Buddhism in Japan

This article is a continuation of Dr. Tanaka’s keynote address at the commemoration symposium.

Dr. Tanaka’s keynote address

"commemoration of Shinran Sho-..."

This article is a continuation of Dr. Tanaka’s keynote address at the commemoration symposium.

By Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka

I cannot leave this topic without mentioning two other developments with American inspiration, one being the start of a Zen meditation group in Tokyo called the "Nightstand Buddhists," which if you recall was coined in the U.S. Second, and an inter-denominational movement for young priests called "Boys be Ambitious," which is a takeoff on "Boys be Men," a famous phrase virtually all Japanese know and is attributed in an American educator who inspired Japanese boys with that slogan in the 19th century.

So, there represent a tiny slice of the many innovations taking place in contemporary Japanese Buddhism.

I hope Norma will gain a better understanding of who I am today. When people learn that I am from Japan they often ask, "Where in Japan are you from?" When I tell them I am from Hiroshima, their response is, "Oh, I know lots of Jodo Shinshu Buddhists who came from Hiroshima." I have yet to figure out what that statement really means. Interestingly enough, all of my relatives in Japan are Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, and in fact, my siblings and I attended kindergartens at Toveno Temple, a Jodo Shinshu temple, in Shimomachi.

I recall my young childhood life as simple..."
Reflections on Becoming a Buddha

T

This March, the Institute of Buddhist Studies hosted an international conference titled “Buddhism without Borders: contemporary developments in Buddhism outside Asia.” The conference brought together more than two-dozen scholars to present new and innovative research, and nearly seventy participants from four continents in attendance.

The conference was divided into six panel sessions focusing on such tops as Buddhist Expressions and Experiences, Transnational Buddhism, and Buddhist Identity. Each panel had four panelists and a moderator and included time for discussion with the audience.

The event’s keynote address was delivered on March 19 by Prof. Thomas A. Tweed of the University of Texas at Austin. Prof. Tweed’s address focused on his recently published Crossing Cultures, Crossing Boundaries, Religion, and its implications for the study of Buddhism. He described religions as social processes that confront suffering and intensify joy, and he challenged scholars to follow the global and transnational flows of communi-
tational texts to see how religious ideas are exchanged in the modern world. For Bud-

Panels included some notable names in the field of American Buddhist Studies such as Charles S. Prebish, Franz Aubrey Metcalf, and Richard Hughes Steger. The keynote speaker was Dean Richard K. Payne a presented paper as well as a number of younger scholars who represent the next generation of American Buddhist Studies such as Jeff Wilson and Wakoko Shinn. steger, Daniel Veidlinger, Kimberly Beek, a

Shinnan Shoiten and those who walk his path, the nembutsu, the pivotal point is true and real faith (shinjin) in becoming a Buppra. The pivotal point in many ways demands clarity and an understanding. To clarify the truth of determinants in the completeness of our entrusting, and its decisive- ness in the act of birth in the Pure Land. Whole death bearing is our lifetime practice in responding to the boundless wisdom and compassion of Buddha. Deeply hearing itself becomes the depth and breadth of our faith. Thus, becoming a Buddha through the nembutsu engages our whole self and self. It is not necessarily an easy task, but it can become clear, illuminat-
ing, and inexpressibly gratifying. What is crucial for each nembutsu follower is whether he is clear in his faith and decisive, and settled in his/her life. The meaning of our daily spiritual journey to enlightenment rests on the clarity of this “living” nembutsu faith. This is not simply an intellectual, emotional, or volitional process. It involves our whole being. And in that sense even a miniscule of difference like the “hair on a turtle” can bring about decisive and indelible changes to our path.

This reminds me of a passage in the Record of Faith (Shinjyo Myo), a Chinese Zen work, “A hair’s breadth of difference and heaven and earth are set apart.” In other words, for the nembutsu, following the clarity of our true and real faith can direct one’s life clearly, with the understanding that the nembutsu path of Shinnan Shoiten be clear, decisive, settled in true and real fact. May the joy and appreciation of wisdom emerging in faith become the very source of composition and kindness for seekers of Buddhahood, the Pure Land, Enlightenment. And, may “becoming a Buddha” be the ultimate expression of spiritual freedom for the liberation of suffering of all beings.

Nama-amida-butsu.
Join the CBE 500 Club for 2010

If you’re interested and want to help, please fill in the form below and mail it back to: BCA Center for Buddhist Education, Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704. All donations made are tax-deductible, and credited towards Campaign BCA – The 21st Century.

