself as a defender of Confucian interests, he does not quote any Buddhist texts or raise any Buddhist doctrinal arguments to refute the Jesuits. Since no Confucian text spoke to this point, Zhixu was forced to rely on pure logic.
>
> The structure of Zhixu's refutation seems to be as follows: (1) They say that the mind only reflects or embraces things; it does not actually create them or bring them about any more than water or a mirror bring into being the things that they reflect. (2) But the mind is not like water or a mirror. Those have definite forms, and you can distinguish them from the things reflected in them. The mind does not have form in the same way. (This would go with the general Buddhist view that the mind is nothing but its contents and that therefore it cannot be clearly distinguished from its contents in the way that a mirror can be distinguished from that which is reflected in it.) (3) If one then counters that something without form cannot create things with form, then you contradict other assertions to the effect that the Lord of Heaven has no form, yet creates things

that have form. If this is possible for the Lord of Heaven, why not for the human mind?

**[Section 9]** They say: "There is that part which is internal to things, such as *yin* and *yang.* There is that part which is external to things, such as the category of active causes (*zuozhe,* 作者). The Lord of Heaven created things, . . . and thus is external to things."[113]

*Comment*: In this part of the text, Ricci is refuting the view of both Buddhism and Daoism that the ultimate creative principle inheres in all things. For Ricci, this is pantheism as understood in the West. Just after the part that Zhixu excerpts here, Ricci asserts that the Lord of Heaven, being the universal active cause, has to be external to all things. Like the preceding passage, this would have been of special interest to a Buddhist such as Zhixu.

I have translated *zuozhe* 作者 as "active causes" because earlier, when Ricci was discussing the four Aristotelian causes, he used this term for "active cause," and in this passage he also explains that "active cause" is external to phenomena. The full passage reads: 四之中，其模者、質者此二者在物之內，為物之本分，或為陰陽是也;作者、為者此二者在物之外，超於物之先者也，不能為物之本分。Lancashire and Hu translate this passage thus: "Of these four [causes], the formal cause and the material cause, as found in phenomena, are internal principles of phenomena or, if one wishes to state it in that way, are the Yin . . . and Yang . . . principles. The active and final causes lie outside phenomena and exist prior to phenomena, and therefore cannot be said to be internal principles of phenomena." Ricci then goes on to state that the Lord of Heaven is among these latter two types of causes, and thus exists outside of phenomena.[114]

The "Investigation" says: That which is above heaven creates heaven, earth, and the myriad things; it must necessarily be external to heaven, earth, and the myriad things. If an artisan makes a vessel or a basin, [then] he must be external to the vessel or the basin. That is definite! However, this Lord of Heaven has boundaries and has distinctions [as argued in the previous section], [p. 11796] and so is not one who could have pervaded everything from the beginning. Thus, He must have parts, and He must undergo change. How could He be

without beginning and without end and [still] be able to be the Lord of the myriad things in the world?

> *Comment*: It appears that Zhixu is pointing out what he takes to be a contradiction in the Jesuit's arguments. On the one hand, the Jesuit claim that God is separate from creation means that He must have boundaries and be distinct from other entities; He cannot pervade all. On the other hand, anything that has boundaries and creates must undergo change, and thus cannot be beginningless, endless, and changeless. If one remembers that Zhixu's mind is working in Buddhist categories, then it appears that he is taking the Jesuits to be asserting that God is a true *ātman*, while at the same time asserting qualities of God that Buddhists use to prove the teaching of *anātman*. It could not but appear a contradiction. Again, since this is a Buddhist argument, Zhixu cannot appeal to Confucian texts for support, but must rely on logic alone.

**[Section 10]** They say: "That which has form is in a place and therefore can fill that place. Spirit is without form, so how could it fill up its place? [A space] the size of a grain [of rice] can be the residence for ten thousand spirits. So why speak only of [spirits of] the past? The spirits of the future will also be accommodated without obstruction."[115]

The "Investigation" says: It is fine for them to say that spirits are without form. However, to be without form also entails being without coming or going, and also to be without number, and also to be without arising or cessation, and yet they say that they are produced by the Lord of Heaven. How is this permissible?

**[Section 11]** They say: "The creator of heaven, earth, and the myriad things is the father of the great multitude. Also, the one who rules and gives sustenance at the [right] time is the highest Lord. If people of the world do not reverence and serve Him, then they have no father and no prince, and they are unfilial and disloyal in the extreme."[116]

The "Investigation" says: The phenomena (*fa,* 法) of this world are not omnipotent. Therefore, heaven [p. 11797] and earth can cover and support, but they cannot illuminate. The sun and moon can illuminate, but they cannot bear and rear [offspring]. Fathers and mothers can bear and rear [offspring], but they cannot instruct. Teachers and friends can instruct, but they cannot reward or punish. The sovereign can reward and punish, but not without some slipping through the net.

Ghosts and spirits can reward and punish without anyone slipping the net, but again, they cannot cover and support, illuminate, and so on. If the Lord of Heaven is indeed omnipotent, then the Lord of Heaven could directly cover, support, illuminate, bear, rear, instruct, reward, and punish, and what need would there be for the actions of heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, the prince, parents, ghosts, and spirits? If [we] still await heaven to cover, earth to support, and so on up to parents to bear and princes to rule, then where is the omnipotence of the Lord of Heaven? The lives of human beings are manifestly visible right now. Heaven covers them; earth supports them; the sun and moon illuminate them; fathers beget them; mothers rear them; princes of the country govern them; ghosts and spirits judge and protect them. However, [if one is] unaware of their kindness and virtue, and credits the kindness to a Lord of Heaven who has never been seen or heard, and regards him as the "great father" and "great prince," then one must necessarily regard one's own father and [p. 11798] prince as a "little father" and "little prince"! How could this be without an extreme lack of filial piety and an extreme lack of loyalty?

Also: suppose they aver that the Lord of Heaven's omnipotence is delegated[117] to heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, princes, parents, ghosts, and spirits as the ruler of a country might delegate his functions to his palace ministers and directors of pasturage.[118] If he does so, then when the common people do well, then the officials may reward them; if the common people incur guilt, then the officials may punish them; what need is there for each and every matter to come before the ruler of the country?

Also, the service that the common people undertake is service only to the officials in charge without disobedience. This is considered [the same as] serving the country's ruler. Why must [they] only serve a single ruler and be forbidden to serve the officials in charge? Now, to declare that immortals and buddhas are usurpers, and to forbid rendering service to them, is like this. [To maintain that] heaven, earth, the sun and moon, ghosts and spirits, were indeed made by the Lord of Heaven in order to cover, support, illuminate, and protect humanity, and yet to forbid worshiping and making offerings to them: is this not strange?

**[Section 12]** They say: "The mind, nature, and destiny of humanity are originally what the Lord of Heaven has bestowed."[119]

The "Investigation" says: "What Heaven has conferred is called the nature."[120] Ziyang's (紫陽, i.e., Zhu Xi's) explanation [of this] is in profound error. I have already explained the main meaning before.[121] That which is bestowable would have [p. 11799] to have form; what form or image do the mind and nature have that could be bestowed? If they lack form and image but are still bestowed, then the Lord of Heaven's own spiritual brightness must have been bestowed [on Him by someone else]. Also, if it can be bestowed, it can also be taken away. How then do you say that it has a beginning but no end?

**[Section 13]** They say: "First there must be things; only afterward is there principle." Then they quote the *Odes* where it says: "There are things, and there are their laws."[122]

The "Investigation" says: Principle is that which connects both the ends and beginnings of things, enabling them to come to completion. Thus it is said, "Sincerity is the end and beginning of things; without sincerity there would be nothing."[123] When the *Odes* says, "There are things, and there are their laws," it is properly [interpreted as meaning that] from principle, things come to completion, and that is why these very things are principle. This is like [using] gold to make a utensil; the entirety of the implement is gold. If one says that first there are things and then there is principle, then prior to their being things, would there be no principle? Since the lack of things would equate to the lack of principle, then when there is no heaven or earth, it would especially entail that there would be no principle, and this would be a case of the very profound error that the Lord of Heaven, being prior to heaven and earth, has no principle.[124]

[p. 11800] **[Section 14]** They say: "It is necessary that first there be that which has no beginning, and then afterward can there be that which has a beginning; that which is formless, and afterward that which is able to give form to forms. . . . Before my body could come to be, there had to be a father and mother to give me birth; there must be the Lord of Heaven to confer virtue upon me."[125]

The "Investigation" says: What a felicitous theory this "without beginning, without form" is! If the Lord of Heaven is beginningless, then are father and mother also beginningless? The Lord of Heaven has no form, so must one's father and mother also lack form?

Perhaps we should understand them as saying that father and mother have form, and therefore they have a beginning. The Lord of Heaven lacks form, and therefore is beginningless. [To this] the

"Investigation" says that my body has form, and therefore it has a beginning. My mind and nature lack form; how would you then say that they are not beginningless?

**[Section 15]** They say: "Heaven and earth are like a palace. Palaces and towers must await a master (*zhu,* 主) to have built them, and only afterward are they completed. Even so for the greatness of this heaven and earth; if there were no Lord for them, could they actually create and complete themselves?"

The "Investigation" says: Before a palace is completed, the Lord, along with laborers and artisans, depend upon land and workshops [with which to build]; before heaven and earth are completed, upon what does the Lord of Heaven depend? Again, a palace requires earth, wood, tiles, and stones to be completed; what things does [the Lord of Heaven] use to complete [p. 11801] heaven and earth? Again, before there are heaven and earth, are there materials for the completion of heaven and earth? Do these materials exist primordially, or does the Lord of Heaven have to produce them? Moreover, where are they kept? Are they inside the Lord of Heaven's body, or outside it? If outside, then the Lord of Heaven does not exist everywhere. If inside, then did He not have to sever a bit of His own self in order that it might become heaven, earth, and the myriad things?

**[Section 16]** They say: "The explanation of the "Great Ultimate" (*Taiji,* 太極) is nothing more than the two words "principle" (*li,* 理) and "raw energy and material" (*qi,* 氣); I have never heard it said that it had bright intelligence or sentience.[126] Since there is no intelligence or sentience, by what means does [the Great Ultimate] superintend the myriad transformations?"

> *Comment*: In Aleni's text, this is the beginning of his response to his interlocutor, the Grand Secretary (*xiangguo,* 相國) Ye Xianggao (葉向高, 1562–1627),[127] who asserts that the Great Ultimate creates heaven and earth by dividing or distinguishing them. Aleni is repeating the neo-Confucian belief that creation occurs within the Great Ultimate when "material," which includes both matter and energy, organizes into patterned transformations in accordance with "principle."

The "Investigation" says: Did Confucius not say, "[In] change there is the Great Ultimate; this produced the two modes"?[128] Now change (*yi,* 易) is precisely the original nature of bright intelligence and sentience. Thus, [change is] "without consciousness and is without deliberate

action. Being utterly still, it does not initiate movement, but when stimulated it is commensurate with all the causes for everything [that happens in the world]."[129] However, there is properly no need to take this as superintending the myriad transformations. If the myriad transformations had a definite superintendent, then things would change only for the good, never for the bad, only for pleasure and never for suffering, and the teachings of sages on the cultivation of the Dao would be of no use at all!

> *Comment*: Aleni's text faulted teachings of the Great Ultimate (*Taiji*) for failing to account for the apparent order of things. He argued that such order ought to lead one to believe that a sentient, intelligent being designed the world and governs its processes. Zhixu, in response, appeals to the first part of the *Xici* commentary of the *Book of Changes*, which speaks specifically of the Great Ultimate, and explicitly denies that it has intelligence or sentience in any human sense and yet governs the world. Furthermore, Zhixu uses the cosmology of this part of the *Book of Changes* to argue that intelligence and sentience are subsidiary phenomena that come into being *after* the Great Ultimate and *through* its creative ordering. Being subsequent, they cannot come before the creation and governance of the world as Aleni assumes.

[p. 11802] **[Section 17]** They say: "Confucians say that each and every thing contains a single "Great Ultimate." Thus, the Great Ultimate is of the same substance as things. It is limited to things, and thus cannot be considered the Lord of heaven and earth."

> *Comment*: Zhixu has greatly truncated Aleni's text here, but without altering the main point. Here is a translation of Aleni's text: "The Confucians say that each and every thing contains a single Great Ultimate. Thus, how could the Great Ultimate fail to be the original [good] quality (*yuan zhi,* 元質) of things and of one substance with things? Since it is of one substance with things, then it is confined to things and cannot be considered the Lord of heaven and earth. Thus, in your esteemed country's maxims things are illuminated in an orderly way, and I have never heard it said that things are the Great Ultimate."[130]

The "Investigation" says: The Great Ultimate is wondrous principle; it has no internal divisions, no boundaries, and thus each and

every thing possesses it in its entirety, and its entire substance is within things, yet it is not confined within [any individual] thing. Confucius said: "It forms and gives scope to the transformations of heaven and earth, and nothing goes beyond it; with meticulous care it completes the myriad things and nothing is left out. It penetrates through the Way day and night, and one knows."[131] This is what is meant. You aver that the one single Lord of Heaven is *not* of the same substance as things, and so must abide above things. This shows that He has divisions and has boundaries. How can you claim that there is nowhere He does not pervade?

> *Comment*: There is a very fundamental philosophical difference between Chinese thought and European theology on display here. Aleni takes for granted that the orderly processes of the universe point to an intelligence that directs them but is outside of them, a "superintendent" (*zhuzai,* 主宰) in my translation. Zhixu takes for granted that the orderliness of natural processes is due to the patterning of events by "principle" (*li,* 理), which requires neither sentience nor intelligence for events to proceed along regular pathways. In fact, as shown in the previous section, Zhixu affirms that sentience and intelligence are effects of the orderliness of the cosmos, not causes of it. He finishes by pointing out that the Christian supposition of a superintendent of creation who stands outside of it contradicts the other Christian claim that God is omnipresent.

**[Section 18]** They say: "Human beings are created by the Lord of Heaven, and they incline entirely toward the good. If there are some who are evil, then that is certainly their own doing."

> *Comment*: Aleni's original text has 或有為惡, whereas Zhixu's text in both editions at my disposal substituted 乃 for 有.[132] I have decided to follow Aleni's original here. In context, Aleni is answering Ye Xianggao's objection that an omnipotent God could surely have created humans to be wholly good. Aleni explains that through their own free actions, humans who are originally good may become bad, and this does not impugn God's omnipotence. The structure of his argument is, perhaps very intentionally, parallel to the case Mencius makes when he asserts that human nature is originally good even as one can see manifestly evil people in the world.

The "Investigation" says: Since the Lord of Heaven is omnipotent, how could He love the good and yet people are not good; hate evil and yet people commit evil? To rescue it [i.e., Aleni's argument] they say: "It is like parents who give birth to a son; they only desire his good, and do not desire evil for him. If the son then inclines to do evil, how would the parents be at fault?"[133] The "Investigation" says: Parents give birth to the son's body; they do not give birth to [p. 11803] the son's mind and nature (*xin xing,* 心性), and thus they do not have free rein in this. Since the Lord of Heaven produced [people's] minds and natures, how could He not produce only good minds and natures?

[Section 19] They say: "The Lord of Heaven created things in the desire that they nourish humans; He created humans in the desire that they serve Him."[134]

The "Investigation" says: Since the Lord of Heaven is beginning-less, what people were serving Him in beginningless [time] when He suddenly got the idea to create people to serve Him? Again, parents have children to prevent [the problems associated with] old age and death. Since the Lord of Heaven has no end, what is the use of creating humans?

[Section 20] They say: When people are born, from whence do they come; when they die, from whence do they go?"[135]

The "Inquiry" says: The Buddhists have discussed this, and it is a secret doctrine for us Confucians, but in function, they are very different. Confucius said, "Originating at the beginning, returning to the end, one knows the explanation of death and life. Essential *qi* (*jingqi,* 精氣) forms things; the escape of the spirit (*hun,* 魂) makes for alteration. Therefore, one knows the real situation (*qingzhuang,* 情狀) of ghosts and spirits."[136] Also: "Ji Lu asked about serving the spirits [of the dead]. The Master said, 'While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve [their spirits]?' [Ji Lu added,] 'I venture to ask about death?' He was answered, 'While you do not know life, how can you know about death?'"[137] From[138] this view, it is clear that life and death do not have two [separate] principles, and [p. 11804] humans and spirits do not have two [separate] ends. This is clear! The phrase "If a man in the morning hears the right way, he may die in the evening without regret"[139] means that a person's "death" retains "non-death." Since death is non-death, then it follows that life must involve non-life. So can one maintain that the Lord of Heaven confers it [at the] beginning of life?

*Comment*: This is the first time that Zhixu has put forward an explicitly Buddhist argument against the Jesuits. His main point is that the Jesuits posit too solid an idea of birth and death, as if there were a "beginning of life" (*shi sheng,* 始生), prior to which the person in question did not exist in any sense. Zhixu adduces Confucian texts that he interprets as expressing the view that birth and death are non-dual or mutually interpenetrating. Because these ideas are never explicit in Confucian texts but have to be read into them, Zhixu claims that this is the "secret doctrine" (*mi zhi,* 秘旨) of Confucius. This reflects Zhixu's over-all strategy of trying to demonstrate that Buddhism is more consonant with Confucian teachings than Christianity and thus more deserving of the literati's support. It is also consistent with his Buddhist commentaries on the Confucian classics.

**[Section 21]** They say: "When the Lord of Heaven was born from on high, it was only that the original substance of His primal nature joined with the nature and substance of us humans. It is analogous to joining a peach [branch] to a pear [tree]; the pear [tree] uses the peach [branch] to produce peaches. What loss has there ever been to its original substance?"[140]

The "Investigation" says: [First] they say that human beings' nature and spirit are all the creations of the Lord of Heaven, and now they use peaches and pears as similes for them. Are they going to claim that all the pears in the world[141] are born of peaches? If pears are originally produced by peaches, what need is there to wait until they are joined? If one must wait until they are joined, and only then they are produced, then peaches would originally not be able to produce pears!

*Comment*: As Kern observes, in this section Zhixu grossly misunderstands the point of Aleni's allegory. Aleni is simply demonstrating that two living things with distinct natures can be joined in such a way that the one can produce the other without a confounding or a metamorphosis of their natures in order to counter the idea that God somehow transformed into a human being, thereby losing His divine nature. Zhixu thinks that the peaches symbolize God and the pears symbolize humanity in a straightforward way.[142]

**[Section 22]** They say: "1,100 years before the Lord of Heaven came down to take birth, there were already signs foretelling His coming

down." And: "His coming down to birth was also announced by heavenly spirits . . . all kinds of extraordinary signs."[143] "The books would fill [p. 11805] a building, only they have not yet been transmitted and translated, etc."[144]

The "Investigation" says: How is this any different from Buddhist narratives about the miraculous signs that accompanied the birth of the Buddha? Asserting that Śākyamuni was born of Māyā without being more than human, so does [saying that] the Lord of Heaven was born of the holy woman [i.e., Mary] make Him the only non-human?

If you assert that Jesus was definitely the Lord of Heaven coming down to birth, how do we know that Śākyamuni was not the Lord of Heaven coming down to birth?

If you assert that the scriptures of the Buddhists are absurd and false, then how do we know your books are not absurd and false?

If you assert that your books have clear and distinct warrants, then can't the Buddhist scriptures also make their own claims to clear and distinct warrants?

If you assert that no one ever witnessed the Buddha [or Buddhism] leaving the Western regions to come here, and that the claim is therefore absurd, then [since] no one witnessed you leaving Europe to come here, is this not also absurd?

Buddhist scriptures come from India, and thus you think that they are misappropriated. You claim to come from ninety thousand *li* away, so who knows whether or not you speak falsely?

Since you came here all alone, from homes far away and a long time ago, how would there be anyone to trade with you? But you still have curios from your own country to present [to people]. Could you really have such extremely strong backs[145] that on the day [that you arrived] the things you were carrying [p. 11806] could be so many? Or perhaps [you] have supernatural powers and can go and fetch [these things] in the morning and be back by evening? Or maybe you have miraculous skills, and you can create them at will?

I have furthermore heard about your background! You were born in a small country near Macao.[146] The clever evildoers set their minds on coveting the imperial power of China, and so they floated on the ocean and snuck in at Lingnan (嶺南, i.e., Guangzhou) where they first studied the language and writing of this place and afterward peeked at the scriptures of the three teachings, pulled [things out of] Buddhism and appended [them to] Confucianism, fabricated and twisted to create

this heterodox teaching. By it you mean to delude the world and dupe the people, eating away[147] and destroying the basis for the country's fortunes. Of themselves they claim that they have cut off sexual immorality and do not marry, and then by pulling out the nonsense about holy water they entice stupid men and women into [their] selfish practices and corruption, and the common people in Min and Yue[148] must conduct trade relations every year with the Philippines and other countries, and your supporters attach themselves to the ships that deliver valuable items for you to give away. Because of this, you do not expect those with whom you have dealings to give you the smallest donation, and you even favor them with curios. As a result, people say that you are honest and incorruptible, make no demands [of people], and are better than the Buddhists' and Daoists' advising people to make donations, to the extent that even the gentry (*jinshen,* 縉紳) [p. 11807] and the intelligentsia (*dashi,* 達士) are bamboozled by you and take you as showing the great Confucian attributes of respectability and reserved modesty.

Alas! Who knew that Wang Mang, so modest and respectable, would be a usurper of the Han court? Or that Jiefu's (Wang Anshi's) "new learning" was actually a parasite of the [Northern] Song period. Your intentions are also very wicked!

