

Do Not Do What Is Wrong

by Nichiko Niwano

From childhood we are often told, “Do not do what you have been taught is wrong.” Why should we not do something we are told is wrong? Furthermore, to begin with, what exactly does it mean to do wrong?

As is written in the Dhammapada: “Do something wrong, and afterward you will regret it.” In other words, avoiding to do something you know is wrong means you can pass your days without regret. Some people may think, “Oh, is that all this is about?” If you live without regrets, you will always feel cheerful and every day of your life can be enjoyable and fulfilling. There can be no greater joy.

Nevertheless, it can be rather difficult to pin down exactly what wrongdoing means. Definitions of the terms “good” and “evil” may change, depending on the person using them, the period in history, and the karmic connections. That is why many philosophers since ancient times have found them hard to define, saying that they are beyond human conceiving.

It has been said, however, that goodness means following a course that fosters life and that evil means going against the flow of life. Simply put, words and deeds that accord with the Truth, or the Dharma, imply goodness, while those that disrespect the sanctity of your own and others’ lives are evil. Also, the reason that Shakyamuni said, “Those who know the preciousness of their own selves, let them not connect themselves to evil,” is because awareness of life is at the root of not doing something wrong.

From this perspective, the ten evils taught by Buddhism are all actions that

do harm to the sanctity of your own and others’ lives. They include: to unnecessarily take life; to steal from others; to become involved in immoral sexual relationships; to use language that is duplicitous or flattering; to speak ill of others, tell lies, or cheat; to cherish fierce desire or anger; and to hold wrong views.

Such behavior, in nearly all cases, causes people to hold a grudge, or makes people angry or sad, and is bound to bring about regret. In order to live without regret, do not do what is wrong—that is an ironclad rule of life.

On the other hand, the Edo-period Shingon priest Jiun Onko (1718–1804) said that “the ten good deeds are the practice hall of bodhisattvas.” In other words, not committing the ten evils means for us studying the Buddha Way and putting it into practice, and that itself is “the Way of humanity.”

Doing Good Deeds

Although we understand that we should not do what is wrong, sometimes we may tell lies or become angry. We cannot say absolutely that there is no chance that, without knowing it, we somehow hurt other people, or that accidentally, we might even be responsible for the death of someone. That is why Shakyamuni has given us the concrete teaching of not committing the ten evils, and thereby encouraged us to always be able to realize the sanctity of life.

“Do not do what is wrong” brings to mind the verse of the precepts of the seven buddhas that sums up Buddhist thought. The first line of the verse, “Do

Nichiko Niwano is president of Rissho Kosei-kai and an honorary president of Religions for Peace. He also serves as an advisor to Shinshuren (Federation of New Religious Organizations of Japan).

no evil,” is in most cases read as a command to refrain from committing evil deeds. Zen master Dogen (1200–1253), however, interpreted this line as meaning that if you walk the Buddha Way and live with awareness of the sanctity of life, you naturally will not do what is wrong. In other words, the phrase “do no evil,” rather than being a warning that we should not do what is wrong, is a phrase that shows us our true nature; that is, if we are truly aware of the sanctity of life, we will only do good. You will do nothing wrong precisely because you have realized what is important to you as a human being, thanks to having made a connection to the teaching of the Buddha. We cannot help but think of the peace of mind that ensues.

As for the people who have committed wrongful acts, just as in the saying “Those who are capable of evil are also capable of good,” once they return to their senses, they are more capable of walking the bodhisattva way than other people, with remorse that serves like the working of a springboard.

Finally, I would like to mention another saying of Shakyamuni’s. “If an action brings about no regret, and can be done happily and joyfully, that action embodies goodness”—so let us spend each day of our lives cheerfully and joyfully. □

DHARMA WORLD

FOR LIVING BUDDHISM AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

JULY–SEPT. 2016 VOL. 43

FEATURES: Contemporary Ideas about Karma

Dharma World presents Buddhism as a practical living religion and promotes interreligious dialogue for world peace. It espouses views that emphasize the dignity of life, seeks to rediscover our inner nature and bring our lives more in accord with it, and investigates causes of human suffering. It tries to show how religious principles help solve problems in daily life and how the least application of such principles has wholesome effects on the world around us. It seeks to demonstrate truths that are fundamental to all religions, truths on which all people can act.

Publisher: Hirofumi Mizuno

Director: Kazumasa Murase

Senior Editor: Kazumasa Osaka

Editor: Katsuyuki Kikuchi

Editorial Advisors:

Miriam Levering, Gene Reeves,

Yoshiaki Sanada,

Dominick Scarangelo,

Michio T. Shinozaki

Copy Editors:

William Feuillan, Gary Hoiby,

DeAnna Satre, Catherine Szolga

Editorial Staff:

Ryuichi Kaneko, Satoe Izawa

Subscription Staff: Kazuyo Okazaki

Layout and Design: Abinitio Design

Cover:

Photo: Shutterstock.com

Photoshop work by Abinitio Design

1 Do Not Do What Is Wrong

by *Nichiko Niwano*

•••••

3 Understanding Karma for Today

by *Dominick Scarangelo*

4 What Does Karma

Really Mean?

by *David R. Loy*

8 Karma as the Constructive

Activity of Experience

by *Maria Heim*

12 Chinese Buddhist Perspectives

on Karma

by *Beverley McGuire*

16 All Sentient Beings

Are Bodhisattvas

by *Fumihiko Sueki*

19 Reviewing the Buddha's Teaching on Karma

and Its Social Ramifications

by *Jonathan S. Watts*

•••••

25 Discovering the Lotus on This Shore:

A Reading of Kenji Miyazawa's "Okhotsk Elegy"

by *Jon Holt*

30 The Actual Refugee Crisis in Europe

by *Ignacio Marqués*

34 Abiding by the Laws of Interdependence

The 33rd Niwano Peace Prize Acceptance Address

by *Dishani Jayaweera, Cofounder of the Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation*

39 The Asian Conference of Religions for Peace

by *Nikkyo Niwano*

THE THREEFOLD LOTUS SUTRA: A MODERN COMMENTARY

43 The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law

Chapter 25: The All-Sidedness of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World (4)

Understanding Karma for Today

by Dominick Scarangelo

The enlightenment of Shakyamuni is a spiritual paradigm par excellence for Buddhists. We are told that under the Bodhi Tree he perceived the karma of himself and other beings, which became the basis for realizing both the causes of suffering and the potential for extinguishing it. Accounts of Shakyamuni's attainment of buddhahood articulate how the concept of karma—action and its effects—lays at the very heart of Buddhism's elaboration of humanity's spiritual problem and the solutions it offers. For this reason, the modern Buddhist trend toward deemphasizing the doctrine of karma or eliminating it altogether is, as Maria Heim points out in her contribution to this issue, a "striking development."

"There's no point in pretending that karma hasn't become a problem for contemporary Buddhism," David Loy declares in the opening of his essay, cutting to the heart of the matter. Apprehension that karma is socially regressive, skepticism about rebirth, antipathy toward determinism, and other objections seem to be making karma, in Heim's words, "optional in modernist Buddhism." Is karma a nonobligatory element of Buddhist tradition that can be dispensed with if it runs afoul of rationalism, science or our notions of equality and agency? If not, how can we understand karma today?

David Loy responds by encouraging us to interrogate the doctrines of karma and rebirth, suggesting that accepting them literally without probing their meaning may actually be unfaithful to

Buddhist tradition. Beverley McGuire challenges us in her piece to rethink karma in light of historical Chinese Buddhist perspectives. Chinese traditions balance mechanical notions of karma with a sense that its workings are inscrutable, providing both practical guidelines for ethical behavior while obviating socially regressive uses of the doctrine, and also recasting misfortune as opportunity for bodhisattva action. Fumihiko Sueki reminds us that the doctrines of karma and rebirth teach that we are all bodhisattvas, capable of transferring the merit of our good deeds to others.

These insightful essays provide starting points from which we can work toward new understandings of karma through dialogue with the past while also addressing the needs and concerns of twenty-first-century Buddhists. In the remainder of this essay I would like to weigh in on the discussion, stressing the continued importance of rebirth and karma, even today, by considering how both concepts can imbue Buddhist scriptures with the power to transform people's lives.

For devotees of the Lotus Sutra, the concepts of rebirth and karma are important to participating in the world of the text and integrating its motifs into one's life. Throughout several chapters of the sutra, the Buddha expounds the Dharma based on an "example of the past" revealing his disciples' karmic affinity with the teaching in order to awaken them. For Zhiyi (538–97), the founder of Tiantai Buddhism, and the later Japanese Lotus

Dominick Scarangelo, PhD, specializes in early-modern and modern Japanese religions. He has taught at the University of Virginia and was the Postdoctoral Scholar in Japanese Buddhism at the Center for Japanese Studies, University of California, Berkeley (2013–14). Currently, he is an international advisor to Rissho Kosei-kai.

Sutra votary Nichiren (1222–82), this karmic connection the Buddha reveals—the action of receiving the teaching in the ancient past—is the sowing of a seed of buddhahood. For the disciples in the text, this revelation is a rendezvous with their forgotten selves; for later and even contemporary upholders of the sutra, this trope of re-encountering the scripture owing to bonds of karma allows them to project themselves into the narrative, making it their own story, and envisioning what the sutra calls their "interior bodhisattvas": their heretofore unknown human potential.

In this way the stories of the Lotus Sutra and the self-awareness of devotees coalesce—the text's compilers transcend time to implant "seeds" of empowering self-transformation into the hearts of people today. This liberating potency is closely related to ideas of karma and rebirth, however, and consequently vulnerable to any diminution of these concepts in contemporary religiosity. How we understand karma today is not pedantic; it is of the greatest importance for the vitality of Buddhism and its sacred texts such as the Lotus Sutra. □

What Does Karma Really Mean?

by David R. Loy

The true focus of the karma teaching is not on the consequences (effects) but on one's actions (causes).

How should we understand karma today?

There's no point in pretending that karma hasn't become a problem for contemporary Buddhism. If we are honest with ourselves, most of us aren't sure how to understand it. Along with rebirth, karma has always been a basic Buddhist teaching, but today we don't know how literally they should be interpreted.

Many of the important Buddhist teachings seem quite modern; in fact, they probably make more sense to us today than they did to people living at the time of the Buddha. What Buddhism has to say about nonself, for example, is consistent with what modern psychology

has discovered about how the ego-self is socially and linguistically constructed. Likewise, what Buddhist thinkers such as Nagarjuna have said about language—how it works, how it often misleads us—is consistent with what many linguists and philosophers have recently been emphasizing. And much of contemporary science agrees with Buddhist claims about interdependence (ecology) and insubstantiality (physics). In such ways Buddhism can fit quite nicely into modern ways of understanding. But not traditional views of karma.

Karma is most often understood as an impersonal and deterministic “moral

law” of cause and effect that is built into the universe: what you do rebounds back onto you. Yet the physical causality that modern science has discovered about the world seems to allow for no such mechanism. Of course, this by itself does not refute karma. It does, however, encourage us to rethink what karma means.

There are at least two other problems with the ways that karma has traditionally been understood. One of them is its connection with a self-defeating split that developed in most Buddhist societies between the monastic *sangha* and the laity. Although the earliest teachings (as recorded in the Pali Canon) make it quite clear that laypeople too can attain liberation, the main spiritual responsibility of lay Buddhists, as popularly understood today, is not to follow the path themselves but to support the monastics. In this way nonmonastics gain *punna* (merit)—a concept that commodifies karma. By accumulating merit they can hope to attain a favorable rebirth into a wealthy family, or maybe win the lottery this lifetime. This approach makes Buddhism into a form of “spiritual materialism,” because Buddhist practices are used to gain material rewards. Of course, this also works to the material benefit of the *sangha*. The result is that many Asian monastics and their lay supporters are locked into a codependent marriage where it's difficult for either partner to change.

There is another issue that has important implications for how Buddhism

David R. Loy is a professor, writer, and Zen teacher in the Sanbo Zen tradition of Japanese Zen Buddhism. He is a prolific author whose essays and books have been translated into many languages. He teaches in America and other countries on various topics, focusing primarily on the encounter between Buddhism and modernity and what each can learn from the other. See www.davidloy.org.

will adapt to a more global role in the future. Historically, the karma doctrine has been used to rationalize racism, caste, economic oppression, birth handicaps, and so forth. Taken literally, karma can justify the authority of political elites, who therefore must deserve their wealth and power, and the subordination of those who have neither. You were born crippled, or to a poor family? Well, who but you is responsible for that? If there is an infallible cause-and-effect relationship between one's actions and one's fate, there is no need to work toward social justice, because it's already built into the moral fabric of the universe. Sooner or later, every one of us will automatically experience the consequences of what we have done in the past.

I remember hearing a Buddhist teacher reflect on the Holocaust in Nazi

Germany during World War II: "What terrible karma all those Jews must have had." This kind of superstition, which blames the victims and rationalizes their horrific fate, is something Buddhist practitioners should no longer tolerate quietly. It is time for modern Buddhists to outgrow it by accepting social responsibility and finding ways to address such injustices.

In the Kalama Sutra, sometimes called "the Buddhist charter of free inquiry," the Buddha emphasized the importance of intelligent, probing doubt. He said that we should not believe in something until we have established its truth for ourselves. This suggests that accepting karma and rebirth literally, without questioning what they really mean, simply because they have been part of the Buddhist tradition, may actually be unfaithful to the best

of the tradition. This does not mean disparaging or dismissing Buddhist teachings about them. Rather, it highlights the need for modern Buddhism to *interrogate* those teachings. Given what is now known about human psychology, including the social construction of the self, how might we today approach these teachings in a way that is consistent with our own sense of how the world works? Unless we can do so, their emancipatory power will for us remain unrealized.

Consider this insightful comment by Erich Fromm about another (although very different!) revolutionary, Sigmund Freud:

The attempt to understand Freud's theoretical system, or that of any creative systematic thinker, cannot be successful unless we recognize that, and why, every system as it is developed and presented by its author is necessarily erroneous. . . . The creative thinker must think in the terms of the logic, the thought patterns, the expressible concepts of his culture. That means he has not yet the proper words to express the creative, the new, the liberating idea. He is forced to solve an insoluble problem: to express the new thought in concepts and words that do not yet exist in his language. . . . The consequence is that the new thought as he formulated it is a blend of what is truly new and the conventional thought which it transcends.

Fromm implies the impermanence—the dynamic, developing nature—of all spiritual teachings. As Buddhists, we tend to assume that the Buddha understood everything, that his awakening and his way of expressing that awakening are unsurpassable—but is that fair to him? Given how little we actually know about the historical Buddha, perhaps our collective image of him reveals less about who he actually was and more about our own need to perceive him as a completely perfect being—omniscient, all-wise, all-compassionate—to inspire our own spiritual practice.

Another basic teaching of Buddhism is impermanence, which reminds us that Hindu and Buddhist doctrines about karma and rebirth have a history, that *they have evolved over time*. Earlier Brahmanical teachings tended to understand karma mechanically and ritualistically. To perform a sacrifice in the proper fashion would invariably lead to the desired consequences. If those consequences were not forthcoming, then either there had been an error in procedure or the causal effects were delayed, perhaps until your next lifetime (hence implying rebirth). A very important part of the Buddha's spiritual revolution is that he transformed this ritualistic approach into a moral principle by focusing on *cetana* (“motivations,” “intentions”). The Dhammapada, for example, begins by emphasizing the preeminent importance of our mental attitude:

Experiences are preceded by mind, led by mind, and produced by mind. If one speaks or acts with an impure mind, suffering follows even as the cartwheel follows the hoof of the ox. Experiences are preceded by mind, led by mind, and produced by mind. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows like a shadow that never departs.

In the Buddha's time the Brahmanical understanding of karma emphasized the

importance of following the detailed procedures (rules) regulating each ritual. Naturally, however, the people who paid for the rituals were more interested in the results. Unfortunately, the situation in some Buddhist countries is not much different today. Monastics tend to be preoccupied with following the complicated rules that regulate their lives, while laypeople are preoccupied with accumulating merit by giving gifts to them. Do both of these attitudes miss the point of the Buddha's spiritual innovation?

As commonly used, the term *karma* refers to the results of something done in the past: for example, when something bad happens to me, I may respond: “Well, that must be my karma.” However, the original Sanskrit term *karma* (*kamma* in Pali) literally means “action.” Buddhism has other words for the consequences of an action: *vipaka* is the “result,” also known as the *phala* (fruit). As this suggests, the true focus of the karma teaching is not on the consequences (effects) but on one's *actions* (causes). In most popular understandings, the law of karma and rebirth is a way to get a handle on how the world will treat us in the future. This also implies, more immediately, that we must accept our own causal responsibility for whatever is happening to us now, as a consequence of what we must have done earlier.

That misunderstands the revolutionary significance of the Buddha's reinterpretation. His emphasis on *cetana* makes karma the key to spiritual development: *how my life-situation can be transformed by transforming the motivations of my actions right now*. The basic point, then, is that karma is not something the self *has*; instead, it is what the sense of self is, because one's sense of self is transformed by one's conscious choices. Just as my body is composed of the food eaten and digested, so my character is composed of those choices, which when repeated become habitual tendencies. In this way “I” am (re)constructed by my

Fromm's point is that even the most creative and revolutionary thinkers cannot stand on their own shoulders. They too remain dependent upon their cultural context, whether intellectual or spiritual—which is precisely what Buddhist emphasis on impermanence and causal interdependence implies. Of course, there are important differences between Freud and the historical Buddha, but the parallel is nevertheless very suggestive. Did Shakyamuni Buddha express his new, liberating insight in the only way he could, using the only religious terms that his culture could understand? Perhaps his (way of expressing the) Dharma was also a blend of the truly new (for example, teachings about *anatta* [not-self] and *paticca-samuppada* [dependent origination]) and the conventional religious thought of his time (karma and rebirth). Although the new transcends the conventional, as Fromm puts it, the new cannot immediately and completely escape the conventional wisdom it surpasses.

By emphasizing the inevitable limitations of any cultural innovator,

consistent, repeated mental attitudes. By choosing to change what motivates me—what motivations I act upon—I change the kind of person I am.