For details visit www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org or contact diretctor@cbe-bca.org or phone (510) 809-1460.

My Gift to Campaign BCA — The 21st Century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you’re interested and want to help, please fill in the form below and mail it back to: BCA Center for Buddhist Education, Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704. All donations made are tax-deductible, and credited towards Campaign BCA – The 21st Century.

For details visit www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org or contact diretctor@cbe-bca.org or phone (510) 809-1460.
A Single Rose of Gratitude

By Reverend Akio Miyaji
Orange County Buddhist Church

I t was a beautiful day on May 20th. The sun was shining brightly, and the air was fresh and pleasant. The sound of birds singing filled the air, and the fragrance of flowers could be闻到. It was a perfect day to celebrate the 750th anniversary of Shinran Shonin’s birth.

The day began with a breakfast meeting at the Orange County Buddhist Church. The attendees were greeted with warm smiles and kind words. The atmosphere was one of warmth and hospitality, as everyone was eager to share in the joy of the occasion.

After the breakfast, the group moved to the Orange County Buddhist Temple, located in Fullerton, California. The temple was a beautiful and serene place, with its large beige walls and white roof. The interior was equally impressive, with its high ceilings and ornate decorations.

The day’s events began with a keynote speech by Dr. Haneda, a well-known scholar and practitioner of the Buddhist faith. Dr. Haneda’s speech was both informative and inspiring, and it set the tone for the rest of the day.

The keynote was followed by a panel discussion featuring some of the most respected leaders in the Buddhist community. The panelists included Dr. Nobuo Haneda, the head monk of the temple, and Rev. Dr. Haneda, the temple’s resident priest.

The afternoon was filled with a variety of activities, including a lecture on the history of the temple, a performance by the temple’s Taiko drummers, and a workshop on meditation.

The day concluded with a dinner at a local restaurant, providing everyone with a chance to relax and socialize. The food was delicious, and the company was even better.

The overall atmosphere was one of joy and celebration, as everyone was united in their love for Shinran Shonin and the teachings of the Buddhist faith. The day was a testament to the power of community and the importance of coming together to share in a common purpose.

The organizers of the event did an excellent job of planning and executing the celebration. The attention to detail was impressive, and the level of enthusiasm was contagious.

In conclusion, the 750th anniversary of Shinran Shonin’s birth was a truly memorable event. The day was filled with beautiful moments, and the joy and love that was shared will be remembered for years to come.
Buddhism in Japan

Continued from Front Page

Japanese Buddhists are also in search of ways to meet their challenges. So, while we should continue to honor our roots in Japan, the BCA should also move boldly forward to meet the challenges that are unique to America.

The Three Obstacles

Having looked at the 3 conditions as we seek to build the BCA, we need to be careful not to lose our sense of connectedness, peace and centeredness. It’s no wonder that many people are attracted to meditation and chanting.

Within the context, Jodo Shinshu does not fulfill the “new spirituality” of other Buddhist traditions, and on the surface it may even be seen as more aligned with the traditional religious notions, where Amida is seen as God, Pure Land is seen as heaven, “karmic evil” (sasai) as death. While there are real differences between Christianity and Jodo Shinshu, without a better understanding of this tradition we will continue to be perceived as “Christian Buddhists.”

What is required is not a change in the doctrine, of course, but a shift in emphasis. For example, we present the Nembutsu practices. Since there is no time for a thorough discussion here, let me simply suggest two things: 1) greater emphasis on the “use” of the BCA, 2) greater emphasis on person-centered concerns especially at the beginning of the year, for Prof. Robert Bellah of U.C. Berkeley (1927-2013), contemporary man values the perspective of the self.

Next, the second obstacle is that of insisting on orthodoxy or the one correct teaching. I believe there has been a tendency in the BCA to discourage discussions of innovative ways of understanding and presenting the teachings, under the assumption that there is one correct way. To the contrary, during much of over 750 years of Shinshu history, there has been openness to various points of views regarding Shinran Shonin’s teachings as well as the existence of numerous doctrinal lineages throughout Japan. In the broader contemporary society beyond the Hongwanji circles, there are even more ways of thinking about Shinran Shonin. In a recent talk about the remarks of Rev. Gyoshin Ikeda, a Cabinet Member of the Honganji, proposed that there are 4 ways of looking at Shinran Shonin, that is, Shinran, 1) as a human being who sought the meaning of life, 2) as a founder of a large Buddhist institution, 3) as a post-modernist, and 4) as a socially engaged Buddhist. Given this broad range of interpretation in Japan, the BCA would be wise not to insist on one particular interpretation as orthodox (the correct teaching) while choking off discussion about others. In order to relate to Americans, diversity of views is essential under the Big Tent.