> *Comment*: Zhixu shows here his own deep antipathy to the Jesuits, dropping any pretense of answering a specific Jesuit assertion and letting loose a pure rant. In doing so, he voiced what others had and have occasionally asserted: the suspicion that the Jesuit missionaries were fronts for a Western incursion into China's sovereignty at the economic and political levels. The references at the end are to Wang Mang (王莽 33 BCE–23 CE), who usurped the throne of the Han dynasty and ruled 9–23 CE; and to Wang Anshi (1021–1086), a reformist official in the court of the Northern Song dynasty, whose proposed reforms, while very progressive and modern, incurred the staunch resistance of traditional Confucian scholars and entrenched moneyed and landed families. Zhixu finds these examples apt, since the Confucian tradition took them both as wolves in sheep's clothing, men who presented themselves as proponents of new ideas that could save an empire in trouble but whose programs turned out in the end to be disastrous for the nation.[149]

**[Section 23]** They say: "Some things have a beginning and an end, like grass, trees, birds, and animals. Some have a beginning but no end, such as heaven, earth, spirits, ghosts, and the human soul. Only the Lord of Heaven is without beginning or end and is able to bring to a beginning or an end the myriad things. Without the Lord of Heaven there could be no things."[150]

The "Investigation" says: We Confucians claim that sincerity (*cheng,* 誠) is the end and the beginning of things. No sincerity, no things. "Next to the above is he who cultivates to the utmost the shoots of goodness in him. From those he can attain to the possession of sincerity. This sincerity becomes apparent. . . . It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can transform."[151] "It is characteristic of the most entire sincerity to be able to foreknow . . . the individual possessed of the most complete sincerity is like a spirit."[152] "[One who has] complete sincerity is able to develop his own nature to the fullest, is able to develop the natures of other people and things to their fullest, help in transformation and nourishment, and participate with heaven and earth."[153]

Thus, initially by means of [these] two words [we] fix the bent of the doctrine.[154] That which is said, "When we have intelligence resulting from sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to nature; when we have sincerity resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to instruction,"[155] [p. 11808] further combines to indicate the doctrine that nature and practice are non-dual, that Heaven and human beings come together in a unity. Therefore [the text] says: "Given the sincerity, and there shall be the intelligence; given the intelligence, and there shall be the sincerity!"[156]

This is the true root and source of the transformation of things, not this so-called Lord of Heaven. If we must set up a single Lord of Heaven as the most spiritual and most holy, omnipotent, and whose power is undivided [with any other], then there would definitely be no labor [for people to] assist in, and also no way [for people to] participate with Heaven and Earth. How could this be reasonable?

Also, [the argument] they set up has the three phrases: "having both a beginning and an end," "having a beginning but no end," and "having neither a beginning nor an end." This is particularly absurd. The *Changes* says, "What is prior to physical form pertains to the Dao, and what is subsequent to physical form pertains to concrete objects."[157]

> *Comment:* This quotation from the *Book of Changes* is particularly apt, as it appears within a discussion of the Dao of Heaven and Earth and the way in which a person may cooperate with this Dao to achieve success.

"Concrete objects" (*qi,* 器) thus have a beginning and must have an end. The Dao thus has no end and must have no beginning.

Since [they] allow the phrase "having a beginning but no end," then why do they not also establish the phrase "having no beginning but having an end?"

> *Comment:* Zhixu's argument here seems aimed at the Jesuit's use of the phrase "having a beginning but no end" to discuss the human soul, which is created but thereafter eternal in their theology. Based on this passage from the *Changes*, Zhixu thinks that either things have both a beginning and an end (i.e., are impermanent), or have no beginning and no end (i.e., are eternal), but that the other two possibilities are absurd.

Moreover, grass and trees differ greatly from birds and beasts, but still they all have beginnings and ends. "People differ from birds and beasts in just a few respects,"[158] so why would they alone have a beginning but have no end?

Again, the fathers and sons of this world are of the same type. Cause and effect must resemble one another. One may manifestly see that humans give birth to humans, [p. 11809] birds definitely give birth to birds. Melons do not give birth to beans, and beans do not bear melons. Since the Lord of Heaven is the one who gives birth to humanity, then if people have beginnings but no ends, then the Lord of Heaven should also have a beginning but not an end. If the Lord of Heaven is so miraculous (*lingmiao,* 靈妙) that He has no beginning, then the human mind must also be miraculous; why say that only [humanity] has a beginning? If the miraculousness of the human mind was bestowed by the Lord of Heaven, then how would one know that it is not the case that the Lord of Heaven bestowed His own miraculousness?

> *Comment:* Since Zhixu has been arguing that like must beget like, the point of this last assertion seems to be that God has only one kind of "miraculousness" to give, i.e., a nature that has no beginning and no end.

Furthermore, the Lord of Heaven created humanity; thus, He must be acknowledged as humanity's great father. Would not creating birds

and beasts make [Him] the great father of the birds and beasts? Would not creating grass and trees make Him the great father of grass and trees? How could a father of birds, beasts, grass, and trees be a Lord worthy of veneration?

**[Section 24]** They say: "As an analogy, a tree's flowers, fruit, branches, leaves, and trunk all come from its root. Lacking a root, then there would be nothing else. The tree's root is its solid origin; there is not another root out of which it arises. The Lord of Heaven is the root source of the myriad things; from what [other source] could He arise?"[159]

The "Investigation" says: The root of a tree has to be dependent on the earth. Is the Lord of Heaven the only one that depends on nothing else?

> *Comment:* Zhixu's brief and scornful response is based on the Buddhist idea of dependent origination. According to this idea, everything depends on something else (or, in Tiantai and Huayan terms, everything depends on *everything* else). The Jesuits were coming from a Thomistic tradition that took for granted that the cosmos had a first cause, which itself was uncaused and independent. According to Frederick Streng, these represent two of the three fundamental cosmologies of human religion (the third being the *urgrund* out of which everything arises, an example of this being the Hindu idea of Brahman).[160] This shows both the Buddhist underpinnings of this seemingly-Confucian text and the depth of the religious differences between the author and his Christian targets.

[p. 11810] **[Section 25]** They say: "In the beginning, the Lord of Heaven wished to create the myriad things for human beings to use. First, He separated the heavens from the earth and brought the myriad things out in all their own kind. Afterward, He brought forth a single man and a single woman, etc."[161]

The "Investigation" says: With heaven and earth not yet separated and no human beings yet [created], then for what reason would [the Lord of Heaven] want to create the myriad things for humans to use?

**[Section 26]** They say: During their lives, human conduct may be good or may be evil. Each soul will have to go before the Lord of Heaven after death for judgment.[162]

The "Investigation" says: If the Lord of Heaven is without form, sound, or abode, then to what place would the deceased go? If they

can go to be heard for judgment, then it must be that[163] [He] is like an ordinary official or teacher or [the being that] the Buddhists call Yama. However, if one proposes officials and teachers, officials and teachers are born of parents and they cannot avoid old age and death. If one proposes Yama, then Yama is numbered among the sentient beings and cannot avoid rebirth. How is it all right to call [such a one] the True Lord who, having no beginning and no end, created [all] things?

**[Section 27]** They say: Retribution in heaven or hell is absolutely unavoidable; therefore, there must be an afterlife. Not [p. 11811] a single person can remember anything from a previous life; therefore, there is no previous life.[164]

The "Investigation" says: Stop someone on the road and ask them about events of their infancy, and you will also not find a single person who can remember. Can you then also assert that they were never infants? Even though one cannot remember one's infancy, one cannot thereby claim that one was never an infant. Even though one cannot remember past lives, how does one know that one also never had any past lives?

**[Section 28]** They say: Immortals, buddhas, and bodhisattvas lead people to worship themselves and defy the sovereignty of the Lord of Heaven.[165]

The "Investigation" says: Although immortals, buddhas, and bodhisattvas are not what we Confucians venerate (*zong,* 宗), one must admit that all immortals, all buddhas, and all bodhisattvas are what the people of the world respect, in addition to which one would have to say heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, ghosts, and spirits all should be served, in which case it is not merely worshipping oneself. Jesus would lead people to worship only one Lord and does not allow the service of heaven, earth, the sun, the moon, and so on. Is not his jealousy of his own monopoly even deeper?

> *Comment.* The last few sections contain the few overt references to Buddhism in this piece, and it is interesting that, in this last section, Zhixu, a Buddhist monk, disavows worship of buddhas and bodhisattvas and speaks of "we Confucians."

[p. 11813]
## Appendix to "Collected Refutations of Heterodoxy"

The [Buddhist] layman Zhong Zhenzhi sent the "Preliminary Investigation" to the Chan Master Jiming 際明 in a letter.

Remember that the two of us were born on the same day, studied under the same teacher, and as children had the same ambitions.

> *Comment:* This opening sentence appears to quote a poem, as the lines break into three four-character rhyming lines (生同一日, 學同一師, 幼同一志). The sentiment is very funny when one realizes that the writer and the recipient are both alternative names for Zhixu himself!

One would not have expected that at the age of twenty-four *sui* you would have abandoned Confucianism and entered into Chan. For the past twenty years, we have gone our own ways, and news of you has become scarce. Now I have been lying ill by the lakeshore and suddenly heard the heretical talk of the Lord of Heaven. I have borrowed their spear to strike their shield and sketched out this "Preliminary Investigation."

> *Comment:* The phrase "borrowed their spear to strike their shield" may refer to Zhixu's having borrowed the Jesuits' books in order to attack them.

I know that for a long time you have been engaged in Chan study, so you must have talent to spare for defeating opponents [in debate]. Moreover, they [i.e., the Jesuits] attack Buddhism especially, and you also cannot bear it in silence. I am presenting my poor manuscript for your correction.

### Chan Master Jiming's Reply

In the world outside, the clouds follow closely upon one another, and [I have] long since lost touch. However, the vows one made forever when young I've not yet dared to forget. I have read your letter and the "Preliminary Investigation." It is very clever. You have undertaken the learning of Confucius,[166] and it is proper to respond by bringing out this [p. 11814] prompt response. Since I have abandoned the ways of the world, there is no need to engage in debates. You assert that they attack Buddhism; in truth, Buddhism is not something that they can defeat. Moreover, at the present time there are many who carry the name "son of the Buddha" [i.e., monk] but do not know the doctrines. This external difficulty could be an opportunity to startle them; this is not necessarily a misfortune for Buddhism. If one does not grind the knife, it is not sharp; if one does not strike the bell, it does not sound. The "Three [emperors] Wu"[167] [tried to] extinguish the clergy,

but the *buddhadharma* benefited and flourished. [This] monk will keep rubbing his eyes in expectation. This is a rough response and is not exhaustive.[168]

*Letter Accompanying Zhong Zhenzhi's "Further Investigation"*

Before, I sent the "Preliminary Investigation into the Study of Heaven" for criticism. My expectation was that you should bring out your hands and eyes in joint support of the sagely way, but you just put your hands in your sleeves and looked on from the side. How is this both "the vows one made forever when young" and "completely forsaken the ways of the world"? What is this claim that "I've not yet dared to forget"? Lately, the heterodox teachings are flourishing more and more. I could not stand this, and so I have once again examined it. I must pray you to give it some consideration. Do not say that you have not yet completely converted to Buddhism; I myself do not have the full knowledge of a Confucian master.

[p. 11815]
*Chan Master Jiming's Letter of Reply*

The two traditions of Confucianism and Buddhism are the same and also different, are different and also the same. Only a sage can deeply penetrate them; they are not such that heterodoxy can confound them. Only a true Confucian can understand Buddhism, and only [one who] studies Buddhism can understand Confucianism. To read the layman's [i.e., Zhong's] "Further Investigation," in the places where it exhibits principle, it is like the sun in the middle of the sky; in the places where it refutes heresy, it is like shooting arrows at a willow from behind an embankment.[169] One could say that the single lineage of Confucius and Yan cannot fail! How could this monk add another word of praise? [I] only hope that the layman will continue to use his intellect to go further in studying the mind-transmission of Buddhism.[170] Thus, the ways of [being in] the world and leaving the world both have their support; although their forms may be far apart, they connect and are not separate. It should not be made into nonsense by me.

NOTES

1. Acknowledgments: I wish to thank a number of people for their help with this project. Rev. Dr. John Witek, S.J. and Rev. Dr. Nicholas Standaert both gave helpful pointers. Dr. Witek and Dr. Elise DeVido both helped in locating and sending primary source materials. Dr. Jiang Wu of the University of Arizona and Ms. Beverley Neal Foulks both read and gave helpful comments on a preliminary draft of this translation. Dr. Wu's comments were extensive and expert, and the final product is much improved because of his esteemed rescript. I am grateful to all these good friends for their generous assistance. I am also grateful to my colleague Dr. Norbert Hintersteiner for prodding me to begin this project.

2. The figures come from Nicolas Standaert, "Christianity in Late Ming and Early Qing China as a Case of Cultural Transmission," in *China and Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future*, ed. Uhalley and Wu (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), 81–116; cf. 83. Reports of incidents and expulsions come from Nicolas Standaert, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China, Vol. 1: 635-1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 510–511.

3. Douglas Lancanshire, "Buddhist Reaction to Christianity in Late Ming China," *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia* 6, nos. 1–2 (1968–1969).

4. Iso Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, Schweizer Asiatische Studien, Monographien 11 (Bern: Peter Lang, 1992).

5. Gianni Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China: The Jesuits' Presentation of Christ from Matteo Ricci to Giulio Aleni*, Ricci Institute Variétés Sinologiques, n.s. 86, Fondazione Civiltà Bresciani, 10 (Taibei: Ricci Institute, 1997); Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China, Vol. 1.*

6. For a listing of these and other names by which Zhixu was known, see Shi Shengyan 釋聖嚴, *Mingmo zhongguo fojiao zhi yanjiu* 明末中國佛教之研究 (Study in Late Ming Chinese Buddhism), trans. Guan Shiqian 關世謙 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1988), 162–164.

7. Ma Xiaoying 马小英, "Wan Ming Tianzhujiao yu Fojiao de chongtu ji yingxiang" (晚明天主教与佛教的冲突及影响, "Conflict and Influence between Catholicism and Buddhism in the Late Ming"), http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s14_zxs/facu/maxiaoying/zhicheng/lunwen3.htm, accessed October 25, 2005.

8. Ouyi Zhixu 蕅益智旭, *Ouyi Dashi Quanji* (蕅益大師全集, Collected Works of Great Master Ouyi), 21 vols. (repr., Taibei: Fojiao chubanshe, 1989), 19:11771–11818.

9. See Ouyi Zhixu, *Pi xie ji* (闢邪集, Collected Refutations of Heterodoxy [1643]), with a synopsis and annotations by Shibata Atsushi 柴田篤 (Kyoto: Chūbun shuppansha, 1861), 10849–11044.

10. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 390–392.

11. Ibid., 390.

12. Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* has already been published in an English translation; see Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu Kuo-chen, trans. and eds., *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu Shih-i)* by Matteo Ricci, Series I, Jesuit Primary Sources in English Translation 6 (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985).

13. In early Buddhist mythology, Kāśyapa was the buddha who preceded the historical buddha, Śākyamuni.

14. These are the first two parts of a three-part system of schematizing time that arose in East Asia. It is said that after the passing away of a buddha, his true teachings persist for a while. With the passing of time, it deteriorates into a mere semblance of the teaching, and finally even that passes away so that only vestigial forms of the teaching remain, but none of its substance. These are, respectively, the ages of the true dharma, the counterfeit dharma, and the final dharma.

15. Buddhist texts use these words to denote four kinds of misconception about the present world: seeing permanence where there is only imperma-nence, bliss where there is really suffering, an essential self in each person when in fact none exists, and purity in things that are impure. In the following sentence, these will be juxtaposed with their opposites, indicating that the Buddha Śākyamuni will replace error with truth.

16. This is a conventional term for the non-Buddhist schools in India during the Buddha's day. Numberings vary, and the number ninety-six is actually more common. See Hui Yi 慧怡, ed., *Fóguāng dàcídiǎn* 佛光大詞典, 8 vols. (Gaoxiang: Foguang chubanshe, 1988), 126b–c; and Nakamura Hajime 中村元, *Bukkyōgo daijiten* 佛教語大辞典 (Tokyo: Tōkyō Shoseki, 1975), 255a.

17. The text from the *Collected Works* has 情汁 here, which makes no sense. The Japanese edition has 情計, which Morohashi defines as "plan, scheme." See Morohashi Tetsuji 諸橋轍次, ed., *Dai kanwa jiten* 大漢和辭典, 13 vols. (orig. pub., Tokyo: Daishukan; repr., Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1984), 10756.44, 4:1075a. The Ming dynasty Jiaxing canon 嘉興藏 (120:47a4) has 情計 in a more cur-sive style (more like 情计). Prof. Jiang Wu noted in a private communication that the meaning is something like "emotional calculation." Thus, I think "scheme" works best here.

18. That is, the permanence of nirvana, not the permanence falsely imputed to worldly experiences and phenomena by the heretical teachers.

19. Normally Ricci's Chinese name is written 利瑪竇.

20. This term has come to mean simply "Catholicism," even in modern usage. In this context, I prefer the more literal translation, as it conveys the sense of strangeness the term had for many Chinese at this time.

21. This is a book published in 1623 by Xu Dashou 許大受 as a critique of Giulio Aleni's publications. See the online article by Pan Feng-Chuan 潘鳳娟, "西來孔子—明末耶穌會士艾儒略 (Giulio Aleni, 1582–1649) 在華事蹟考" ("Confucius from the West: The Jesuit, Guilio Aleni (1582–1649) in Late Ming China: A Biography"), http://www.ces.org.tw/main/fcrc/fcrc_wksp/wksp-1d.htm. See also Standaert, *Handbook of Christianity in China*, 1:512; and Adrian Dudink, "The Sheng-ch'ao tso-p'i (1623) of Hsü Ta-shou," in *Conflict and Accommodation in Early Modern East Asia: Essays in Honour of Erik Zürcher*, Blussé, ed. Leonard Zurndorfer and Harriet T. Zurndorfer, Sinica Leidensia 29 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), *passim*.

22. On this earlier anti-Jesuit work, see the article by Adrian Dudink. After examining a wide array of evidence, Dudink concludes that the reason the book did not circulate widely is that the author, after handing copies out quite vigorously for a time, was convinced by a Christian literatus of the absurdity of its arguments, and burned his remaining copies (Dudink, "The Sheng-ch'ao tso-p'i (1623) of Hsü Ta-shou," 136–137). Dudink suspects that the author, Xu Dashou 許大受, had been a convert himself who had turned against Christianity; perhaps this made him susceptible to his friend's counter-arguments. The text is still extant as part of the collection *Po xie ji* (破邪集, Anthology of Refutations of Heterodoxy).

23. These are both names for Ouyi Zhixu himself. Criveller states that Zhixu used this secular name when writing from a Confucian viewpoint; he used other names in other contexts (Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 413n60). Ma Xiaoying states that, in the Buddhist-Jesuit debate, both sides tried to coopt the Confucian bloc to strengthen their own side, and Zhixu's decision to write under his lay name (specifically his style-name, which had Confucian significance) may have been an instance of this tactic at work. See Ma, "Wan Ming Tianzhujiao yu Fojiao de chongtu ji yingxiang."

24. This refers to the monk Sengzhao (僧肇, 374–414).

25. This appears to be a reference to a contemporary work by the monk Kongyin (空印, 1547–1617) called *Critical Discussion of [Sengzhao's] Treatise on the Immutability of Things* (*Wu bu qian zhengliang lun* 物不遷正量論) (Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1993), 54:912–926. According to the introduction, Kongyin, while admiring Sengzhao's work, found it liable to misunderstanding among his contemporaries, so he wrote a critical commentary on it. This work is in the *Xu Zang Jing* 續藏經, vol. 54, 912–926. It can also be found online through CBETA at http://cbeta.org/result/normal/X54/0879_001.htm. On Kongyin, a disciple of Hanshan Deqing, see the *Foguang Da Cidian* 佛光大詞典, 6632c–6633a. Jiang Wu discusses this work in his *Enlightenment to Dispute: The Reinvention of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-Century China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

26. This term could mean the neo-Confucianism of the Cheng brothers and Zhu Xi, which was the orthodox Confucian teaching for purposes of the civil examinations.

27. On the first page of the "Preliminary Investigation," the layman Mengshi is identified as Cheng Zhiyong 程智用.

28. The signature line to this preface was written by a monk Dalang 釋大朗 of Gao'an 杲庵, i.e., the Gao Hermitage.

29. Kern's translation omits the previous two sentences, thus leaving out all references to the monk Gao'an.

30. There is some ambiguity here that may be deliberate. It can mean a Chan/Zen story used as an object of contemplation or meditation, often rendered into English by its Japanese pronunciation *kōan*. However, the term also means a public legal case or brief placed before a magistrate for adjudication.

31. This term is a bit mysterious. It might possibly be an official title, but if so, it does not appear in Charles O. Hucker's *Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (repr., Taibei: SMC Publishing, 1995). The term does occur in Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten*, 38951.62, 11:98c, but is defined as an unofficial history derived from official histories.

32. Not surprisingly, a glance in a geographical dictionary reveals that Xin'an 新安 has been a very common place name throughout Chinese history. I think it most likely, pending further research, that the reference is to Xin'an County in Guangzhou 廣州, whose name was changed to Bao'an County 寶安縣 during the Republican period. See Xie Shouchang 謝壽昌 et al., *Zhongguo gujin diming da cidian* 中國古今地名大辭典 (Great Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Place Names in China) (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu, 1993), 1008a. The "critical notes" appear in small type between the columns of text, and I have not translated them except where they seem significant. In such cases, the translation will appear in an endnote.

33. Zhenze County is in Suzhou 蘇州. See Xie Shouchang et al., *Zhongguo gujin diming da cidian*, 1205b.

34. Literally, "Teaching of the Lord of Heaven," since Catholic translators rendered "God" by 天主. To this day, this distinguishes Catholics from Protestants, who render "God" with the term "Lord on High" (*shàngdì*, 上帝).