From this perspective, we experience karmic consequences not just for what we have *done* but also for what we have *become*, and what we intentionally do is what makes us who we are. An anonymous verse expresses this well:

Sow a thought and reap a deed
Sow a deed and reap a habit
Sow a habit and reap a character
Sow a character and reap a destiny

(Of course, it's not always so simple: remember the destiny of the Jews in Nazi Germany. This reminds us that individual transformation by itself is not enough. We also need to be concerned about social transformation—about social justice. What happens to us is not separate from what happens to other people.)

What kind of thoughts do we need to sow? Buddhism traces back our *dukkha* (dissatisfaction) to the three unwholesome roots of evil: greed, ill will, and delusion. These problematic motivations need to be transformed into their positive counterparts: generosity and loving-kindness, along with the wisdom that realizes our interdependence with others.

This perspective helps us to understand why confession and repentance are so important: because they are our way of acknowledging, both to others and to ourselves, that we are striving not to allow something deplorable that we have done to become (or remain) a habitual tendency, part of one's sense of self.

Note that such an understanding of karma does not necessarily involve another life after physical death. The spiritual path is not about preparing for my next lifetime but doing the very best I can in this lifetime. To do that is the best way to prepare for one's next lifetime (if there is rebirth!). As the philosopher

Spinoza expressed it: "Happiness is not the reward for virtue; happiness is virtue itself." Looked at from the other side, I am punished not *for* my unwholesome actions but *by* them. Whether my habits are wholesome or unwholesome, I become the kind of person who does that sort of thing—who lives in that kind of world.

That is because, when your mind changes, the world changes. To become a different kind of person is to experience the world in a different way. And when we respond differently to the world, the world tends to respond differently to us. Since we are actually interdependent with the rest of the world, our ways of acting in it involve feedback systems that incorporate other people. People not only notice what we do, they notice why we do it. I may fool people sometimes, yet over time my character becomes revealed as the intentions behind my deeds become evident. The more I am motivated by greed, ill will, and delusion, the more I must manipulate the world to get what I want, and consequently the more alienated I feel and the more alienated others feel when they see they have been manipulated. This mutual distrust encourages both sides to manipulate more.

On the other side, the more my actions are motivated by generosity, loving-kindness, and the wisdom that recognizes our interdependence, the more I can relax and open up to the world. The more I feel part of the world and genuinely connected with others, the less I will be inclined to abuse others, and

consequently the more inclined they will be to trust and open up to me. In such ways, transforming my own motivations not only transforms my own life; it also affects those around me, since what I am is not separate from what they are.

This more naturalistic understanding of karma does not mean we must necessarily exclude other, perhaps more mysterious possibilities regarding the consequences of our motivations for the world we live in. What is clear, however, is that karma-as-how-to-transform-my-life-situation-by-transforming-my-motivations-right-now is not a fatalistic doctrine. Quite the contrary: it is difficult to imagine a more empowering spiritual teaching. We are not enjoined to accept and endure the problematic circumstances of our lives. Rather, we are encouraged to improve our spiritual lives and worldly situation by addressing those circumstances with generosity, loving-kindness, and the wisdom that we are not separate from each other. □

Karma as the Constructive Activity of Experience

by Maria Heim

Karma . . . is not so much reaping what one sows but the constant work of fashioning who one becomes.

One of the striking developments noticed by observers of modernist forms of Buddhism is the extent to which long-established doctrines of karma and rebirth have been deemphasized, and in some cases, dispensed with altogether. While indisputably central to the earliest scriptural tradition as it is represented by the Pali texts of the Theravada, doctrines of karma and samsara have sometimes been regarded as optional in modernist Buddhism.

One key moment in the modern formulation of these ideas is found in the work of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar,

social reformer, politician, and leader of the Buddhist Dalit movement in Independence-era India. Dr. Ambedkar publically embraced Buddhism along with millions of his followers in 1956. His was a Buddhism of social justice and equality, which he developed in response to the ideology of caste-based social injustice he saw as inextricably connected with Hinduism. Dr. Ambedkar argued that Buddhism was, above all, a religion of social emancipation. He had no use for teachings about karma that might legitimize social hierarchy, and he argued that in Buddhism karma has

relevance only for the present life. He rejected the idea that we inherit karma from past lives that determines our present condition, a doctrine he saw as sanctifying caste hierarchy and injustice (see B. R. Ambedkar, *The Buddha and His Dhamma* [Oxford University Press, 2011], 178–82). Following in the wake of Dr. Ambedkar, many contemporary Buddhists have found the doctrines of karma and samsara—especially when understood in a mechanical way simply as retribution or reward for actions across lives—empirically unverifiable at best and socially pernicious at worst.

Yet to cast aside too quickly doctrines about karma developed by the rich textual traditions of Buddhism is to miss the deeper and more complex possibilities they offer for understanding human experience. In this essay, I focus on a close reading of the early Pali sources and their commentaries as they attempted to understand the workings of karma. While the Buddha sometimes taught about karma in terms of retributive justice (and much narrative literature depicts it this way), he also introduced an intellectual tradition that deployed karma to explore the workings of human psychology, agency, and subjectivity. (By *agency* we mean the capacity to act, and by *subjectivity*

Maria Heim is Professor of Religion at Amherst College. She holds a PhD from Harvard University and did her undergraduate work at Reed College. She has held fellowships from Guggenheim and Fulbright. Her most recent book is The Forerunner of All Things: Buddhaghosa on Mind, Intention, and Agency (Oxford University Press, 2014). She is currently working on two projects: a study of emotions in classical Indian thought and a study of Buddhaghosa's hermeneutics.

we mean the ways we can experience ourselves as agents.) I offer here an exploration of what the Pali canonical tradition and its chief commentator, Buddhaghosa, suggest about the moral psychology of karma.

An often-quoted Pali *sutta* where the Buddha identifies karma with intention can offer a useful place to begin (Aṅguttara Nikāya III. 415). In this teaching, the Buddha retains the idea that the “fruit” of karma will be experienced in the present or future, including in hellish, animal, ghostly, human, or divine future births. But he also offers a “penetrating teaching” that aims to identify the subjective element in karma. Karma is here identified with its inner, subjective experience—intention (*cetanā*). This move places the significance of action on its intention and thus affirms that only intentional action (rather than accidental or nondeliberate action) “counts” as karma. This idea has important implications for determining culpability in moral and monastic codes of behavior. But the identification of karma with intention also invites us to consider the moral psychology of intentions and how they are formed. Defining karma in terms of intention takes us into the moral psychology of motivation, will formation, and agentive action.

Modern scholars have often seized on this *sutta* to argue that the Buddha taught a robust sense of moral agency and free will. Damien Keown, for example, argues that *intention* in this context should be interpreted as the decision or choice that determines action: “ethics

concerns choices” and “the distinctive function of *cetanā* is making choices” (*The Nature of Buddhist Ethics* [Palgrave Macmillan, 1992], 54, 143). Richard Gombrich also sees freedom of individual choice and moral responsibility in this conception of karmic intention: “Since ethical value lies in intention, the individual is autonomous and the final authority is what we would call his conscience” (Richard Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought* [Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, 2009], 13). In these readings, ethics is centered on choice, and karma involves the autonomous and free agent deliberating and making moral choices. This idea of human nature as fundamentally autonomous in the sphere of ethical decision making resonates strongly with modern Western assumptions of moral agency. It also contributes to a notion of karma as retributive justice—one is merely reaping what one sows with bad choices.

What is missing in this account of “intention as choice” are the complex phenomena that underlie our choices. There is good reason to be skeptical about rational deliberation as the sole or even major determinant of moral action. Recent neuroscience, for example, has suggested that well before we are aware of making a decision, our brains and bodies are already enacting it; desires, beliefs, and rationales for choice occur *ex post facto* (Susan Pockett, William P. Banks, and Shaun Gallagher, eds., *Does Consciousness Cause Behavior?* [MIT Press, 2006]). Moreover, even determining what our options are in

a moral choice involves prior subjective processes of attention and selection. Moral dilemmas do not come to us ready-made; they are constructed out of a much broader field of experience that we construe far prior to the business of framing and making moral choices. And awareness and selection are themselves conditioned by feeling, perception, and other subjective factors of our psychologies.

It is in fact these very sorts of processes that the Pali intellectual tradition was interested in when describing intention. Rational deliberation is only one process that goes into karma, and one that occurs rather late in the mental processes of formulating experience. While the canonical *suttas* do not define *cetanā*, the commentator Buddhaghosa explains that intention is a rudimentary process of mind that collects other key mental processes and marshals them in acting. Intention is not a decision or choice in the sense of a rational and free agent weighing moral options and deciding among them. Rather, intention is a prereflective process that together with other rudimentary processes creates all experience (Atthasālinī 111–13, translated by Pe Maung Tin as *The Expositor* [Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1999], 147–48).

In developing the psychology of intention, Buddhaghosa was working with the Abhidhamma tradition. The Abhidhamma is concerned to analyze in a remarkably fine-grained manner the intricate workings of experience; in this sense it can be understood as

an exercise of moral phenomenology. The phenomena described in the Abhidhamma texts are not, at least in principle, subconscious; they can be consciously observed by those highly skilled in introspection (first among whom, of course, is the Buddha, who made known the Abhidhamma methods based on his meditation experience). In one formulation, *cetanā* is one of five phenomena that construct every moment of experience, with the other four being sensory contact, feeling, perception, and awareness. In other words, intention is present in every moment of consciousness, constructing, along with other phenomena, how we experience the world.

Intention was thus interpreted as one phenomenon among many working in conditioned and conditioning relationships to construct our moment-by-moment experience. As Abhidhamma analysis gets more and more granular, another classification scheme depicts *cetanā* as an agentive constituent of mental life that works with and galvanizes fifty-five other mental phenomena (termed *dhammas* or *cetasikas*) to construct conscious experience. Buddhaghosa likens the role of *cetanā* to that of the head carpenter who works to coordinate and galvanize other workers to work on a construction project; intention gathers and stimulates other phenomena to do their work in the active construction of conscious experience.

In keeping with these ideas about the constructive aspects of intention, another early teaching, the Intention Sutta (Aṅguttara II. 158–59), describes *cetanā* in relation to the verbal form of *saṅkhāra*, a central psychological category that refers to the “constructions” or “synergies” that create experience. The *saṅkhāras* comprise a large list of phenomena, including what we might refer to in general and rather imprecise terms as *dispositions*, *temperaments*, *thoughts*, *emotions*, and *habits*

of mind. Here again, experience is not a given, and we do not have direct, unmediated access to the world “out there.” Rather, moment-by-moment experience is constructed and fashioned by the ways we perceive, feel, name, and react, which are processes themselves conditioned by past histories that generate the tendencies with and through which we see the world and act in it. When the texts identify intention and karma with these processes, they implicate them in the very subtle constructions that constitute all human experience.

These considerations about the intentional processes identified with karma are quite far removed from a conception of agency framed in terms of moral choice. The intentionality that is karma refers, rather, to the most basic ways that we construct experience. The construction of experience is our present action in the world; moreover, the ways we construct experience create what and who we become in the future. Considered this way, karma is not the isolated moral decisions and actions we make that determine in a tit-for-tat fashion what we will experience in the future, as it has often been imagined by modern scholars. Instead it is the rudimentary but highly significant ways we put together experience itself. These processes determine who we are and who we will become.

The Pali analysis thus puts the emphasis on the psychological factors of becoming. Human nature is not fixed; we become who we are by how we fashion our experience. Karma names the agentive role we take in constructing what we perceive and attend to in a field of experience. The Buddha’s insight was that this agentive process has moral significance across time. For example, if a person becomes habituated to apprehending and organizing his or her experience in a hateful and disaffected manner, the person’s experience becomes coarser and increasingly

aversive and violent over time. Karma creates disposition and temperament within a single lifetime and across lives. This is the inner, subjective logic of karma—we become who we will be by the very ways we actively fashion our experience. It stood to reason in a culture that assumed ideas of rebirth that over time a habitually hateful person would come to create the sensibility and reactions of a predatory beast, for example.

Karma is, of course, both cause and effect. Our actions are causes for our present and future, but karma is also the fruits or effects of the past. So, too, our intentions and related psychological phenomena are all conditioned effects. And as effects, the intentional process fashioning experience is not entirely free and autonomous. This point merely restates the heart of Buddhist teachings: to be a being in samsara is to be caused and conditioned. To be sure, we fashion in a dynamic and active way our awareness, but we do so out of conditioned phenomena. None of the mental phenomena with which we function are entirely free, autonomous, or independent of other phenomena or past conditioning. The foremost analytical treatment of this idea is articulated by the teaching of dependent origination; *saṅkhāra*, which is linked closely with *cetanā*, is but one link in a chain of conditioned and conditioning processes, where it is conditioned, in particular, by ignorance. The experience of being in samsara is thus not perfect freedom but, rather, entails being subject to conditions that shape what is possible for us to create in our experience. This is not determinism—the Buddha sharply rejected a deterministic worldview—but it is not the imagined freedom of the autonomous moral subject assumed in many modern Western philosophical circles. Freedom is understood in the Pali sources as a gradual process of coming to master experience and is gradually acquired only by disciplinary

practice. It is fully achieved only with the attainment of nirvana.

This moral psychology is, from the ground up, different from many typical modern assumptions about agency and the nature of ethical reflection. Some modern people may find the Pali tradition's complex reading of the constructive and constructed phenomena that comprise experience to be messy; others may resist its refusal to affirm the autonomous, rational, and free individual so cherished by the modern West. For me what is arresting in the Pali tradition's treatment of karma and intention is precisely the possibility it offers for questioning the assumptions of the modern West, particularly about the psychology of choice. The Pali teachings on karma invite us to see how the very foundational ways we organize and construct our experience are in fact the essential karmic activities crucial to the moral life. Action and intention are not isolated moments of ethical choice but the moment-by-moment work of attending, seeing, noticing, and fashioning our experience. Where moral progress is made is not simply by changing our decisions and choices but by attending to (and learning to master) the motivational, affective, and dispositional activities that go into them. The Buddha did not teach people to make different moral choices: he taught them to attend to their experiences and to learn how to uproot the deeper causal seeds that motivate a distorted, disaffected, or overly attached construction of the world and our place in it. Ethics centers less on moral choice and more on the disciplinary practices that shape our awareness.

In its emphasis on psychology, this traditional reading of karma will resonate in many ways with the psychological readings of Buddhism that many modernist Buddhists prefer (see David McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* [Oxford University Press, 2008], 52–57). Dr. Ambedkar's concerns

about karma's potential to sanction an unjust status quo are important, and I share them. But a close reading of the early Pali interest in karma suggests that the early tradition located the moral significance of karma less in its external social manifestations and more in its internal, subjective operations. Karma in this understanding is not so much reaping what one sows but the constant

work of fashioning who one becomes. I also think that in a broader way the "timescape" offered by teachings of samsara is not as easy to cast aside as many moderns would have it. Samsara shows the depth of our ingrained habits of mind—who we are now has been many lifetimes in the making—even as it demonstrates the enormity and urgency of liberation from them. □

Chinese Buddhist Perspectives on Karma

by Beverley McGuire

Neither a theodicy nor a license to judge other people's actions, karma provides a means of confronting and responding to one's own life and morality, but the most honest stance toward other people's suffering is that of extreme humility.

Chinese Buddhists speak about karma in various ways. Many describe it as a force generated from bodily, verbal, and mental actions that leads to particular consequences in one's present or future life, but some consider the relationship between actions and consequences more closely correlated than others do. Chinese Buddhists typically translate *karma* as "action" (*ye*), which alludes to activities of body, speech, and mind, although they sometimes refer to it as "causes and effects" (*yinguo*) or "retribution" (*baoying*), which imply a deterministic relationship between previous or present actions and future repercussions. In this essay I explore various Chinese Buddhist depictions of karma and then reflect on the ethical implications of such views. I propose that we rethink how we understand karma in light of such Chinese Buddhist perspectives.

Karma as Inscrutable

Early Chinese Buddhists such as Xi Chao (ca. 331–73) and Huiyuan (334–417) emphasize the inscrutability of karma. Xi Chao portrays karma as secret and cryptic. He writes, "Ordinary thoughts that appear in the mind in every instant

of thought receive retribution; although the phenomena has not yet taken form, there is a hidden response and mysterious structure." While he recognizes that thoughts and intentions have future repercussions, Xi Chao describes this karma as "hidden" and "mysterious." Similarly, Huiyuan characterizes karma as subtle and mysterious. He writes, "The mind takes good and bad deeds as the cause, retribution takes crime and virtue as the outcome, [and their relationship is like] form and its shadow, sound and its echo." His choice of metaphors—form and shadow, sound and echo—suggests a more ambiguous relationship than a direct correspondence between cause and effect. Without sunlight, forms do not cast shadows; likewise, barriers can muffle the echoes of sound. Implicit in such metaphors is the idea that if one cultivates certain conditions, one can intervene in the workings of karma. We find this view espoused by contemporary Chinese Buddhists, including Venerable Yifa of Fo Guang Shan and Master Sheng-yen of Dharma Drum Mountain. Venerable Yifa portrays karmic causes and effects as subtle and profound, mysterious and inscrutable; Master Sheng-yen suggests that karmic force is like a shadow that

always follows a person but changes its shape and intensity as light and position change. Because people can continually perform new actions modifying the karmic force, they can lessen previous nonvirtuous karma by generating virtuous karma.

Karma as Organic

Some Chinese Buddhists portray karma as organic and liken it to planting seeds that later come to fruition, or to a plant that depends on certain causes and conditions in order to bloom. They often draw from the Yogācāra tradition, which understands karma as stowed in one's "storehouse consciousness" (*ālaya-vijñāna*). They speak of "seeds" (*bijā*) of previous experience being stored in this level of consciousness and coming to fruition in later experiences under the right circumstances. This metaphor of karma planting seeds in one's storehouse consciousness enables them to explain how an action in a previous lifetime can come to fruition in a later lifetime. As Dan Lusthaus notes, "Just as plants reach fruition by producing new seeds that re-enter the ground to take root and begin regrowing a similar plant of the same kind, so do karmic actions produce wholesome or unwholesome fruit that become latent seeds for a later, similar type of action or cognition."