This article will continue in the next issue of Wheel of Dharma.
strive to be, I suggest that you reflect upon Shonin Shinon and how you taught during that difficult period of his life when he was in exile living in poor farming communities.

As a reader, Shinon understood his audience clearly. He lived among them and shared their suffering.

Second, Shinon understood his message. He learned one thing, and he passed it on and held onto the simplicity of the message. The third thing, the message was relevant to the needs of the peasant farmers, which came to him. The message provided a particular enlightenment. Fourth, Shinon was personal and conveyed his message in language that was appropriate to his listeners.

Fifth, he was humble. He simply shared what was personally important to himself. He was not self-righteous. He made it clear that he too was a sinner and that he was sharing what he was taught.

Sixth and most important, he was passionate about his message. He believed in it; he lived it; that message lived in his life.

As we remember the life of Shinon on this 750th memorial commemoration, we should draw inspiration from this spirit. We should ask ourselves as teachers to move them to unified action in creating the future we want.

The last step, Step Six is Assessment. This happens after you have completed your teaching, implemented your plan and delivered your message. At this point, you ask: Why did it happen?

How did the group respond? Why? What can I learn from this? What do I need to change?

And then you go back and begin with Step One again. There’s that. The Six Step Approach to achieving organizational action. I would like to conclude with this comment. We need to let go of the BCA as stated in its by-laws and the recently crafted mission statement of the Hawaii Kyodan are essentially calls to educate, to teach. The by-laws state that BCA shall fulfill in its members the spiritual principles and teachings of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist faith. The recently crafted mission of the Hawaii Kyodan is to share the living teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism so that all beings may enjoy lives of harmony, peace, and gratitude.

750th Volunteers

Step Two – Recruit partners.

Step One – Choose your action. Identify your mission.

Another thing will happen if you embrace teaching as the central task in your work at your temple, district, or national organization. You will begin to see less of an adversary and more of a partner. What can I learn from this? What do I need to change? You will gain new insight as to why your organization might be moving very slowly if at all into the future.

What have I suggested tonight is that you first recognize this fact… for once you view the heart of your organizational tasks as the art of teaching you will gain new insight as to why your organization might be moving very slowly if at all into the future.

Another thing will happen if you embrace teaching as the central task in your work at your temple, district, or national organization. You will begin to see less of an adversary and more of a partner.
法灯をかかげて歩む五十年

林茂男

私は1959年9月1日に、ハワイ本派伝道記事の読者を

拝謁して以来、今日まで法灯をかかげて歩み続けて約50年が過ぎました。その間、ハワイ本派伝道記事

読者、米国仏教会、カナダ仏教会、そして再び、米国仏教会の教祖を

勧め、毎日7月31日付で、

米国仏教現役教祖を引退いたします。

米国仏教の教祖が正式に始まったのは、初代監督・藤田宗

遺志と再び覚師が、1899年（明治32年）9月1日にサンフラ

シルスに着任させられてから始まります。浄土真宗のお念仏の教え

は米国大陸で、111年におわって講義を続けてきました。日本人

の米国移民初期より今日まで、多くの困難を乗り越えて布教伝道に携

わって来た開教師法師に、一般念仏者の力強い法念の念に新た

めて感動いたします。

藤田宗遺志は1899年8月16日に日本で横浜市を、妻子や

父上のときの別れの苦しみから出払って出られます。藤田師はそ

の日お誕生に「吾人は唯教の為に雇に在り、遠く離るる仏教より

覚悟の事に於て、親鸞を仰ぎ、故に何等度の光明界傑に在っても、更

に悲しみを忘る事に自らの念を顧てア弥陀仏の

光明に包まれて法宣の念に生きる、力強い念仏の教念を記

いております。この精神こそ今日より渡来した全ての開教使の

心情と云ふ得るより。

ハワイ教団の監督、後で総長として32年間務め、ハワイ教団の

基礎を築かれた今村宗師は「毎教師様と米国国く」と云う法話の

中で、「米国に話を布教する際、教主の向上を期すための念仏を

違等に教ずる事に於て、自らの悲しみを顧て阿弥陀仏の

光明に包まれて法宣の念に生きる、力強い念仏の教念を記

いております。この精神こそ今日より渡来した全ての開教使の

心情と云ふ得るより。'

この父母をあばれこそ

今日の命があるものを

今、感激に受け継いで

私は立たん この上に

と、一生パイオニアの方が子孫のために力強く生きてこられた姿を

称え、二世の子孫が奮起して生きようとする決意が強く働かれて

いました。

私は以前に駐在していた南アフリカ仏教教会の会員で、大きな

花図を楽し、四つの西に留め金融会社を経営して大変忙しい方が、

鹿児島に住んでおられる84才の入院中のお母さんを見舞いに訪問さ

れました。病院のベッドの側に立って、そのお母さんが、「お寄りにお

参りしていますか？」と尋ねられたそうです。息子さんは「忙しいか

ならぬ」と云って、「忙しい、忙しい」と去れぬおいしやお参りされ。

お参りして、忙しい、忙しいと云っていき」と語られたそうで

お母さんはきっと、仏さまの願いと、息子の発展と幸せを願う私

の思いは一つであることを胸に持っておられたと話し、

これは進進して乳化した「仏は世間の根をかきして

聞くべし」と言う教と同様素晴らしいお母さんのお講しであります。

浄土真宗の教祖とは、私一人が真の幸せになるためであり、その

私一人の幸せは、そのまま厳重に一切に施すと云う慈悲の精神から

生まれる民衆の幸福にもなるのを願う私の心、親鸞のことを見守る

仏の心、見守る心、そして人々の心を見守るのを

上で人生の真実を見失って立ち、私の念仏者にはそれもうありません。

聴覚として真の念仏者になります。

お念仏の法灯を照らされた開教使人生50年、それはハワイ教団、

カナダ仏教団、米国仏教会の数多くの念仏者の心に支えられ

て歩んだ半世紀でありました。お念仏の中に心より感謝を申し上げまし

た。
再度お願い

先年に、九条時輝が「アメリカに蓮如上人と顕如上人の精神を」と、お二方のご遺骨を供仕真言センターへ寄贈されました。それで、先生小松総長が訪日する折り、お二方のご遺骨をお納めするお弔子（写真を参照のこと）を京都の仏具店に依頼しました。このお弔子の製作には約$20,000（送料込も含）がかかりました。

それで、昨年八月に法輪紙を通じてこのご弔子製作のためにご寄付をいただきましたところ、篤信者数名より早速チェックが送られてきました。誠にありがとうございます。

しかし、本部では皆さまのご寄付をまた受け付けておりますので、ご協力をお願いいたします。本部の総務室（電話415－776－5600内線24またはメールでshop@bcahq.org）までご連絡いただきますようお願い申し上げます。なお、寄付された方々のご芳名や追悼される方々のお名前もお弔子に書き入れ永く後世に伝えることもできます。

次に、そのお弔子製作に努めている関係者の方々の前向きに頼まれている関係者アンケートの数年後を思い出して、きっと、前向きを安堵し、その後の方々の心温まることが心に描かれるかと思います。なお、関係者の皆様には、全然八月の寄付を受けていない方々に心の言葉を送らせていただくということのようです。

このように、メンバーの方から、いさや若者たちが育て、若者が勇ましくなっている。浄土真宗のみ教えについて様々な角度で親しむことができる一冊で、希望者の方々に寄付して下さることも嬉しいです。希望者の方々には、二、三の方々が寄付をして下さることに感謝の声を送らせていただくことになるでしょう。

それに伴い、私たちの仏書店は、関係者の方々に寄附して下さった方々の名を掲載し、名前を寄附した方々に心温まることが心に描かれるかと思います。なお、関係者の皆様には、全然八月の寄付を受けていない方々に心の言葉を送らせていただくということのようです。

このように、メンバーの方から、いさや若者たちが育て、若者が勇ましくなっている。浄土真宗のみ教えについて様々な角度で親しむことができる一冊で、希望者の方々に寄付して下さることも嬉しいです。希望者の方々には、二、三の方々が寄付をして下さることに感謝の声を送らせていただくことになるでしょう。

にともなって、関係者の方々に寄付して下さった方々の名を掲載し、名前を寄附した方々に心温まることが心に描かれるかと思います。なお、関係者の皆様には、全然八月の寄付を受けていない方々に心の言葉を送らせていただくということのようです。