35. Both my main text and the Japanese reprint have the word *zi* 子, "master," in this place, but an online version of the text has the very similar character *yu* 予 here, meaning "I, mine." If this is correct, then it would mean that the visitor, not Mr. Zhong, finds the Jesuits' views compatible.

36. The full title of this work is *Tianzhu shengxiang lüeshuo* 天主聖像略說 (Brief Explanation of the Sacred Images), a brief work by Jean de Rocha (1566–1623) and Xu Guangqi, a Chinese Catholic convert. See Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 390. A facsimile of this text is available online through the archives of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong at  Facsimile downloaded from the website of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocesan Archives: http://archives.catholic.org.hk/books/dtj.12/index.htm. This website gives the date of

publication for the edition they provide as 1609. In subsequent notes, it will be referred to as *Sacred Images*.

37. *Sacred Images*, 1a.3–4.

38. Compare with Criveller's translation of the first objection in Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 391. He renders *xingzhi* 形質 as "corporal substance." Kern translates it as "Körper" (Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 225). Also, Kern translates 不通 as "inkohärenz" (incoherence) (ibid., 225 and *passim*).

39. The layman Mengshi's marginal note here says,"This is the very essence of the eternal sagely study [Confucianism]." 千古聖學要在於此。

40. *Analects* 15:28.

41. My primary text and the online digital edition both misquote the *Analects* 12:1 thus: 為人由己. The Japanese edition quotes it correctly: 為仁由己. Zhixu is taking this phrase out of context, as it occurs within the *Analects* as part of a question: 為仁由己, 而由仁乎哉. In Legge's translation, this is: "Is the practice of perfect virtue from a man himself, or is it from others?" (James Legge, trans., *Lunyu* 論語 [*Analects*] by Confucius, vol. 1 of The Chinese Classics [orig. pub., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893; rpt. Taibei: SMC Publishing, 2001], 250).

42. This is Legge's translation of chap. 5 of the *Doctrine of the Mean* 1:5, which Zhixu quotes here (James Legge, trans., *Zhongyong* 中庸 [*Doctrine of the Mean*], vol. 1 of the Chinese Classics [orig. pub., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893; repr., Taibei: SMC Publishing, 2001], 385).

43. This is from the entry on the first hexagram *qian* 乾 in the *Zhouyi* 周易. I have quoted Richard John Lynn's translation of the passage. Richard John Lynn, trans., *The Classic of Changes: A New Translation of the* I Ching *as Interpreted by Wang Bi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 138.

44. For the text on Lucifer that Zhixu finds objectionable, see *Sacred Images*, folio 2b.

45. This is a reference to a story from the *Zuozhuan* 左傳, commenting on the entry for the eighteenth year of Wengong 文公. The *Zuozhuan* relates how, during the reign of the sage-emperor Yao, his minister Shun assessed the virtue of all the nobles. He found four whose riotous and rapacious behavior, described in detail in the text, were completely beyond the pale, and he banished them, while employing sixteen virtuous nobles. The story is found in James Legge, trans., *Zuozhuan* 左傳, vol. 5 of the Chinese Classics (orig. pub., Hong Kong: London Missionary Society, 1872; rpt., Taibei: SMC Publishing, 1991), 280, 283. I am grateful that Iso Kern led me to this reference in Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 227n52.

46. Zhixu is responding to the text of the *Sacred Images*, folios 3b–4a, that describe the "three enemies" (*san chou*, 三仇). As described by Da Rocha and Xu Guangqi, it appears that they are simply describing the classic trio of

temptations, "the world, the flesh, and the devil."

47. *Analects*, 17:19. Legge's translation.

48. *Mencius* V.5.4. Legge's translation: James Legge, *The Works of Mencius* by Mencius, vol. 2 of The Chinese Classics, 2nd. ed., rev. (orig. pub., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895; rpt., Taibei: SMC Publications, 2001).

49. The passage in *Sacred Images* to which Zhixu refers is found on folio 4a. As for the obscure term *Fengshan tianshu* 封禪天書, according to a website on Chinese history, this refers to an episode that took place during the Song dynasty. In 1004, the kingdom of Liao 遼國 invaded and the Song emperor Zhenzong 真宗 was forced to pay tribute. Song and Liao signed a treaty and peace prevailed. Zhenzong himself thought he had demonstrated fine tactical ability, but certain nobles thought that his offering tribute to a tribal people was a humiliation for the Song court. Zhenzong began to doubt himself in light of this talk, and, at the suggestion of his chancellor, decided to hold a Han-era imperial sacrifice called the Taishan fengshan 泰山封禪, which had traditionally been carried out on Mt. Tai 泰山, where *feng* 封 refers to an offering to heaven carried out on the peak, and *shan* 禪 refers to an offering to the earth carried out on one of the hills below the peak. (On this, see the lengthy description in Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten,* 3412.122, 4:10d–411b.) Not having a credible reason to hold such a grand sacrifice, the emperor, also at his chancellor's prompting, feigned having a dream in which a spirit revealed to him the location of a ritual text wrapped in silk that he then "found," artisans having fabricated it earlier; this is the *tianshu* 天書 to which Zhixu refers. With great expense and fanfare, the sacrifice was carried out in 1008 over a period of forty-seven days. Peace continued with the Liao kingdom thereafter, and the common people credited the power of the sacrifice with averting invasion, but in fact trouble was forestalled by the Liao government's own internal politics. By Zhixu's time, if not earlier, this episode was known as an example of fraudulent religious claims. For this story, see the article 天書降神：宋真宗泰山封禪一場自欺的戲 ("The *Celestial Book* Descends from the Gods: Song Zhenzong's Fengshan Sacrifice, a Drama of Self-Deception"), at http://www.singtaonet.com:82/weekly/weekly0604/weekly0604_11/t20060731_290484.html.

50. *Sacred Images,* folio 4b.

51. The section dealing with the Jesuits' putative plagiarism of the Buddhist doctrine of buddha-bodies is also translated by Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 392.

52. Paraphrased from *Sacred Images*, folio 4b1.

53. You and Li 幽厲 are named in the *Book of Mencius* 4.a.2, verse 4. Zhixu is more or less quoting the text here, but he rearranges the phrases. Interestingly, Legge (*Mencius,* 293) does not recognize these as proper names, but translates

the passage, "He will be known as 'the Dark' or 'the Cruel,' and though he may have filial sons and affectionate grandsons, they will not be able in a hundred generations to change [the designation]." Wing-tsit Chan likewise takes the words to function as symbolic names for unenlightened kings and cruel kings (see Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963], 73). However, Morohashi (*Dai kanwa jiten*, 9205.464, 4:543b) says that You and Li were kings of the Zhou dynasty whose names paired as in the Mencius came to symbolize misgovernment. Note that Zhixu is quoting Mencius here when he refers (in my translation) to "filial sons and compassionate grandsons."

54. This is a quotation from the *Great Learning* (*Da Xue* 大學) 1:6. Quoted from James Legge, trans., *Da Xue* 大學 (Great Learning), vol. 1 of The Chinese Classics (orig. pub., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893; rpt., Taibei: SMC Publishing, 2001), 359.

55. This is a very loose paraphrase from the *Sacred Images*, folio 5a. Starting from line three, it says, "There is only one true Lord who creates things, most great, most revered, who creates and nourishes humankind. The Lord guides all under heaven in this and future generations, who requites good and evil and is to be worshipped and served by men. All other spirits, buddhas, [spirits of] heaven and earth, sun, moon, and all stars are the Lord's creations and ought not to be worshipped or given offerings as if they were the lords of humanity."　只有一造物真主。至大至尊。生養人類。主宰天下今世後世賞報善惡。乃人所當奉事拜祭的。其餘神佛天地日月諸星都是天主生出來的。不能為人真主。不能拜祭。Thus, while Zhixu seems to think that the Jesuits' Lord wants to wipe out all other gods (oddly omitting the fact that the original passage mentions buddhas in this connection), the claim here is that all other spiritual beings are creatures and unworthy of worship, not that they should be obliterated.

56. In Buddhist scriptures, this is what the Buddha-to-be said after he was born from his mother's side and had walked seven paces pointing both up at the sky and down at the ground. A search of texts in CBETA found this phrase occurred many times in Chan texts that recount the story of Śākyamuni's birth.

57. The *Sacred Images*, at folio 55a6–7, says, "We further teach people to know that the human soul is eternal and is not extinguished." 又教人知道人的靈魂常在不滅。As we shall see in subsequent passages, the idea that the human being (or any entity) can have a beginning but no end struck the Chinese as very odd. Things were either eternal, beginningless, and endless, or they were impermanent and had a beginning and an end. To emphasize this, the layman Cheng Zhiyong (who arranged for the publication of this tract) adds this marginal note here: "The heaven and hell of the Buddhists have both ingress and egress, and thus are reasonable. They [the Jesuits] say there is only ingress but

no egress, and this is absurd."

58. Like the eighth objection, this seems not so much to say that the Catholic teaching is actually absurd, but rather that it is plagiarized from the Buddhists.

59. This objection is not based on anything contained in the *Sacred Images* and so appears to be something that Zhixu has merely heard somewhere. Interestingly, though, the *Sacred Images* does admit that heaven and hell are invisible in discussing God's creation of heaven and earth. It says that each of these has two parts: the part humans can see (skies and earth) and the part humans cannot see (heaven and hell). Thus, Zhixu's point loses potency, as the Jesuits present the same point forthrightly. However, Zhixu's main point, that the Jesuits should not criticize Buddhist realms on the grounds that no one has ever seen them when they themselves assert the existence of invisible realms, remains valid. See *Sacred Images*, folios 1a–2a, 6a6.

60. Zhixu quotes the *Sacred Images* out of context here. In fact, the meaning of the Jesuit text is quite the opposite of that which Zhixu takes it to be. Here is the full quotation (*Sacred Images*, 6a9–6b4):

> Even though right now one does not see [heaven and hell], [if] we wait until we can see [them] [that is, after death] and then try to reform and repent, they will not be turned. Therefore, we must act now to reform and repent. It only needs to be genuine. God will naturally pardon one's sins and confer blessing. [We] do not preach something like 'now' is the same as the moment at the end of life, having then heard and followed Gods teaching, one can still repent, reform, and [one's sins] will be turned away. Sin abides right up until our last breath. One absolutely cannot make it [after that]!

> 今雖不見。待我們見時。又翻悔不轉了。所以要及今翻悔轉來。只要真。天主自然赦罪。賜福。不要說如今就是臨終時一刻。聽從了天主的教法。也還翻悔得轉來。直到氣盡了。罪了。萬萬無及矣。

61. Quoted from *Sacred Images*, folio 6b5.

62. The Jesuits chose the term *shi jie* 十戒 to translate "Ten Commandments." This term is also a Buddhist term for the ten precepts of a novice cleric. Zhixu's claim of identity between the two, leading to his conclusion that the Jesuits are merely plagiarizing Buddhist moral teaching, is unjustified.

63. Quoted from *Sacred Images*, folio 6b5.

64. Quoted from *Sacred Images*, folio 6b6–7.

65. These last three quotations from the *Sacred Images* are sentence fragments taken out of context. The text at this point is discussing the need for true repentance by a sincere mind. It is possible that Zhixu has seen identical phrases in Buddhist literature, but I have not checked for this.

66. This is, in fact, far from clear. In the *Sacred Images*, readers are exhorted to keep the Ten Commandments truly and sincerely from their own bodies and minds. 遵依了十戒從自己身心上。實實做出來。方是。*Sacred Images*, folio 6b6. This is a moral exhortation, not, as Zhixu takes it, a doctrine of creation that infringes on God's status as creator of all things.

67. The second-to-last line of the *Sacred Images*, 7a4 makes a disparaging reference to the "two houses of Buddhism and Daoism" 釋道兩家, which Zhixu quotes, rightly observing that the authors make no specific criticism.

68. This is a direct quotation from *Sacred Images*, folio 7a1–2, which goes on to disparage these propositions as without reason (此無之裡也). It concludes by saying that if people do not inquire closely, they will assume that the sacred images of the Christians are on par with those of the Buddhists and Daoists, and that is why the tract was published. Interestingly, in the last statement in this objection, Zhixu seems to have assumed exactly that when he asks how the images or icons differ.

69. *Doctrine of the Mean* 1:1; see Legge's translation, p. 383. Kern incorrectly takes the entire sentence as a quotation from this text; see Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 234 and 234n73.

70. Again, at the conclusion of the *Sacred Images*, folio 7a, Xu and Da Rocha emphasize that the "image" (*xiang*, 像) of the Lord of Heaven is different from the "images" of Buddhists and the Daoists, although their text uses *shi dao* 釋道 rather than *fo lao* 佛老 as Zhixu does here.

71. Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 390 identifies these three works as Matteo Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, Giulio Aleni's *Learned Conversations of Fuzhou*, and J. Soerio's *Brief Account on the Religion [of the Lord of Heaven]*. He says this shows Zhixu had a vast knowledge of Christian literature. Kern, in contrast, does not translate the phrase *xilai yi* 西來意 as the title of Ricci's work, but simply as *Opinions from the West*, which is a literal translation of the phrase. However, against this, it should be noted that much of what follows quotes Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* and critiques it, and so it would be strange for Zhixu not to name it in his introduction to this second part. Thus, I have taken 西來意 as standing in for the real title of Ricci's work, despite the fact that it is not actually so named.

72. This quotation is taken almost verbatim from Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* (*Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義). See Lancashire and Hu's translation, *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, 73–75. I have quoted directly from the Lancashire-Hu English translation.

73. Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, 76–77. Zhixu has abridged the passage and misquotes the last clause as 成於天主, when in fact it reads 即吾所謂天主也. In subsequent quotations, Zhixu's abridgements will be marked with ellipses, even though Zhixu himself does not

indicate abridgements in his text.

74. Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 88–89.

75. Literally, "the hundred bones" (*bai hai,* 百骸). This is a common idiom meaning "the entire body."

76. Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 94–95. These are not exact quotations, as Zhixu skips around and omits several words.

77. See Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 122–123 and following, wherein Ricci quotes many ancient Chinese classics, including the *Shi jing* 詩經, *Zhou song* 周頌, and others, concerning the Sovereign on High. The translators of Ricci's text provide many footnotes on pp. 122 and 124 tracing the sources of Ricci's quotations.

78. Kern notes that Zhixu derived this threefold analysis of the meaning of "heaven" in the Confucian classics from the neo-Confucian thinker Zhu Xi (朱熹, 1130–1200), as expounded in the first chapter of the posthumous work *Zhuzi yu lei* 朱子語類. See Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 240n89.

79. This is from the *Doctrine of the Mean*, 26.9, Legge's translation. The full quotation is 今夫天斯昭昭之多,及其無窮也,日月星辰繫焉,萬物覆焉。 "The heaven now before us is only this bright shining spot; but when viewed in its inexhaustible extent, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations of the zodiac, are suspended in it, and all things are overspread by it." See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 420.

80. Zhixu uses the word *miu* 謬 twice in this sentence. "Absurdity" here does not translate the term *bu tong* 不通 as in the "Preliminary Investigation."

81. Legge's translation of *Doctrine of the Mean* 1.1. See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 383.

82. *Zhunzhun* 諄諄. Here, Zhixu is alluding to *Mencius* 5a5.3, which reads: 天與之者,諄諄然命之乎? This is a question that Wan Zhang puts to Mencius after Mencius has affirmed that heaven (*tian,* 天) gave the empire to the legendary emperor Shun 舜. In this sentence, Wan Zhang asks Mencius to clarify what he means by this. Legge translates Wan Zhang's question as: "'Heaven gave it to him'—did Heaven confer its appointment on him with specific instructions?" (see Legge, trans., *Works of Mencius*, 355). Chan translates it as: "By Heaven's giving it to him, do you mean that Heaven gave it to him in so many words?" (Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 77). Mencius, in the following verse, answers that this is not his meaning because heaven does not speak, and thus does not give specific orders or instructions. Thus, when Zhixu uses this phrase, his Confucian audience would understand that he was clarifying the meaning of "heaven" as reflected in the first line of the *Doctrine of the Mean*, i.e., as an agency that confers a basic nature on beings rather than as a

sovereign that issues instructions. This also clarifies what the word *ming* 命 means here.

83. *Analects* 2.4.4: 五十而知天命. Legge's translation. See Legge, *Analects*, 146–147. In Zhixu's time, the official commentary on the *Analects* studied by all examination candidates was that of Zhu Xi. For this particular passage, Zhu Xi understood "the decrees of heaven" very broadly. While Confucius may have only meant his own personal duties, Zhu Xi understood it to mean all of the processes of nature, and this fits well with the argument that Zhixu is mounting here. See Daniel K. Gardner, *Zhu Xi's Reading of the* Analects*: Canon, Commentary, and the Classical Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 44 for an English translation of Zhu Xi's comments on this passage.

84. *Doctrine of the Mean* 1.4, Legge's translation adapted for consistency. 喜、怒、哀、樂之未發,謂之中。See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 384.

85. 易無思也,無為也,寂然不動,感而遂通天下之故。This is from the first part of the *Xici* commentary (繫辭上) of the *Yijing.* I have not followed Richard John Lynn's translation of this passage (at Lynn, *Classic of Changes,* 63) because he takes the word *yi* 易 to mean the title of the *Book of Changes* itself, whereas Zhixu, seeking to supply a variety of synonyms for "heaven," clearly means change as such.

86. *Great Learning*, 5, Legge's translation. See Legge, trans., *Da Xue*, 358–359.

87. Abridged from *Doctrine of the Mean*, 1.2–3, Legge's translation. See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong,* 384.

88. See *Analects* 16.8.1. Legge has "ordinaces" rather than "decrees." See Legge, trans., *Analects*, 313.

89. *Mencius*, 6A.11.4, Legge's translation. See Legge, trans., *Works of Mencius*, 414.

90. *Analects* 15.20, Legge's translation. See Legge, *Analects*, 300.

91. *Analects* 12.1.1, Legge's translation, adapted. The main text I consulted in this translation substituted 人 for 仁, whereas the Japanese edition quoted the *Analects* correctly. See Legge, *Analects*, 250.

92. *Mencius*, 7A.4.1, Legge's translation, modified to fit Zhixu's argument. See Legge, trans., *Works of Mencius*, 450.

93. *Doctrine of the Mean* 21, my translation of 自誠明,謂之性.

94. *Doctrine of the Mean* 20.18, Legge's translation. See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 413.

95. My primary text has 法 here, while the Japanese text has 洪. I have chosen to abide by the Japanese text.

96. This is the opening of a quotation from the *Book of Changes* that describes

the genesis of the sixty-four hexagrams. The text is from a commentarial portion called the *Xici* (繫辭, "Appended Commentary"), section 11. The "two modes" (兩儀) are *yin* and *yang*. It will go on to mention the four images and the eight trigrams. I am following Richard John Lynn's translation of this section of the *Book of Changes*; see Lynn, *Classic of Changes*, 65–66.

97. This is a very loose quotation of a well-known phrase from the "Commentary on the Text" for the first hexagram *qian* (*qian wen yan,* 乾文言) of the *Yi Jing* that speaks of the ability of the sage to cooperate with heaven and earth: "The great man is someone whose virtue is consonant with heaven and earth, his brightness with the sun and the moon, his consistency with the four seasons, and his prognostications of the auspicious and inauspicious with the workings of gods and spirits. When he precedes heaven, heaven is not contrary to him, and when he follows heaven, he obeys the timing of its moments. Since heaven is not contrary to him, how much the less will men or gods and spirits be!" Translated in Lynn, *Classic of Changes,* 138.

98. The phrase 繼天立極 is used by Zhu Xi in his commentaries to both the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean.* It indicates the sage's ability to inherit the true way from heaven and transmit it to people in order to establish virtue. For the phrase *li ji* 立極 as meaning "establish morals," see Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten,* 8:697b.

99. This is condensed considerably from Ricci's *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, and I have borrowed the translation equivalents used by Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 145.

100. The word *xùn* 殉 can also mean "to be buried alive with."

101. The text I am primarily working from has 理究, which does not make much sense. The Japanese edition has 究理, which would mean "to penetrate [moral] principle." This makes sense, and it is adopted here.

102. *Mencius* 4.2.19. I have used Legge's translation (Legge, trans., *Works of Mencius*, 325) with adaptation.

103. *Houdi* 后帝. Lancashire and Hu translate this term as "sovereign or emperor," but this seems incorrect. Morohashi (*Dai kanwa jiten,* 3298.26, 2:837c) gives only one definition for this term, another name for heaven, but this cannot be what Ricci means, since his whole point is that one cannot recklessly show disrespect for earthly sovereigns, so how much less would disrespect for God be permissible. A third possibility is that this is not a compound, but the two separate words "empress" and "emperor," which would make Ricci's assertion gender-inclusive. I have used this meaning and amended Lancashire's and Hu's translation accordingly.

104. Zhixu's text has *tong zun* 同尊, "equal respectability," but Ricci's original text has *tong deng* 同等, "the equal of." I have amended Lancashire's and Hu's translation to reflect Zhixu's misquotation.

105. An abridged quotation from Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 204, 205.

106. A truncated citation of *Mencius* 2B.2.6. I have consulted Legge's translation (see Legge, trans., *Works of Mencius*, 214) but altered it to match the original Chinese better.

107. *Analects* 15:35. Here I have preferred Wing-tsit Chan's translation over Legge's. See Chan, *Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 44.

108. *Great Learning* 1:6. See Legge, trans., *Da Xue,* 359.

109. A reference to *Doctrine of the Mean* 26:10. This is the end of a passage describing King Wen's virtue. See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 421.

110. This is a reference to *Doctrine of the Mean* 30:1. In Wing-tsit Chan's translation this reads, "Chung-ni (Confucius) transmitted the ancient traditions of Yao and Shun, and he modeled after and made brilliant the systems of King Wen and King Wu." See Chan, *Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 111.