Karma as Retributive

By contrast, other Chinese Buddhists depict karma as a strict retributive

Beverley McGuire is an Associate Professor of East Asian Religions at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She received her PhD in East Asian Languages and Civilizations from Harvard University, and she specializes in late-imperial and modern Chinese Buddhism. She has published articles in Journal of Chinese Religions, Material Religion, and Religion Compass and a book entitled Living Karma: The Religious Practices of Ouyi Zhixu (Columbia University Press, 2014).

causality, with an exact correspondence between past actions and future rewards or punishments. This mechanistic view assumes one can record, tally, and balance karma as one might a checking account. A particular group of texts called “ledgers of merit and demerit” (*gonguo ge*) and “morality books” (*shanshu*) claimed to allow people to master their fate by following specific guidelines for behavior. The texts were popular because they offered a clearly defined moral code to follow, and they promoted the idea that people could “create their own destiny” (*zaoming*) by improving their moral status through good deeds. Urging readers to draw up an account of their merits and demerits each day, tally and record the results each month, and calculate the balance at the end of the year, ledgers encouraged a quantified measurement of morality in particular, concrete actions. The monk Yunqi Zhuhong (1535–1615) went so far as to assign relative weight to each action, with points from one to one hundred, in his *Zizhi lu* (Record of self-knowledge). This mechanistic view of karma does not allow one to undo or reverse karma, only to try to outweigh evil karma by engaging in virtuous activities.

Karma as Elimidable

However, other Chinese Buddhists maintain the possibility of extenuating the effects of karma and even eliminating

karma entirely. For example, the monk Ouyi Zhixu (1599–1655), experiencing severe illness, deaths of loved ones, and obstacles in his meditation practice, surmises that he has a significant karmic burden and dreads the possibility of being reborn in hell. He engages in various rituals to try to mitigate his karma, including divination to decipher his previous misdeeds and repentance to eliminate such transgressions. He regards rituals as having the capacity to “stimulate the response” (*gan-ying*) of buddhas and bodhisattvas such

as Dizang (Skt., Ksitigarbha), who vowed to save sentient beings relegated to hell. Interestingly, Ouyi describes karma in both mechanistic and organic ways. In his divination texts, he adopts a mechanistic view that one can determine the good and evil deeds committed in the past, the strength of those karmic forces, and whether retribution has occurred in the past or will occur in the present or future. In his repentance texts he promotes the organic view that buddhas and bodhisattvas might intervene on behalf of sentient beings and eliminate their karma. The central part of his repentance ritual involves acknowledging that there is karmic cause and effect: in order for one’s karma to be eliminated, one must have a profound belief in the inevitability of karmic retribution.

Collective Karma

Some contemporary Chinese Buddhists, such as Venerable Yifa and Master Shengyen, espouse the idea of collective karma, arguing that each person suffers the consequence of his or her own actions but that sometimes it ripens simultaneously for a group, with one consequence taking care of many people’s karma. They consider such cases of collective karma—for example, natural disasters—as opportunities to respond and bring about positive change. Yifa writes, “The challenge of Buddhism, therefore, is to extend compassion as broadly as possible and recognize the interconnections

of cause and effect within all suffering; that suffering everywhere is our suffering; and that our suffering is the world's." She argues that everyone is affected by such calamitous events: because we are interdependent, all of our actions have consequences.

Karma as Unknowable

All Chinese Buddhists would agree that human beings lack the capacity to know their own (or others') karma. Instead, the tradition makes clear that only buddhas and bodhisattvas have the six supernatural powers (*liu shentong*) and three types of awareness (*sanming*) that would allow them to perceive karma. The former includes knowing others' states of mind, recollection of previous lives, and knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings and how beings are fortunate or unfortunate according to their actions. The latter consists of the power to observe beings in all six realms of rebirth, the power to know previous lifetimes experienced by themselves and all other beings, and the power to extinguish all afflictions of the three

realms. This acknowledgment of the cognitive limitations of human beings has profound significance for the way one uses karma as a lens for interpreting one's own experience or the circumstances of others.

Ethical Implications

Given that human beings cannot definitively know their own (or others') karma, I would propose that karma is best applied and understood within the context of one's own life. If one experiences illness, catastrophes, or other unfortunate situations, one might understandably speculate about one's karma. Each obstacle could be understood as potential retribution for some previous transgression: physical illness can be seen as "direct retribution" for previous misdeeds, and adverse social, political, or environmental situations can be seen as "circumstantial retribution." One could certainly interpret one's circumstances in this way. Such a karmic worldview would not necessarily engender a sense of fatalism, since it could also prompt one to change one's

fate. As Peter Hershock says, "Karma is also the inflection of things as-they-are-coming-to-be" and "Karma is always *playing out live*, in ways that are open to significant improvisation." One could see future possibilities in the present moment, allowing karmic obstacles to become karmic opportunities.

Although one might speculate about karmic causes for one's own situation, one cannot use karma as an explanation for evil or the suffering of others. Since karma is inscrutable, one cannot presume to judge the plight of others as karmic retribution. As Eric Sean Nelson has noted, "Buddhist karma is primarily about the moral status of an action. It does not aim at excusing, justifying, or normalizing suffering as a necessary good." Neither a theodicy nor a license to judge other people's actions, karma provides a means of confronting and responding to one's own life and morality, but the most honest stance toward other people's suffering is that of extreme humility. Because humans cannot decisively conclude that unfortunate circumstances are the result of karma, we cannot explain poverty, natural disasters, or other calamitous events as karmic retribution. We can act "as if" karma were fixed or deterministic, avoiding evil and cultivating good with the understanding that karmic retribution might strictly correlate with virtuous and nonvirtuous actions, and we can confess our transgressions and perform repentance rituals in the hopes that buddhas and bodhisattvas might compassionately respond. However, we must acknowledge the inscrutability of karma when trying to understand and respond to the plight of others.

In other words, a mechanistic view of karma might work well as a moral guide for one's own behavior, but the mysterious view of karma provides the best way to approach the situation of others. Karmic retribution can serve as an effective moral framework: karmic

punishment and reward can motivate a person to do good and avoid evil, thereby supporting that person's cultivation of virtue. One might believe that buddhas and bodhisattvas have the capacity to eliminate karma but admit that such a view can lead one astray if used as a license for engaging in immoral activity. The ideal is not to "sin boldly" (as Martin Luther famously urged those who believe in God's grace), with the expectation that buddhas and bodhisattvas will eliminate one's karma, but instead to try to live a virtuous life. A mechanistic view of karmic retribution can provide a helpful moral parameter in this regard, while an appreciation of karma's mysteriousness can foster a sense of humility in one's cognitive limitations and gratitude for the compassion of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

A final contribution that Chinese Buddhism might make to our understanding of karma is its bodhisattva ideal. Given that we are all interconnected and interdependent, any instance of misfortune provides a karmic opportunity for us all to extend compassion to those who suffer—for us to act like bodhisattvas who have vowed to liberate other sentient beings. Ouyi Zhixu

provides an example of this: he envisions himself as a future bodhisattva and vows to either eliminate the karma of sentient beings or, in the event that they cannot escape their karma, to substitute in their stead in hell or other unfortunate realms of rebirth. We might also embody compassion, seeing ourselves as bodhisattvas in the making, and view all karmic obstacles as karmic opportunities.

This stands in stark contrast to what we typically encounter in Western popular culture, where the retributive view of karma predominates and frequently becomes a means of judging others and legitimating their misfortune. For example, on social media one occasionally sees karma memes implying that others will get their just deserts. One such meme shows a picture of John Lennon with the words INSTANT KARMA, alluding to the lyrics "Instant Karma's gonna get you / Gonna look you right in the face." However, if we recall the song, we find that these lyrics are immediately followed by, "You better get yourself together / Pretty soon you're gonna be dead / What in the world you thinking of / Laughing in the face of love / What on earth you tryin' to do / It's up to you, yeah you." Lennon's song

underscores the potential role of karmic retribution—as a guide for getting oneself together—but also its limitations if it leads one to mock others and their plight. Instead of "laughing in the face of love," it encourages people to embody compassion, and it acknowledges that positive change relies on each and every one of us. □

Referenced Works

- Hershock, Peter. "Valuing Karma." In *Revisioning Karma: The eBook*, edited by Charles Prebish, Damien Keown, and Dale S. Wright, 175–228. Journal of Buddhist Ethics Online Books, 2005.
- Lusthaus, Dan. *Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch'eng Wei-shih lun*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.
- Nelson, Eric Sean. "Questioning Karma: Buddhism and the Phenomenology of the Ethical." In *Revisioning Karma: The eBook*, edited by Charles Prebish, Damien Keown, and Dale S. Wright, 359–80. Journal of Buddhist Ethics Online Books, 2005.
- Sheng-yen. *Zen Wisdom: Conversations on Buddhism*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2001.
- Yifa. *The Tender Heart: A Buddhist Response to Suffering*. New York: Lantern Books, 2007.

All Sentient Beings Are Bodhisattvas

by Fumihiko Sueki

Modern Buddhists have . . . concealed [the] doctrine of karma and the cycle of rebirth or have sought to abandon it as violating the true teachings of the Buddha. But are they right to do so? Should we reject the concept of past and future lives and assume that our few decades in this life are all there is?

Should the Doctrine of Karma and the Cycle of Rebirth Be Rejected?

A person's own actions (*karma*) bear fruit or results (*vipāka*). Good actions produce happiness, while bad actions lead to misery. These karmic effects are brought forth not only in this life; happiness and misery are the result of actions in past lives, and actions in this life will determine whether our circumstances in the next will be happy or miserable. But no matter how happy one's circumstances may be, we are trapped in a cycle of birth and death, or a recurring cycle of rebirth, called *samsāra*, and so once our accumulation of good deeds has been exhausted, we will once again fall into a state of misery. The scope of this cycle of rebirth extends to the six realms of existence, these being the realms of hell, hungry spirits, animals, demons, human beings, and heaven, and the beings in the cycle of rebirth within these six realms are called *sattva*, or "sentient beings." To escape the suffering of the cycle of rebirth, one must practice spiritual discipline to emancipate oneself from worldly desires and achieve nirvana.

The paragraph above encapsulates what we are taught as common knowledge in Buddhism. Nowadays, this doctrine of karma and the cycle of rebirth often comes in for criticism. From the modern rationalistic standpoint, talk of past and future lives appears to be nothing but superstitious nonsense. Moreover, if one accepts that one's present circumstances are determined by the rightness or wrongness of one's actions in previous lives, this means that those who enjoy good fortune in this life do so because they did good in a previous life and so are entitled to their present good fortune. Conversely, those who suffer in this life deserve exactly what they get because of their evil actions in a previous life. This is denounced as a prejudiced and discriminatory theory that defends the strong who have power and money in this world and abandons the poor and sick on the grounds that they deserve their fate. Modern Buddhists have therefore concealed this doctrine of karma and the cycle of rebirth or have sought to abandon it as violating the true teachings of the Buddha.

But are they right to do so? Should we reject the concept of past and future lives and assume that our few decades in this life are all there is? Is Buddhism

as parochial in outlook as that? If so, there is not even any particular need for something like Buddhism. Science and ethics are sufficient. A modernized and rationalized Buddhism is in fact just a self-denial of Buddhism. But Buddhism advances the concept of a much broader world, one that embraces also the creation and dissolution of the universe and universes beyond this universe. Once so expansive in scope, this Buddhist teaching has come to be viewed as a fairy tale that is detached from reality. However, present-day science now concerns itself with the beginning and end of the universe and has come to argue for the possibility of universes other than this one. Science has, in other words, moved closer to the position of Buddhism.

Dedication of Good Deeds and Bodhisattvas

That being the case, it is wrong to reject the doctrine of karma and the cycle of rebirth on the grounds that it is "irrational." And if it seems prejudiced and discriminatory, I would argue that that is not because the theory itself is wrong but because it has been wrongly interpreted.

How then should it be interpreted? The first point to observe is that being able to encounter and follow the teachings of the Buddha is the greatest happiness that we can experience in this world. All other fortunes and misfortunes are tiny and insignificant in comparison, and I doubt that anyone who has encountered the teachings of the

Fumihiko Sueki, PhD, is a professor emeritus of the University of Tokyo, the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies. He currently serves as president of the Japanese Association for Comparative Philosophy. His research focuses mainly on reconstruction of the intellectual history of Buddhism in Japan from ancient to modern times. He is the author and editor of a number of books, mainly on Japanese Buddhism and the history of Japanese philosophy and religion.

Buddha would deny this. Many people are unaware of this, of course, but that is because the time is not yet ripe.

This being so, our being able to experience this greatest of good fortunes must mean that we have all performed the greatest of good in our past lives. A commonly cited parable is that of the blind turtle and the floating log, found in the Nirvana Sutra and other Buddhist scriptures, which teaches us that it is as rare to be born human as it is for a blind turtle, when raising its head above the waves once in a century, to stick its head in the hole of a log that happens just then to be floating by. How much more unlikely it is, then, that we should also encounter the teachings of the Buddha! That we do is naturally not a matter of chance but, instead, the fruit of past good deeds, and we must not squander such a rare opportunity.

But does this encounter depend solely on our past good deeds? Granting that no one knows what one's past lives were like, is it really possible to believe, in light of one's present capacities, that one had the ability to perform such good deeds in past lives? For some this may be conceivable, but probably most people would find it impossible to believe that they had once possessed such a capacity for good. Why then is a human without such a capacity able to experience the greatest happiness that is encountering the teachings of the Buddha? Here there arises a problem that cannot be resolved by a simple theory of karma and the cycle of rebirth. It has to be considered that there is some other

factor at work that severs the chain of karma and the cycle of rebirth.

According to the theory of the early Buddhist schools, the fruits of one's karma are received by oneself, and no room is allowed for the involvement of anyone else. However, this thinking was transformed by the arrival of Mahayana Buddhism, which taught that one could dedicate one's own good deeds to others. In other words, the good deeds performed by oneself count as the good deeds of others, making it possible for them to be born into better circumstances. This dedication of good deeds, or transfer of merit, is called *pariṇāma* in Sanskrit, and in Japan it is often referred to by such terms as *ekō*. This concept of transferring merit, which counts, for example, the recitation of sutras on behalf of the dead as though they were the good deeds of the dead themselves, radically overturns the theory of the early Buddhist schools, which held that the fruits of one's karma are limited to oneself, and allows others to become involved in one's own fate. One's own actions and results thus become intertwined with and permeate those of others. Naturally, however, we cannot give our bad deeds to others, just as we cannot give our debts to others, but we can give money that we have earned to others.

Aspiring to benefit others by giving them one's own good deeds is the mark of a bodhisattva. Living in the spirit of a bodhisattva means acting to benefit oneself and to benefit others. Given that people who are not bodhisattvas want to benefit themselves, it is

wanting to benefit others that characterizes a bodhisattva. Benefiting others naturally also includes eliminating others' physical and mental suffering and generating happiness. That is only a first step, however, and the ultimate goal of benefiting others is to direct them toward awakening (*satori*). Through the repeated performance of such good deeds and helping of others, a bodhisattva in time reaches awakening and achieves buddhahood. A buddha is thus not different from a bodhisattva but is, rather, the perfection of a bodhisattva, being in the state in which the powers of a bodhisattva can be exercised to the full. Among bodhisattvas, there are those who want to continue to be active while staying imperfect, remaining on the same level as other sentient beings without attaining the perfect buddha condition. In Japanese, this is called *daihi sendai*, or the *sendai* of great compassion. *Sendai* is the short form of *issendai*, the Japanese transliteration of the Sanskrit word *icchantika*, which is used of a sentient being who does not believe in Buddhism and lacks the potential to become a buddha. *Daihi sendai* stands this on its head, however, and signifies the aspiration to reject of one's own volition to become a buddha and, instead, to continue to help other sentient beings as a bodhisattva.

All Sentient Beings Are Bodhisattvas

When viewed through this lens, the happiness that I experience through

my encounter with the teachings of the Buddha in this life should be seen to result not from my own ineffectual good deeds but from the transfer of merit to me by others, namely buddhas and bodhisattvas. This is made possible by what is called *tarikī* (other power), or liberation by the grace of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Bodhisattvas' exercising of the power of benefiting others to help others is no mean achievement. As it means extinguishing the effects of the bad deeds of other sentient beings and implanting in their place the greater effects of good deeds, it is something that lies beyond our own ordinary abilities. The Jātaka tales about the previous lives of Shakyamuni Buddha frequently recount how he sacrificed his own life to save other sentient beings, which is something that no normal person could possibly do. Amitābha Buddha, on the other hand, is said to have become capable of exercising his liberating powers as a buddha only after acquiring his religious faculty through a long state of meditative consciousness (*samādhi*) for five *kalpas*, or eons.

On hearing these tales, one might despair that the act of transferring merit seems far beyond unenlightened mortals such as ourselves. Rather than dedicating our own good deeds to others, it might actually appear better to receive and enjoy the good deeds of buddhas such as Amitābha or bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara (Jpn., Kannon; Ch., Guanyin). Being neither buddhas nor bodhisattvas ourselves, it is easier to think of ourselves simply as the objects of liberation by buddhas and bodhisattvas. But can we be satisfied with

enjoying happiness like that? Doing so leaves us with a restless feeling of insecurity and sense that our own satisfaction is not the be-all and end-all. Why should that be?

The Lotus Sutra asserts that "all sentient beings are bodhisattvas." This is an astounding statement to make, and one that Śāriputra and the Buddha's other disciples found impossible to believe. They could not accept that such ability lay within themselves. However, the Buddha revealed to Śāriputra his past, explaining that Śāriputra, too, had received the Buddha's teachings and practiced spiritual discipline as a bodhisattva through countless past lives. Śāriputra had forgotten this and, assuming that he had encountered the Buddha for the first time in this life, had accepted his teachings and only practiced spiritual discipline for his own benefit. As his state of forgetfulness had been so profound and hard to reverse, the Buddha had first allowed Śāriputra to practice spiritual discipline for himself, and only after he had achieved a certain degree of such

discipline was he able to recall the long chain of causation that linked him to the past.

