

## J I K O J I   C O N F E S S I O N

We witness

1. that the doctrine of Other-Power Nembutsu is the ultimate development of the Teaching given by Gautama Buddha and the various Mahayana teachers<sup>1</sup>;
2. that the core of this doctrine is fully embodied in the teachings and writings of Shinran Shonin, namely
  - (a) that Birth in Sukhavati, the "Pure Land", is not different from complete and ultimate Enlightenment, definitive and perfect nirvana, the realization of the Dharmabody in its essence<sup>2</sup>, the real self-nature<sup>3</sup> that is non-ego<sup>4</sup>, void<sup>5</sup>, naturalness<sup>6</sup>;
  - (b) that for us, Birth in the Pure Land is realized exclusively through the all-compassionate virtue of Amida's Other-Power, this is the power of the immeasurable Buddha-Compassion and Buddha-Wisdom, which we experience as 'the merit-transfer in going'<sup>7</sup>;
  - (c) that this Birth in the Pure Land can be established already during this present life-time, as Shinjin (the 'Mind of Confidence')<sup>8</sup>, expressing itself in the Nembutsu and being the reflection of Amida Tathagata's activity ;
  - (d) that the Name NAMU AMIDA BUTSU is the objectification of this Mind of Confidence and is evoked by the Other-Power in the depths of all beings, as it is the expression of their true and real essence ;
  - (e) that it is the Infinite Buddhahood, beyond conceptions of space and time, that embodies the great Practice, so that moral, meditative, liturgical and ritual practices are only to be considered as

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<sup>1</sup>Especially the Seven Patriarchs of the Jodo-Shinshu, but also the philosophical masters of Madhyamaka, Yogacara and Avatamsaka .

<sup>2</sup>Skr. *dharmakāya-dharmatā* ; Ch. *fa-hsing fa-shen* ; Jap. *hosshō-hosshin* .

<sup>3</sup>Skr. *svabhāva* , *tathatā* ; Ch. *tzu-hsing* , *chen-ju* ; Jap. *jishō* , *shinnyo* . .

<sup>4</sup>Pāli *anattā* , Skr. *anātman* , *nairātmya* ; Ch. *wu-wo* ; Jap. *muga* .

<sup>5</sup>Skr. *sūnyatā* ; Ch. *k'ung-hsing* , *wu* , *hsü-wu* ; Jap. *kū* , *kdshō* , *mu* , *komu* .

<sup>6</sup>Skr. *svayambhō* ; Ch. *tzu-jan* ; Jap. *jinēn* .

<sup>7</sup>Ch. *wang-hsiang hui-hsiang* ; Jap. *ōsō-ekō* .

<sup>8</sup>Skr. *\*sraddhā-citta* (E.Lamotte); Ch. *hsin-hsin* ; Jap. *shinjin* .

auxiliary supports<sup>9</sup>, socially and psychologically useful means<sup>10</sup>, and that only the Mind of Confidence is the deep cause of Birth in the Pure Land;

(f) that the True Pure Land is not a static condition of individual happiness but a dynamic state of becoming and participating beyond individuality (ego-ness) in the compassionate Buddha-activity, aiming to bring all beings to realize Enlightenment, this being called 'the merit-transfer in returning'<sup>11</sup>;

(g) that the Infinite Buddhahood, beyond all spatio-temporal conceptual limitations inherent in the human mind, encompasses<sup>12</sup> all beings without discrimination;

3. that this Other-Power Nembutsu teaching is not selective, but natural and spontaneous, even in its latent forms active in all people, wise or foolish, rich or poor, erudite or illiterate, male or female, old or young, without distinction of time and place, race or culture

4. that therefore this teaching is universal, i.e. can be fully and completely lived under the most different historical and geographical situations and independently from external, conventional, culturally determined forms;

5. that the person who lives the life of Other-Power Nembutsu, distances himself spontaneously from individual soteriological calculations and practices, in order to dedicate his life, without any concern of recompense or punishment and to the extent of his possibilities, to the spiritual, moral, social and material well-being of his fellow-beings.

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<sup>9</sup>Ch. *chu-yeh*; Jap. *jogō*.

<sup>10</sup>Skr. *upāya kausalya*; Ch. *fang-pien*; Jap. *hōben*.

<sup>11</sup>Ch. *huan-hsiang hui-hsiang*; Jap. *gensō-ekō*.

<sup>12</sup>Jap. *sesshu fusha*.