111. This quotation from *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* is heavily abridged and not completely accurate. Also, the translation by Lancashire and Hu is overly interpretive and uses different vocabulary from that employed here. Thus, I have translated the passage myself. See Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 210–213.

112. Ibid., 206–207.

113. Ibid., 222–223, my own translation.

114. See ibid., 84–87.

115. Ibid., 256–257. Zhixu abridges the text somewhat. Ricci wrote this in response to the difficulty that, if human souls are created but never destroyed, would the universe not eventually be filled beyond capacity?

116. Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 438–439.

117. The *Collected Works* text uses the word *ji* 寄, "to send to," which I am translating here as "delegate." However, the Japanese text uses the word *zai* 宰, "to govern," instead. This would give the sense that the Lord of Heaven oversees the forces of nature and one's parents and rulers as they perform their functions. In either case, the sense of the passage is much the same: the Lord of Heaven allows subordinates to perform their functions instead of doing everything directly.

118. Rhetorically, Zhixu is depicting the gamut of officialdom from the highest to the humblest positions.

119. Giulio Aleni (Ai Rulüe艾儒略), *San shan lun xue ji* 三山論學記 (Learned Conversations at Fuzhou) (orig. pub., n.p.: n.p., 1847); rpt. in *Tianzhujiao dong chuan wenxian xu bian* 天主教東傳文獻續編 (Supplement to Documents

Relating to the Catholic Missions to the East), 3. vols. (Taibei: Xuesheng shuju, 1966), 1:419–493; see 1:438. This section presents the first of a series of quotations from Giulio Aleni's *San shan lun xue ji* 三山論學記 (Criveller translates the title as "Learned Conversations of Fuzhou"; see Criveller, *Preaching Christ in Late Ming China*, 390). This particular passage is followed immediately by an unfavorable assessment of Buddhist theories of mind, which may be what drew Zhixu's attention to it.

120. From *Doctrine of the Mean* 1:1, Legge's translation. See Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 383.

121. This might be a reference to Zhixu's commentary on the *Zhongyong*, entitled *Zhongyong zhizhi buzhu* (中庸直指補註, Supplementary Notes to Direct Pointing to the Doctrine of the Mean), in *Ouyi Dashi Quanji* 蕅益大師全集 (*Collected Works of Great Master Ouyi*), 21 vols. (repr., Taibei: Fojiao chubanshe, 1989), 19:12312374–12312416. Although neither his general introduction and explanation of the title nor his comments on this specific passage makes direct reference to Zhu Xi's commentary, his differences with Zhu Xi are stark. Zhixu explains the Mean (*zhong,* 中) in terms of the Tiantai notion of "Middle-Way buddha-nature" (*zhongdao foxing,* 中道佛性), and the mind in equilibrium as the *ālayavijñāna* or "storehouse consciousness." See Ouyi Zhixu 蕅益智旭, *Zhongyong zhizhi buzhu* 中庸直指補註 (Supplementary Notes to Direct Pointing to the Doctrine of the Mean), in *Ouyi Dashi Quanji* 蕅益大師全集 (Collected Works of Great Master Ouyi), 21 vols. (repr., Taibei: Fojiao chubanshe, 1989), 19:12378–12416.

122. Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:441. Zhixu cites Aleni's text out of order. The passage from the *Book of Odes* is 有物有則. Aleni asserts that the term "law," or *ze* 則, means "principle," or *li* 理. Aleni's point here is that, contrary to neo-Confucian thought, principle does not give rise to things by informing *qi* 氣. Rather, he insists that things come first, and only afterward do their principles manifest. God, as creator, stands behind both things and their principles, as an author stands behind both the things in a text and the principles by which they interact. I have translated it following Legge's note at the bottom of p. 541 of his translation of the *Odes* rather than quoting Legge's translation itself, which is unnecessarily long. See James Legge, trans., *Shijing* 詩經 (*Book of Odes*), vol. 4 of the Chinese Classics (orig. pub., Hong Kong: London Missionary Society Printing Office, 1871; rpt., Taibei: SMC Publishing, 1991), 541.

123. Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 418. *Doctrine of the Mean* 25:2, Legge's translation. Kern misidentifies this as *Doctrine of the Mean*, chap. 23, which expresses a somewhat similar idea but is not the source of this quotation. See Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 253n158.

124. The marginal note here says 尤妙邪人當自大笑, "Especially profound! The heretics ought to have a big laugh at themselves."

125. Abridged from Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:442–443. Aleni follows this by posing the question: "Without that which confers on me a spiritual nature (*lingxing*, 靈性) and produces my bodily form, then where do spirit and body come from?"

126. Zhixu misquotes Aleni here. Aleni's text (*San shan lun xue ji,* 1:444, line 2) says *lingming zhijue* 靈明知覺, while Zhixu, in both editions that I have, mixes up the words as 靈知覺明. In translating Zhixu, I have used Aleni's original text because Zhixu himself uses the correct word order in his response.

127. On the identification of Aleni's interlocutor as Ye, see Standaert, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*, 1:614.

128. Zhixu quoted this same line from the *Book of Changes* once before, in section 5 at p. 11791.

129. This is a quotation from the *Book of Changes*, *Xici* (Appended Commentary), A.10.9. I have followed Richard John Lynn's translation of this passage. See Lynn, *Classic of Changes,* 63. Some phrases are in square brackets because Zhixu has abridged the passage somewhat.

130. from Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:444–445.

131. For this quotation, I have departed from Richard John Lynn's translation because he depends upon the commentary of Wang Bi, who thought this passage described the person who has come to understand the *Changes*. Thus he takes the first clause to mean that one comes to imitate heaven and earth so that one completes them (Lynn, *Classic of Changes*, 52). This is clearly not what Zhixu means, since such an interpretation would utterly miss the point of Aleni's contention about the nature of the Great Ultimate. Thus, the translation from the *Changes* here is mine, in consultation with the Baynes translation. See Wilhelm Baynes, trans., *The I Ching: The Book of Changes*, Bollingen series XIX (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 296. The original is in the *Xici* A:4.

132. Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:445.

133. This quotation is not from Aleni's text. Its source is unclear.

134. Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:452, line 1. Aleni here is discussing the presence of plants and animals that are dangerous to human beings in a world created by a good God. He blames this on original sin and human disobedience.

135. Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:456. Zhixu misquotes Aleni here. In the second clause, he quotes Aleni as saying 死從何去, when Aleni's original says 死歸何去, "When they die, to whence do they return?" This sentence in Aleni's text does not represent a serious assertion, but a rhetorical question that opens the topic of human life. In fact, it is preceded by *wuhu yixi* 嗚呼噫嘻, a pair of expletives meaning roughly, "Alas, how astounding!" Thus, Zhixu's response below does not really address Aleni's actual point.

136. *Book of Changes*, *Xici* 繫詞 A.4. While I consulted both Lynn and Baynes's translations of this passage, I felt that they both added too much to the text by way of explanation. While following their lead, I have provided my own translation, which I hope retains more of the conciseness and enigmatic language of the original. See Lynn, *Classic of Changes*, 51–52; and Baynes, trans., *I Ching*, 294.

137. Confucius, *Analects* 11:11, Legge's translation with romanization adapted. See Legge, *Analects*, 240–241. Zhixu misquotes the text somewhat. In both of the exchanges between Ji Lu and Confucius, he adds 則 before the 曰 that precedes the master's response. In the first instance, he substitutes 則 for 子 ("the master"). In the second instance, he simply inserts 則.

138. *The Collected Works* has 由 here, while the Japanese edition has 繇. Both mean roughly the same thing.

139. Confucius, *Analects* 4:8, Legge's translation. See Legge, *Analects,* 168.

140. Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:483–484. Zhixu has abridged Aleni's text considerably.

141. The *Collected Works* has 世問, but the Japanese edition has 世間, "in the world" or "worldly," which makes more sense.

142. See Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 260n185.

143. Kern translates 奇功異瑞 as two terms: "Wundern und aussergewöhnlichen Dingen." However, all of my dictionaries, including Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten*, 5892.104, 3:574a, translate 奇功 as an adjective meaning "of special merit." Thus, I have used it as an adjective modifying 異瑞.

144. Aleni, *San shan lun xue ji*, 1:485. Zhixu has selected scattered phrases from around this page.

145. The phrase *lüli* 膂力 is literally "the strength of the back," but usually it is just used to mean one's strength in general. I have translated it more literally because Zhixu is speaking so sarcastically about the amount of goods that the missionaries must have carried into China in a single day. This is curious, since in the next section Zhixu is obviously aware of the Jesuits' supply lines into Macao and their cooperation with European traders for communications and transport.

146. 香山嶴之小國 (*xiangshan ao zhi xiao guo*). Kern writes that this refers to an area in the Pearl River delta between Hong Kong and Macao; See Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 262n192. However, Prof. Jiang Wu, who raised the matter with a Chinese geographer, informs me that it refers to Macao itself. At the time this work was composed, Xiangshan was a county in Guangdong to which Macao belonged. Personal communication, December 2007.

147. According to Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten,* 33824*,* 10:114d, the character used in the text is a variant of *dù* 蠹, which has a very rich set of connotations including parasitism, malpractice, and bringing harm to a people or nation.

148. I.e., Fujian and Guangdong provinces.

149. Kern believes that this was the original ending of this tract and that Zhixu appended the material that follows after reading Soerio's book. See Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 263n197.

150. João Soerio (Su Ruowang 蘇若望), *Tianzhu shengjiao yueyan* 天主聖教約言 (Brief Exposition of the Holy Teachings of the Lord of Heaven) (orig. pub. ca. 1600); reprinted in *Chinese Christian Texts from the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus*, vol. 2 (Taibei: Ricci Institute, 2002), 257.

151. Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 417. Legge's translation. The ellipses indicate Zhixu's use of *naizhi* 乃至, which conventionally indicates text skipped over in a quotation.

152. This is a very truncated quotation from the *Doctrine of the Mean*, section 24 (Legge, *Zhongyong*, 417–418), Legge's translation. I have added the ellipsis, since Zhixu himself does not indicate the large amount of text he skips over. Kern misidentifies the quotation as coming from *The Doctrine of the Mean*, section 22 (see Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 264n201).

153. I have put this passage in quotation marks, but it is really a very abridged paraphrase of *The Doctrine of the Mean*, section 22. I have used my own translation here, as Legge's or anyone else's would have to be truncated in such a way as to be unintelligible and fail to convey Zhixu's point. Kern has also misidentified this source in Kern, *Buddhistische Kritik am Christentum im China des 17, Jahrhunderts*, 264n202.

154. This sentence is difficult. First, the referent of the phrase "two words" (*er yu,* 二語, possibly also "two sayings") is unclear. The "two words" might mean the phrase "utmost sincerity" (*zhi cheng,* 至誠), which occurred several times in the previous passage. If it means "two sayings," then Zhixu might mean the two quotations from the *Doctrine of the Mean* that will come up next. The phrase *zongqu* 宗趣 does not appear in any of my dictionaries, although the Japanese edition of the text has a ligature between these two words, making clear that the editor of this edition considered them a compound. I have tentatively translated it "the bent of the doctrine."

155. Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 414–415, section 21, Legge's translation.

156. Legge, trans., *Zhongyong*, 415, section 21, Legge's translation. This phrase follows directly after the one just quoted. Zhixu would not necessarily agree with Legge's reading, as he wishes to establish that intelligence and sincerity are undifferentiable, not that one arises from the other.

157. *Xici* (系辭, Appended Commentary), section A, 12. I am quoting Richard John Lynn's translation; see Lynn, *Classic of Changes*, 67.

158. *Mencius* 4B, 19. Translation mine.

159. Soerio, *Tianzhu shengjiao yueyan*, 257. Zhixu does not quote it exactly, but the discrepancies are minor and do not affect the sense.

160. Frederick J. Streng, *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1967), 105–106.

161. Soerio, *Tianzhu shengjiao yueyan*, 257–258. Again, the quotation is not completely verbatim but preserves the sense of the original.

162. This is not a direct quote from Soerio's text but a condensation of Soerio's discussion of postmortem judgment as laid out in Soerio, *Tianzhu shengjiao yueyan*, 260–261. Thus I have not put it in quotation marks. In this section, Soerio also mounts a direct refutation of the Buddhist belief in rebirth, and this may be the reason it especially caught Zhixu's eye.

163. 殆 *dài* seems to have a number of meanings, many of which are appropriate here. It seems to mean (1) "it must be that . . ."; (2) "this is nearly; this amounts to . . ."; and (3) "I'm afraid that. . . ."

164. This statement does not appear in Soerio's book. Zhixu may be summarizing statements from different parts of *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* here. Ricci argues in chap. 3 that retribution in heaven and hell prove that the human soul is immortal; see Lancashire and Hu, trans., *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven,* 142–143. In chap. 5 Ricci asserts that no one can remember anything from previous lives, thus proving that human beings have no previous lives; see ibid., 242–245.

165. This is not an exact quote, but is cobbled together from ideas found in the section of Soerio's tract that deals with the first of the Ten Commandments. Zhixu seems to be working from memory here since he changes some wording. See Soerio, *Tianzhu shengjiao yueyan,* 266–268.

166. *Shengxue* 聖學. See Morohashi, *Dai kanwa jiten*, 29074.21, 9:202a. It generally means the study of the works of past sages, but it seems specifically to mean the study of Confucianism. Two subsequent sub-entries give the titles of two old books on Confucianism, both of which begin with this phrase.

167. *San wu* 三武. The three major persecutions of Buddhism prior to the writing of this tract, in 446, 574, and 845 CE, were all carried out under emperors named Wu 武.

168. This last phrase is 草復不既, which is probably just a conventional phrase of self-deprecation. Thanks to Dr. Jiang Wu for his help in translating it.

169. This phrase is obscure. It occurs in no dictionary, nor does a Google search turn it up in anything but the present document. The Japanese edition parses

the grammar by linking the first two characters, 基箭, as a compound noun, and putting the last two characters, 射柳, in a relation of transitive verb–object. Given the context, it therefore might mean something like "shooting fish in a barrel," i.e., taking free shots at a helpless opponent.

170. 深究西竺心傳. I am translating this as "Buddhism" because of the reference to "India in the west" and the Chan idea of "mind transmission."

p. 408 (blank)

# Initiation and the Chinese *Hevajra-tantra* (*T.* 18, 892)[1]

## Charles Willemen

International Buddhist College, Thailand

ETYMOLOGICALLY "SUTRA" MEANS the weft of a cloth, and "tantra" is its warp. Both are needed. Sutras are the ideological guides, and tantras give the actual practices, the rituals. The most important ritual is initiation, *abhiṣeka.* Initiation is essential in esotericism. As is well known, ever since Bu-ston (1290–1364 CE) one commonly distinguishes four kinds of tantras: (1*) Kriyā* (action) tantras deal with external practices, for example, snakebites, the making of rain, curing eye-diseases, and so on. (2) *Caryā* (practice) tantras show an equilibrium of external practice and inner yoga. Buddhahood may be obtained after a long period of accumulating moral and intellectual merits. Such texts include, for example, the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi-sūtra*, written either in the early seventh century in Central India in Nālandā[2] or in Lāṭā on the Kathiawar Peninsula,[3] or, according to Wayman, in the mid-sixth century in Mahārāṣṭra.[4] (3) Yoga tantra, in which *upāya*, means (practice), is joined with wisdom, *prajñā.* Vairocana's three ways of acting are united with the individual's three ways of acting, within one's lifetime. An example of yoga tantra is the *Tattvasaṃgraha-tantra* (Compendium of Truth), dating from the end of the seventh century in southern India but completed at the end of the eighth century. One finds this stage in a text by Vajrabodhi (Jingangzhi, 金剛智; 671–741 CE) of 723 CE, *T.* 18, 866, and in a text by his ambitious disciple, Amoghavajra (Bukong, 不空; 705–774 CE), ca. 754 CE, *T.* 18, 865. Dānapāla translated the complete text in 1015 CE in the Translation Bureau of the Northern Song (960–1127 CE), *T.* 188, 882. (4) *Anuttarayoga* (unsurpassed yoga) tantras. An example is the *Guhyasamāja* from the early eighth century (translated by Dānapāla in 1002 CE, *T.* 18, 885), and also the *Hevajra-tantra* from the end of the eighth century (translated by Dharmapāla in 1054–1055 CE).

During the final decades of the tenth century and the first half of the eleventh century, texts were translated in the Song Translation

Bureau in Bianliang 汴梁 (Kaifeng, 開封), established in 982 CE. At the end of the tenth century many Indian monks arrived in China. Why? One important reason may have been the uncertain times after the fall of the Pāla dynasty in Bihar and Bengal. Most translated texts in China belonged to esoteric Buddhism. In 1071 CE the printing activities in the capital Bianliang were brought to the Xiansheng 顯聖 Temple there. The Japanese monk Chōnen 奝然 was in Bianliang in 984 CE, and he sent the new texts to Japan. The Japanese Tendai monk Jōjin 成尋 did likewise in 1073 CE. But it is not clear what happened to these texts. Did they arrive? Anyway, their influence on existing Shingon 真言 and Tendai 天台, which were already well organized at the time, was very limited. In China itself the new texts did not have a significant impact. Chinese esotericism, esoteric yoga, was established in the eighth century, the most influential figure being Amoghavajra. He was the teacher of Kūkai's (空海, 774–835 CE) teacher, Huiguo 慧果, in the Qinglong 青龍 Temple in Chang'an 長安. The situation in China had its own characteristics that differed from the Indian situation. Weinstein has established that even in the thirteenth century esotericism was called *yuqie* (yoga) *mizong* (瑜伽密宗, esoteric lineage).[5] He found his information in two Tendai chronicles: *Shimen zhengtong* (釋門正統, Jpn. *Shakumon shōtō*), written during the Jiaxi 嘉熙 era (1237–1240 CE) of the Southern Song by Zongjian (宗鑒, Jpn. Shūkan); and *Fozu tongji* (佛祖統記, Jpn. *Busso tōki*) of 1269 CE (*T.* 49, 2035), i.e., *Xianchun* 咸淳 5, by Zhipan (志磐, Jpn. Shiban). Here the names of Vajrabodhi, Amoghavajra, and Huilang 慧朗, one of the six main disciples of Amoghavajra, are mentioned, but not Śubhākara, Shan Wuwei 善無畏. These mentioned Chinese scholars are representative of yoga tantra. So, esotericism in China was seen as a yogic tradition, requiring initiation by a guru. Also Amoghavajra's *Jingangding jing yuqie shiba hui zhigui* (金剛頂經瑜伽十八會指歸; *T.* 18, 869), outlining eighteen yoga gatherings (fifteenth is the *Guhyasamāja*), mentions (*anuttara*) yoga texts. It is only Japan's Kūkai who changed the emphasis to mantra, *shingon*. Was he partially influenced by Huiguo and Amoghavajra?

In Tibet the *Hevajra-tantra* was translated by 'Brog-mi in the mid-eleventh century. He taught it to the founder of the Sa-skya Monastery (1073 CE). So, the Chinese and Tibetan versions are very close in time. 'Phags-pa (1235–1280 CE), a most important figure in this lineage, was Qubilai's preceptor. The text was quite influential in Yuan 元 China (1279–1368 CE).

It has often been said and written that the Chinese versions of the tantras are quite different from the Indian and the Tibetan versions. This, however, does not mean that a Chinese version is faulty. I am convinced that the Chinese had to render the original Indian text while adapting it to the Chinese environment, but in such a way that the message was understandable and correct for the initiated. The Chinese text mentions four initiations, but never explains them one by one. One might even have the impression that just the first initiation is known.

The first initiation is called *ācāryābhiṣeka*, master initiation, usually explained as an initiation to become an *ācārya*, master.[6] It now consists of five plus one parts, i.e., water, crown, *vajra*, bell, and name, all accompanied by sprinkling rites. This first initiation is also known as the jar (*kalaśa*) initiation, because all parts include the use of a jar or jars. It is said that *kriyā* texts only had water and crown, that *caryā* texts had all five, and that yoga and *anuttarayoga* texts had five plus one; the *ācārya* initiation gave its name to the complete set. The contents of these parts may have known an evolution too, but in the sixth part eight girls are made to enter the mandala. The Chinese *Hevajra-tantra* calls them *vidyā* (esoteric knowledge), *prajñā* (wisdom) or *yoginī* (ascetic), *vidyārājñī* (knowledge queen), and *mudrā* (seal). The Chinese text briefly explains the set of five (plus one) in chapter four, and also in chapter fifteen. In chapter fifteen the eight girls are called: wife, sister, daughter, niece, maternal uncle's wife, and maternal aunt. The last two are phonetically rendered as four, although the Indian text has mother-in-law and paternal aunt as seven and eight. In this chapter the author refers to the *Tattvasaṃgraha-tantra* for a complete explanation of the mandala ritual. The second initiation is called secret, *guhya*. Here the *ācārya* as adamantine being, *vajrasattva*, unites with a girl in menstruation. The essence of this great bliss, a drop of *bodhicitta*, thought of enlightenment, consisting of *śukra*, semen, i.e., *upāya*, and of *rakta*, blood, i.e., *prajñā*, is given to the disciple with thumb and fourth finger. The disciple may now look at the *mudrā*, the *yoginī*. It may be expected that the preliminary practices are faithfully explained or, at least, clearly mentioned. The choice of a site, its protection, the triple refuge, the four immeasurables or pure abodes, the fourfold *vajra*, all these are mentioned in the Chinese text in chapters six and seven. It is clear that the second initiation cannot be openly described in a text written by a religious official working for the Chinese government. Zhipan's *Fozu tongji* (*T.* 49, 2035, 406a1) mentions that in 1017 CE a *Vināyaka-sūtra* was

barred from inclusion in the *Tripiṭaka*, and that from that moment on it was forbidden to translate such texts. Anyway, it is hard to speak of esotericism if one informs the whole of East Asia. Furthermore, one must not forget that there already was an esoteric tradition in China. It already had its fundamental texts. It is the merit of Dharmapāla that he translated this explicit Indian text in such a way that those who know understand the proceedings. For example, chapter ten, "Abhiṣeka," talks about the relative *bodhicitta* (thought of enlightenment), *śukra*, semen, without actually explaining what has happened. The same may be seen at the end of chapter twelve. When in chapter thirteen the text says, "with thumb and fourth finger he explains how to understand the great symbol" the second initiation is meant, without explicitly saying so. In chapter thirteen the four joys and moments, experienced by the *yogin*, are explained. Adornment, *vicitra*, is the expedient explanation of various principles. Development, *vipāka*, is said to be nothing else but perfect joy, *paramānanda*, knowing blissful contact. Reflection, *ālocana*, is said to be nothing else but joy of cessation, *viramānanda*. Note that the common term *vimarda*, rubbing, is avoided. The absence of characteristics, *vilakṣaṇa*, is simultaneously-arisen joy, *sahajānanda* (i.e., simultaneous with the third joy), free from the three: passion, absence of passion, and a middle state. This passage in chapter thirteen talks about the *guhyābhiṣeka* without explicitly saying so. The word "semen" is never used. Instead we see, for example, in chapter fourteen: "Worldly bliss is like a *kunda*-flower (white jasmine) in the shadow of the white moon." This is the explanation of the *bodhicitta* in its relative form. In chapter fifteen the *yogin* sprinkles camphor, i.e., *śukra*. This happens in the second initiation. It seems to me that the four stanzas at the end of chapter fifteen can all be understood in the context of the second initiation:

> 1. This quality [i.e., of being Hevajra] is neither of the three periods of time, nor of samsara nor nirvana. It is without self or other. It is perfect bliss.