Śāriputra was exactly like us. We may have forgotten the inseparable ties to the Buddha that stretch far back through our past lives, but we have nevertheless actually been beneficiaries of the power of the Buddha and continuously striven to practice spiritual discipline as bodhisattvas. That is what the Lotus Sutra means when it says that all sentient beings are bodhisattvas. Having been involved with others as bodhisattvas, then, even though we may forget that now, we subcon-

sciously cease to be able to be satisfied with our own happiness and become concerned about the happiness of others. The Buddha's greatest gift to us is to awaken us from this state of forgetfulness and remind us that we are bodhisattvas.

While superficially this may sound like a fairy tale, it contains a profound truth, which is that caring for others as bodhisattvas and being cared about by others is not limited to the narrow confines of this life alone. From far before even the beginning of time (what in Zen is called "before the birth of one's parents," where "before" is meant in the ontological rather than the temporal sense), we have received the power of the buddhas and bodhisattvas and continue to care for others. Having to be involved with others, receiving their strength, and sharing our strength with them as bodhisattvas is our inescapable karma and destiny. For that reason, all sentient beings must inevitably be bodhisattvas, and that is the fundamental teaching of Mahayana Buddhism. □

Reviewing the Buddha's Teaching on Karma and Its Social Ramifications

by Jonathan S. Watts

The Buddha repudiated both past karmic determinism (pubbekaṭavāda) and theistic determinism (issarakaraṇavāda), because they lead to passive resignation and discourage taking action that can be of direct benefit.

The Basic Etymology and Construction of Buddhist Karma

Buddhism shares with other Indian religious systems the basic understanding of *karma* as “work” or “action.” The Vedic concept of karma is qualified as ritual action. The qualifier in the Buddhist understanding of karma is volition or intention (*cetanā*), so that karma is more precisely understood as “action based on intention” or “deeds willfully done,” as seen through these words of the Buddha: “Monks! Intention (*cetanā*), I say, is karma. Having willed, we create karma, through body, speech, and mind” (Aṅguttara Nikāya 2005, A. iii. 415). In this way, it is understood that “actions that are without intention are not considered karma” (Payutto 1993, 6). This immediately distinguishes Buddhist karma from the Upanishadic and Jain understandings of karma as largely a material force. Buddhism emphasizes karma as fundamentally nonmaterial, mental. The Buddha repudiated both past karmic determinism (*pubbekaṭavāda*) and theistic determinism (*issarakaraṇavāda*), because they lead to passive resignation and discourage taking action that can be of direct benefit. However, because of this emphasis

on the quality of the mind, the Jains considered Buddhists as embracing the view that human action is inconsequential (*akriyāvāda*) (Macy 1991, 171–72).

Indeed, an extreme interpretation of karma as *cetanā* can lead to a focus on the mere purification of thought and away from positive action. Such a position can be seen in certain interpretations of Buddhism in which monastics should completely withdraw from any kind of social involvement and focus entirely on the purification of their minds through reclusive meditation. When the Buddhist tradition is interpreted this way, it moves toward the ascetic ideal of the Upaniṣads, likewise becoming less inclusive, less engaged, and less ethical. However, the Buddha said, “Having willed, we create karma, through body, speech, and mind”; that is, not just through mind. This emphasis on intention should actually be seen as a means to engender skillful, positive activity to resolve karmic constructions, which occur most often in the context of relationships with others. If karma is truly a law governing moral and ethical behavior, then it becomes increasingly difficult to speak about it in terms of solitary asceticism, because individuals cannot be moral objects unto themselves. The ground of morality is always

Jonathan S. Watts has been a researcher at the Jodo Shu Research Institute in Tokyo since 1999 and at the International Buddhist Exchange Center in Yokohama since 2005. He has also been an associate professor of Buddhist Studies at Keio University, Tokyo, and has been on the executive board of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) since 2003. He has coauthored and edited Never Die Alone: Death as Birth in Pure Land Buddhism; Rethinking Karma: The Dharma of Social Justice; and This Precious Life: Buddhist Tsunami Relief and Anti-Nuclear Activism in Post 3/11 Japan.

established in a community of social relationships (Obeyesekere 2002, 113).

This point becomes clearer by examining another key concept in the Buddhist understanding of karma, *saṅkhāra*, which has been translated in various ways but should be understood here in terms of dependent origination (*paṭicca samuppāda*) as “volitional formations” (Payutto 1993, 8), “mental concocting” (Buddhadasa 1988, 28), or “constructs” (Swaris 2008, 179). In *paṭicca samuppāda*, the consciousness (*viññāṇa*) that develops from the power of ignorance (*avijjā*) and *saṅkhāra* (concocting, constructing) will be labeled as positive, negative, or neutral feeling (*vedanā*) without the power of mindfulness (*sati*) to stop it. This feeling gives rise to desire (*taṇhā*) and craving (*upādāna*), which give rise or birth (*jāti*) to a sense of self and ego (*attā*). Through the continuing power

of ignorance (*avijjā*) and *saṅkhāra*, one continues to engage in this process of codependent ego construction that is never able to find sustained satisfaction.

In this process, consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is not found to arise from a transcendental source like a self (*ātman*) or subject (*nāma*). Rather, consciousness is a dependently originated concoction or construct (*saṅkhāra*) that arises from the coming together of sense forms (*rūpa*) and sense bases or media (*nāma*). By understanding that consciousness, the mind or “subject” (*nāma*), and the object (*rūpa*) codependently arise, the Buddha deconstructs and lays bare the fallacy of mind/body duality that leads to a fetishization of the mind as a transcendental force of caution, such as God, *ātman*, or scientific law.

In this formulation of *paṭicca samuppāda*, the Buddha lays the basis for his whole radical ethical and social message, also articulated as the three marks: “All *saṅkhāra* are impermanent (*anicca*); all *saṅkhāra* are suffering (*dukkha*); and all realities (*dhamma*) are without substance (*anattā*)” (Dh. 277–79). In such a deconstruction, the transcendental claims to truth and authority that Brahmins had used to sanctify an unjust social order and that Upanishadic recluses had used to posit a private and elitist form of salvation are seen for what they are: speculations at best, pernicious lies at worst. The Buddha’s conclusion to this insight was not further speculation in another metaphysic but rather a deep ethic, as seen in his declaration after gaining enlightenment: “House builder you have been found out. You shall build no house again. Your rafters lie shattered. Your rooftop lies in ruins. Consciousness is deconstructed. Desire (*taṇhā*) is destroyed” (Swaris 2008, 177; Dh. 153–54). The ignorant consciousness that drives us to control and manipulate others is deconstructed and laid bare. Desire and craving are thus rooted out, liberating and empowering the individual to work and live for the benefit of all beings.

Unfortunately, mainstream Theravada Buddhism, and in fact most of the entire Buddhist tradition, slid back into such transcendental and ontological understandings by interpreting *paṭicca samuppāda* as a process spanning three lifetimes—an interpretation developed in the later Abhidhamma texts and specifically in Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga*. This interpretation says that *saṅkhāra* produced from a previous lifetime will condition consciousness in this lifetime that leads to the karmic result (*kamma-vipāka*) of rebirth (*jāti*) in the next life (Buddhadasa 1992).¹ *Saṅkhāra* expresses itself in the next life as the meritorious (*puññabhi-saṅkhāra*) or nonmeritorious formations (*apuññabhi-saṅkhāra*) that condition the way life is experienced (Payutto 1994, 28).

In the understanding of *paṭicca samuppāda* that focuses only on this lifetime and is found in the sutra discourses of the Buddha, *jāti* is not rebirth of the self in another body. Rather, it is the rebirth of an ego over and over again in this life whenever *saṅkhāra* conditions an ignorant consciousness, thus leading to ignorant desire as craving (*taṇhā*) and attachment (*upādāna*). Like Upanishadic thought, the Abhidhammic multiple-lifetime understanding sees *saṅkhāra* in a more material or essential way as the unchanging factors of mind (*nāma*) that condition future rebirth. On the other hand, the single-lifetime understanding views *saṅkhāra* in a more conditioned way as the constructs that frame consciousness and the way the world is perceived.

In either understanding, *saṅkhāra* is understood as a form of karma, that is, the force that plans and organizes the movements of the mind and that through repetition results in character traits, physical features, and repercussions from external forces (Payutto 1993, 7–8). However, the understanding of *paṭicca samuppāda* that focuses on this lifetime is closer to the Buddha’s

emphasis on karma as intention, because it makes this whole process observable and changeable in the present life condition. Swaris sums up this point eloquently:

If “birth” [*jāti*] here is understood as physical birth, then human suffering becomes an ontological condition and can be ended only with physical death or eventual nirvana understood as the extinction of being, not craving [*taṇhā*]. This surely makes the Buddha’s claim that suffering can be ended in this very life meaningless. (Swaris 2008, 242)

When Buddhists miss these key distinctions in the foundation of the Buddha’s enlightenment experience, that is, his experience of the unfolding of *paṭicca samuppāda*, they miss the entire ethical and transformative (both personal and social) thrust of his teachings. For when the Buddha deconstructed consciousness and found no creator god

(Brahma) or ultimate self (*ātman*) behind it, he deconstructed the whole mythic power of the Brahmin priests and the violent system of class and patriarchy founded on their and the ruling classes' desire (*taṇhā*) for wealth and temporal power. In more than one discourse, such as the Madhupiṇḍika Sutta (M. i. 108) and the Mahānidāna Sutta (D. ii. 55), the Buddha explains the process of *paṭicca samuppāda* beginning with the concocting of ignorant consciousness and develops it into an explanation of how quarrels, violence, and warfare result. In these discourses, the ethical and social intent of the Buddha's realization is clear. Nirvana is not a transcendental, ontological void but, rather, the sustaining of mindfulness (*sati*) that empowers one to quench egoistic desire for the purpose of intentional, ethical action (karma) on the behalf of all.

Contextualizing the Law of Karma

In the Abhidhamma literature, the law of karma (*kamma-niyāma*) is placed alongside four other kinds of natural law concerning environment and weather (*utu-niyāma*), heredity (*bīja-niyāma*), mind and sense (*citta-niyāma*), and the natural interdependence of all things (*dhamma-niyāma*). The law of karma is the law that governs human behavior. In this way, the highly respected Thai scholar-monk Ven. P. A. Payutto emphasizes that we must not reduce these laws into the single law of karma and that “not all events are the workings of karma” (Payutto 1993, 4–5). Payutto further emphasizes that a major problem is the confusion of the law of karma with societal customs and laws, which vary from society to society. What may be impure or evil in one society (for example, eating pork) may not be in another. In this way, karma may or may not work in line with social customs. The common misapplication of it, which we have seen above, is that if one desires to

go against social norms (such as eating pork or abandoning a violent husband), one may be threatened with some sort of punishment—in the Buddhist case, the threat of accumulating bad karma. The contextualization of karmic law as one of many laws also steers us away from a deterministic understanding of karma and a retributive sense of justice that reduces suffering to the result of karmic sin. Instead, it moves us toward a deeper investigation of the wide variety of causes behind suffering and the ways to remedy them.

Another oversimplification is equating karma with its results (*vipāka*), or to put it another way, equating the constructs (*saṅkhāra*) of a person's mind with the unfolding of the person's life. This confusion is connected to the conflation of karma and social custom. According to Payutto, karma can lead to *vipāka* on a number of levels, such as (1) accumulated mental tendencies and the quality of mind; (2) physical character, mannerisms, and behavior; (3) worldly conditions and the events of life; and (4) larger social conditions. The law of karma is dominant on the first two levels and then begins to interact with social customs on the third and fourth levels.

When people misapply the karmic formula of “good actions bring good results, bad actions bring bad results,” they usually do so on the third and fourth levels. Thus, if a person is born as a poor woman, she must have bad karma resulting from bad actions in a past lifetime, and so must endure the suffering of sexism and classism (the third and fourth levels) regardless of whether she has a kind and gentle character (first and second levels). On the other hand, if a person is born rich and male, he is seen to be enjoying the good karma of good actions done in a past life and will receive social honors and respect regardless of the quality of his mind and behavior. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu often clarified this confusion

by saying that karma does not mean fortune or results; it just means action (Buddhadasa 1988, 18). In combating the prevalence of this confusion in terms of rebirth, Payutto goes so far as to say, “As for the unfolding of the present life, the results of previous karma stop at birth, and a new beginning is made” (Payutto 1992, 76).

The conflation of karma with *vipāka*, which leads to a deterministic understanding of karma, is incompatible with the Buddhist understanding of causality. The fundamental teachings of not-self (*anattā*) and emptiness (*suññatā*) reject the ideas of both (1) a creator god or an original source like a self or soul (*attā/ātman*) and (2) a purely material universe. In the former case, if there is an all-powerful creator god or immutable original source, power moves in a one-way flow from the godhead or original source. Power never moves back toward it, making this source unchangeable and unconditionable. In the latter case, causality (the movement of energy or power) is too simplistic, moving in a linear one-to-one correspondence between physical forces and denying any causal role for the mind (Macy 1991, 29–30).

Since Buddhist causality is interpenetrative, with things interacting and conditioning each other, power is understood in a much more dynamic and complex way and cannot be reduced to an unconditionable source or a rigid determinism. Mind and matter, self and other, are intimately interconnected through the nondual, not-self, and empty nature of reality. This means that power surges through all sectors of the intricate web of physical and mental relationships. When the world is seen in this way, the flow of large and complex systems becomes more varied and less predictable, progressively losing any sense of linear causality (Macy 1991, 168). This is why the Buddha spoke of determining the results of karma as unfathomable (*acinteyya*) and refused “either to identify the agent of action with the

experiencer of the result, or to separate him from it” (Macy 1991, 163). In the same discourse in which the Buddha rejects theistic determinism and past karmic determinism, we see him elaborate this point of nondeterminacy.

Monks, for anyone who says, “In whatever way a person makes karma, that is how it is experienced,” there is no living of the holy life, there is no opportunity for the right ending of suffering. But for anyone who says, “When karma based on a certain kind of feeling is made, results arise in conformity with that feeling,” there is the living of the holy life, there is the opportunity for the right ending of suffering. There is the case where a trifling evil deed done by a certain individual takes him to hell. There is the case where the very same sort of trifling deed done by another individual is experienced in the here and now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment. (Aṅguttara Nikāya 2005, A. iii. 99)

In the nondual world of not-self and emptiness, the structure of our experience (*saṅkhāra*) is not different from the function of our intentional actions (*karma*); they are two faces of one way of being. Karma is not the fate into which we are born or our inevitable destiny. It is, rather, our identity and continuity in the present, our resource and our fate (Macy 1991, 165). As the Buddha said, “I am the owner of my actions, heir of my actions, actions are the womb from which I spring, actions are my kin, actions are my protection” (Aṅguttara Nikāya 1975, 12, A. v. 57). This is why the understanding of *paṭicca samuppāda* over three lifetimes moves us away from the true intent of the Buddha’s teaching. It creates an excessive space between action and result that distinguishes sharply between doing good and receiving benefit, when doing good is actually benefit in itself. As the

Buddha noted, “wisdom is purified by morality, and morality is purified by wisdom . . . and the combination of morality and wisdom is called the highest thing in the world” (Dīgha Nikāya 1995, D. i. 124). In the understanding of *paṭicca samuppāda* within this lifetime, it is clearer that *saṅkhāra*—as the malleable nature of consciousness—is impermanent and not-self. The results of previous intentional actions expressed in *saṅkhāra* are alterable through present intention. As the inevitable consequences of a previous life, *saṅkhāra* are mysterious and distant. As present mental tendencies, they become an object of change through mindfulness and intentional moral action. In this way, the Buddha constantly exhorted the development of energy and vigor (*virīya*) up to his last words, “All *saṅkhāra* are of the nature to decay (*anicca*), strive on untiringly!” (Dīgha Nikāya 1995, D. ii. 156).

This leads to the conclusion that since karma involves intentional action of a moral nature, it requires ethical behavior in dealing with others. On a personal level, by acting morally we not only create good karmic results (*kamma-vipāka*) in the quality of our mind and behavior (levels 1 and 2) but also engender positive conditions around us that help to create a positive society (levels 3 and 4). In this way, the model of an ascetic who shuns society in pursuit of liberation can never represent the epitome of human religious culture. This epitome is found, rather, in the interdependent struggle of all beings to attain liberation, and so entails a compassionate ethic that cannot passively accept the exploitation of others. If karma is not passive fatalism to past actions or creator gods, then it is also not acquiescence to unjust social customs or authority figures. Karma as intentional action is ethical and should always follow the five cardinal precepts (*pañcasīla*) based on nonharming and nonviolence. Payutto sees the practical results of this kind of understanding of

karma as a series of empowerments that (1) encourage self-reliance, diligence, and a sense of responsibility, and (2) endow all people with natural and equal rights based on their mental qualities and behavior, rather than on class, gender, or race (Payutto 1993, 99–100).

The Retreat of Ethicization

We have seen that the Buddha made a number of key changes in the understanding of karma that helped to fully universalize and ethicize it. His emphasis on intention (*cetanā*) empowers the individual to create action (*karma*) in the present, instead of being controlled by a priestly class that dictates ritual action, being paralyzed by the weight and power of past karma, or being cowed by the absolute power of a creator deity. The Buddha’s emphasis on not-self (*anattā*) undercuts tendencies toward unskillful theistic devotionism, while his emphasis on the unfathomable (*acinteyya*) nature of karma undercuts tendencies toward reducing karma to an all-encompassing explanation for personal and social suffering. Finally, his formulation of morality (*sīla*) into a number of different ethical systems for different types of communities shows the inescapable ethical core of the path toward liberation; for example, the guidelines for a moral king (*dharmmarāja*) in the Cakkavatti Sutta (D. iii. 58–79), for the householder in the Siṅgālovāda Sutta (D. iii. 180–93), and for republican congresses in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (D. ii. 74), which provided the model for the monastic vinaya.