> 2. If someone raises his hand, stretches his two fingers, thumb and fourth finger, and presses them together, the two are recompensed [i.e., *lalanā* and *rasanā*, *prajñā* and *upāya*, etc.]. This is certain.

> 3. If originally one does not have this characteristic [*scil.*, of being Hevajra], how could the thought that one may have it arise?If later, when knowledge has arisen as if in a fool's dream,

4. he relies on the void, the true end, since he is free from desire in this most excellent end, he is called One With Knowledge of the Void [Hevajra].

In the third initiation, *prajñājñāna*, knowledge of wisdom, the disciple unites with the *mudrā, prajñā,* wisdom, practicing seminal retention and promoting the *bodhicitta* in his body. The *mudrā*, a girl, is not even explicitly mentioned as a girl. She is referred to as a youth. The ignorant do not even understand a female youth is meant. She is helpful in order to realize the absolute thought of enlightenment, the great bliss. This is mentioned in chapter fourteen.

The fourth initiation is just called *caturtha*, fourth. At the moment of the third one the disciple experiences this fourth one. It arises simultaneously. *Sahajānanda*, simultaneously-arisen joy, means the fourth initiation for the disciple, i.e., great bliss, *mahāsukha*. The Chinese *Hevajra-tantra* does not distinguish four *mudrās*: Karma° (action), dharma°, *samaya*° (convention), and *mahā*°. It only mentions *mudrā* (seal), *yoginī, mahāmudrā* (great seal), and *mahāsukha* (great bliss).

The last chapter (Chinese chapter 20) of the text is called "Sahajārtha" ("Meaningfulness of the Simultaneouly-Arisen"). Here four stanzas refer to the four initiations. One is supposed to know that there are four initiations and also what happens in them. I quote:

Then Vajragarbha Bodhisattva pronounced four *gāthās* on initiation:

1. "Excellent it is, o adamantine *ācārya*, to see to it that all pupils are received, holding the great *vajra* and the great fine bell, and dwelling within the adamantine great mandala!

2. "Give them my secret initiation! Because they are initiated they hold the thought (of enlightenment). It is like the *bodhi* of a buddha. O great leader, bring about perfection for the sons of the endless true law!

3. "Have pity! Have pity, o *mahāsattva*! Because of your great pity you are worshipped. You are skillful in innumerable forms, and you fulfill all wishes.

4. "The adamantine circle is like the sky, free from impurity and essentially pure. It is called the gate to salvation of the friendly father. Concerning this great knowledge, few share in it!"

The Chinese text has three additional final stanzas, not found in either Tibetan or Sanskrit, warning against the dangers of the ritual and praising the benefits when correctly understood.

As for the places of pilgimage that are visited by the *yogin* after initiation, these places are mentioned in chapter seven, but the Chinese text seems to adapt the contents to China. While the Indo-Tibetan versions have twelve places, the Chinese has ten, a number that is associated with the ten stages of bodhisattvahood. The Chinese leaves out places seven and eight of the Indian original. This seems to be the result of the Sanskrit *samāsenābhidhīyate*, "called for short." While eight places are located outside of China, in India, the last two (nine and ten) may be anywhere. Nine: The places in which the congregation rejoices, or the ocean's shore. Ten: Groves with fine fruits and pure ponds. So, the Chinese differs from the Indian versions, but there always is a reason for these differences. Ignorance and inability alone are no satisfactory explanation. Cemeteries are nowhere explicitly mentioned as places for the ritual. When in chapter three, stanza four, the *yogin* should sit on a corpse, the Chinese phonetically says *mṛtaka,* corpse. I cannot imagine that any ordinary Chinese intellectual understands such word. It is equally untrue that, as one theory goes, the originally "correct" translation was later cleansed and adapted. No Chinese scholar suspected the existence of such a word as *mṛtaka.* When in the same chapter, stanza nineteen, we read: ". . . his [i.e., Hevajra's] second left arm then, and his second right hand [hold] the teaching of *prajñāpāramitā* (perfection of wisdom). She may have an appearance similar to the Buddha," this passage mentions the female consort, the *prajñā*, and her appearance. To any ordinary reader it would seem that Hevajra holds a *pustaka,* a book, or scroll, not a consort. So, there is a reason for this so-called wrong translation.

I could give many more instances showing that the so-called mistakes can always be explained. There always is a good reason for what seems to be a mistake. It is this phenomenon that made me pay closer attention to the four initiations, especially two and three. The conclusion is that in the Chinese *Hevajra-tantra* the proceedings of the four initiations can be detected only if one already knows what happens. The need for a teacher who orally explains the proceedings is there. The Chinese text continues a fine esoteric tradition.

## NOTES

1. The Chinese source for the whole explanation is Charles Willemen, *The Chinese Hevajratantra* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004). The following text is based on a lecture delivered at the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, 2004.

2. Yūkei Matsunaga 松長有慶, *Mikkyō Kyōten Seiritsu-shi Ron* 密教經典成立史論 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1980).

3. Shōun Toganoo 栂尾詳雲, *Toganoo Shōun Zenshū* 栂尾詳雲全, vol. 1 (orig. pub. 1933; repr., Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., 1982), 30.

4. Alex Wayman and Ryūjin Tajima, *The Enlightenment of Vairocana* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), 10–11.

5. Stanley Weinstein, "Buddhism, Schools of: Chinese Buddhism," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion,* ed. M. Eliade, vol. 2 (New York: McMillan Publishing Co., 1987), 482–487.

6. By far the most useful explanation of initiation in Indo-Tibetan sources is Per Kværne, "On the Concept of Sahaja in Indian Buddhist Tantric Literature," *Temenos* 11 (1975): 88–135.

p. 416 (blank)

# A Comparison of the Tibetan and Shingon *Homas*

**Richard K. Payne**
Institute of Buddhist Studies

## INTRODUCTION

This essay is part of a larger work in progress. The goal of that work is a cross-cultural comparative study of the *homa.* There is also, at the same time, a broader theoretical goal, which is to establish a cognitive theory of ritual. In brief, this argument is that ritual is a product of human cognition and as such the ways in which rituals are structured manifest the structuring principles of cognition. The intellectual frame within which this theoretical venture is being undertaken is that ritual is part of a larger category of rule-bound behaviors that include such phenomena as language, games, drama, and so on, all of which are manifestations of the structuring principles of cognition.[1] This is a heuristic decision, and is not, of course, the only intellectual frame within which ritual can be placed. The decision to place ritual in relation to other kinds of organized activities does not mean that other possible frames—economic, psychological, theological, performative, and the like—are being rejected out of hand; rather, they must themselves be examined for whatever heuristic value they might have.

While some rule-bound behaviors, such as chess and football, have explicit rules, others do not. Some theorists have taken this as a fundamental flaw in the formation of the category, that is, that it attempts to bring together into a single category members of what are basically two different kinds of things. One way in which this critique may be formulated is in terms of natural and artificial. Under this theoretical formulation, artificial behaviors would be those whose existence depends upon the formulation of an explicit set of rules—thus, for example, while poker and gin are both played with a standard deck of cards, their difference is determined by the difference in the rules of the game. In this reading, artificial behaviors would stand in semiotic

opposition to natural behaviors whose rules emerge by analysis and generalization. Definitionally, however, as long as being "rule-bound" is understood as indicating regularity and predictability, the category can be of heuristic value, even if it includes diverse instances and is not, therefore, metaphysically unitary. A more highly theorized response, however, is that first, no categories are in fact metaphysically unitary, and second, since we are discussing the cognitive basis of behaviors, the natural–artificial distinction is not perfectly cogent. Consider, for example, how children make up the rules of their games as they go along. Such rules frequently emerge in response to changing conditions—yesterday, the dumpster is the goal of play, but today the dumpster is gone, so something else has to be designated.

Additionally, this essay is intended to serve two more short-term goals, which will contribute to the development of a cognitive theory of ritual. The first is to demonstrate the utility of a syntactic analysis of ritual as a systematic means of describing ritual structures.[2] This approach was pioneered by Frits Staal, whose work analyzing Vedic ritual first established the syntactic approach to the study of ritual. The second is to add to the body of rituals that have been analyzed syntactically. Many additional such studies employing a shared analytic method will be required to adequately ground a cognitive theory of ritual.

An incidental goal of this essay is to bring attention to the very large corpus of rituals in the tantric Buddhist tradition. Not only is this a large corpus of rituals, it is one whose history is rooted in the Vedic ritual culture and which is found in a wide range of different cultures. Therefore, the study of the tantric Buddhist ritual corpus can contribute to such theoretical questions in ritual studies as (1) studying the historical development of a ritual and (2) studying the cultural transformation of a ritual.

The balance of this introduction will first give a brief survey of the theoretical grounds of a cognitive theory of ritual. This will be followed by a brief historical introduction to the tantric Buddhist *homa* and a discussion of the variety of *homas*, comparing the Tibetan and Shingon traditions. Finally, the specific ritual elements of the Tibetan *homa* analyzed will be compared with a Shingon *homa*. The main body of the study will then be devoted to a syntactic analysis of a Tibetan *homa*, followed by a discussion of the syntactic principles that may be generalized when it is compared with the Shingon *homa*.

THEORETICAL GROUNDS OF A COGNITIVE THEORY OF RITUAL

Fundamental to the idea of a cognitive theory of ritual is the analogy between ritual and language. As mentioned above, both are rule-bound behaviors and are the products of human cognition. By examining the structure of these products one can hypostatize the organizing principles by which they were generated.

The concept of "generation" is ambiguous. There is a formal sense, as is found in "generative grammar." It was this sense that Staal had in mind when he initially proposed a syntax of ritual in his seminal 1979 essay "The Meaninglessness of Ritual."[3] A formalized analysis is concerned with the rules of a system that constitute a logic. In a generative grammar, analysis is intended to demonstrate how by the systematic application of some set of rules (transformation rules) particular sentences are generated. This is simply an instance of the reduction of apparent complexity to underlying simplicity found throughout the scientific endeavor.

The eventual goal toward which my own attempts are intended, that is, a cognitive theory of ritual, develops out of an intuition that regular patterns of ritual organization reflect in some way the cognitive structuring of behavior. It is important to clearly distinguish between this latter, simultaneously looser and more ambitious, cognitive sense of "generate" from the former sense as theorized in the context of generative grammar.

The analogy between ritual and language can be made explicit in the form of the following argument by analogy:

1. Language and ritual are alike in being (a) rule-bound behaviors and (b) products of human cognition.
2. The study of language (i.e., linguistics) reveals important characteristics of human cognition.
∴ The study of ritual (i.e., ritual studies) can also reveal important characteristics of human cognition.

This is a general analogy between ritual and language that provides a theoretic basis for the more specific analogy between a ritual and a linguistic expression.[4] It is this latter sense that is at work in the application of a syntactic analysis to any particular ritual.

Attempting to understand human cognition on the basis of its products, whether the regularities of language or of ritual, is an instance of "reverse engineering," or "artifact hermeneutics."[5] Such an approach

makes a default assumption that the product is in some way optimal, and further assumes that the producer had some "good reason" for designing the product in the way that it was. (Daniel Dennett refers to this latter as the "intentional stance."[6]) We can then extend our notion that the systematic character of both ritual and language reflects underlying cognitive organizing principles, some of which may be manifest in both language and ritual, by including the idea that these principles are in some way optimal, that is, that they have a functional utility beyond the scope of some specific application. As Staal notes, "Language originated by chance, like everything else in the evolution of living beings; and was selected because of its extraordinary fruitfulness."[7] Before extending our discussion to principles, however, it is necessary to understand the regularities of ritual structures empirically. In order to generalize about such regularities, it is in turn necessary to have a shared analytic procedure that makes such structures evident. The use of inverted tree diagrams, as in the following, allows for just such empirically-based generalizations. Metaphors other than trees have been suggested by different theorists, including boxes, boilerplate, and frames. In her discussion of ordinary sacrifices (*iṣṭi*), such as the daily A*gnihotra*, Stephanie W. Jamison talks about "ritual boxes" that are first opened and then closed. For example, she discusses the "preparation of grain at the beginning of the ritual" by the sacrificer's wife as the opening of a box that "is closed at the end."[8] Employing the imagery of "boilerplate," Charles Orzech notes that the application of ritual "for specific purposes starts with the fundamental template, which governs the deployment of the mandala/altar itself, the names and iconography of the divinities in it, and their mantras and *mudrās*."[9] He goes on to point out that this "modular approach makes the system learnable, infinitely expandable, and easily adapted to whatever needs a new context might require."[10]

The terminology of "ritual frames" is employed by Yael Bentor in her study of Tibetan consecration rituals.[11] In her presentation of the three days of a consecration ritual, we can see a clear instance of recursive embedding (see fig. 1).

Michael Witzel also employs the terminology of ritual "frames" in his discussion of the *Agnihotra* in Nepal. Witzel's analysis of the *Agnihotra* performed in Patan shows that the frames are crossed. Specifically, the tantric element in which the practitioner calls the deity into his own body (*nyāsa)* is not matched until after the closure of the Vedic

First Day of Consecration



Second Day of Consecration



Third Day of Consecration
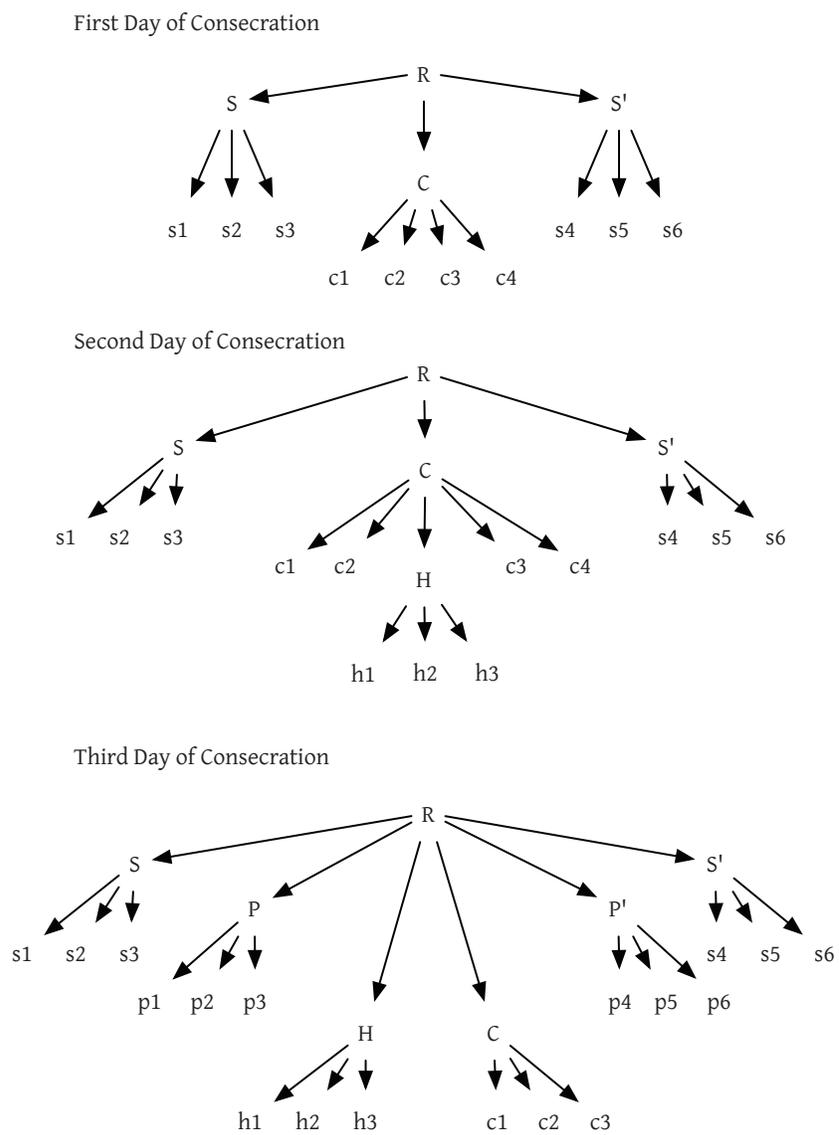


Figure 1. Recursive embedding in the Tibetan consecration ritual

rites that started prior to the ritual identification. Because of this "crossing" of ritual frames, Witzel argues that "Ritual does not have, as Staal will have it, a structure similar to an inverted tree, so well known from modern grammarians, but rather a complicated frame structure."[12] Staal had also noted these kinds of ritual interruptions, saying that "an embedded ritual may be interrupted, to be continued or completed afterwards."[13] Thus, in addition to symmetry, discussed more fully *infra*, we have evidence of another regular pattern, the interruption and later continuation of a set of ritual activities, or what may be—given the linguistic analogy we are employing here—called a "phrase."[14]

Despite the complications created by interrupted ritual phrases, the methodological issue is analysis of the structure of the ritual, not the symbolic representation by which that structure is made evident. Considering rituals as trees, boxes, frames, or boilerplate is, however, not simply incidental to the goal of developing a systematic analytic machinery that can reveal the structure of ritual as part of a larger category of rule-bound behaviors. The decision as to which symbolic representation to employ is a heuristic one—which is most useful for what kinds of applications? While it may seem that there is no substantive difference between the four metaphors for thinking about structure— boxes, boilerplate, frames, trees—Staal has pointed out that there is a significant advantage to employing an analytic technique that is both intuitively accessible and allows the analysis of ritual to be related to other kinds of rule-bound behaviors. Most importantly, there are things that can be analyzed in terms of trees that cannot be analyzed in terms of frames—sentences. "All frames are trees but all trees are not frames."[15] Since tree diagrams can be applied to both language and ritual, thus expanding the scope of formal investigation of rule-bound behaviors, this is an important advantage of inverted tree diagrams over other metaphors, such as boxes, frames, and boilerplate.

There are, however, several ways in which ritual and language are not alike. Two of the most important are that while rituals are frequently symmetrical, language is not; and while linguistic expressions are usually spontaneous, ritual is (almost) always scripted.

A structural characteristic of the *homas* and other tantric Buddhist rituals that I have examined is symmetry. The symmetry of tantric Buddhist rituals is already found, not surprisingly, in Vedic rituals. This, then, is one of the ways in which language and ritual differ. Where

language allows for the asymmetrical addition of elements, ritual seems to mandate that no matter what kind of additions are made to a ritual, it must keep its basic symbolic symmetry. If it is indeed the case that rituals are symmetrical while language is not, it would be important to understand why. Is there something unique about symbolic action that requires symmetry? The assumptions of artifact hermeneutics would lead us to assume that there is a "good reason" for this difference.[16] Additional research by scholars familiar with other kinds of rituals is, however, needed to determine whether this generalization is accurate or not.

Second, while sentences are usually spoken in some spontaneous fashion, rituals are not. Like other performative arts, they usually have an established "script," a text of some kind.[17] The analogy between ritual and dramatic performance may also be a heuristically valuable one, but it is outside the range of this particular study.

Ritual also allows for the repeated embedding of a ritual element, creating a larger ritual structure. This is a particular kind of recursive rule, and according to Staal it is "the one type of structure in which ritual differs markedly from the syntax of language."[18] The open-ended character of this kind of recursion allows for the (at least theoretical) generation of rituals of in(de)finite length. Thus, A ➤ BAB ➤ B(BAB)B ➤ B(B(BAB)B)B, and so on.[19]

We now turn to the *homa* per se, introducing it first historically, then examining some of the varieties of *homas*.

## BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The *homa* is a votive ritual in which offerings to deities are made by burning them in a fire. The roots of the *homa* are in the Vedic ritual tradition, which in turn connects the *homa* to a wide range of Indo-European ritual practices. The *homa* has been a part of every form of tantra—Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain, from Mongolia to Indonesia.[20] The late medieval Indian situation sees a change, with an increasing shift to internalized forms of practice. Shaman Hatley points out that "As for homa: from my standpoint as an Indologist, it seems reasonable to assert that homa has a role in virtually all early medieval tantric traditions. Post twelfth-century, it seems to me that the situation becomes more complicated. The hathayoga/Nath cult strand of Śaivism, for instance, moves away from much of the 'external' ritual characteristic of earlier tantric ritual systems. Sufi Yoga, which seems to arise

largely in the context of interactions with Nath yoga/yogīs, seems parallel insofar as homa and much of the early ritual repertoire have little role."[21] In addition to Nath yoga, then, other limiting edges of the spread of *homa* are in Sahajiya Vaiṣṇava and in the forms of Sufism influenced by tantra.[22]

Practices identifiable with later, explicitly tantric forms of Buddhism[23] appear to have started in India about 200 CE. Between that time and the appearance of the first fully tantric texts around 600 CE, a variety of elements from the Indian religious cultural context were integrated into Buddhist tantra.[24] One of these elements was the *homa*, which at some point was adapted into the tantric Buddhist ritual corpus. It is for example described in one of the three earliest Buddhist tantras, the *Mahāvairocana*, which dates from sometime in the seventh century.

Some Shingon scholars suggest a relatively early date for the *homa*'s integration into Buddhism on the basis of the apotropaic burning of mustard seeds found in the text describing the ritual preparation of an enclosure for reciting the *Peacock Spell Sutra* (*Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī*). This preparatory ritual is attributed to Śrīmitra, active in the Eastern Chin court from ca. 317 to 343, and is found in conjunction with an early sixth-century version of the *Peacock Spell Sutra* (*T.* 984). Such apotropaic burning of mustard seeds continues to be a part of the Shingon *homa*. In addition to disputing the attribution, Strickmann has pointed out that this differs from the *homa* per se in that the apotropaic function is distinct from the *homa*'s propitiatory function. In its propitiatory function, the ritual model employed in the *homa* is that of a feast offered to guests, the offerings of food, drink, incense, perfumed water, and so on being given to Agni—present as the fire—who purifies and transmits the offerings to the deities. Additionally the burning of mustard seeds also lacks the typically tantric element of ritual identification between deity and practitioner.

As a part of the ritual corpus of tantric Buddhism, the *homa* was conveyed to both Japan and to Tibet, where it continues to play an important part in the practices of the two traditions.

<div align="center">SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES<br>IN THE CONTENTS OF THE TWO RITUALS</div>

The similarities and differences between the Tibetan and Japanese forms of the *homa* offers insight into the process by which a common

ancestral ritual form was adapted to local situations. The categorical schema into which rituals are grouped, both *homas* and other kinds of rituals, is one of the important similarities. More specific to the *homas* themselves, both forms have Agni as a central figure in the ritual and share the organizing metaphor of feasting an honored guest that derives from Vedic rituals.

### Varieties of Homas

The *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* (also, *Vairocanābhisambodhi-tantra*, common Japanese name *Dainichikyō*, 大日經, *T.* 848) describes two *homas*, internal and external, saying that the internal aspect frees one from karma, and that anyone performing the external rite without this understanding "will not obtain any results."[25] Elsewhere, in what I would personally suspect is an older portion of the text, the *Mahāvairocana-sūtra* identifies forty-four different fires by name and function. Here, in addition to "quelling calamities," "increasing benefits," "vanquishing foes," and "attracting property,"[26] one finds fires associated with conception, bathing, bathing of a pregnant woman, birth, naming, first feeding and making a topknot of a child's hair, and other such functions. These, however, are identified as the "practices of brahmans, and read by those who practice the Vedas."[27] The Buddha then explains that he performed these without proper knowledge, and did not achieve any results. Having attained *bodhi*, he expounded twelve fires, each described by name, and attributes.[28] Perhaps this elaborate system of different kinds of fires did not serve the interests of tantric scholastics, for the system we are now familiar with has been reduced markedly, and structured according to a more limited set of functions.

As explained by Skorupski, the many differing types of *homa* rituals were codified into four principal types,[29] though, as discussed below, a system of five categories is also known. This system of four kinds of *homas* (Tib. *sbyin sreg*,སྦྱིན་སྲེག) in the Tibetan tradition is also found in Shingon. The terms for these four kinds of *homas* are:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| pacifying | Skt. *śāntika* | Tib. *zhi-ba* ཞི་བ | Jpn. *soku sai* 息災 |
| increasing | Skt. *pauṣṭika* | Tib. *rgyas-pa* རྒྱས་པ | Jpn. *sō yaku* 増益 |
| subjugating | Skt. *vaśīkaraṇa* | Tib. *dbang-gi* དབང་གི | Jpn. *kei ai* 敬愛 |
| destroying | Skt. *abhicāraka* | Tib. *drag-po* དྲག་པོ | Jpn. *gō buku* 降伏 |

These four categories are generally applied to the entire range of rituals in the tantric Buddhist tradition.[30] That the system of four kinds of *homas* is common to both the Shingon and Tibetan traditions suggests that either the system originated in India and came to be the predominant category system before the transmission out of India to Tibet and China, or that there was contact between the two traditions. The system of four kinds of rituals did not eradicate all traces of other kinds, however. In Japan a fivefold system (Jpn. *goshuhō*, 五種法) is also known, adding a type of ritual whose function is "acquisition" (Skt. *aṅkuśa*; Jpn. *kō shō,* 鉤召). As with the Japanese case, Kong sprul adds a fifth type to the standard four, "called all-encompassing which combines into one ritual the four rites."[31] In Tibetan this is *las bzhi* ལས་བཞི་ and is also known as "the highest rite" (*mchog gi las*, མཆོག་གི་ལས). Despite the dominance of the four and five ritual category systems, other ritual types are also known.[32]

Agni is central to the performance of *homa* in both Tibetan and Japanese forms. Agni is, of course, one of the premier Vedic deities, essential to the Vedic ritual tradition as the purifier and conveyor of offerings to all of the other deities. Just as Agni as a shared feature of both versions of the *homa* points to the relatively close relation between the two, it also points to just how strong the connection is between Vedic ritual culture and tantric Buddhist ritual culture, wherever it has been transmitted. One difference in the rituals I have examined, however, is that the fundamental ritual in the Tibetan case is an Agni *homa*, whereas in Japan Agni is the first of the set of "mini-*homas*" that are inserted into a fundamental ritual which is not itself a *homa*. This apparent difference may, however, simply be a difference in interpretation, one more issue that syntactically detailed comparisons of the two kinds may help to resolve. Further on this below.

As with the importance of Agni, the Vedic origins are shown in the common basic model of the *homa*, the feasting of honored guests. John Makransky has indicated the influence of this basic model on Tibetan tantric ritual:

> Some Indologists have noted that the term *pūjā* in Hindu *sūtras* and epic literature referred primarily to a ritual for venerating guests through offerings. The structure of ancient Indian customs for entertaining esteemed guests is retained throughout the history of Buddhist *pūjā* practice in India and Tibet, where the "guests" . . . are sacred beings or their representations.[33]

The same is certainly also true of East Asian tantric Buddhist ritual as well.

There are several noteworthy differences between the two forms, including the location in which the rituals are performed, whether the ritual is a "stand-alone" ritual or primarily performed as part of a larger ritual complex, and a variety of ritual details. In my observations Tibetan forms are generally performed outdoors, while in Japan *homas* are performed indoors. An important exception is the Shugendō *saitō goma* 齋燈護摩. Since the Indian origins of the tantric Buddhist *homa* seem to have generally been performed outdoors, it would appear to be the case that it is the Japanese move indoors that requires explanation. Three possible explanations may be considered.

First, the destructive effects of the climate on the altar may have motivated its location inside of a *goma* hall (*gomadō*, 護摩堂). The Japanese altar is an elaborate, permanent installation requiring a substantial investment, while the Tibetan altar seems to be fairly simple and created anew for each performance. From this correlation, two scenarios are possible: either at some point in the development of tantric practice in East Asia the altar was moved indoors to protect it, or because the altar was indoors, it could become more elaborate. Second, there is the possibility that the two may have been based in different ritual cultures. While most of the different kinds of Vedic and Brahmanic fire rituals are performed outdoors, it seems that the most common, the daily *Agnihotra*, was performed indoors at the household fire. The Nepali ritual studied by Witzel mentioned above is identified as an *Agnihotra*, with definite tantric adaptations, and is performed inside a temple.[34] Perhaps the ritual cultures within which the two differing forms developed employed alternative ritual conceptions, ideas about the performance of fire rituals drawing on either the domestic (*gṛhya*) rites performed at the family fire altar, or the solemn (*śrauta*) rites performed in temporary, outdoor settings.[35] Third, there is also the possible influence of Daoism on the formation of esoteric Buddhist ritual culture in China. Daoists performed some of their rituals indoors in what is known as a "pure chamber" (*ching-shih*), a closed space with a central altar upon which incense is burned.[36] This may have provided a model of ritual behavior, itself adaptive to the climate of China and Japan, that was borrowed by Buddhist practitioners.

In addition to differing as to location of the ritual performance, the Tibetan and Shingon traditions also seem to differ in terms of the

context of performance. The Tibetan version can be performed as an isolated ritual, as part of a larger ritual sequence, or as a propitiatory rite in conjunction with a retreat period. In his study of the cult of Tārā, Beyer describes the Tibetan uses of the ritual:

> The burnt offering may be performed as an addendum to a large ritual of evocation or at the end of a period of ritual service to correct any errors of fill in any omissions (in which case it is a minor ritual function); or the burnt offering may be performed by itself as the most important part of the ritual, as a pure exercise of power in a ritual function toward a specific end, such as the pacifying of one's own sins or of a community's diseases; in this instance the burnt offering is the major ritual function and the ceremony of pacifying should be performed during the fortnight of the waning moon, and that for increasing during the fortnight of the waxing moon (for sound astrological reasons).[37]

In Japan, however, the *homa* seems to always be performed as a separate, independent ritual.

There are many additional similarities and differences in the ritual details. A sample of the similarities between these rituals includes minor deities, types of offerings, specific ritual actions, and ritual implements. Both rituals employ the same relatively minor deities as ritual agents, specifically the "four embracing deities." In the Japanese form, when the deities come to the altar hearth they are fixed in place by hook, snare, chain, and bell, which corresponds to B.2.e. to B.2.h. in the Tibetan form outlined below. Both traditions employ both symbolic and material forms of offerings. One of the specific ritual actions found in both is that the final material offering is a mixture of the remnants of the previous material offerings. In addition to other ritual details regarding colors, time of day, and shape of hearth, the rituals also employ similar ritual implements. For example, as in the Vedic fire rituals, both employ two ritual implements, a ladle and a spoon, for making some of the offerings.

One of the notable differences is that the Tibetan version seems to consider that there are "commitment beings" (*dam-tshig sems-dpa'*, དམ་ ཚིག་སེམས་དཔ) already present in the altar hearth and that it is "wisdom beings" (*ye-shes sems-dpa*, ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་དཔ)[38] who are escorted from the mandala to the altar hearth and join with the commitment beings. This idea that there are beings already present in the altar hearth is not the case in Japan. This may reflect the developments in Buddhist tantra

in India after the transmission to China that formed the basis for the Japanese system, or within Tibetan tantric practice itself.

The most significant difference is that the Japanese form includes in its frame ritual an explicit act of ritual identification between the chief deity (*honzon*, 本尊) and the practitioner. The Tibetan version does not have such an action, and although ritual identification is not found in all tantric rituals, it is possible that the just mentioned union of commitment being and wisdom being has at least something of the same significance. Again, this may be the result of developments in Indian tantric Buddhism after the transmission to China or in Tibet.

## STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF A TIBETAN *HOMA*

Sharpa Tulku and Michael Perrott have translated and compiled a set of six *homas* from various sources. The very way in which they have compiled these demonstrates the characteristic embedding of ritual elements into larger ritual sequences. Both the Shingon and the Tibetan *homas* employ what might be called a "prototype ritual" that provides the basic structure into which offerings to specific deities are embedded.[39] As noted above, the Tibetan prototype ritual is itself an Agni *homa*. Sharpa and Perrott have organized their text as (A) a first round of offerings to Agni, which with appropriate modifications can precede any of (B) six different offerings to various deities, which are (C) closed by a final round of offerings to Agni. In other words, the following structure (fig. 2) applies to the six *homas* described in Sharpa and Perrott's presentation:
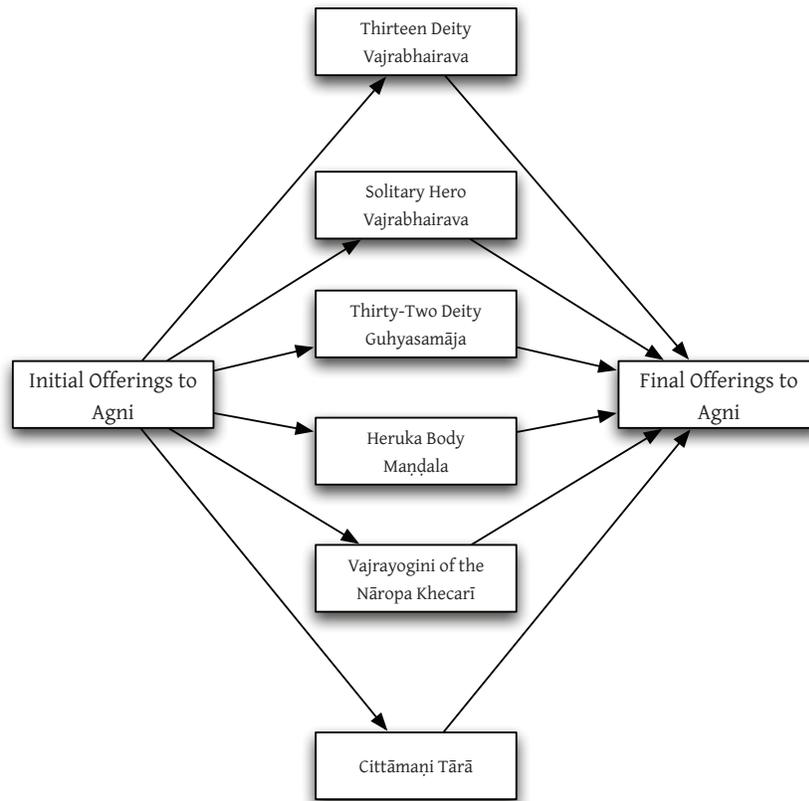
Figure 2. Embedding of *homa* offerings to specific deities into the Agni *homa*

   If one were to remove the central section of offerings to a specific deity, the initial and final offerings alone would together constitute a complete ritual—an Agni *homa*. Significantly, the insertion in the Tibetan form comes at a spot comparable to that in the Shingon, that is, in the sequence of offerings to the main deity of the frame ritual. Likewise, the inserted set of offerings to specific deities itself has a complete ritual structure, as is the case in the Shingon *goma* as well. In order to study the ritual structure at a more detailed level, it is first necessary to identify each ritual action, as is done in the following.

Pacification Homa for the Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava, based
on the compilation of Lobsang Yeshe (Second Panchen Lama,
1663–1737) reconstructed from the translation by Sharpa
Tulku and Michael Perrott in *A Manual of Ritual Fire Offerings*
(Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1987).

*I. The First Round of Offerings to Agni, the Mundane Fire Deity*
A. Preliminaries
 A.1. Ritual Cake Offering to the Lord of the Site
  A.1.a. mantra
  A.1.b. visualization
  A.1.c. mantra
  A.1.d. mantra
  A.1.e. Verse of the Four Buddhas
  A.1.f. offering statement
  A.1.g. The Power of Truth
 A.2. Blessing the *Vajra* and Bell
  A.2.a. visualization/conceptualization
  A.2.b. mantra
  A.2.c. mantra
  A.2.d. statement
  A.2.e. mantra
  A.2.f. mantra
  A.2.g. ring the bell
 A.3. Cleansing and Blessing the Hearth, Offerings and Practitioner
  A.3.a. sprinkle the offerings, hearth and practitioner, mantra 3X
  A.3.b. sprinkle with the inner offering, mantra 1X
 A.4. Generating and Blessing the Offerings
  A.4.a. sprinkle offerings to the fire deity, mantra 1X
  A.4.b. visualization/conceptualization
  A.4.c. mantra and mudra
 A.5. Purifying and Blessing the Materials to Be Burned
  A.5.a. all materials, mantra
  A.5.b. offering sticks, mantra
  A.5.c. clarified butter, mantra
  A.5.d. grains, mantra
  A.5.e. visualization/conceptualization, mantra
 A.6. Lighting the Fire
  A.6.a. light the torch, mantra 3X

A.6.b. purify with cleansing water and inner offering, mantra 3X

A.6.c. light the fire, mantra 1X

A.6.d. fan the flames, *bīja* mantra (HUṂ) 1X

A.6.e. revive the fire, 7 scoops clarified butter, mantra (7X?)

A.7. Making the Kuśa Grass Seat for the Deity

A.7.a. hold kuśa stems, mantra 7X

A.7.b. recitation

A.7.c. lay out the stems

A.7.d. request Vajrasattva to pacify hindrances

B. The Main Ritual

B. 1. Generating the Hearth and the Mundane Fire Deity for the Vajrabhairava Ritual

B.1.a. lustrate with cleansing water

B.1.b. action mantra

B.1.c. visualization

B.2. Inviting the Wisdom Beings of the Fire Deity

B.2.a. fearlessness *mudrā*, wave the thumb, proclamation

B.2.b. mantra, seating directions

B.2.c. lustrate, action mantra

B.2.d. offer the four waters, 4 mantra

B.2.e. draw the wisdom being close to the commitment being, mantra

B.2.f. wisdom being enters the commitment being, mantra

B.2.g. bound inseparably, mantra

B.2.h. brought under control, mantra

B.2.i. holding the *vajra* and bell make the *mudrā* of embracing, snap fingers

B.3. Making Offerings and Praises to the Fire Deity

B.3.a. mantra, offer cleansing water to the first receptacle 3X with the kuśa stems

B.3.b. pick up flowers between index fingers, make *mudrā* of down-turned fist, release from little fingers (apparently dropping flowers into first receptacle)

B.3.c. mantra, offer the face cooler to the first receptacle

B.3.d. mantra, open *vajra*-palms *mudrā*, offer libation to second receptacle

B.3.e. pick up flowers, fist *mudrā*, circle three times, open up-turned fist from index fingers

B.3.f. mantra, offer foot bathing water to third receptacle

B.3.g. five sensory offerings and music, 6 mantra

B.3.h. inner offering, mantra

B.3.i. praises while ringing bell

B.3.j. commitment (mantra) 3X

C. First Round of Offerings to the Fire Deity

    C.1. Visualize the Tongue

    C.2. Instructions on Holding the Ladle and Funnel

        C.2.a. funnel in the left hand, upturned Tathāgata fist

        C.2.b. ladle in the right, downturned Tathāgata fist

        C.2.c. in *mudr*ā of Supreme Enlightenment, circle both together clockwise 3X (this is apparently understood to open Agni's mouth)

    C.3. Offering of Clarified Butter: 3 or 7 ladles of clarified butter with one of three mantras

    C.4. Joining Mantras and Appended Lines of Request

        C.4.a. mantra and appended lines of request

        (optional: C.4.b. investigate for hindrances in the fire and correct if needed:

            C.4.b.i. lustrate with cleansing water, 7 ladles of clarified butter

            C.4.b.ii. repeat appended lines with addition

            C.4.b.iii. lustrate with cleansing water, 1,3, or 7 ladles of clarified butter, mantra)

    C.5. Actual Offering of the Materials to Be Burned

        C.5.a. offering sticks: holding the offering sticks between thumb and ring finger in the *mudr*ā of Best Bestowing, statement, mantra, request

        C.5.b. clarified butter: mantra, request (?statement?)