This concern for interpersonal relationships in Buddhism is what marks the full ethicization and universalization of the Vedic and *samaṇa* cultures of India (Obeyesekere 2002, 113). Brahmanism, with its emphasis on ancestral rites (*śrad-dhā*), focused on relationships in the life of the householder yet remained constrained by its sexism, its classism,

and the domination of the priestly class. The Buddha often harangued Brahmin priests for the emptiness of their Vedic rituals, while he rationalized and ethicized Brahmanistic ritual concepts. For example, in the Kūṭadanta Sutta (D. i. 144–47), the Buddha teaches a wealthy Brahmin that the best form of sacrifice (*yajña*) is not a ritual one involving slaves and animal slaughter but, rather, an ethical way of living that provides for people in one's community, supports the monastic sangha, and practices morality, meditation, and insight to gain enlightenment.

In this way, it would seem that the Buddha would have agreed with the Upanishadic view that ritual action to make merit toward a better rebirth is an inferior form of practice unable to lead one to final enlightenment. While the Buddha certainly gravitated more toward the Upanishadic and *samaṇa* focus on a renunciate lifestyle, he rejected its exclusiveness and lack of concern for general society. Perhaps the best expression of the Buddha's universal ethical concern is found in his opening the monastic sangha to all seekers, conspicuously women and those of lower caste. Buddhism, and to a certain extent Jainism, differed from most of the ascetic communities of the time by being concerned for the welfare of householders and by creating a system of reciprocity between the lay and monastic. This was a middle path that harmonized the two communities into a collective whole.

This system of reciprocity is based on giving (*dāna*) in which laypeople provide monastics with material requisites and monastics offer instructions on the teachings and practice. While this system represents the height of Buddhist ethicization, it also contains pitfalls. Over time it has become formalized and overly ritualistic, reverting into a form of Brahmanism. As such, *dāna* often loses its wider ethical meaning as helping anyone in need and becomes a

kind of Brahmanistic karma, that is, ritual action designed to gain merit toward a better rebirth.

The practice of making merit (*puñña*) in Buddhism remains a very problematic issue. The Buddha recognized the role of merit making, often referring to the monastic sangha as “fields of merit” (*puññakkheta*); for example, “Such an assembly [of monastics] is . . . an incomparable field of merit for the world . . . that a small gift given to it becomes great and a great gift greater” (Ānāpānasati Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya 1995, 942, M. iii. 80). In Theravada Buddhist societies, the contemporary practice of merit making strikes at the center of the ethicization process in Buddhism. The practice of reciprocal *dāna* was an attempt to bring the worlds of lay and monastic together into a harmonious, ethical community focused on the good life and liberation from suffering. It harkened back to the days of the earliest Aryan communities when *dāna* was as an act of economic justice through the voluntary redistribution of wealth among tribe members. This was before the development of sedentary agriculture, when nomadic pastoralism prevented the hoarding of surplus goods, and the less stratified clan structure discouraged the creation of outcasts.

Over time, the unique insights of the Buddha have been difficult to sustain, and as we have seen, a number of key concepts and teachings have become blurred, most centrally the understanding of nirvana. Although there are numerous examples of laypeople attaining nirvana during the time of the Buddha, the fact that the Buddha himself was a monastic led to the sensibility that nirvana is best attained through the deep and highly personal experiences of assiduous ascetic practice.² Swaris, in his brilliant analysis of this issue, comments that “conceptualization and reification leads to a fetishization of nirvana. The deluded disciple then goes on to relate himself or herself to nirvana in much the same way that

members of other schools relate either to personal gods or philosophical constructs” (Swaris 2008, 185). The understanding of nirvana stopped being the deconstruction of ignorant consciousness and reverted back to Upanishadic notions of the ecstatic oblivion of having one's consciousness absorbed and dissolved back into the godhead or eternal self (*ātman*). This is an ontological crossing over from one realm to another, ultimately attainable only through physical death,³ as opposed to the Buddha's crossing over from bondage to liberation, immanently attainable in this body and this life (Swaris 2008, 123). This conceptualization and reification of nirvana is a mistake that the Buddha himself directly warned his disciples to avoid:

There is the case, monks, where an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person (*puthujjana*)—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for people of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—perceives earth as earth. . . . He perceives nirvana as nirvana. Perceiving nirvana as nirvana, he conceives about nirvana, he conceives in nirvana, he conceives apart from nirvana, he conceives nirvana as “mine,” he delights in nirvana. Why is that? Because he has not fully understood it, I tell you. (Mūlapariyāya Sutta, M. i. 4)

With this shift, nirvana became remote and impractical even for the common monastic, and Buddhism began to take on the worst aspects of the Vedic notions of karma. For the layperson, nirvana could be attained only through ritual action to build merit (*puñña*) toward a better rebirth. In this way, the role of the monastic sangha became fetishized as an “incomparable field of merit” to which the giving of material requisites became the highest form of generosity (*dāna*). In

this way, lay practice has often become focused on this kind of ritual action that is more an investment in *samsāra* than working toward nirvana. For the monastics, nirvana could be attained only through a cloistered life dedicated to intensive meditation practice. In many Buddhist societies, monastic practice and vocation split into those who became overly integrated into society through ritual and scholastic activities and those who shut themselves off from society for intensive meditation and ascetic practice. These trends mark a closing down of the universal and ethical character of Buddhism.

Conclusion

The discourses of the Buddha found in the Pali sutras offer a great resource for deepening our understanding of karma. However, these discourses are not without their problematic aspects, as the discussion of merit making shows. Another difficulty we find in the discourses is the Buddha's focus on the individual level of action. It is typical to find him speaking of how the individual can act ethically toward others in order to prevent harm to them and bring benefit to oneself. In those cases where one is the recipient of harmful action, the Buddha's teaching is almost always focused on how to maintain and develop wholesome mental states, for example *upekkhā*. The situation that is not well addressed in the Buddha's discourses, nor anywhere in Buddhist teachings, is how to take the next step of stopping the harmful actions of others and of society. For example, concerning the caste discrimination of Brahmins, the Buddha often addressed Brahmins directly on this issue, but rarely if ever do we find him instructing those of low caste about how to deal with a direct experience of severe discrimination.

This remains an important missing link in the construction of a Buddhist social justice, especially in these

postmodern times when it is more often social structures rather than individuals that oppress people. Where is the karmic justice for those who purify action, word, and thought yet still suffer from structural violence? As Buddhists, must we once again rely on miserable promises of a better rebirth? This essay has tried to show how individuals can use Buddhist teachings to promote positive intentional action toward improving their lives (karma on levels 1 and 2). However, essential work still needs to be done to create positive intentional *communal* action in order to disable harmful social conditions and create beneficial *kamma-vipāka* for society as a whole. □

This essay is an excerpt from the chapter "Karma for Everyone: Social Justice and the Problem of Re-ethicizing Karma in Theravada Buddhist Societies" in *Rethinking Karma: The Dharma of Social Justice*, ed. Jonathan S. Watts, 2nd ed. (Bangkok: International Network of Engaged Buddhists [INEB], 2014).

Notes

1. In this work, Buddhadasa strongly criticizes this popular understanding of *paṭicca samuppāda*, derived principally from Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*, which he describes as a form of Brahmanism.

2. Buddhadasa, a dedicated forest monk himself, writes in an essay entitled "Insight by the Nature Method" of the fallacies of reclusive meditation as the only means to nirvana (1993, 81).

3. This is another key issue that Buddhadasa liked to discuss in detail, such as in the essay "Nibbāna for Everyone," in which he cites one of the synonyms for nirvana as "the end of concocting [*sankhāra*]." He further comments that "*nibbāna* has nothing in the least to do with death. . . . It is the coolness remaining when the defilements . . . have ended" (1996).

References

Āṅguttara Nikāya: The Discourse Collection in Numerical Order. 1975. Translated by Nyanaponika

Thera. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.

Āṅguttara Nikāya: The Further-Factored Discourses. 2005. Translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. <http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/an/index.html>.

Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. 1988. "Buddhism in All Aspects." Translated by Santikaro. Unpublished manuscript, reedited and reprinted as *It All Depends*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, forthcoming.

Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. 1992. *Paṭicca Samuppāda: Practical Dependent Origination*. Translated by Steve Schmidt. Surat Thani, Thailand: Dhammadana Foundation.

———. 1993. *Handbook for Mankind*. Translated by Rod Bucknell. Surat Thani, Thailand: Dhammadana Foundation.

———. 1996. "Nibbāna for Everyone." Translated by Santikaro. <http://www.budsas.org/ebud/ebdha013.htm>.

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya. 1995. Translated by Maurice Walshe. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Macy, Joanna. 1991. *Mutual Causality in Buddhism and General Systems Theory*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya. 1995. Translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Obeyesekere, Gananath. 2002. *Imagining Karma: Ethical Transformation in Amerindian, Buddhist, and Greek Rebirth*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Payutto, P. A. 1992. *Buddhist Economics: A Middle Way for the Market Place*. Translated by Bruce Evans. Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation.

———. 1993. *Good, Evil and Beyond: Karma in the Buddha's Teaching*. Translated by Bruce Evans. Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation.

———. 1994. *Dependent Origination: The Buddhist Law of Conditionality*. Translated by Bruce Evans. Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation.

Swaris, Nalin. 2008. *The Buddha's Way to Human Liberation: A Socio-Historical Approach*. Nugegoda, Sri Lanka: Sarasavi Publishers.

Discovering the Lotus on This Shore: A Reading of Kenji Miyazawa's "Okhotsk Elegy"

by Jon Holt

Miyazawa wrote stories and poems in order to help others understand, venerate, and propagate the Lotus. In doing so, he created works that are both very Japanese and very worldly.

Kenji Miyazawa (1896–1933), perhaps Japan's most popular Buddhist writer in the modern period, was also one of Japan's greatest modern proponents of the Lotus Sutra, a special text that has remained highly vital to Japanese since antiquity. Although Miyazawa was by profession a scientist and by avocation a writer of children's stories and free verse, he reminds Japanese of the bonds between their society today

and its past. Dedicated to writing Lotus literature (*Hokke bungaku*), Miyazawa wrote stories and poems to help others understand, venerate, and propagate the Lotus. In doing so, he created works that are both very Japanese and very worldly. This welcome contradiction is immediately apparent in his poem "Okhotsk Elegy" (*Ohōtsuku banka*), in which the poet records his thoughts, as he stands on the shore of a Japanese

Jon Holt is an Assistant Professor of Japanese in the Department of World Languages and Literatures at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. His research interests include modern Japanese poetry, Japanese Buddhism, and manga. Recent publications include "In a Senchimentaru Mood: Japanese Sentimentalism in Modern Poetry and Art" (Japanese Language and Literature [2014]); and "Ticket to Salvation: Nichiren Buddhism in Miyazawa Kenji's 'Ginga tetsudō no yoru'" (Japanese Journal of Religious Studies [2014]). His translations of Amari Hayashi's tanka recently appeared on asymptotejournal.com.

colony formerly held by Russia, as well as his emotional changes that come from reconnecting with the Lotus Sutra after a dark period when he doubted his faith, following the death of his younger sister, Toshiko, in 1922.

"Okhotsk Elegy" takes place in Karafuto, not Japan proper. Karafuto is the Japanese name for Sakhalin Island. Its southern portion below the fiftieth parallel north became a colony of Japan in 1905. Officially, Miyazawa went there in August 1923 in order to help procure employment for one of his students through a former colleague. Miyazawa wrote a total of five poems in this series, documenting his progress and return, but "Okhotsk Elegy" was the main poem and serves as the section title within his 1924 poetry collection *Spring and Asura* (*Haru to shura*). The poem is at

once both Japanese and very other as it opens, describing a near-alien landscape (the translation of the poem is mine):

The surface of the sea has completely gone to rust from the morning's carbonization

because you also have that green-blue color, there must also be azure present.

Far off where the waves disappear, there's much liquid lazuli.

Because we are reading an elegy (*banka*), we know this is a song memorializing a dead person's spirit. *Banka* is one of the oldest forms of Japanese poetry. Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (ca. 660–720), the great poet of *Manyōshū* (The collection of ten thousand leaves), composed a large number of elegies for private and public purposes. Miyazawa's elegy, however, begins with a tone that is entirely too rational. He is trying to make sense of this new, foreign landscape with his mind, not with his heart. Trained in the sciences of the soil, plants, and agriculture, he tempers his poetic spirit with the logic of a geologist and a taxonomist as the poem continues:

the spikes of *timothy* grass have become so short like this
and they are blown by the wind, over and over and over
(What they are are the keys of a blue

piano being pounded upon by the wind again and again and again) or perhaps it's just a shorter variety of *timothy*?

Morning dew droplets and *asagao* blooms
there is the glory that we call morning glories

Despite the large number of names or terms in this poem that are English, Dutch, and even Sanskrit, strangely there are no Russian words to be found in this poetic topos of the Karafuto landscape, one so close to fellow resident Russian speakers. The landscape has a fantastic allure for Miyazawa, refreshing his senses in the "glorious" seaside of Sakaehama (Glory Beach), wherein he will rediscover the power of the Lotus Sutra. Miyazawa uses his cold, rational faculties to make sense of a fantastic place. His heart, aching for warmth, soon finds succor:

Here comes a dray meant for open-country work, the one I just saw
the draft horse hangs its white, wizened head
and here's that goodness of the pack-horse man
that I felt earlier
when I asked him on the vacant street corner
"Where is the most lively part of the

beach?" and he answered,
"Probably that part, but I don't know because I've never been over there."
Now he gives me a kind, sidelong look
(Yes, in his small spectacles are reflected the white clouds of Karafuto)

When we are lost in a foreign land, we ask directions. Miyazawa asked the Japanese colonist about this place and got an answer that was both helpful and not helpful, but at least he made contact with another person. Reaching out to him kindled the spark of faith in other people, which Miyazawa had been missing. As Miyazawa often does in his "mental-image sketches" (*shinshō suketchi*), he breaks off from his internal conversations to speak with others, although he always returns to his own thoughts, often in the form of parenthetical asides. Now he reconsiders his botanical assumptions, perhaps to reaffirm confidence in his rational powers. Miyazawa is still very far away from the spirit of the person he came to remember.

They look more like *paeonia* than *asagao*
They are big beach roses
They are Japanese *hamanasu* roses of the darkest red morning
Ah, the deep fragrance of flowers

like these!
Somehow it must be the trick of
fairies!
They bring to them countless indigo-
colored butterflies,
and those small spear tips of golden
grass,
greenish bamboo blinds, nephrite
vases, and on and on

The landscape is a dizzy array of colors, shapes, smells, and light that overwhelm Miyazawa's scientific mind so much that he cannot find predicates for all of his subjects. Magic, through these fairies (*yōsei*), defeats rational science and Japanese syntax. Miyazawa tries to reassert his rational mind by using the provisional form (*ba*) of predicates to clarify the cause and effect of nature on human senses. When Miyazawa uses logical sentence constructions in his poetry, it usually shows a sense of desperation. Miyazawa here is desperate not to become sucked too deeply into his poetic reveries, because he would risk succumbing to his grief.

Plus, with the clouds shining so
much like this
for me it's all a mad, dizzying rush
and oh so fun!

The tracks of the horse, side by side
remain on the brown sand, quiet
and wet
of course it's not that just the horse
has passed through
but the wide ruts of its dray
are so faint; are lines of cursive
writing

Miyazawa's exhilaration of the scene is tempered by its solemnity. He came to communicate with the dead. Instead, fairies and sunlight have distracted him, exciting him about the beauty of life. He looks to the landscape and sobers himself. He reconnects with the cart man, with whom he had brief communication. Instead of memories of speech, Miyazawa begins to see messages in the sand, a line of cursive text, which is more alienating than the cart man's warm words or kind eye contact. Miyazawa has a mission to communicate with the dead. The landscape reminds him of his mission, of his message.

In the fine white lines formed after
the waves come
three small mosquitoes hover over
me
and then are blown away
What lovely shells! White fragments!

The stalks of blue day lilies are half
buried in the sand
waves coming in; waves churning
sand
I fall down into the fine gravel of
white schist and
I put into my mouth a piece of a shell
that was cleanly polished by the
waves
and try to doze off for a while

If the landscape will not speak directly to Miyazawa, he will take the landscape into his mouth. Although he does not digest the shell, he has mouth-to-mouth contact with it; in turn, he falls into the landscape, allowing the beach to absorb him in its colorful and soft embrace:

Why sleep here? Well, on such a
high-quality *carpet* like these pale
white lingonberries
and newly ripened black berries
down under these mysterious
bluebells,
my transparent energy
that I gave to the Sakhalin morning
fairies before
I must now recover from the light
of the clouds
and the sound of the waves and

the damp-smelling wind
moreover, most importantly, my
mental image
has gone totally pale from exhaustion
and that's why, that's why it's even
glowing blindingly green-gold in
color
I can even hear from the light rays
and the dark, layered sky
unnerving bucket-drum sounds

Now the poet, rather than being
the one that absorbs and refashions
nature, is dominated by nature. He is
in danger of losing his special humanity,
his *shinshō*, mental image. Miyazawa,
with his pad and pencil taking notes out
on this poetic journey, now becomes
like illuminated text—glowing green-
gold in color, much like Buddhist sutras
illustrated and written with gold, which
was once an extreme act of devotion
by an aristocrat to demonstrate one's
dedication to the Buddha's teachings.
Are these unnerving drum sounds not
unlike the distant sounds of someone
beating the *mokushō*, the percussion
instrument used by Lotus practitioners
to chant the *daimoku*? Hail to the Sutra
of the Mysterious Flower and Wonderful
Law! *Namu myōhō renga-kyō*! Miyazawa
is becoming attuned now to his true
mission on Glory Beach, here at the
Sea of Okhotsk:

The humble grass heads, the haze
of light
The greenish-blue color stretches
gloriously to the sea horizon
from the seams of the clouds' lay-
ered construction
a bit of blue heaven peeps out
my chest is ever so strongly pierced
the two colors of blue over there
both are qualities my Toshiko had
When I walk alone, nod off from
exhaustion
on this deserted Karafuto shore
Toshiko is there on the edge of that
blue place
what she's doing there, I don't know.

Finally, the seeker has found what
he seeks. However, when Miyazawa
observes Toshiko's spirit slowly emerg-
ing from her "two blue colors" of the
sea and sky, he cannot understand what
she is doing. If she has not come forth
to communicate with him, why is she
there? Miyazawa is confused.