        C.5.c. sesame: mantra, request

        C.5.d. dūrvā grass, in pairs: mantra, request

        C.5.e. unbroken rice: mantra, request

        C.5.f. *sho-zen* (sweet tsampa-based dairy mixture): mantra, request

        C.5.g. kuśa grass, in pairs: mantra, request

        C.5.h. mustard seed: mantra, request

        C.5.i. coarse barley: mantra, request

        C.5.j. husked barley: mantra, request

        C.5.k. pulses: mantra, request

        C.5.l. wheat: mantra, request

   C.5.m. mixed items: mantra, request (mantra varies in later phases)

  C.6. Offering the Face Cooler and Cleansing Water

   C.6.a. offer face cooler, mantra

   C.6.b. offer cleansing water, mantra

*II. Offering to the Supramundane Deity Vajrabhairava (and Retinue)*

D. Generating the Celestial Mansion

  D.1. Visualization of the Celestial Mansion in the Hearth

  D.2. Escort the Deities from the Mandala to the Hearth

  D.3. Call the Deities by Their Mantras and Invite Them to Take Their Seats, 14 mantras, throw a flower into the hearth with each mantra

  D.4. Seating the Deities: recitation of deities and location

  D.5. Offerings and Praises to the Deities (extended form, pp. 63–66)

   D.5.a. four waters

    D.5.a.i. cleansing water: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.a.ii. face cooling water: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.a.iii. supreme libation: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.a.iv. foot cleansing water: offering praise and mantra

   D.5.b. preliminary offerings

    D.5.b.i. perfume: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.b.ii. flowers: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.b.iii. incense: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.b.iv. butter lamps: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.b.v. food: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.b.vi. music: offering praise and mantra

   D.5.c. five objects of desire

    D.5.c.i. three kinds of forms: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.c.ii. three kinds of sounds: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.c.iii. three kinds of scents: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.c.iv. three kinds of tastes: offering praise and mantra

    D.5.c.v. three kinds of tangibles: offering praise and mantra (end extended form)

   D.5.d. inner offering: 14 mantras

   D.5.e. praises

   D.5.f. visualize the tongue

E. Actual Offering of Materials to Be Burned

  E.1. Appetizer /and the Way to Join and Count Mantras (explanatory section, not ritual directions)/

    E.1.a. seven ladles of clarified butter, mantra (7X?) and request
    E.1.b. visualize the deity promising enlightened activities
   E.2. Offering the Thirteen Substances to the Principal Deity
    E.2.a. offering sticks: statement, mantra, request
    E.2.b. clarified butter: mantra, request
    E.2.c. sesame: mantra, request
    E.2.d. dūrvā grass, in pairs: mantra, request
    E.2.e. unbroken rice: mantra, request
    E.2.f. *sho-zen*: mantra, request
    E.2.g. kuśa grass, in pairs: mantra, request
    E.2.h. mustard seed: mantra, request
    E.2.i. coarse barley: mantra, request
    E.2.j. (husked) barley: mantra, request
    E.2.k. pulses: mantra, request
    E.2.l. wheat: mantra, request
    E.2.m. special mixture: mantra, request
   E.3. Offering the Thirteen Substances to the Retinue
    E.3.a. offering sticks: mantra, request
    E.3.b. clarified butter: mantra, request
    E.3.c. sesame: mantra, request
    E.3.d. dūrvā grass, in pairs: mantra, request
    E.3.e. unbroken rice: mantra, request
    E.3.f. *sho-zen*: mantra, request
    E.3.g. kuśa grass, in pairs: mantra, request
    E.3.h. mustard seed: mantra, request
    (E.3.i. coarse barley: mantra, request—not listed, by error? other procedures include both, and section title refers to 13 items)
    E.3.j. (husked) barley: mantra, request
    E.3.k. pulses: mantra, request
    E.3.l. wheat: mantra, request
    E.3.m. special mixture: mantra, request
  E.4. Purifying the One for Whom the Ritual Is Being Performed: visualization
F. Concluding Activities
  F.1. Offerings, including garments and toothpaste (?, toothstick?), and Praises
   F.1.a. 3, 7, or ? ladles of clarified butter with mantra of principal deity
   F.1.b. libation, mantra

F.1.c. cleansing water, mantra
F.1.d. face cooling water, mantra
F.1.e. garments: statement, mantra
F.1.f. toothpaste, mantra
F.1.g. sense offerings and music, mantras only
F.1.h. inner offering, 14 mantras
F.1.j. verses of praise and homage
F.1.k. libation, mantra
F.2. Apology for Mistakes and Request for Accomplishments
F.2.a. holding a flower, join the palms together at the heart, recitation and mantra
F.2.b. hundred syllable mantra of Yamāntaka
F.2.c. good-bye, 14 mantras
G. Departure
G.1. Mantra
G.2. Deities Are Returned to the Mandala
*III. Final Offerings to Agni, the Mundane Fire Deity*
H. Final Offerings
H.1. General Offerings
H.1.a. five sense offerings, mantra
H.1.b. music offering, mantra
H.1.c. inner offering, mantra
H.1.d. cleansing water, mantra
H.1.e. face cooling water, mantra
H.1.f. toothpaste, mantra
H.1.g. garments, statement, mantra
H.2. Offering Materials to Be Burned
H.2.a. offering sticks, mantra, request
H.2.b. clarified butter, mantra, request
H.2.c. sesame, mantra, request
H.2.d. dūrvā grass, in pairs, mantra, request
H.2.e. unbroken rice, mantra, request
H.2.f. *sho-zen*, mantra, request
H.2.g. kuśa grass in pairs, mantra, request
H.2.h. mustard seed, mantra, request
H.2.i. coarse barley, mantra, request
H.2.j. barley, mantra, request
H.2.k. pulses, mantra, request
H.2.l. wheat, mantra, request
H.2.m. special mixture, mantra, request

H.3. Offering of Praise: while ringing bell, recitation
H.4. General Offerings and the Ritual Cake
    H.4.a. face cooling water, mantra
    H.4.b. cleansing water, mantra
    H.4.c. five sense offerings, mantras
    H.4.d. music, mantra
    H.4.e. inner offering, mantra
    H.4.f. offering the ritual cake
        H.4.f.i. bless and purify the cake
        H.4.f.ii. mantra, 3X
        H.4.f.iii. offer the cake
    H.4.g. five sense offerings, mantra
    H.4.h. music, mantra
    H.4.i. inner offering, mantra
H.5. Prayers: while ringing the bell, recitation, mantra
H.6. Verses of Apology: recitation, mantra
H.7. Departure of the Mundane Fire Deity
    H.7.a. good-bye, mantra, visualization
    H.7.b. optional: milk pudding offering
    H.7.c. Prayer of Aspiration
    H.7.d. verses of auspiciousness

This linear presentation of the ritual obscures the internal structure. Writing about a linear representation of an *Agniṣṭoma*, Staal notes that "A *linear* representation of this type is not only extremely cumbersome, but it obscures all the elements of structure."[40] Such a presentation of the ritual represents the sequence of events as observed, and is analogous to the surface structure of a sentence. Surface structures alone do not allow us to understand the *systematic* relation between sentences that we recognize intuitively as being different ways of expressing the same declarative meaning, such as "John has gone for bread at the store" and "John has gone to the store for bread." It is the systematic relation in grammatical structure (movement of one element in relation to the others) that motivates the understanding that there is a difference in emphasis—one being on why he has gone, and the other being on where he has gone. Thus, if our concern is with how language and ritual work, and not with John's location or intention, then we must look through the surface structures to the underlying structures, patterns, and relations.

If we examine the relations between activities within the beginning of the ritual and the end, the similarities between the activities begin to reveal a kind of repetition—in some cases repetition of activity per se, and in other cases a repetition of meaning. The first issue, however, is to identify the transition point between the beginning and end. Clearly the place in the ritual where the offerings to Vajrabhairava and his retinue is embedded marks a transitional moment in the Agni *homa.* What I am calling here a "transitional moment" occurs between ritual actions, or sets of ritual actions, that allow for the embedding of additional ritual elements. There is no formal reason that additional ritual elements may not be embedded between any ritual actions; however, within a ritual tradition, it seems that there are typically relatively fixed sets of actions that are usually performed together, without interruption, that is, ritual phrases. For example, the demarcation of the ritual enclosure, its purification, the invitation of deities into the enclosure, and its protective sealing usually form one coherent set of actions, that is, a ritual phrase.

Also, while there can be any number of transitional moments where embedding can occur, in this case, particularly when viewed at a macro-level, the offerings to Vajrabhairava and his retinue do constitute the transition between beginning and end of the Agni *homa.* This could be diagrammed at the macro-level as follows:

$$13 \cong A \; V \; A'$$

"13" representing the "Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *Homa,*"
"A" the first half of the Agni *homa,*
"V" the offerings to Vajrabhairava and his retinue, and
"A'" the second half of the Agni *homa.*
"$\cong$" is used to indicate "congruence" in the sense that the two are identical in form.
The relation between the Agni *homa* and the Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *homa* is one instance of the pattern indicated in fig. 2, *supra.*

Turning our attention to the internal workings of the Vajrabhairava *homa,* we find that the offerings per se mark the midpoint. Using the notations from the detailed presentation above, we can summarize the Agni *homa* as

$$\text{Agni} \cong A \; B \; C \; H$$

and then the surface structure of the Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *homa* detailed above may be represented in more summary form as

$$13 \cong A \ B \ C \ (D \ E \ F \ G) \ H$$

But considering the syntactic structure of the ritual reveals that although the sets of actions identified in the linear detailing above as F and G—described in the manual as separate, sequential sets of activities—structurally they are part of the activities of D. Turning to fig. 3, the structure is identified with D' (prime markers indicate the repetition of a set of actions in the second half of the ritual). At this point in the analysis, it appears that D' displays a mirror image symmetry, with the terminal abbreviation of D.1. and D.4. Terminal abbreviation is the tendency to simplify actions and reduce the number of actions in the second half of the ritual. It is very typical of other tantric Buddhist rituals I have examined.

Similarly, rather than being another, separate set of actions, the Final Offerings to Agni are symmetrical with the Initial Offerings to Agni. As far as I have been able to analyze this section of the ritual, it appears to be a complicated interlacing of repeated actions, hence the B', C', B', A', C', B' sequence. We can see the value of a syntactic analysis of ritual by contrasting fig. 3 with fig. 4. Based on the structure made evident in fig. 3, fig. 4 traces the sequence of actions as they would be observed. Beginning at the open circle, and proceeding along the sequence indicated by the arrows, until the closed circle, would trace the actions in a flat, linear description. Such a representation of the ritual, however, actively obscures how individual ritual actions are grouped together into larger, meaningful units, or phrases. Thus, contrary to the criticisms leveled against a formalistic analysis as being irrelevant because it is meaningless, it is clear that an empirical observation of the ritual sequence simply as performed, instead of grouped as syntactic elements, would inhibit understanding the reasons why the ritual is performed in the way that it is, a critical element in understanding the ritual's meaning.
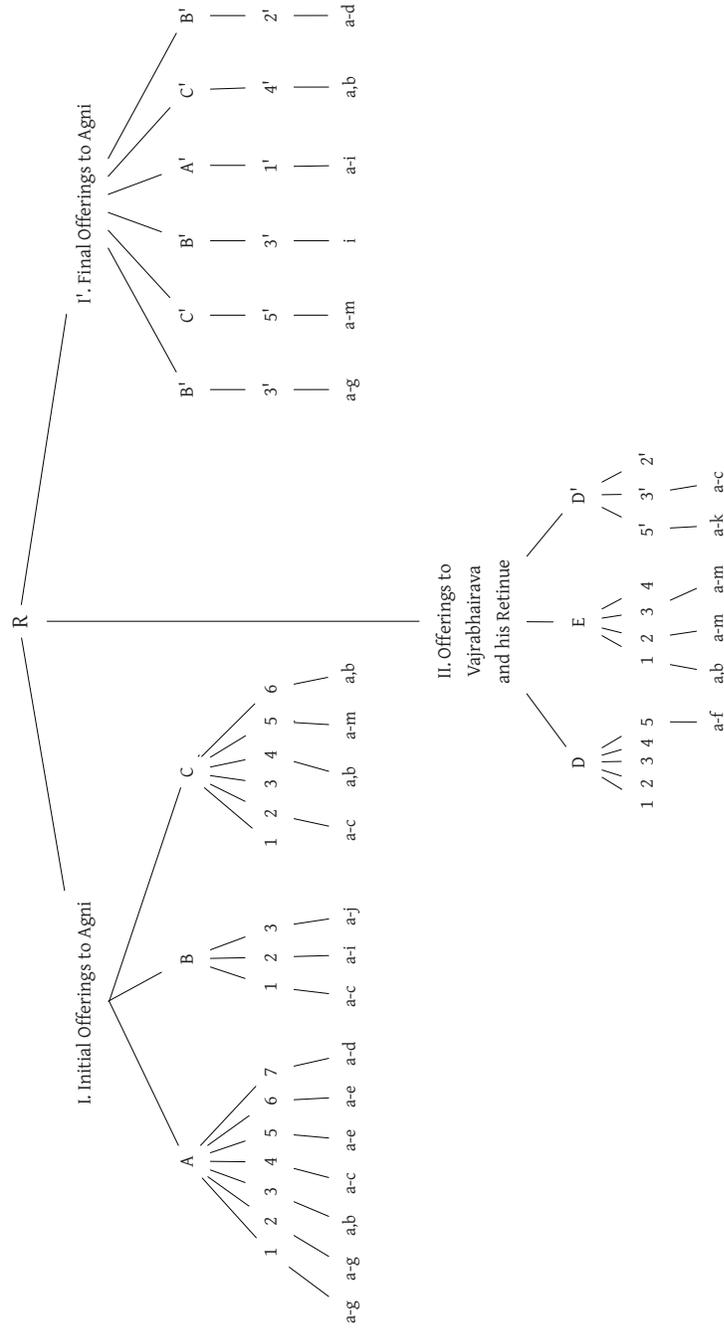
Figure 3. Syntactic structure of the Thirteen Vajrabhairava *homa*

Figure 4. Observed sequence of the Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *homa*

In sum, however, the Tibetan Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *homa* displays structural characteristics similar to the Japanese *homas*. Its structure is basically symmetrical, appearing to have both mirror image and sequential symmetries, and the terminal actions are abbreviated.

## STEPS TOWARD A SCIENCE OF RITUAL

The utility of a syntactic approach to the study of ritual appears to this author as twofold. First, it allows for the development of a cognitive theory of ritual. Second, it allows for the exploration of the history of ritual systems. Both of these, however, can only follow from the establishment of a consistent method for the detailed description and close analysis of rituals as regular patterned behaviors, that is, as rule-bound. This is not the place for attempting to further develop either a cognitive theory of ritual or the historical application of syntactic analysis. However, since both depend upon the development of a consistent analytic method that can constrain speculative interpretations of ritual, some of the criticisms of the structuralist theoretical background behind syntactic analyses will be addressed.

Pierre Bourdieu critiques structuralism, specifically Saussure's linguistics, pointing out that the logic of deciphering, that is, language (*langue*), is given priority over the logic of function, or performance, that is, speech (*parole*). "It follows that, because it is constructed from the strictly intellectualist standpoint of deciphering, Saussurian linguistics privileges the *structure* of signs, that is, the relations between them, at the expense of their *practical functions*, which are never reducible, as structuralism tacitly assumes, to functions of communication or knowledge."[41] Bourdieu's critique, however, depends upon a sharp division between the creation of meaning through contrasts—structure as the relation between signs—and the creation of meaning through use—the practical functions of signs. A syntactic analysis, however, does not require a prior determination of the origin of the rules it discerns.

In other words, at the step of identifying the consistent patterns it is not important whether or not those patterns exist inherently in some kind of seventeenth-century Cartesian rationalist conceptions of mind, or arise through use—and indeed, the distinction feels suspiciously like a false dichotomy. For other theoretical inquiries, such as the development of a cognitive theory of ritual, such questions about

the location and origin of the rules discerned through a syntactic analysis do become relevant.

Another critique of structuralism is found in the work of Philip N. Johnson-Laird, who identifies two problems with structuralism, specifically in its anthropological form as developed by Claude Levi-Strauss.

> One problem is that the theorist imposes a classification on the data in much the same way that numerologists detect what are for them significant patterns in the works of Shakespeare. A theory may be so rich in descriptive possibilities that it can be made to fit any data. Moreover, if some cultural practice is correctly described by a theoretical structure, it does not follow that this structure is in anyone's mind apart from the theorist's. Ordinary members of the culture may use an entirely different representation, since there can never be just a single unique description of any set of data. Indeed, a cultural product such as a myth may be the result of factors, such as errors of translation, that are not represented in anyone's mind.[42]

First, it is certainly the case that an uncritical application of any interpretive technique, including Levi-Strauss's paired oppositions (such as upstream/downstream), can generate speculative interpretations only supported by the rhetorical abilities of the theorist. At least in relationship to ritual, however, a syntactic analysis is one means by which such speculative interpretations may be constrained. The determination of which actions form coherent sets, such as the set of actions involved in the installation of the deities in the ritual enclosure discussed *supra*, depends upon an understanding of the ritual structure. That this set of ritual actions form a group—a phrase—is not something that can be observed, that is, it cannot be determined by the examination solely of the linear sequence of ritual actions as they are performed. (Note in this regard that the "surface structure" of the Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *homa* given above is already initially structured by the authors and is itself not a record of empirical observation, which is what is being referred to here.) In order to discern structures, a syntactic analysis is necessarily informed by an understanding of the meaning that ritual actions have within a ritual tradition. As such, a well-founded syntactic analysis is itself one means of constraining the flights of speculation that concern Johnson-Laird.

Again in relation to ritual, Johnson-Laird's second critique may be expressed as a concern about the location of the structures discerned by a syntactic analysis of rituals. Are these structures just in the mind of the analyst? Are they only cleverly constructed analytic artifacts

generated through the application of the analytic technique? In a sense, Johnson-Laird's critique is misplaced. From a technical perspective, that is the goal of creating a formalization of rituals: the location of the structures discerned is not relevant—though it is, of course, to the development of a cognitive theory of ritual. It is also, however, more fundamentally a question of the goal. Do we want (or need?) to know the mental representations of individuals? The moment we move beyond each individual, we are necessarily involved in generalizations. Those generalizations are only going to be in the mind of the researcher, not in the minds of the people about whom the generalizations are being made. We may indeed reverse the question and ask of Johnson-Laird, how would one determine that a myth is the result of a mistranslation, without recourse to a close comparative analysis of the structures of the source myth and the mistranslated target myth? And, although such an origin may not be represented in anyone's mind, other than the theorist speculating alternatives, certainly the resulting myth does exist in the minds of the people who know the myth. To take an example different from that of myth, to assert that people in capitalist societies generally think of labor in terms of its monetary value does not mean that in the minds of all or most of the members of that society could be found the thought "labor = money." That the generalization does not exist in any individual member of the group about which the generalization is being made does not mean that the generalization is not a true one, since it is being made at a different level from that of the mind of some individual member of that society. To that extent then, Johnson-Laird has committed a category mistake. Discussing the syntactic analysis of the sentence "John read the book," Staal says that "This tree does not give us a picture of the sentence; it gives us a picture of the *structure* of the sentence which, incidentally, is not a fiction."[43]

The critiques of structuralism made by both Bourdieu and Johnson-Laird, as well as others,[44] are important for the refinement of the theoretical bases of any attempt to understand the regularities of human behaviors. Like any tool, however, the utility of structural analysis may well exceed the conditions of its creation. If we had discarded rocks because they were used for making arrowheads, an activity now only pursued as part of the education of aspiring archeologists, then we would not have hammers. As a tool for the close description of rituals in a formal manner, syntactic analysis, although drawing on

structuralism broadly and the formalizing technology of linguistics specifically, is not dependent upon those theoretical backgrounds. It is a tool, and like any tool needs to be evaluated by its efficacy. It is in other words the heuristic value of the syntactic analysis of ritual that is of primary concern.

The goal of the syntactic analysis of the Thirteen Deity Vajrabhairava *homa* undertaken above has been to enable a principled comparison between a Tibetan form of the *homa* and those found in the Shingon tradition. The purpose of the comparison is to begin to establish the utility of tracing historical connections between rituals, in this case by examining two rituals that are known to be historically related. Without a principled analysis, such as that produced by a syntactic analysis, speculations based on superficial similarities are unconstrained. That both the *homa* and the Eucharist involve symbols of eating and of sacrifice may or may not be significant.[45] Whether such similarities are significant and if so, what that significance is, depends upon the development of a systematic technique for the close and detailed description of rituals, one that both allows for the comparative study of ritual and constrains speculative interpretations about the meanings of rituals.

## NOTES

1. It may be of use to some readers to explicitly state that the idea of "rule-bound" behaviors does not mean either lacking in spontaneity or unchanging. When a quarterback "spontaneously" decides to run rather than pass, he is still bound by the rules of football. That behaviors change over time—from whist to bridge, for example—only means that such new behaviors can themselves be analyzed in terms of the rules employed.

2. Van Valin and LaPolla's comment regarding language can be adopted *mutatis mutandis* for ritual as well. "Developing serious explanatory theories of language is impossible in the absence of descriptions of the object of explanation. Understanding the cognitive basis of language is impossible in the absence of adequate cross-linguistic characterization of linguistic behavior. We cannot explain or posit cognitive mechanisms for something unless it has first been described." Robert D. Van Valin, Jr., and Randy J. LaPolla, *Syntax: Structure, Meaning and Function* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3.

3. Frits Staal, "The Meaninglessness of Ritual," *Numen* 26, no. 1 (June 1979): 2–22.

4. Although much attention is paid to the syntax of sentences, leading one to expect the sentence to be the basic unit of analysis and therefore one term

of the comparison of language and ritual, syntax has a wider scope. As Van Valin and LaPolla note, syntax may extend to the examination of "devices users of human languages employ to put meaningful elements together to form words, words form phrases, phrases together to form clauses, clauses together to form sentences, and sentences together to form texts." Van Valin and LaPolla, *Syntax*, 1.

5. See Daniel C. Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life* (New York: A Touchstone Book, Simon and Schuster, 1995), 212–220.

6. Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, 229–230. The term "intentional" is used here in the sense of an analytic approach, and not in the sense of attributing conscious purpose.

7. Frits Staal, "From Meanings to Trees," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 11.

8. Stephanie W. Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife: Women, Ritual, and Hospitality in Ancient India* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 52.

9. Charles D. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The* Scripture for Humane Kings *in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 155. Although Orzech refers here to "template," "paradigm" may be a more appropriate term, since "template" implies a pattern from which specific items may be made. However, my understanding is that the model is provided by some specific ritual, that is, a paradigm, which is then transformed to fit the need.

10. Ibid.

11. Yael Bentor, *Consecrations of Images and Stūpas in Indo-Tibetan Tantric Buddhism*, Brill's Indological Library, vol. 11 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 7–8.

12. Michael Witzel, "Meaningful Ritual: Vedic, Medieval, and Contemporary Concepts in the Nepalese Agnihotra Ritual," in *Ritual, State and History in South Asia: Essays in Honour of J. C. Heesterman*, ed. A. W. van den Hoek, D. H. A. Kolff, and M. S. Oort, Memoirs of the Kern Institute, no. 5 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 781.

13. Frits Staal, "Ritual Syntax," in *Sanskrit and Indian Studies: Essays in Honour of Daniel H. H. Ingalls*, ed. Masatoshi Nagatomi et al. (Dordrecht, Boston, and London: D. Reidel, 1980), 131.

14. The issue raised by Witzel and Staal regarding the asymmetries created by one set of ritual actions interrupting another in a way that is more complex than a simple embedding is both important and complex. The syntactic issues will require greater depth of study than is feasible in the scope of this particular essay, and will be treated separately in another, future essay.