The wild trunks and branches of the
ezo and *todo* pines
over there have been wildly scattered,
the waves curl and curl
and the sand bursts forth because
of their rolling
the salt water becomes muddy and
lonely
(The time is 11:15. The flat plate dial
shines with its pale blue light)

Like Wordsworth's pathetic fallacy,
the landscape of Miyazawa's mental
sketch mirrors his confusion. Miyazawa,
the scientist, reemerges to counter this
mental chaos by taking note (parenthet-
ically) of the data he has: the time of day
and the position of the sun. When he
returns to his observations of the beach,
another Miyazawa emerges: this time it
is Miyazawa the elder brother.

Birds fly high and low through the
clouds here
the morning boats now go sliding
past
carved into the sand, the rut from
the bottom of a fishing boat
and the hollowed-out space from a
big wooden beam
together form a single wavy crucifix.
Taking a number of *ki-pen*, as she
called small pencils,
Toshi once spelled HELL and
changed them to LOVE
then showed me them arranged into
the Cross
it was a trick anyone could do, so
I mocked her with a cold smile
(one piece of shell gets buried in the
sand its white edge only sticks out.)
Fine sand that had dried out at last

flows down into this carved-out cross
now it steadily pours down and down

Kenji and Toshiko were the two
eldest Miyazawa children. When Kenji,
the eldest, converted from Pure Land
Buddhism to Nichiren Buddhism, only
Toshiko joined him, turning away from
Amida to focus on the Lotus Sutra. In
their youth, they learned about other
cultures and religions. Toshiko, like
Kenji, studied English; they also learned
about Christianity and had experiences
learning English through Christian mis-
sionaries. The two eldest Miyazawa chil-
dren turned to the Lotus to channel
their faith into positive energy. When
Toshiko died in 1922, it was a terri-
ble shock to Kenji. He never married;
the one true female friend he had was
his sister, Toshiko, who was his liter-
ary confidante and perhaps even his
soul mate. As recorded in his famous
poem "Pine Needles" (*Matsu no hari*),
he repeatedly asks her on her death-
bed, "Are you really leaving me alone?"
Even in August 1923, a year after the
tragedy of her death, Miyazawa contin-
ued to pursue Toshiko, hoping to get

an answer to his question. “Okhotsk Elegy” concludes with the poet confronting both the realm of death and the world of nature.

Although the sea is so green like this
when I still think about Toshiko
the expression of the distant folk
say to me, “Why do you
mourn only for this one person, your
younger sister?”

I hear a voice within me say
(*Casual observer! Superficial traveler!*)
Once the sky shines so bright, quite
unexpectedly, the darkness spreads
out
and three fierce birds go flying now
and they start chirping so sadly like
that!

Do they bring me some kind of news?
One side of my head hurts
The roofs of Sakaehama village, now
distant, glitter
a bird, just one, blows her glass
whistle
and she goes drifting up to chalcedony clouds
The glittering quality of the town
and the wharf,
the pink color of the smooth hillock
there, smooth and high,
is from its full swath of willow-orchids
fresh apple-green grassland!
and rows of blackish-green pines!
(*Namo Soddaruma Pundarika Sutra!*)
When the sea waves come rolling in
five little sandpipers
run away with tottering steps
(*Namo Soddaruma Pundarika Sutra!*)
When the waves pull out
they follow them running with tottering steps
over the flat mirror surface of the
sand.

Although Miyazawa’s “Voiceless Lamentation” poems about Toshiko’s death on November 27, 1922, are well known and loved by many Japanese, these poems from the “Okhotsk Elegy” lamentation poems are equally moving.

In the first lamentation poems, Miyazawa vividly described the passing of his sister in terms that were very realistic but also very much part of Miyazawa’s inner world. Those poems are very sad because Miyazawa lost both his sister and his faith. In this “Okhotsk Elegy” poem, Miyazawa slowly regains his faith as he comes to terms with the death of Toshiko. The Lotus helps him find his strength again. Urged by the other-world spirits not to just mourn and pray for Toshiko, Miyazawa awakens from a long, dark dream on an otherwise sunny beach. On Glory Beach, Miyazawa hears the *daimoku* chant of the Lotus Sutra sung in the original Sanskrit (“*Namo Soddharuma Pundarika Sutra!*”). Looking out at the Sea of Okhotsk, sitting in a colony on a Russian-Japanese island, Miyazawa connects with the world of his faith, once lost but now found. Somewhere out there, perhaps in between reincarnations, Toshiko exists (“what she’s doing there, I don’t know”). She is not caught in limbo between HELL and LOVE (that is, the Christian heaven). The tides of the cosmos or Buddhist karma flow again. Nature’s cycle of birth and death, like the waves of the sea, comes and goes.

Looking out “over the flat mirror surface of the sand,” Miyazawa sees himself in those sandpipers who delicately trace the comings and goings both of the sea and of life. Here is a perfect example of the kind of Lotus literature that Miyazawa wanted to write. Not only does it contain the *daimoku*, but it also contains the core message of how the Lotus Sutra can bring salvation to oneself and to fellow human beings.

The Actual Refugee Crisis in Europe

by Ignacio Marqués

We have seen European leaders meeting in Brussels to consider the promise of providing more facilities to Turkey if it agrees to stop the crowds of refugees and allow them to remain in its territory, forbidding their access to EU countries.

Though I'm not a theoretical expert on such issues as refugee crises, from my personal experience of treating poor immigrants or refugees from all over black Africa ("sub-Saharan people," they are called, because they come from several countries south of the Sahara Desert), I would like to write about the present situation in Europe.

Since 1983, I've been involved in such humanitarian situations. Since the first black Africans coming from Senegal, Gambia, Mali, and so forth

were not allowed to enter France—from where they hoped to join relatives who had already migrated to neighboring Spain—they had to change their plans after being reminded that at the time Spain didn't belong to the European Community, and Spain's laws on immigrants and refugees were milder for the advantage of the Africans.

I am a Catholic priest living in the agricultural area of Maresme County, Mataró, close to Barcelona, not far from the border with France, where they began

to establish themselves. In the eighties when it happened, it was easier for immigrants to get jobs, and I had the luck of welcoming them into the halls of Saint Paul's parish (my parish). With the help of some volunteers, we started to help them with their needs for accommodation and food and to learn our languages (Spanish and Catalan), organize their documents, and so on. They were the first "colored" Africans living in Spain (recognized then as "black people in El Maresme"), and in ten years they spread throughout Spain. The Welcome Centre we opened to help them, which is still open, is nowadays considered the first center opened in Spain to help African immigrants.

In order to improve my knowledge of those people and their countries, I've visited many of their families and the places where they came from. Though most of the first arrivals were Muslims, later some Christians started to come from African countries, such as Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Cameroon. At the beginning I was only able to offer our halls for their Muslim activities (prayers, Ramadan, other feasts). After the Christians arrived, as a Catholic priest I helped them not only in material ways but in spiritual ways. I can officiate at their celebrations (from baptisms, for their birth in the faith, to funerals, for transition from this world to heaven after their death).

Because of that, I have been involved in interreligious issues. I was invited, for instance, by the International Association for Religious Freedom (a charitable organization founded in Boston in 1900

Ignacio Marqués, a Roman Catholic priest in Barcelona, founded the Sant Pau Centre Terapèutic there in 1984, Spain's first Welcome Centre for helping sub-Saharan people. He was for ten years the Archdiocese of Barcelona's episcopal delegate for migrants and gypsies, and promotes interfaith dialogue among people from 127 countries, including Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Christians. In May 2015 he visited Japan and spoke at Rissho Kosei-kai Dharma centers in Tokyo and Nagoya.

and the oldest international interfaith group), which works for religious freedom around the world, to present my experiences during its thirty-fourth World Congress, held in August 2014 in Birmingham, England.

United States Involvement

Though the United States (as everybody knows, the richest country in the world) was the first to arm and train Syrian opposition factions fighting the regime of Bashar el Assad in Syria five years ago, provoking there a terrible civil war, the United States was not disposed to accept Syrian refugees. Pretending to want to avoid the entry of secret “jihad terrorists,” the United States preferred to help the Syrian opposition only by giving money, not by accepting new refugees. In 2014 the US government accepted only 132 Syrian refugees, and in 2015 accepted no more than 2,000. The United States has sent four million dollars to Jordan, Egypt, and other friendly countries neighboring Syria to help Syrian refugees, but obliges them to remain there.

All Europe Is Affected

Nowadays—as I write this humble report—the European Union is attempting to do something similar: pay Turkey millions of euros while promising to admit it as a new member of the EU if Turkey succeeds in stopping the crowds of refugees from reaching Greece and

Italy, from where they could move into the rest of Europe.

It is true that the eastern and southern doors of Europe are almost bursting with the crowds of refugees arriving every day. Lesbos and Idomeni in Greece and Lampedusa in Italy are sadly famous for being the hardest borders to cross in Europe. The thing is that two thousand persons per day are asking for asylum in Germany. And Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, risks losing the next election because she is considered by many of her fellow citizens as “too generous to refugees.” Her enemies argue that she’s like that because her father was a Protestant minister and she’s too soft. Some eight hundred thousand persons are supposed to have applied for refugee status throughout Germany in 2015.

If years ago the problem was concentrated in southern Spain (near North Africa), from where *hundreds* of people crossed directly to Gibraltar in small boats, risking their lives to enter Europe, now the fact is that *thousands* of poor people are entering Europe every day through its eastern borders.

Though the United Kingdom has border control in spite of belonging to the

EU (because it did not sign the Schengen Agreement), thousands of poor migrants from all over the world are waiting in Calais, where the English Channel is a natural barrier, for an opportunity to enter Britain illegally, which they consider a Promised Land or a new El Dorado.

The Macedonian army stops refugees, the Hungarian government builds walls, the Slovenian police are trying to stop floods of people, and the Austrian border patrol checks the passports of dark-skinned passengers on trains despite their coming from other European countries. All of this violates the Schengen Agreement. Yet every day thousands of refugees manage to enter Europe.

What Does Europe Intend to Become?

Although those who are considered the founding fathers of the European Union (Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, et al.) were humane, interested in defending their ideals of peace, democracy, and human rights, their successors, considering that Europe had two world wars in just one century, built a market instead of a political union.

That is why Europe in 1957 established the European Economic Community, also called the Common Market. The ideals were transformed into money. Europeans hoped that if they had common interests, they would never go to war again. And there has been no war in Europe in recent decades.

But as a human being I can’t accept the refugee situation. As a European among many millions of Europeans, what can we do to solve this injustice that affects so many people who need to be helped and to come to our countries?

The Dramatic Actual Situation (March 19)

The situation that occurred the week of March is and still prevails on the border between Greece and Macedonia—with the crush of more than fifteen thousand refugees who come mostly from Syria and Iran, while the border to the Balkans and Europe is closed, is pushing our authorities to send them to Turkey. This decision is extremely dramatic and unjust! The Greek village of Idomeni, which is currently the site of the largest refugee camp, has become today a place of human misery. We have seen on TV images of small, flimsy tents under heavy rain amid mud and cold weather; images of a truck carrying wood at night to warm the people, and everybody struggling for food; images of deep discrimination, people separated—according to country of origin or even places of birth—men, women, children, babies . . .

We are facing a humanitarian crisis in every way, but this time, perhaps for the first time, it is twofold: a humanitarian crisis in its origin as well as in its destination. In its origin first, because refugees’ arrival in Europe has been due to war and immense poverty in their own countries, particularly in the conflicts generated in the Middle East, from the internal confrontations between Shias and Sunnis in Islamic politics, and recently from the creation of the Islamic

State. But it's also a humanitarian crisis in its results because, in spite of the right of the refugees to have their status recognized everywhere, they find themselves sheltered in front of a European border completely closed to them.

Even since March 19 we have seen European leaders meeting in Brussels to consider the promise of providing more facilities to Turkey if it agrees to stop the crowds of refugees and allow them to remain in its territory, forbidding their access to EU countries. Such a measure could be considered blackmail; bribery that has never been committed before by any European Union member.

Regarding the current situation in Greece, it is not too satisfactory, since to the number of fifteen thousand refugees already there we add fifteen thousand more, reaching a figure higher than thirty thousand in a country without a comfortable economy and in dire crisis.

If we are sincere about this situation, we are led to ethical reflections: we feel great shame because it is very contradictory that a continent like old Europe, economically stabilized, denies Eastern refugees not only the right to be welcomed but the right to be protected inside its borders. This is their

right, and our moral duty consists to make it effective!

For this reason, Filippo Grandi, the United Nations high commissioner for refugees, has said, "The participation of all EU Member States in a solution is critical to managing it effectively. It should not just be left to the entry countries of Greece and Italy, and those such as Austria, Germany and Sweden, who welcomed so many."

His proposed plan would be to manage and stabilize the situation of refugees according to the following six key points:

1. Implement fully the so-called hot spot approach and relocation of asylum seekers out of Greece and Italy and, at the same time, return individuals who don't qualify for refugee protection, including under existing readmission agreements.
2. Step up support to Greece to handle the humanitarian emergency, including for refugee status determination, relocation, and return or readmission.
3. Ensure compliance with all the EU laws and directives on asylum among Member States.

4. Make available more safe, legal ways for refugees to travel to Europe under managed programs—for example, humanitarian admission programs, private sponsorships, family reunion, student scholarships, and labor mobility schemes—so that refugees do not resort to smugglers and traffickers to find safety.

5. Safeguard individuals at risk, including systems to protect unaccompanied and separated children, measures to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence, enhancing search and rescue operations at sea, saving lives by cracking down on smuggling, and countering xenophobia and racism targeted at refugees and migrants.

6. Develop Europe-wide systems of responsibility for asylum seekers, including the creation of registration centers in main countries of arrival, and setting up a system for asylum requests to be distributed in an equitable way across EU member states.

My Motivation

I feel deep motivation to think and to try to behave like this, simply because I aim to be an honest human being and a European citizen. Besides that, as a Christian and as a Catholic priest, I find other commitments in the Bible.

We read in the Old Testament: "You shall love the foreigner as you love yourself, because you were foreigners in the land of Egypt, too" (Lev. 19:33–37). And in the New Testament: "You that are blessed by my Father: Come! . . . I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me" (Matt. 25:34–36). □

Abiding by the Laws of Interdependence

The 33rd Niwano Peace Prize Acceptance Address by Dishani Jayaweera, Cofounder of the Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation, Sri Lanka

The Niwano Peace Foundation awarded the thirty-third Niwano Peace Prize on May 12 to the Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation (CPBR) of Sri Lanka for its distinguished contributions to peace building and reconciliation in Sri Lanka during and after the country's twenty-six-year civil war and its help in rebuilding a society that honors diversity. The presentation ceremony took place in Tokyo. In addition to an award certificate, CPBR received a medal and twenty million Japanese yen. The cofounder's acceptance speech follows.

We are here today to represent all members of the Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation and Sri Lanka's religious and community leaders, youth, women, communities, friends, partners, well-wishers, and other citizens and believers in universal love and interdependence.

As strong believers in interdependence, we see the universe as a web of relationships, a web of connections. As believers in Mother Earth and Father Sky we see the world as a place where all of us have come to be part of the life of the universe and the core of diversity, and to be messengers of universal love, because the human being is said to be the most intelligent animal on the planet.

If so, what are the expectations of Mother Earth and Father Sky for us? That we should be messengers of universal love, agents of humanity, and protectors of this planet's basis of existence.

What are the planet's core values of existence? We think they are interdependence and coexistence. These are the two key core values that Mother Earth and Father Sky maintain on this planet. As the most intelligent daughters and sons of Mother Earth and Father

Sky, do we abide by these values? Do we keep these two core values at the hearts of our social, cultural, political, economic, environmental, and educational systems? That is what we are concerned about.

Instead of interdependence, we have made dependence or independence the cores of our systems and structures. Whether they are family, social, national, or global structures, these are the two ends we strive for—dependence or independence.

We forget that there is a middle place. In Buddhism we call it the Middle Way. This middle place is interdependence.

Can you live 100 percent independently? Even for one minute? I believe that we cannot. We need air, water, fire, soil, food, love, care, and so on. Just imagine yourself 100 percent dependent. What would that mean? That would be nonexistence. No one can exist on this planet by being 100 percent dependent or independent. What are those states? We may say they are nonexistence. That is the truth.

Unfortunately, as the most intelligent animal on the planet, we have forgotten the core values of our beings, of our origins. We came into this world as

a result of opposite energies. Life originated in the universe through the harmonizing of very different energies. But from the moment we came to be, we have searched for people exactly like us. Individually and also collectively this is our aim: to find people like us or make everyone be like us. But we are on a mission that is next to impossible.

On the other hand, we are on another mission—a political, economic, and environmental mission. We may be engaged with each other on different levels, such as personal, social, national, and global, in pursuing this mission. Doesn't it mean trying to subordinate others or to subordinate ourselves?

Gradually we have come to a level where we are also trying to govern our Mother Earth and Father Sky. Doesn't trying to govern the whole universe mean taking control of Mother Earth and Father Sky?

Where do you think we are now, today? It is as if we were sitting on a volcano about to erupt! Environmentally, socially, culturally, economically, politically, emotionally, and spiritually, we are burning ourselves out.

Fear and the fire of violence are two factors governing our lives. We call this

The Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation (CPBR) of Sri Lanka was founded in 2002 by Ms. Dishani Jayaweera, a former attorney, and Dr. Jayantha Seneviratne, an expert in conflict transformation, who are Sinhala Buddhists by birth. CPBR is a nonprofit organization promoting peace building and nonviolent conflict resolution. It supports personal and societal transformation within and between ethnic, religious, linguistic, and regional communities in Sri Lanka, working at the grassroots, local, and national levels. To achieve goals of national reconciliation, CPBR focuses on people considered to hold the greatest influence and promise for transformation: religious leaders, women, and young people.

“fire” and “fear,” the two Fs. They govern our lives on personal, social, and global levels. More sadly, I have to say that we have also injected the two Fs into our Mother Earth and Father Sky. So today we are in a crisis on a universal level, too. This is the result of the mission of the most intelligent animal, the human being. As the most intelligent animal, what do you think we have achieved with this mission?

We think we have achieved some beautiful things we can be proud of, but at the same time some destructive things as well. On the one hand, we see the beautiful and amazing things we have created: at all levels and in all sectors, from the family structure to global, political, and social structures, from pins to big machines, from culture to art.

But we must admit that none of the things we have made is original. They are all copied from Mother Nature. They all originated from Mother Earth and Father Sky. As their children we look at and make beautiful, amazing copies of things we see in nature. We are masters of copying nature and reproducing it. But we delude ourselves if we credit our creations to our own brilliance. We *are* brilliant, but not as much as Mother Nature, because she is the real creator.

Even though we have copied some of her creations, we have been unable to copy the core of her system of governing the universe. We haven't absorbed the fundamental truth of our existence, which is interdependence. Instead, we have produced systems and structures

to govern ourselves that violate the core values of our existence and origins. The only original thing we have created is government on social, political, cultural, economic, and emotional levels.

That is where everything has gone wrong. That is the problem that we of the Centre for Peace Building and Reconciliation are trying to solve. We are trying not only to face it but to get involved in solving it.

What went wrong, and why? What is the right path? How and what can we do to guide humanity to the right path? This is the search we are engaged

in. What can we do to guide us back to our core values and bring ourselves back home?

We realized that this has to start with us, through our own selves, with processes of self-deconstruction and self-transformation. One may call it unlearning and new learning. To do that we need to discover our own selves before searching for others or discovering the world.

Hence, our center's origin is self-discovery and self-transformation. This is our hardest task in life, and it is where religion can be a tool. There are many

tools and vehicles that can be used to initiate an inner dialogue to discover one's own self. We associate traditional societies with religion. We associate youth with art and creativity. We associate women with religion, art, creativity, and the soil.

Our second step is group transformation. We want to give birth to organized groups on the community and national levels that think and act differently, creatively, and alternatively. We want to create spaces for recognizing, accepting, respecting, nourishing, and

celebrating diversity. We want to create social spaces where people of different faiths or ethnicities can meet and understand each other in organized groups, sharing the same core values yet different from one another.

We want to create common, safe social and cultural spaces where diverse communities can come together to understand Mother Nature's law of interdependence: spaces to help them understand their differences as well as their similarities, understand and learn the skills and gain the knowledge to deal

with their differences to achieve positive outcomes.

Then we want to organize diverse intra- and interfaith as well as nonreligious groups at district and national levels, to bring the voices of their communities to the national level.

In one way we are on a universal mission. It is to introduce the art of interdependence as the core value of our being and to explore methods, approaches, and mechanisms to engrave that core value in the systems and structures that govern our lifestyles. We need to see conflict as a natural phenomenon and develop skills to acknowledge and find opportunities to emerge from conflict safely. We want to cultivate a culture of peace rather than of violence.

In another way, we are simultaneously engaged in a local-level mission to help transform the issues we face as Sri Lankans on political, economic, social, cultural, and emotional levels.

We have two strategic goals.

On social and cultural levels, we are creating common physical and psychological spaces where people can come together to innovate social or community systems and structures to address their common and identical needs as communities, and not as a single ethnic or religious community. We want to

give birth to community systems that engage in a collective mission to transform situations.

For this, one model we developed is interfaith dialogue centers in six strategic locations in Sri Lanka. In the future we are planning to test a model called Community Hubs, based on the ecovillage concept.

Our strategic political goal is to organize diverse grassroots communities to speak with one single voice and make their voices heard on an opinion-making level. Organizing grassroots- and national-level voices as one voice would promote their collective voice. That goal includes advocacy and lobbying to bring grassroots voices to policymaking tables. For this, the model we tested was the People's Forum.

Through our interfaith dialogue centers, we have organized yearlong community-consultation processes, consulting children, youth, women, men, elders, and religious leaders in eighty villages and in four main war-affected cities to collect community recommendations for reconciliation in Sri Lanka. These recommendations were presented on June 10, 2015, in Colombo at a national gathering of state heads and representatives of civil societies, the international community, and nationally known artists and activists. Religious and community leaders from all four faiths and different regions met in one place. They called this conference the People's Forum. This May they will start a national advocacy and lobbying campaign to bring the recommendations into policy-level discussion.

In order to test this model, we are working with traditional societies through religious leaders and community leaders. Intra- and interfaith dialogue and actions are the core method we are adopting. Through this initiative we have touched close to thirty thousand people's lives.

We strongly believe that young people, too, have many things to say to this world. But is there any space or freedom

for them to voice them? In our country, there have been many violent youth uprisings. Why?

They needed to change the environment they were living in. Our Young Visionaries initiative has two components: the Voice of Image, and Future Leaders. With the Voice of Image, we are creating spaces for youth to engage in inner dialogue, outer dialogue, community dialogue, national dialogue, and dialogue with the universe through photography. This helps them see the world through different lenses and to connect with the core of their being while connecting to other people as well as their Mother Earth and Father Sky, meaning the universe.

Through this initiative we developed a model called "Exhibitions for Dialogue, Dialogue for Actions, Actions for Change." The Exhibition for Dialogue phase gives youth space to interpret with their eyes the environment they are living in. Their voices are made heard through community, regional, and national exhibitions. Following the exhibitions, other segments of communities will initiate dialogues based on photographic images and form action groups.

Following the Dialogue for Actions phase, the Future Leaders groups are

taking the lead in addressing community issues by mobilizing and organizing communities and resources. They do this by building bridges between diverse communities and within the same communities through photographic images and acts of community leadership. With this initiative we are hoping to bring all young photographers and their exhibitions together under the theme "Our Country, Our People" for a national discourse to create lobbies for youth to make their voices heard on a national level in terms of the social, political, economic, cultural, and emotional realities of their villages and areas. Future Leaders will make the voices of the people heard loud and clear by policymakers.

We are now in the process of exploring potential for bringing the environmental component into the work scope of promoting a broader aspect of peace building. Our testing ground is our sister organization WOMAN. WOMAN is a space created by women for women, to see, read, understand, and interpret everything as they experience it. It is women's vision of exploring ways to heal themselves as well as all living beings while embracing the identity of their womanhood.

Under the WOMAN umbrella we are testing the following things:

1. The role of women as religious leaders in healing and reconciling ourselves with our wounded souls and our soil
2. The role of women in reproducing, recycling, and re-creation
3. The role of women in creating a safer planet for our children
4. The role of art and culture in engraving the core values of our being (diversity and interdependence) in the next generation's mindset

As daughters of Mother Nature, members of WOMAN came together to explore and reinterpret the world through their own eyes. We are trying to imagine what a city designed by women would be like, or an economic system designed by women. How do women lead religions and spirituality?

At all levels, we are exploring how we can develop inner strength in people to be courageous enough to explore the ways and means of developing power *with* relationships instead of power *over* relationships. From experience we know

this is a hard task. We women ourselves have failed to do so on many occasions. Taking all moments as life lessons, we are exploring how to develop systems and structures based on power with relationships to promote power sharing as a political solution for Sri Lanka's national crisis. Our philosophical basis is interdependence. Our political basis is power sharing through power with relationships. Our spiritual base is Mother Earth and Father Sky.

In order to engage in these areas, the main tool we are introducing is dialogue: inner dialogue, interpersonal dialogue, intragroup dialogue, intergroup dialogue, intercommunity dialogue, national discourse, and silent dialogue with nature.

To respond to the two Fs—fear and the fire of violence—our approach is the four Hs: heart, head, hands, and health. Power is the two Bs: brains and breath. Strength is the three Cs: compassion, commitment, and creativity. Drive is the three Is: integrity, interdependence, and imagination.

We are moving ahead and exploring how to connect with our being. On that journey, today we are standing in front of you, sharing how we feel, think,

and act to give back as daughters and sons of Mother Earth and Father Sky or, in another sense, of Mother Nature.

As the CPBR family, we extend to you our heartiest gratitude for creating the space for us to share our views with you. We feel deeper gratitude for all the wonderful people who have crossed our paths on this journey through life, trusting and inspiring us to believe in what we believe and stand for; and for the love shown by our families, who never expected things from us as family responsibilities and who released us from those bonds because of the bond of love.

We extend our gratitude to all the team members of the Niwano Peace Foundation and the Selection Committee, who have trusted in us. Trust is one of the best gifts one can give to other people. All of you have given it to us. We will take it as a responsibility. We strongly believe that we are equally responsible for the world we have created for ourselves and our children.

This is a time to stop and reflect and ask ourselves, “Are we doing our duty responsibly to hand over a safer planet to our children and grandchildren?”

The answer needs to come from the deepest place of brutal honesty. That answer will guide us to become the kind of people we want to be on this planet. We wish all of us to be brutally honest in this crucial hour of need, because Mother Nature is deeply wounded and weeping, and her children are also deeply wounded and weeping. If every one of us can stop just for one minute and listen, I am sure we will hear the weeping.

Once we start listening—not only hearing but listening—to this painful weeping, we can no longer stay still. We need to move. We need to do something; we need to do something collectively.

I am sure all of us have the courage to walk away from here not only with that dream of working together in the true sense of the word but also with the intention of making that dream a reality. □

The Asian Conference of Religions for Peace

by Nikkyo Niwano

In March 1999 an autobiography by Rev. Nikkyo Niwano (1906–99), the founder of Rissho Kosei-kai, was published in Japanese under the title Kono michi: Ichibutsujo no sekai o mezashite (The path that we have walked: Aspiring to the world of the One Buddha Vehicle). The book is a lively account of the life of Founder Niwano as a leader of an international lay Buddhist association and a pioneer of interreligious cooperation who dedicated himself to liberating all people from suffering with firm faith in the Lotus Sutra. Dharma World will continue to publish excerpts from the book in installments.

Northeast of Kyoto, on the border between Kyoto and Shiga Prefectures, lies Mount Hiei, where the headquarters of the Tendai Denomination of Japanese Buddhism is located. In 788, Saicho (767–822) built a small meditation hall on the eastern slope of the mountain,

which he called Ichijo Shikan'in (One Vehicle Meditation Hall). Later he went to China and studied the Lotus Sutra on Mount Tiantai. On his return to Japan, at the behest of Emperor Kanmu, he established the Tendai school of Japanese Buddhism, based on the teachings of the

Nikkyo Niwano, the founder of Rissho Kosei-kai, was an honorary president of Religions for Peace and honorary chairman of Shinshuren (Federation of New Religious Organizations of Japan) at the time of his death in October 1999. He was awarded the 1979 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.

Lotus Sutra. That small meditation hall developed into a large, sacred temple complex, Enryakuji—comprising three thousand stupas and subtemples, centering on the Konpon Chudo (Primary Main Hall), and it functioned as Japan's main place of Buddhist training to guard the nation. Because of its geographical position, people also believed that it protected the capital and the emperor's palace from evil spirits entering from the northeastern quarter. Today, twelve hundred years later, a forest of ancient trees covering the whole mountain surrounds the temple in an embrace of calm and quiet.

In July 1976, one hundred representatives from Japan's various religions and sects gathered for more than two days at the Enryakuji Kaikan, a hotel on Mount Hiei near the Konpon Chudo. The meeting was preparatory to the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) planned for that November.

During the Second World Assembly of the World Conference of Religions for Peace, in Leuven, Belgium [1974], there had been a call for a conference involving just Asian religious leaders,

and Asian representatives had met informally during a tea break at the conference. A clear opinion emerged that it was not easy to convene or participate in a conference of religious leaders from all over the world. Since Asia was home to many issues that threatened world peace, wouldn't it be a good idea to hold a conference centered on Asia just for Asian religious leaders? The determination to move on this idea grew. The representatives asserted that peace in Asia had to be built by Asian religious leaders and thought that Japan should take the lead in organizing a conference. They asked me to undertake it.

Singapore was agreed upon as the place most central to delegates, and a preliminary discussion was held there in July 1975. Twenty-five participants from eleven countries took part—Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Coming from countries in Asia and the Pacific, we felt a strong affinity with one another and exchanged lively opinions in a friendly atmosphere. We decided that the theme of the conference should be “Peace through Religion: On the Path to Peace, Asia Reflects, Proposes, Participates,” and also determined the overall plan in terms of location, length, and budget.

We must never forget, though, that the scars of the dreadful war of the past remain deep in the hearts of people living in the countries around Japan.

When I visited Singapore for that preliminary discussion, I met up with a local doctor and his wife with whom I had an acquaintance. They were both of Chinese ancestry. I will never forget what he told me at that time. “My wife’s father was killed by a machine gun fired by Japanese soldiers. Her mother was twenty-eight at the time, with four young children, and what she went through is indescribable. She said she considered

committing suicide many times, but because of the children, she could not. She worked desperately to survive, and even today absolutely refuses to use items made in Japan.”

Singapore was the site of the first hard-fought battle following Japan’s entry into World War II. Today the city is developing very attractively, and there are no visible signs of the war. However, I could not help wondering how deep its wounds were in people’s minds and how long it would take until they were healed. I told myself, “Unless we Japanese can put ourselves in the position of the other countries of Asia, we will only inflict further wounds, on top of those already there. The true significance of ACRP will be a measure of how clearly Japanese religious leaders can express contrition for Japan’s war responsibility.”

Issues concerning Asia are extremely important when we talk about world peace. Most Asian countries were developing nations in the 1970s, and religion still played an important role in people’s lives. Whereas Europe and the Americas were part of the Christian world, and the Middle East belonged to the Islamic world, Asia seemed like a melting pot of religions. It was also experiencing directly the great wave of

the two opposing ideologies that divided the world, communism and capitalism, and so was a likely flashpoint for a world conflict. Japan was inextricably involved in the countries of Asia.

Behind the envy felt by many people in Southeast Asia for Japan's post-war wealth is a deep-rooted antipathy that is expressed in a wariness about Japanese exports. "Japan has begun to invade us again, this time through economic means rather than military."

Mother Teresa

ACRP I was held over six days in Singapore, beginning on November 25, 1976. Three hundred religious leaders from twenty-one countries, mostly Asian, attended. We were also honored to have with us Ven. Etai Yamada, the 253rd head priest of the Tendai denomination of Japanese Buddhism. The conference was divided into three commissions: "Peace, Security, and Human Dignity," "The New International Economic Order and Comprehensive Domestic Development," and "Developmental Action through Religion." Representatives from each country spoke on the actual situation there, and their presentations led to keen discussion.

Even now, in various parts of Asia, there are many who are deprived even

of the right to live a truly human life, and countless numbers are afflicted by hunger and illness, and do not even have shelter.

The keynote address was given by Mother Teresa, head of the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta and later a Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1979). She said, "And as you and I know, poverty is not only hunger for bread; there is a hunger for love in the world today. There is the hunger of loneliness, the hunger of being unwanted, unloved, uncared for. . . . We do not need bombs and guns, we need love and compassion."

In the company of 350 sisters, Mother Teresa worked every day from four in the morning, dedicating herself to the demanding tasks of caring for those sick and near death, taking their hands in hers, and looking after orphans.

What struck me the most about the way she served people was that she did not give what she had left over but, rather, what she did not have. To give people this, she had to make every effort to create it.

To devote oneself passionately to the service of others and provide what they most need in the conviction that to do so is to serve God, as Mother Teresa has done, makes her a deserving winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Rescuing the Boat People

In the midst of our serious deliberations at ACRP I, news came of the arrival of Vietnamese refugees in the vicinity of a Singapore harbor.

Ever since the end of the Vietnam War, increasing numbers of people from Vietnam had taken to the sea in small boats, seeking refuge abroad. These "boat people" were drifting down the South China Sea, finally making their way to

the focus of the conference underwent a complete change. When the American committee members, and then the Canadian, also decided to make a donation, Rev. Yasusaburo Tazawa, patriarch of Shoroku Shinto Yamatoyama, brought forward an urgent motion before all the delegates to the conference, appealing for funds for refugee relief.

A project team was formed, and two large ships, the *Roland* and the *Leap Dal*, were chartered to rescue refugees. The team conferred and refined relief plans with, among others, the UNHCR representative in Kuala Lumpur, the French ambassador to Singapore, and a US Embassy secretary there. In the beginning of the following year, rescue work began in the seas off the coast of the Malay Peninsula. Incidentally, a baby girl was born on the *Roland* and named after it.

The plan was that refugees living aboard small boats would be given food, water, and medicine while they waited for permission from appropriate countries to land. However, the problem was that no country would give the boat people permission to land.

While this was going on, reports began coming in about how religious leaders were going too far, ignorant of international politics. The costs involved in chartering two large ships were mounting day by day, and when I heard the mainly unsympathetic reports from the media, it was little wonder that I, too, began to feel uncertain. All the same, the strenuous efforts of the Asian religious leaders were being backed up by religious leaders around the world.

The charter of the ships and the cost of supplies for the refugees amounted to about \$1,100 a day. Members of Religions for Peace made appeals in their various countries and raised \$300,000. The relief effort over several months was able to aid 530 refugees.

The greatest benefit I reaped from these activities was the conviction that it only needed wholehearted cooperation

among people of faith around the world, working to a good purpose, to move the world itself.

Eventually, Australia, Canada, France, and the United States agreed to take in the refugees. The actions of religious leaders in those countries helped to turn global public opinion around so that in the end the UN took up the refugee problem in earnest. When I later met Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the UN secretary-general in 1972–81, he thanked me, saying, “At the time, I thought it was premature when religious people got involved in aid for the boat people, but now I have to thank you with all my heart for taking the lead in forming global opinion about refugees.” At last I felt a burden had been lifted from my shoulders.

Where would the refugees placed under the care of the UN refugee agency now go and how would they live? In Japan, reception centers were set up by the Japanese Red Cross, Caritas Japan, and Tenrikyo for refugees seeking a new life. Risho Kosei-kai, too, established two centers to look after them beginning in 1977: one in Kominato in Chiba Prefecture and another in Takahama in Fukui Prefecture. At that time, there were already seven hundred Vietnamese refugees in Japan.

Some Vietnamese children attending a Japanese elementary school cried when told they would have to leave Japan for the country of their final destination.

At that time, as the numbers of boat people coming to Japan increased, the Japanese government was asking us to take in more and more refugees, but it was very hard to find facilities for them. I sent a request to temples and religious organizations around the country, asking urgently for their help. I remember that one Buddhist priest answered, sending his donation but apologizing that he was unable to do anything other than this, while the Salvation Army agreed to accept boat people for a year, which was an enormous help. □

Singapore and Malaysia. Though several hundred boat people had come into Singapore harbors, the government did not permit them to land. That was perhaps inevitable, given that Singapore was a small island nation, unable to cope with a large influx of people. Their supplies of food were low, and the rainy season had started. It was clear that unless something were done, they would fall helpless victims to the sea. Whatever the political complications, we could not, as people of religion, allow people to die before our very eyes.

A committee for the relief of Indochinese refugees was set up as a joint undertaking of the Board of Religions for Peace and ACRP's Commission on Peace, Security, and Human Dignity in Asia, headed by Professor Yoshiaki Iisaka of Tokyo's Gakushuin University. It was decided to begin relief efforts immediately. However, funding these efforts was the problem. We needed around \$120,000 at the very least to provide for several hundred boat people. How could we meet the cost?

At once the Japanese representatives on the committee met together and agreed to raise \$60,000. With this

The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law

Chapter 25

The All-Sidedness of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World (4)

*This is the 125th installment of a detailed commentary on the Threefold Lotus Sutra
by the founder of Rissho Kosei-kai, Rev. Nikkyo Niwano.*

TEXT “If any woman desiring a son worships and pays homage to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, she will bear a son happy, virtuous, and wise.

COMMENTARY Surely no contemporary reader would take this literally, but without understanding the true meaning here, one might dismiss this passage as nonsense. Therefore it is important to consider carefully the meaning behind the words.

“Son,” in other words, refers to wisdom. From early times, it has been common in almost every country to think of men as superior in wisdom and women as superior in compassion.

Therefore, “desiring a son” means nothing less than desiring true wisdom, desiring *prajna* (wisdom) that penetrates the true aspect of all things.

It has been said many times before that the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World embodies the truth of the Middle. Since the truth of the Middle is true wisdom, if one takes refuge in, worships, and makes offerings with sincere gratitude to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, such wisdom will in due course take root.

It is also significant that the son will not only possess wisdom but will also be “happy, virtuous.” Happiness and virtue are inspiring powers in a person of fine character. However rich someone might be, if he or she is edgy, miserly, and unbending, he or she cannot be said to be happy and virtuous. One who is happy and virtuous is one whose countenance is gentle, spiritually rich, and smiling, so that when others see it, they too come to feel genial and warm at heart.

In leading others, this means that we should not lead by coercion but by persuasion, guiding and influencing others by

the example of our own virtues. We ought to accept “happy and virtuous” as having this particular nuance.

TEXT If she desires a daughter, she will bear a daughter of good demeanor and looks, who of old has planted virtuous roots, beloved and respected by all.

COMMENTARY As mentioned in the previous passage, a “daughter” is a symbol of compassion. We can therefore interpret the true meaning of this passage to be that if you wish to cultivate great compassion, you should worship and make offerings to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World. If you do so, you will surely become a person of compassion, appreciated and followed by many.

- *Who of old has planted virtuous roots, beloved and respected by all.* Those who have accumulated great merit in previous lives are rewarded for that by “recompense” of good karma, being reborn so virtuous that they will be loved and honored by many.

This passage, however, refers not to this principle in general, but specifically to the true character of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World. (This is not to imply that the bodhisattva is female. Kannon’s gender has long been debated, but that is not an issue, since Kannon is a symbolic entity transcending gender distinction.)

Since the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World accumulated innumerable meritorious acts in previous lives over an extremely long period, he acquired perfect wisdom and compassion, and the supernatural power to appear in various forms. He bestows such wisdom and compassion on all people, and moreover, he acquires a most beautiful countenance for his honorable merits. The literal meaning of this passage is that the woman will bear a daughter of good demeanor and well-featured like this admirable bodhisattva.

The true meaning of this passage is that if you worship and make offerings to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, you will be filled with great compassion. But the formalities alone of worshipping and making offerings cannot accomplish this. You will feel great compassion well up within you for the first time by becoming one with that bodhisattva.

The above passage teaches that those who desire the two virtues of wisdom and compassion will be granted them if they worship and make offerings to that bodhisattva.

As I have just mentioned, the formalities alone of worshipping and making offerings are insufficient, since one must also emulate the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World. The famous agricultural expert Ninomiya Kinjiro (1787–1856) is a good example of this. Precisely because he decided to personify the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, he acquired the wisdom to help

people live better and make better use of their land, and the compassion that compelled him to liberate many people from suffering.

TEXT Infinite Thought! Such is the power of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World. If any of the living revere and worship the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, blessings will not be rudely rejected.

“Therefore, let all the living cherish the title of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.

COMMENTARY *Blessings will not be rudely rejected.* This means that divine blessings will not be wasted.

TEXT Infinite Thought! Suppose anyone cherishes the names of bodhisattvas [numerous as] the sands of sixty-two *kotis* of the Ganges, who all his life makes them offerings of food, drink, garments, bedding, and medicaments—what is your opinion—are not the merits of that good son or good daughter abundant?” Infinite Thought replied, “Extremely abundant, the World-honored One!”

COMMENTARY *All his life.* The original Chinese says: “until he has used up his form (body) as a human being,” that is, until he dies.

TEXT The Buddha proceeded: “But if [any]one cherishes the title of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, or only for a moment worships and reveres him, the blessings of these two men will be exactly equal without difference, and cannot be exhausted in hundreds of thousands of myriads of *kotis* of *kalpas*. Infinite Thought! Such is the immeasurable, boundless degree of blessedness he will obtain who cherishes the name of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.”

COMMENTARY One must be careful not to misunderstand this passage. It might be easy to think that it takes a whole group of other bodhisattvas to equal the single Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.

That is not true, of course. The previous passage “cherishes the names of bodhisattvas [numerous as] the sands of sixty-two *kotis* of the Ganges, who all their lives make the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World offerings of food, drink, garments, bedding, and medicaments” refers to the forms of worship and making offerings. The passage “cherishes the title of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, or only for a moment worships and reveres him” means to awaken to and take refuge in the Truth (the Wonderful Dharma).

The forms of worship and making offerings are also important and never useless. Doing these things sincerely for a long time ensures that we receive great merits of faith. It is taught here, however, that if we firmly awaken to the Truth and take refuge in it even for a moment, we will obtain exactly the same merits. This means that awakening to and taking refuge in the Truth is fundamentally very important.

Preaching that awakening to the Truth and taking refuge in it is the ultimate importance of faith, and saying meanwhile that commonplace modes of religious faith are not useless, is truly welcome thoughtfulness.

Forms for expressions of faith are not insignificant, either. If the focus or object of veneration is appropriate, and if we continue to wholeheartedly express devotion to it, the true heart of faith will inevitably respond to the Truth. Therefore, although the primary definition of the faith of people today is to awaken to the Truth and take refuge in it, one cannot flatly condemn or ignore religious modes that start out with physical forms.

TEXT The Bodhisattva Infinite Thought [again] said to the Buddha: “World-honored One! How is it that the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World wanders

in this *saha* world? How does he preach the Dharma to the living? What is the character of his tactfulness?”

COMMENTARY *Wanders.* Bound by no restraints whatsoever, the bodhisattva freely goes wherever and does whatever he wishes. He goes throughout the *saha* world, appearing freely in various forms.

• *The character of his tactfulness.* The power of tactfulness has been explained in detail in chapter 2, “Tactfulness.” Choosing the most correct way to preach the Dharma and the best means of liberation, depending upon the person and the circumstances, is called “tactfulness.”

TEXT The Buddha replied to the Bodhisattva Infinite thought: “Good son! If the living in any realm must be saved in the body of a buddha, the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World appears as a buddha and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a *pratyekabuddha*, he appears as a *pratyekabuddha* and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a *shravaka*, he appears as a *shravaka* and preaches to them the Dharma.”

COMMENTARY It is held that “the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World appears as a buddha and preaches to them the Dharma” because without attaining buddhahood, he could not appear as a buddha, so abandoning his original buddhahood, he assumed the form of a bodhisattva to free people from suffering.

We need not comment again on the *pratyekabuddha* or *shravaka*, but here the reference is to a virtuous person who has attained a *pratyekabuddha*’s enlightenment or a *shravaka*’s state of mind, rather than a person in religious training. This refers, in other words, to the standpoint of a leader.

The above-mentioned buddha body, *pratyekabuddha* body, and *shravaka* body are called the “three holy persons.”

TEXT To those who must be saved in the body of Brahma, he appears as Brahma and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of Shakra, he appears as Shakra and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of Ishvara, he appears as Ishvara and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of Maheshvara, he appears as Maheshvara and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a great divine general, he appears as a great divine general and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of Vaishravana, he appears as Vaishravana and preaches to them the Dharma.

COMMENTARY *Brahma*. This is a Hindu god of creation.

- *Shakra*. This is the sobriquet for Indra, the central deity of Hinduism.

- *Ishvara*. This is identical with the Hindu deity Maheshvara.

- *Maheshvara*. This is the same as *Ishvara*. The original translator of the sutra may have assumed that since the names were different they referred to separate deities. Regardless, we may interpret them as deities of Hinduism.

- *A great divine general*. In Hindu thought, this is one of the great generals who assist the various rulers or kings of heaven.

- *Vaishravana*. This is one of the four heavenly kings of Hinduism and the so-called guardian deity of the north of the world.

The above were originally Hindu deities who became six guardian deities of Buddhism after their incorporation into Buddhism. The six are referred to as the six classes of heavenly deities.

TEXT To those who must be saved in the body of a minor king, he appears as a minor king and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of an elder, he appears as an elder and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a citizen, he appears as a citizen and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a minister of state, he appears as a minister of state and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a Brahman, he appears as a Brahman and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a *bhikshu*, *bhikshuni*, *upasaka* or *upasika*, he appears as a *bhikshu*, *bhikshuni*, *upasaka* or *upasika*, and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of the wife of an elder, citizen, minister, or Brahman, he appears as a woman and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a boy or girl, he appears as a boy or girl and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in the body of a god, dragon, *yaksha*, *gandharva*, *asura*, *garuda*, *kimnara*, *mahoraga*, human or non-human being, or others, he appears in every such form and preaches to them the Dharma. To those who must be saved in [the shape of] a diamond-holding god, he appears as a diamond-holding god and preaches to them the Dharma.

COMMENTARY *A diamond-holding god*. This is originally a Hindu deity who in Buddhism became a guardian deity of the Buddha Dharma. This god Vajrapani, who possesses great power, is also called a *vajra* wrestler (the *vajra* being a mystical weapon wielded by Indra), and is known as Nio in Japan.

The Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World appears in these thirty-three incarnations—as the three holy persons, as the six classes of heavenly deities, as the five classes of human beings, as the four classes of the Buddha’s disciples, as the four classes of wives, in the two forms of boys and girls, as the eight guardians, and as a diamond-holding god. He instructs all living beings, and he shows compassion through “the thirty-three incarnations of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.”

The all-sidedness. Needless to say, the appearance of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World is not limited to thirty-three incarnations, and he may assume any of a hundred or a thousand incarnations when it is appropriate for the liberation of someone. This appearance in any and all suitable forms, out of equal affection for all living beings, in order to liberate every one of them, is called “all-sidedness.” This is one of the two great virtues of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World, along with the previously mentioned virtue of compassion great enough to be willing to make any self-sacrifice for many other suffering people.

Many incarnations of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World surround us. This is an extremely important point. If we are selfless in dealing with people of seemingly humble social status, we may learn important lessons about life.

It is possible to say that when I was a young man about to leave for Tokyo, my father was truly an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World at the moment he advised me that in the event of a fire or earthquake, the first thing I should do was drink some water and get hold of myself.

The principal of our elementary school for over twenty years was a kind, affable, truly excellent headmaster. The school was small, so an assistant teacher taught the first and second grades as one class and the principal taught the third to sixth grades as one class. I followed the principal almost unconditionally.

I particularly remember him telling us, “Be kind to others” and “Revere the gods and buddhas.”

I listened obediently to what the principal told us about being nice to people. In my young heart I thought that meant being nice at particular times, such as when a friend got hurt or was in trouble after forgetting to bring a textbook to school. I began to look out for friends who were at a loss and in need of my help.

It may be strange for me to say this, but even after I grew up, it remained my habit to be kind to others and to serve them. This has made my life blessed beyond words, because there can be no greater happiness than the constant

satisfaction of doing things to make others happy. I am often criticized for being too softhearted, but no matter what others say, I believe that is perfectly all right.

I also followed the teaching to revere the gods and bud-dhas. As I wrote earlier, whenever I passed the village shrine, the image of Kannon enshrined in the village temple, or statues of Jizo (the Bodhisattva Kshitigarbha, well known as the guardian of the spirits of departed children), I always stopped to pay my respects.

Before long, and without knowing exactly what it was, I began to feel somewhere in my mind a great power that gives life to us all. When I reflect on it now, that became the pillar supporting my mind throughout my life.

The principal of our elementary school may not have had high social standing in our community, but to me he was truly an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.

Come to think of it, during my life I have met many incarnations of that bodhisattva and received their instruction and deliverance. When I was employed as a young man, I encountered that bodhisattva in the shopkeeper where I worked and in our customers. In the navy I encountered the bodhisattva in the lower-ranking officers and commissioned officers. Needless to say, when I started my own business and embraced religious faith, I received grace or favors from more and more incarnations of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.

If you calmly look back on the course of your own life, you will surely have the same impression. Undoubtedly you will recall how a certain person once did something for you that made a big difference. That was the bodhisattva in one of his thirty-three incarnations freely liberating and leading human beings.

That bodhisattva is always around us, so we have no excuse not to become a bodhisattva ourselves. Merely receiving blessings with no thought of giving benefits does not make one a true human being.

It may be said that the ideal society is surely one in which one is surrounded by many such bodhisattvas and in which one also becomes like the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World.

TEXT Infinite Thought! Such are the merits acquired by this Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World and the various forms in which he wanders through many lands to save the living. Therefore, do you with single mind pay homage to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World?

COMMENTARY *Save*. This term is a translation of the Chinese characters for *duotuo*. The original meaning of *duo* is “to cross,” as in “to cross from this shore of delusion to

the other shore of awareness.” *Tuo* means “to emancipate” and is synonymous with attaining enlightenment, which signifies being able to liberate others from delusion (and therefore from suffering).

• *With single mind pay homage to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World*. In what way shall we make offerings? We should do so in a spirit of selflessness, fervently grateful for the blessings of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World and deepening our desire to become one with him. By doing this, ordinary people also become bodhisattvas and the world around us will be filled with such bodhisattvas.

TEXT This Bodhisattva-Mahasattva Regarder of the Cries of the World is able to make fearless those in anxiety and distress. For this reason all in this *saha* world give him the title Bestower of Fearlessness.”

COMMENTARY *Bestower of Fearlessness*. Often in halls enshrining statues of Kannon in Japan one sees a plaque bearing Chinese characters meaning “endowing fearlessness.” The plaques are based on this passage, for this bodhisattva gives people the spiritual strength to be afraid of nothing.

The reason that he is called “Bestower of Fearlessness” should be self-evident if one recalls that this bodhisattva embodies true wisdom. If one knows true wisdom, there is nothing to fear. If one follows true wisdom, then one will not waver even in a crisis.

Let me tell you about an encounter I had with the Bestower of Fearlessness. In late March 1945, near the end of the Pacific War, I received a draft notice. That was a time when even middle-aged men with no military training were being drafted to fill out the ranks of diminished units. I had passed the physical examination qualification for a conscript and served for three years in the navy. Because I was in my prime in my thirties, and had nothing wrong with me physically, I had to resign myself to ending up in a watery grave.

Already seven years had passed since I had founded Rissho Kosei-kai, a new religious association, but it was still small and hardly known to the general public. Although I was concerned about leaving believers behind, it was in any case a time of national crisis, and even in the train to Maizuru Naval Base I was preoccupied with trying to brace myself for certain destruction.

However, upon enlistment I underwent a pro forma medical examination. The examiner in charge looked straight at me and said, "You are a person who has important work to do on the home front. There is no essential difference between the importance of serving the nation by going to the front and of saving others at home. I'm going to disqualify you."

Even now I cannot but marvel at the examiner's decision. No matter how I try to understand it, the times did not warrant disqualification of a seaman for that reason.

After hearing that decision, I completely lost fear of everything. After returning to Tokyo, where air raids by B-29 bombers had intensified, and even after the city became the target of indiscriminate bombing day and night, to tell the truth I was not the least bit afraid. I was filled with the sense of my mission: Save people on the home front. Perform the work the Buddha has provided. I had no time to think or feel anything else.

When I think about it now, I realize that the medical examiner was also an incarnation of the Bestower of Fearlessness. I do not know his name and I never saw him again, but I believe beyond all doubt that he was also one of the incarnations of the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World appearing before me.

TEXT The Bodhisattva Infinite Thought said to the Buddha: "World-honored One! Let me now make an offering to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World."

Thereupon he unloosed from his neck a necklace of pearls worth a hundred thousand pieces of gold and presented it to him, making this remark: "Good sir! Accept this pearl necklace as an offering of the Dharma."

COMMENTARY *Good sir!* This is a form of address that literally means "virtuous, benign person," and although they are both bodhisattvas, the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World ranks higher, so the Bodhisattva Infinite Thought calls him "sir"

• *Offering of the Dharma.* There are occasions when this means making an offering of an important teaching or a piece of knowledge to someone, but here it is used as an expression of gratitude for compassionately teaching the Dharma.

Of course, in presenting the necklace, the Bodhisattva Infinite Thought wanted to make an offering and was not making a donation as an individual but rather as a representative of every living being in this world. On behalf of all living beings, he wanted to express gratitude to the Bodhisattva Regarder of the Cries of the World for appearing in countless forms in all places in this world and liberating all living beings.

To be continued

In this series, passages in the **TEXT** sections are quoted from *The Threefold Lotus Sutra*, Tokyo: Kosei Publishing Company, 1975, with slight revisions. The diacritical marks originally used for several Sanskrit terms in the **TEXT** sections are omitted here for easier reading.