15. Staal, "From Meanings to Trees," 21.

16. The symmetry of the rituals that I have examined in detail may be explained by reference to the cognitive impact of the "appropriated metaphor" that provides the model for the ritual itself. Specifically, the "guest feast" model imposes a certain logic on the ritual activities. This is in keeping with what John R. Taylor has called the "symbolic thesis" of cognitive linguistics, according to which "syntax itself is regarded as inherently symbolic." John R. Taylor, *Cognitive Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 22. It is important to note here that "symbol" in the context of Taylor's cognitive grammar means "the relation between a phonological element and a semantic structure." Ibid., 23. Syntax constitutes the third term, that is, the relational element between phonology and semantics. This means that "the syntactic (and morphological) facts of a language will be *motivated* by semantic aspects and that they can be exhaustively described by means of symbolic structures." Ibid., 29. What this does not mean, however, is that rituals are reducible to simply a set of symbols, but rather that attention must be paid to how the semantic component motivates the syntactic—specifically, here, how the feast model (» semantic element) serves to structure (» syntactic element) ritual activities. The characteristics of individual performances and ritual cultures as expressed in the physical aspects of a ritual performance would approximate to the phonological element.

17. Such scripts are not always written texts. In some cases, as for example in southern India, the manipulation of a written text is part of the ritual performance, but the performance is based on a memorized script.

18. Staal, "From Meanings to Trees," 19.

19. Ibid., 20. We are here employing the symbol "➤" as a technical operator meaning "application of a recursive rule." Thus the first step above would be read something like "by the application of a recursive rule A becomes BAB." This would be a more limited operator than the more usual →.

20. Although the field of "Jain tantra" is only now being explored, the *homa* is found there as well. For example, it is found "in the Jaina tantric text Bhairavapadmavatikalpa, in chapter 3 (devyarcanādhikāra: the section on worship of the goddess [Bhairava-padmāvatī]). Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa of Malliṣeṇa Sūri. Śukadeva Caturvedī, ed. *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa.* Saṃskṛta Vivaraṇa evaṃ 'Mohinī' Hindī Vyākhyā Sahita. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999." Shaman Hatley, personal communication, 30 August 2010.

21. Personal communication, 29 August 2010. One suspects that the internalization of ritual appears to be an important element in setting the stage for the development of the *bhakti* traditions that share so much with tantra.

22. Personal communications, Glen Hayes and Carl Ernst, respectively, 2 September 2010.

23. By "proto-tantra" is meant the use of elements (e.g., mantra, *mudrā*, mandala) that would become part of tantra per se. Tantra per se is defined as the integrated use of these elements for ritual practice (*sādhana*) in the course of which the practitioner ritually identifies him/herself with the deity evoked.

24. Some scholars have interpreted the appearance of such elements within Buddhism as part of an increasing decadence of the tradition, a rhetoric that creatively plays with the ambiguity of "decadent": "impure" because of mixed with non-Buddhist practices, and "immoral" because of sexual and other antinomian practices. Although usually presented simply as factual, and then rhetorically linked with the decline (another metaphor of decadence) of Buddhism in India, these are basically judgments, the evaluative bases of which are usually obscured.

25. Rolf Giebel, trans., *The Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra* (Berkeley, CA: Numata Center, 2005), 152; cf. Stephen Hodge, *The Mahā-Vairocana-Abhisaṃbodhi Tantra, With Buddhaguhya's Commentary* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 272–273. Although read as referring to two kinds of *homas*, the text seems to my understanding to be talking about two different dimensions of the *homa* ritual, since the internal is not described in terms of a visualization, but rather in terms of its ability to eliminate karma. Cf. Giebel, *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra,* 217, and Michel Strickmann, "Homa in East Asia," in *Agni: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, ed. Frits Staal, 2 vols. (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), 2:443.

26. Giebel, *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi Sutra,* 214.

27. Ibid.

28. Cf. Strickmann, "Homa in East Asia," 438.

29. Tadeusz Skorupski, "Tibetan Homa Rites According to the gTer ma Tradition," *The Tibet Journal* 20, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 5.

30. See Yael Bentor, *Consecration of Images and Stūpas in Indo-Tibetan Tantric Buddhism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 270n214.

31. Skorupski, "Tibetan Homa Rites," 5.

32. According to Strickmann "the earliest systematic classification of Homa types" is found in texts translated by Bodhiruci dating from ca. 709, one of which (*T.* 951.19: 261c et seq.) lists three types: *śāntika, pauṣṭika,* and *abhicāraka.* Strickmann, "Homa in East Asia," 2:434. Strickmann also indicates that by the end of the eighth century the other two kinds identified in this paper had become part of the ritual corpus of Chinese tantric ritual practice.

33. John Makransky, "Offering (*mChod pa*) in Tibetan Ritual Literature," in *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, ed. José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion, 1996), 314. Internal reference to Nancy E. Auer Falk, "Hindu Pūjā," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 83.

34. Witzel, "Meaningful Ritual," 774.

35. Even the grandest and most elaborate of altars for a *śrauta* rite, that of the *Agnicayana* rite, is considered a temporary one—upon completion of the twelve days of the ritual performance per se, the shelter over the altar is burned and the altar abandoned to the elements. Frits Staal, *Agni: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, 2 vols. (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), 1:689; see plates 110 and 111.

36. Kristofer Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, trans. Karen C. Duval (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1993), 91–93. According to Isabelle Robinet, the Daoist pure chamber (trans. here as "purity chamber") is itself modeled on Confucian chapels that were used as places for reading the classics. Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, trans. Phyllis Brooks (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 62.

37. Stephan Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1978), 264.

38. Tibetan names are from Bentor, *Consecration of Images and Stūpas*, xix.

39. "Prototype" is being used here in the sense of exemplar. Cf. George Lakoff, "Cognitive Models and Prototype Theory," in *Concepts and Conceptual Development: Ecological and Intellectual Factors in Categorization*, ed. Ulric Neisser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 64. For an application of prototype theory to syntax, see John R. Taylor, *Linguistic Categorization,* 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

40. Staal, "Ritual Syntax," 127.

41. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology, no. 16 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 24.

42. Philip N. Johnson-Laird, *The Computer and the Mind: An Introduction to Cognitive Science* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977), 125–126.

43. Staal, "From Meanings to Trees," 23. Emphasis original.

44. For an informative review of criticisms of structuralism, particularly in its linguistic form as applied to the study of literature, see Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (orig. pub., 1975; repr., London and New York: Routledge, 2002), esp. "Part I: Structuralism and Linguistic Models."

45. See, for example, the speculations regarding violence and human nature growing out of René Girard's theology. As intriguing as these are, they may have nothing to do with the contemporary Japanese or Tibetan performances of the *homa*.

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# BOOK REVIEW

**Readings of the Lotus Sūtra. Edited by Stephen Teiser and Jacqueline Stone. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. 284 pages. Hardcover, $79.50; paperback, $24.50. ISBN 978-0-231-14288-5.**

**Taigen Dan Leighton**
Institute of Buddhist Studies

*READINGS OF THE LOTUS SŪTRA* serves as a good, brief introduction to significant issues in the *Lotus Sutra* as a text. Even more, with impeccable scholarship throughout, it surveys major aspects of the devotion and practice based on the sutra in East Asia, where it is arguably the most important Buddhist scripture. Suitable for undergraduate classes, this is a collection of eight informative but accessible articles by leading scholars in the field of East Asian Buddhism, with useful reference material added at the end.

One notable feature of this book is that all citations for textual references to the sutra use the translation by Leon Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (orig. pub., New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). This translation has been reprinted and updated for the occasion of this *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra* volume and includes a new foreword by *Readings* co-editor Stephen Teiser. The Hurvitz translation is one of more than a half-dozen reasonably good English translations of Kumārajīva's Chinese rendition, the primary version for all East Asia. While there is an earlier, nineteenth-century English translation by H. Kern from the Sanskrit, the Hurvitz edition is the most academically careful and includes notes on the Sanskrit edition, so it is a sensible choice. Hopefully this joint publication by Columbia University Press will not dissuade readers from also referencing and comparing passages from the other available good translations, for example the excellent new translation by Gene Reeves, *The Lotus Sutra: A Contemporary Translation of a Buddhist Classic* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008), which is less academic but more accessible

to modern general readers, and unlike Hurvitz, also includes the important though shorter so-called opening and closing sutras associated with the *Lotus Sutra*. Among its useful end-materials, *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra* includes an annotated bibliography of all European-language translations of the sutra, as well as a cross-references to citations given in this book with page numbers from the Hurvitz old and new editions, the Kumārajīva version in Chinese in the *Taishō*, and the translation by Burton Watson, *The Lotus Sutra* (orig. pub., New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

The editors of *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra*, Stephen Teiser and Jacqueline Stone, have written an extremely helpful introductory article, "Interpreting the *Lotus Sūtra*." It first presents the sutra's role in setting key issues in early Indian Mahāyāna and a new vision of liberation apart from the extinction of nirvana. Teiser and Stone further describe how the sutra's bold claims fit into Mahāyāna developments in India, and even more in East Asia, including how aspects of the sutra provides a fresh context for envisioning bodhisattva practice. The article lists "central claims" of the sutra, especially the One Vehicle teaching, which might be seen as inclusive of various equally useful *upāya*, "skillful means" or "expedient devices" in Hurvitz's translation, or, by contrast as a way of championing the *Lotus Sutra* itself as preeminent. The radical promise of universal buddhahood is a key feature of the sutra, especially influential in East Asia and prefiguring the somewhat later idea of "buddha-nature." Perhaps most radical is the unique *Lotus Sutra* view of Śākyamuni Buddha as a primordial buddha with an unimaginably extensive life span. The article then provides an account of Chinese translations of the sutra and their commentaries, as well as historical movements dedicated to the sutra. This includes Chinese Tiantai, and Tendai and Nichiren developments in Japan. Modes of popular approaches to the sutra's dissemination are discussed, such as artistic copying of the text as well as miracle tales about the efficacy of its veneration.

The second article, by Carl Bielefeldt, "Expedient Devices, the One Vehicle, and the Life Span of the Buddha," informatively addresses the central issues in the sutra. He focuses on expedient devices as a problematic spiritual technique, as seen in the related One Vehicle teaching. The *Lotus Sutra* often depicts itself as the elitist, one supreme vehicle transcending the three vehicles of *śrāvaka*, *pratyekabuddha*, and bodhisattva, although it instead may also be seen as inclusive, with

all three as part of the universal one vehicle. Bielefeldt interestingly highlights the distress of the original, faithful students of the Buddha, now viewed as somehow deficient. He further explores the *Lotus Sutra* Buddha's inconceivable life span. Bielefeldt considers such a Buddha not a "mere wise man and kind teacher; he is more like a supernatural ruler, a lord of hosts," and the sutra's fantastic vision as more mythic than practical. The article includes considerations of some of the sutra's parables and the history of interpretive traditions about it, but the questions raised by these key issues are complex and susceptible to a wide range of perspectives, far beyond the scope of a single introductory article.

The *Lotus Sutra*'s story of the *nāga* king's daughter quickly attaining buddhahood has been a central contested narrative for Western considerations of the role of women in Buddhism. In her illuminating article, "Gender and Hierarchy in the *Lotus Sūtra*," Jan Nattier provides valuable contexts from both Indian and later Mahāyāna Buddhism for considering not only gender issues, but the question of early Buddhist roles in supporting or challenging societal hierarchy. For both gender and hierarchy the story is certainly mixed. Buddhism did overturn caste hierarchies but also gave validity to claims of karmic misdeeds in past lives of those born to lower castes, thus reinforcing social hierarchies. Furthermore, monastic hierarchies were established, though these might be considered as alternatives countering conventional social prejudices. As to gender roles, Nattier usefully mentions other exemplary Mahāyāna women but points out that they are still very much in the minority. Nattier highlights the most radical aspect of the story about the *nāga* king's daughter, simply the rapidity of attainment of buddhahood, and its wider availability, deeply subversive to the conventional Mahāyāna view of lifetimes of practice. She discusses this in its importance to East Asian devotees as a "leap of faith" providing a major shift in Buddhist understanding and at least the "potential for sweeping egalitarianism." But Nattier concludes that while the sutra does challenge conventional gender roles and hierarchy, leaving them "profoundly weakened," it still falls short of a truly inclusive view, for example with the *nāga* king's daughter's need to assume, albeit with ease, a male body before achieving buddhahood.

James Benn in "The *Lotus Sūtra* and Self-Immolation" discusses one of the aspects of Chinese veneration of the sutra probably most bizarre and uncomfortable for Westerners. Many Americans in the sixties had

as their first image of Buddhism the Vietnamese monk Thich Quang Duc sitting upright as he immolated himself in downtown Saigon to protest the war in Vietnam. But probably still, few Westerners know about the venerable Chinese tradition described by Benn of *Lotus Sutra* devotees from the early fourth century on immolating themselves, or burning limbs or other body parts. This practice was inspired directly by the Bodhisattva Medicine King celebrated in chapter 23 of the *Lotus Sutra.* In the sutra story this bodhisattva performs this act of "auto-cremation" as an offering to buddhas, indicating his sincerity and expiating lifetimes of karma. Benn discusses the story and its traditional readings, and also describes the history of notable historical Chinese monks who performed this act in emulation of Medicine King. Of course this was never a widespread practice, but the fact that it was respected at all will surprise Westerners with customary perspectives of suicide as sin and without a belief in future lifetimes. In this article Benn, who has published a book-length treatment of Chinese self-immolation practices, also mentions some related apocryphal practices and other relevant scriptural sources besides the *Lotus Sutra.* While this material may be the most startling and unfamiliar aspect of the sutra to some readers, given its relatively minor role in the total history of *Lotus Sutra* veneration it is a somewhat surprising choice for an anthology of only eight articles surveying the text. Nevertheless, it does provide a wider viewpoint for understanding the range of historical *Lotus Sutra* devotion.

Daniel Stevenson's excellent article, "Buddhist Practice and the *Lotus Sūtra* in China," provides a fine survey of less extreme but more diverse (and probably more agreeable) popular Chinese practices associated with the sutra. These practices were expressions of the sutra as itself an object of devotion. Stevenson notes that they were never as formalized or institutionalized as Japanese veneration of the sutra, but discusses the development of these Chinese ritual practices directly from the sutra's own encouragements to uphold, read and recite, expound, and copy the sutra itself. Each of these modes produced a range of ritual activity. Stevenson also mentions the rich lore of *Lotus Sutra* related miracle tales and of hagiographies of devotees of the sutra.

Willa Jane Tanabe in "Art of the *Lotus Sūtra*" discusses the rich artwork focused on the *Lotus Sutra* that developed especially in Japan but also in China and Korea. This artwork derived from the sutra's

exhortation to copy the text and served to disseminate the sutra's stories and teachings. Tanabe provides classifications of this artwork in terms of varied genres, such as frontispiece paintings and jeweled *stūpa* mandalas, as well as for their functions. The article includes nine photographs of exemplary paintings and one sculpture. Also provided are a table listing the episodes commonly depicted from the sutra, as well as a detailed, informative table itemizing the paintings of the sutra at the important Buddhist caves at Dunhuang on the Silk Road in Western China, showing the works from each chapter of the text during seven different periods ranging from the Sui dynasty (561–618) to the Song (960–1279). The art derived from the *Lotus Sutra* both represents devotional practice and expression of the sutra's popular role, so this chapter of the book is an important aspect of describing the impact of the sutra.

Ruben Habito's informative article "Bodily Reading of the *Lotus Sūtra*" discusses the expression in Nichiren Buddhism of the sutra's encouragement of its own veneration. The article starts with discussing the sutra's idea of the "value of the book," apart from what is cognitively signified in the text, as the sutra's physical scrolls are identified with the Tathāgatha's body by the sutra itself, and in the history of its veneration. Habito discusses how Nichiren most fully expressed this idea in his primary physical practice of chanting the sutra's name, "*Namu myōhō renge kyō*," along with encouraging reading of the sutra text. Nichiren is also interesting in his embrace of *mappō*, the declining final dharma age, widely believed to have already arrived in thirteenth-century Japan. Nichiren came to see this as a welcome opportunity, rather than a hindrance, as he understood himself and his followers to be those predicted in the *Lotus Sutra*, and thus themselves verification of the sutra's truth. Habito also briefly surveys some of the prominent exponents and outgrowths of the Nichiren and Japanese *Lotus* tradition after Nichiren, including in the twentieth-century nationalist Tanaka Chigaku, socialist Seno'o Girō, and the Risshō Kōseikai and Sōka Gakkai movements.

In the book's excellent final article, "Realizing this World as the Buddha Land," co-editor Jacqueline Stone starts from the sutra's promise not only of eventual buddhahood for all practitioners, but also for the enlightenment of the land or realm. She shows how this idea of the buddha's land is informed by the context of the Buddha's vast life span, or virtual omnipresence, and how it was developed in Chinese Huayan

and Tiantai and Japanese Tendai thought to subtly express the non-duality of beings and land, and of the Pure Land and this very world. Stone adeptly presents the subtlety of these ideas and their unfolding practical expression in Japan. From Tendai slogans such as, "Grasses, trees, the land itself: all will become buddhas," Japanese Buddhism implemented various means for placing the *Lotus Sutra* in various local sacred geographies and ultimately as a protector of the whole land of Japan as a nation. This leads naturally to Nichiren, with a detailed discussion of Japanese nationalism and its unfolding in modern times, and concludes with a discussion of post-war *Lotus Sutra* devotion, supplementing some of the material also discussed by Habito.

*Readings of the Lotus Sūtra* is not a substitute but rather a welcome adjunct to the two other somewhat comparable available anthologies of good critical articles, *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture*, edited by George and Willa Jane Tanabe (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), and *A Buddhist Kaleidoscope: Essays on the Lotus Sutra*, edited by Gene Reeves (Tokyo: Kosei Publishing, 2002). The eleven articles in the Tanabe and Tanabe's useful volume, as its name suggests, focus on the sutra's impact in Japan, covering aspects medieval and modern, political, poetical, and artistic. It begins with two very useful surveys of the text's literary and conceptual structure and central ideas. The first article, by Shioiri Ryōdō, helpfully analyzes the traditional interpretations of the structure of the sutra especially by the great Tiantai founder Zhiyi, who divided the text into halves of cause and effect or fruit; the second article by Tamura Yoshirō provides detailed commentary on the development of central ideas, including those highlighted in the first two articles in *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra*. *A Buddhist Kaleidoscope* is broader in scope than either of the other two books, with thirty mostly academic and stimulating articles covering a wide range of informative topics including philosophical, social, and ethical issues. For example, topics include the relationship of the sutra to the work of Kenji Miyazawa and Tolstoy; discussions of the sutra's relationship to ecological crises, healthcare, and gender justice; and coherent contesting views of key issues such as temporality and skillful means. While probably not as approachable a volume for general readers, it contains articles by three of the contributors to *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra*, including co-editor Jacqueline Stone.

What *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra* provides to supplement the previous two volumes is an informed and comprehensible introduction to

the sutra, more accessible to general readers but at the same time with high quality scholarship and depth that will prepare those who might want to read further in the other anthologies. *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra* will surely enhance awareness of the *Lotus Sutra* and its importance among Western readers interested in Buddhism.

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# BDK ENGLISH TRIPIṬAKA SERIES:
## A Progress Report

In 2009, we brought forth the publication of *The Sutra on the Concentration of Sitting Meditation* and *Buddhacarita: In Praise of Buddha's Acts.* These were the latest volumes to be published in the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series. The following volumes have thus far been published:

The Summary of the Great Vehicle [Taishō 1593] (1992)

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The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts [Taishō 1488] (1994)

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Buddhacarita: In Praise of Buddha's Acts  [Taishō 192] (2009)

These volumes can be purchased at the BCA Buddhist Bookstore in Berkeley, CA or directly from the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation & Research.

The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research as well as the Editorial Committee of the BDK English Tripiṭaka Project looks forward to continuing to publish volumes of the English Tripiṭaka Series. Through this work we hope to help fulfill the dream of founder Reverend Dr. Yehan Numata to make the teaching of the Buddha available to the English-speaking world.

### The *Pacific World*—Its History

Throughout my life, I have sincerely believed that Buddhism is a religion of peace and compassion, a teaching which will bring spiritual tranquillity to the individual, and contribute to the promotion of harmony and peace in society. My efforts to spread the Buddha's teachings began in 1925, while I was a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley. This beginning took the form of publishing the *Pacific World*, on a bi-monthly basis in 1925 and 1926, and then on a monthly basis in 1927 and 1928. Articles in the early issues concerned not only Buddhism, but also other cultural subjects such as art, poetry, and education, and then by 1928, the articles became primarily Buddhistic. Included in the mailing list of the early issues were such addressees as the Cabinet members of the U.S. Government, Chambers of Commerce, political leaders, libraries, publishing houses, labor unions, and foreign cultural institutions.

After four years, we had to cease publication, primarily due to lack of funds. It was then that I vowed to become independently wealthy so that socially beneficial projects could be undertaken without financial dependence on others. After founding the privately held company, Mitutoyo Corporation, I was able to continue my lifelong commitment to disseminate the teachings of Buddha through various means.

As one of the vehicles, the *Pacific World* was again reactivated, this time in 1982, as the annual journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies. For the opportunity to be able to contribute to the propagation of Buddhism and the betterment of humankind, I am eternally grateful. I also wish to thank the staff of the Institute of Buddhist Studies for helping me to advance my dream to spread the spirit of compassion among the peoples of the world through the publication of the *Pacific World*.

Yehan Numata
Founder, Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai

### In Remembrance

In May of 1994, my father, Yehan Numata, aged 97 years, returned to the Pure Land after earnestly serving Buddhism throughout his lifetime. I pay homage to the fact that the *Pacific World* is again being printed and published, for in my father's youth, it was the passion to which he was wholeheartedly devoted.

I, too, share my father's dream of world peace and happiness for all peoples. It is my heartfelt desire that the *Pacific World* helps to promote spiritual culture throughout all humanity, and that the publication of the *Pacific World* be continued.

Toshihide Numata
Chairman, Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai