



EXPERIENCE:
Laurent Cohen
lives life to its
fullest,
page 2.

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA 90401 and at additional mailing offices
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: SGI-USA Subscriptions, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MAY 27 SPEECH — PART 1

THE SUPREME REVOLUTION

In Kansai, SGI President Ikeda says that 'kosen-rufu is the supreme revolution. Consequently, a life dedicated to this cause is one of supreme nobility.'

Welcome! Thank you so much! Let's have an enjoyable meeting!

Many thanks to those of you who have traveled from as far as the Chubu, Chugoku and Shikoku regions and from overseas to join us today.

Today, May 27, is the anniversary of the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of independent India. He passed away 35 years ago, in 1964.

Second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda often said that he'd like to meet with Nehru, confident that they would develop a quick rapport. Unfortunately, Mr. Toda was not able to meet him — but his wish was, in a curious way, real-

ized many years later. Here we see the precise, wondrous workings of Buddhism: I, President Toda's disciple, developed a friendship with the grandson of Nehru, Rajiv Gandhi, former Indian prime minister, and his family.

After our meeting at the State Guesthouse in Tokyo in 1985, Rajiv Gandhi exclaimed with delight that he had met a truly genuine Japanese. After his tragic assassination in 1991, I have maintained close ties of friendship with his widow, Madame Sonia Gandhi, and their family, including their daughter Priyanka.

Prime Minister Nehru visited Japan in October 1957, at which time he traveled to Kyoto. Records of his visit report that he was deeply impressed by the beauty and exquisitely proportioned design of traditional Japa-nese gardens.

SEE REVOLUTION, 6



On Nov. 29, 1985, SGI President Ikeda confers with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the State Guesthouse in Tokyo. Rajiv Gandhi was tragically assassinated in 1991.



SGI PLAZA BUILDING Opens to Community

A community opening for the new SGI Plaza in Santa Monica, Calif., was held June 2. The event, which about 150 community guests attended, including representatives from local government, businesses and civic organizations, commemorated the 30 years that the SGI-USA national headquarters buildings have been in Santa Monica. At the opening, Santa Monica Mayor Pam O'Connor presented SGI-USA General Director Fred Zaitzu with a proclamation naming June 2 "Daisaku Ikeda and SGI Day in Santa Monica." The seven-story office building at the SGI Plaza is now serving as both the SGI-USA national headquarters and the SGI North America office.



Santa Monica Mayor Pam O'Connor presents a proclamation to General Director Zaitzu naming June 2 'Daisaku Ikeda and SGI Day.'

EXPERIENCE — LAURENT COHEN, BARCELONA, SPAIN

LIVING LIFE *to its* FULLEST

Laurent Cohen faces death head-on, and wins.

The following article was translated by Tobias Maxwell, Los Angeles. It first appeared in the French SGI publication *Troisieme Civilisation*.

I live in Barcelona where I began to practice four years ago. The year began full of important events — my work with SGI-Spain, organizing the exhibition, “Buddhism and the Environment,” the unexpected death of my mother to cancer, and the news of a baby on the way. In July 1994, I married my girlfriend who was five months pregnant. In August, while visiting my father in Paris, just a few days before an SGI seminar in Trets, I felt a severe abdominal pain.

On my return to Barcelona, I spent two agonizing weeks in search of a diagnosis. When I went to the hospital in emergency, I was diagnosed with cancer of the lymph nodes. I needed to be operated on for a biopsy of the affected ganglions, to get a more specific diagnosis and to choose an effective treatment, which included removing the spleen to prevent the spread of the disease. I was still full of hope, and with the support of my wife and fellow members, I never doubted a quick recovery. I practiced a lot, even taking things with a sense of humor.

The operation, however, had a negative effect on me. The pain in my back persisted and the doctor announced that the biopsies showed no signs of cancerous activity and that the ganglion inflammation was possibly from some infection. I didn't know how to react to the news, unconvinced of the validity of the results. The biopsies were sent to a specialized center, which confirmed the diagnosis but only added to my confusion. Meanwhile I was to be

under observation for two months, even though the doctor felt I had succeeded in “evading” the disease. Yet I was troubled, since from the very beginning of this challenge, I had practiced to obtain a clear diagnosis.

In the interim, I had assisted in the birth of our daughter, Africa, and I was given morphine tablets to control my pain. Soon I was free of any medical observation. I was left to fend for myself to discover the source of my back pain — a trek that would entail both conventional and alternative medicine.

One specialist wanted to try “shock-chemotherapy”; unfortunately the lack of researched information on its benefits, as well as my feelings toward the person, kept me searching elsewhere. Buddhism teaches us how subjective these perceptions and feelings can be, and how easily they can change. I kept this in mind as I consulted different therapists, naturopaths and chiropractors. I dabbled in macrobiotics, reflexology, as well as the laying on of hands. Always without results.

My strength was diminishing by now. I was losing my appetite and losing weight perceptively. I was confined to my bed most of the time, waiting for better days. I continued to practice without understanding why my prayers brought no results. I read all I could on Buddhism and sickness, but my confusion remained. To say that I would deepen my faith from this illness or that I would be able to show actual proof while changing my karma was of no consolation. These are difficult concepts to believe in while one is suffering physically. Finally I redid some tests, which showed a cancerous tumor pushing against my gall bladder and causing my horrific pain. I went into the hospital.

I was exhausted but relieved:



Laurent and Maria José Cohen, with baby daughter, Africa (right), and her cousin, Lourdes.

I had my “clear” diagnosis, even if it was a very bad one. “Now I can fight the enemy,” I thought, but I was very weak. I could not eat, nor get up, let alone practice. Everyone was very worried about me.

It's then that I hit rock bottom, that moment when “the night is so dark the dawn can be nothing but far away.” Despite the sensation that death — my death — was close, so close that I could almost feel its presence, I actually never lost the conviction that I would live, that I had a mission to fulfill in this lifetime. In retrospect, I can honestly say that this was a mystical experience, so strong was my conviction. I managed to tell my wife that she wasn't to worry, because I KNEW somehow that my time had not yet come and that all this was a kind of proof I had to go through, a step in my human revolution.

Friends and leaders came to

visit me. One leader said that SGI President Ikeda was praying for my recovery. That was hard to believe having never met him in person. Although I admired him and his actions, he had remained rather “abstract” to me until that moment. But I was touched by my leader's concern and sincerity. At that point I remember thinking, “If what we learn in the Soka Gakkai is true, I have no need to fear, because surely President Ikeda, my mentor, is praying for me, although he doesn't know me and has never seen me.” These words crossed my mind as if they were the truth and I lay at peace, thinking about him.

Of course I did not know the gravity of my condition, but I was convinced that if one were lucid, one knew when the time had come to cross that invisible barrier of death, a barrier that is always there, though we refuse to see it in our everyday lives, living as if we were immortal. I

had heard that very old people could feel the moment of their death beforehand. I myself had witnessed the death of another patient who, for several days, had talked about nothing but his fear of death. One morning, I woke up and saw the nurses trying to bring him back with a heart massage. I knew instantly that he wasn't there anymore. I wanted to tell the nurses: “Leave him alone, the man is just not there.”

After this experience, I was convinced that life surely continued after death in another form, and that there was nothing to be afraid of. I felt that when we had completed our mission in life, we were then able to leave this life at peace with ourselves.

Finally the day of the operation came. I knew it would be a crucial moment and that members of the youth division were praying for me. Much later, my wife told me that the surgeon

had been unable to do a thing, since the cancerous mass had invaded my entire abdomen. He had sewn me up after cutting out samples for further biopsies. A sympathetic doctor had told my wife that I was to be given chemotherapy anyway, even if the odds of success were one in a million.

But by now the totality of events had changed something within me. After a few days in and out of consciousness, I woke up on the third day with an appetite and rekindled optimism. I asked my wife to bring me a sandwich. Little by little, with my appetite, I regained my will to live. I still had a long challenge ahead of me before I could be totally cured — two months riddled with obstacles. Still, in the deepest recesses of my self, I felt the worst was over.

Three days later I began chemotherapy and soon the pain disappeared. Every third week I received treatment as an outpatient followed by four days of in-home treatment.

It's difficult when we're healthy to imagine our existence reduced to a few square feet of bed and bedroom. How complicated it is when we've no strength to get up, to eat, to sleep, to bathe, to urinate, etc. My extreme weakness barely allowed me to speak.

Rather, it was in the silence of night, when the noises of daily life had all receded that my conscience manifested itself the most. It was then that I would lock on to things so as not to dwell on my anxiety. Little things, concrete practical objectives: "Tomorrow I'll read this passage from this book; listen to this piece of music; eat this dish." To sit on the side of the bed, and then in a few more weeks, take a few steps, and little by little leave my bedroom to go as far as the living room to stretch out on the sofa. To go alone to the bathroom. To read and to draw a little. To feel the beauty of a voice while listening to the words of a favorite song. Certain feelings would make me cry. Seeing my daughter growing. Rejoicing from the love of

my wife. Rediscovering tastes. Because it was clear, "he who eats, lives." I had already observed that at the hospital. Every day there was a victory in the task of my daily life.

Spring arrived and things were going well. Soon I was

were a few lesions in my abdomen. We decided to continue the treatment until October. I had recuperated sufficiently enough to take advantage of what was left of the summer. After another month, waiting for the final results, with obstacles all the way


those around me. It's too early yet to see the repercussions of this experience on my future. For now, I am filled with gratitude and determination to accomplish my mission on this earth. Like Mr. Ikeda says: "We must try to accomplish our

life was reduced to its simplest "essential" faith. To believe in Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, in the Buddha that is within us, in what the Daishonin taught, in life. All are aspects of the same thing: faith. This is what I felt.

As to understanding the "why" of my difficult experience; the "why me?" I believe there is no answer to that. It is undoubtedly the function of karma, and so, pointless to question it further.

What is clear is that life's difficulties are a springboard for our development, as hard as that may seem. The essence of Buddhist practice is not particularly to overcome the sickness as it is to transform it into a treasure, which makes life more meaningful. It's not about enduring a negative state, nor to pass from a negative state to a neutral one, but rather to achieve a very real metamorphosis of the suffering into enlightenment.

"In this way, even illness can stimulate the development of Buddhahood, the ultimate state of life," writes Daisaku Ikeda. "Faith, liberated from everything, means to utilize all difficulties like a springboard for our own development."

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those who shared my experience and who kept me in the coolness of shade with their daimoku. 

The essence of Buddhist practice is not particularly to overcome the sickness as it is to transform it into a treasure, which makes life more meaningful. It's not about enduring a negative state, nor to pass from a negative state to a neutral one, but rather to achieve a very real metamorphosis of the suffering into enlightenment.

able to go out in a wheelchair and enjoy the first rays of the sun. During one of my hospital visits, something changed in my doctor's attitude. When my wife asked what he thought of my progress, he answered matter-of-factly, as if it were the most natural response in the world: "Oh, nothing. He's on his way to recovery."

The weeks passed, summer followed spring, and I moved to the coast to take advantage of gardening, the sun and shade, accompanied by my wife, daughter and my mother-in-law.

The illness had provided me with this opportunity to solidify my ties with my family who were there for me throughout. I came to better understand my father who had been ill for a number of years, something I would never have thought possible. I had unexpected contacts with people in my environment — neighbors, people in my area, my social worker. I continued to be supported by my leaders and certain members who visited me regularly and I began to practice vigorously for my final victory.

In August, after a scan to evaluate the results of my treatment, I found out that the tumor was practically all gone. All I had left

through, the doctor told me what I'd been waiting for: "There is no more cancer activity." (I had chanted so much daimoku for his happiness.) "You can lead a normal life now," he told me. It was almost too good to believe. In the taxi, on my way home, I smiled inwardly at the sun playing in the trees of the beautiful town I was in. How beautiful life was. Life is so beautiful.

Of course, nothing would ever be the same again. This experience has revolutionized my life, the life of my family and of

most intimate goals, and if we don't succeed with them there will be no regrets because we will have tried everything. Life is short, live it to its fullest."

In Buddhism we learn that faith, practice and study are the three pillars of Buddhism. In my case, at the crucial moment, all I had was faith. Second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda used to say, "The Buddha is life itself." I cannot explain it, but in that hospital room, it's exactly what I felt. When I was faced with my own death, my

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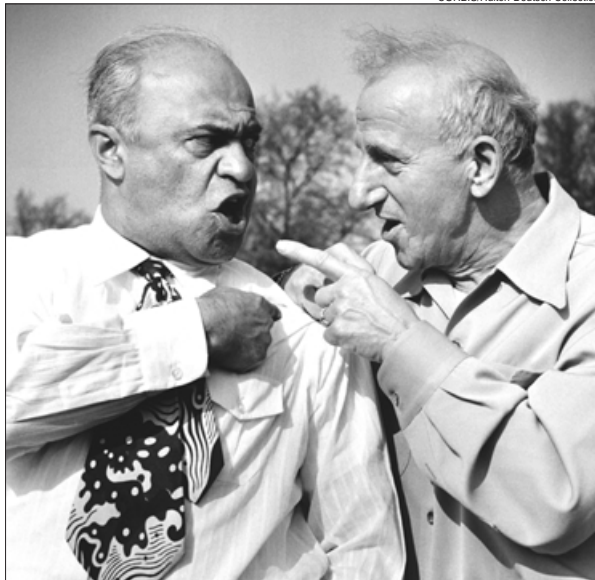
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Correction: In the "Words to the Wise," Jan. 8 *World Tribune*, p. 10, a passage reads, "A life with adversity, a life of ease and comfort, produces nothing and leaves us with nothing." It should read: "A life *without* adversity, a life of ease and comfort, produces nothing and leaves us with nothing." We apologize for any misunderstanding this caused.

SGI President Ikeda's May 1 Speech — Part 3

THE ARROGANCE of Anger



In Buddhism, Anger is one of the four evil paths.

In the conclusion of this speech, SGI President Ikeda talks about the world of Anger, and how it can hinder our progress. 'The prime characteristics of people in the life-state of Anger,' he explains, 'are jealousy toward those who are superior to them in some way and a desire to win against others....'

I want to talk about the life-state of Anger that impedes the progress of kosen-rufu. In terms of the Ten Worlds, the world of Anger is fourth from the bottom. Together with the worlds of Hell, Hunger and Animality, it is one of the four evil paths.

The prime characteristics of people in the life-state of Anger are jealousy toward those who are superior to them in some way and a desire to win against others, which is accompanied by a contempt for people and the wish to hold them down.

In his *Great Concentration and Insight*, the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai of China describes the lowly nature of Anger: "Since the mind of a person who is in the world of Anger desires in every moment to be superior to everyone else and cannot bear to be inferior to anyone else, he belittles and despises others and exalts himself just as a kite flies high and looks down. Moreover, he outwardly displays benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and good faith, and develops minor goodness of the mind, yet puts into practice the way of *asura*" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 430).

People in the world of Anger arrogantly think themselves superior, though outwardly they pretend to be people of character and virtue. They are skilled in the art of disguise.

At the heart of Anger lies vanity — the desire to look good in the eyes of others — and arrogance — the tendency to scorn and denigrate people. Individuals dominated by this life-state find it impossible to believe in the Lotus Sutra, a teaching that expounds how all people can attain enlightenment.

Those in the world of Anger are not content unless they are above everyone. They even like to delude themselves that they are above the Mystic Law — that is how arrogant they are.

This is the essence of those self-serving individuals who hinder the advance of kosen-rufu. How could such people possibly understand the hearts of the votaries of the Lotus Sutra, who are earnestly striving for the happiness of themselves and others?

In "The True Object of Worship," the Daishonin writes, "Perversity is the world of Anger" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 52). "Perversity" here specifically refers to a perverse, fawning heart. Those who fawn on others are always comparing themselves to others and adjusting themselves based on how others measure up in their estimation.

They put on a pretense of obedience or goodwill, covering up what they really feel. Because the hearts of those in

the world of Anger are twisted and perverse, they cannot see others correctly and fall into the deluded thinking that they are better than everyone else.

Only the power of Buddhas can win against corrupt clergy and political leaders.

The Daishonin writes: "There is a mighty Asura King, who can battle with Bonten, Taishaku and the Four Heavenly Kings. He has entered the minds of the leaders of the Zen, Nembutsu and Ritsu schools of Buddhism and from there entered the minds of the nation's leaders and its people, driving all sages to extinction. It is extremely difficult even for Bonten and Taishaku to prevent such great evil from occurring. How much more ineffective against such evil, then, will be the tutelary gods of Japan with their puny power. Such great evil can only be prevented with the protection of the great Bodhisattvas of the Earth, who appeared in numbers as innumerable as the dust particles of a thousand worlds, Shakyamuni Thus Come One, Many Treasures (Taho) Thus Come One and all Buddhas throughout the universe" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 141).

Only the power of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth and Buddhas can win against the collu-

sion and schemes of corrupt clergy and political leaders, who are ruled by the life-state of Anger, who manifest the behavior of *asuras*, the contentious demons of Indian mythology. In exact accord with this Gosho passage, the SGI, which is a gathering of Bodhisattvas of the Earth, has written a magnificent history of victory. This is an incredible achievement.

In his treatise "The Three-fold Secret Teaching," the 26th high priest, Nichikan, describes *asuras* as being so gargantuan that, when standing in the ocean, the water comes up only to their knees. This is also how they are portrayed in various Buddhist sutras.

That's how puffed up with their own self-importance they are. They can't see themselves for what they really are.

But when such arrogant individuals are reproached by someone stronger than themselves, they shrink to their true tiny size and flee. This nature of *asuras* is clearly elucidated by the Daishonin in "Letter from Sado." When *asuras* are confronted with superior strength, they quickly reveal their base natures.

In "Letter from Sado," the Daishonin writes, "An arrogant man will be overcome with fear when he meets a strong enemy, just like the haughty asura who shrank and hid himself in a lotus flower blossoming in Munetchi Lake when reproached by Taishaku" (*MW-1*, 35).

In closing, I want to introduce some great words of wisdom of humankind. Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is to be observed that all civilizations have been on their trial. That civilization which is permanent outlives it." We of the SGI, too, have weathered constant trials.

Next, let me share a number of Philippine proverbs:

"Strength and bravery make life progress."

"Strength lies in unity."

"The greater the sufferings, the more brilliant the victory."

"You will never know what success is, unless you have experienced a lot of sacrifices or sufferings."

"The tongue is the most powerful weapon."

"Nothing is mightier than the truthful tongue."

"He is twice a victor who knows how to be humble in a moment of victory."

"Wealth can be lost, but wisdom never disappears."

"If you want to change the world, start by changing yourself."

I am earnestly praying for your health, longevity and boundless good fortune in life and will continue to do so for as long as I live.

Thank you for your long attention today.

Part 3 of President Ikeda's speech at the 33rd Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, May 1. Part 1 appeared in the May 21 World Tribune, and part 2 appeared in last week's issue.

World The SGI-USA's Weekly Newspaper

The World Tribune (692-720) is published weekly by the SGI-USA, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427; (310) 260-8900; FAX (310) 260-8910; E-mail: wt@sgi-usa.org Subscriptions Office: (800) 835-4558; FAX (310) 260-8970; E-mail: SGIsubs@aol.com

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA, and at additional mailing offices. Return To: SGI-USA Subscriptions, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427

Subscription Rates (subject to state taxes) \$15 for Three Months; \$28 for Six Months; \$50 for One Year; \$85 for Two Years; \$110 for Three Years

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AN ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

A Great Wave **ARISES**

Sharing excellent examples of Korean leadership, SGI President Ikeda reflects, 'If a single wise person stands up and takes the lead, a great wave forward in kosen-rufu always arises.'

The sky shone. The sea sparkled. Both nature and city glittered. The foothills of Halla-san Mountain, rising in the middle of the island, were gown'd in green, composing a poetic picture of light. I found Chejudo to be a beautiful jewel of an island. It was an island of poetry, an island that makes people into poets. It was an island of peace, linking one beautiful heart to another, as serene as the endless, clear skies that unfold after surmounting storms of bitter suffering.

★★★★★★★★★★

On May 16, I arrived at Chejudo for the first time. After a long-awaited memorial to Korea-Japan friendship was unveiled at the Fukuoka Training Center in Kyushu, May 15, I was on my way to Korea for the third time, my first visit there in a year.

This time, I came at the invitation of Cheju National University, which conferred an honorary doctorate upon me, May 17. I want to reiterate my deep gratitude for this tremendous honor to dynamic President Cho Moon Boo and all at Cheju National University, their warm friendship as expansive as the sea that surrounds Chejudo. In addition, Chancellor Choue Young Seek of Kyung Hee University and President Chung Jong Taeck of Chung Cheong College were kind enough to travel to Chejudo to attend the ceremony despite their busy schedules. This sign of their deep friendship moved me profoundly.

In the past, an arrogant Japan immorally trampled on this nation that has been our great cultural benefactor and mentor. I am therefore aware of the deep significance of receiving this great honor from Korea.

★★★★★★★★★★

Also present at the ceremony were Chejudo SGI members and SGI-Korea representatives, who shared with me the joy of this event. In addition, three representatives of the Osaka Local Main Office of the Korean Residents Union in Japan joined us.

The links between Chejudo and Japan are deep. When Chejudo was known as the kingdom of Tamla, in the 7th century, exchange with Japan was already taking place. Today, approximately 20 percent of Korean residents in Japan are from Chejudo.

Links to the Kansai region are especially close, and many people who trace their roots to Chejudo live in Osaka's Ikuno and Higashinari wards, near our Kansai Culture Center. Large numbers of them are active as wonderful members of Ever-victorious Kansai, the SGI organization there.

In 1922, a direct sea route linking Chejudo and Osaka opened, and that is one of the reasons so many people originating in Chejudo now live in Kansai. Of course, this took place against the backdrop of Japan's colonial rule of Korea, and one can only imagine the terrible pain and hardships these Korean residents of Japan endured over the years.

I share this honor from Cheju National University with our SGI members in Korea and those of Korean descent living in Japan. They have suffered more than words can express.

★★★★★★★★★★

A riot of beautiful flowers is now blooming on Chejudo, but one must wait until the height of summer to enjoy the elegant blooms of the national flower of Korea, the Rose of Sharon — or, as it's called in Korean, the Immortal Flower (*mugunghwa*).

What a noble appearance it has

— enduring the scorching summer heat to bloom proudly, as if wishing to cheer people's hearts! And though its blossoms only last one day, opening in the morning and withering at dusk, the plant produces new flowers each day, from summer all the way to autumn. This is why the Rose of Sharon symbolizes the hearts of the Korean people: strength of spirit, perseverance, hard work and enterprise.

★★★★★★★★★★

The Rose of Sharon, the Immortal Flower — a perfect symbol of our beloved Korean members, who have this history of enduring persecution and triumphing over all. What a long, hard winter they have weathered! How they have gritted their teeth, put down roots in society and patiently continued planting the seeds of trust and happiness!

*Having endured the long winter
I am reborn like the grasses.
O happy lark
From every ridge
Soar joyously into the sky!*

Our Korean comrades have triumphed, just as spring triumphs in this poem, "Spring," by Yun Tongju. With their invincible spirit, they have become a flower garden of hope for SGI members around the world.

★★★★★★★★★★

Today, a statue of the hero of nonviolence, Mahatma Gandhi, adorns the Headquarters of SGI-Korea. There is a person who is often called the Korean Gandhi: An Ch'ang-ho, a great champion of Korean independence. When An founded a group to promote independence in 1913, one of the qualities he emphasized most



Photo by SEIKYO PRESS

South Korea's Cheju National University confers an honorary doctorate upon SGI President Ikeda, May 17. This was President Ikeda's third visit to Korea and first visit to the island of Chejudo.

heavily was unity. He urged the forging of an unchanging, indestructible unity aimed at achieving justice, calling this a "sacred unity." This corresponds to the unity of many in body, one in mind (*itai doshin*) that we speak of in Buddhism and to the indestructible unity in faith we have directed toward realizing our great goal of kosen-rufu.

★★★★★★★★★★

An Ch'ang-ho also taught the importance of practical action, declaring: "It is more effective to demonstrate something once than explain it a hundred times. One person who actually makes an honest effort has more power to effect change than a hundred people talking about making an honest effort."

There are people who talk wonderfully about what needs to be done, but then leave the doing to others. They don't act themselves. Nothing destroys people's trust and unity more than this kind of false leadership.

On the other hand, if a single wise person stands up and takes the lead, a great wave forward in kosen-rufu always arises. This is the principle of human revolution.

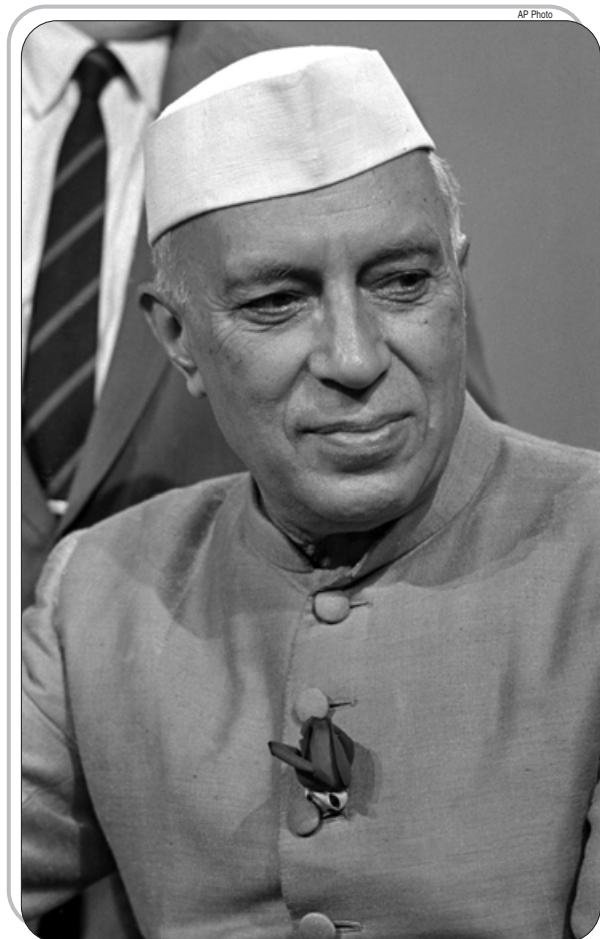
The Gakkai is as strong as it is precisely because brave lions have stood up, joined forces and ac-

cepted the challenge. The tremendous development of SGI-Korea is the crown of victory that our heroes, led by General Director Park Jae Il, have won. They have triumphed by persevering in their activities with sincerity while enduring the storms of adversity. I praise them from the bottom of my heart as a model for all the world.

★★★★★★★★★★

Nichiren Daishonin says that "if the minds of the people are pure, so is their land" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 4). As I gazed up at the bright skies of Chejudo, which seemed to be smiling with the joy of victory, I could not help but offer a silent prayer: May my beloved fellow members be happy, successful and make endless progress! No matter how rough the waves may be, may an indestructible rainbow bridge of peace and friendship between Korea and Japan span joyfully across the skies of the 21st century!

This series is published as "Thoughts on The New Human Revolution" in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.



Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of independent India.

REVOLUTION, FROM PAGE 1

Enduring cruel criticism is part of being a revolutionary.

During his youth, Nehru was imprisoned for his involvement in a revolutionary struggle to change India's destiny. Imprisonment is the hallmark of a true revolutionary. Those who stand up to fight in a revolution expect that they may be killed in its course. Trials such as being jailed and having to endure cruel criticism and defamation are part and parcel of being a revolutionary. Not encountering attacks or persecutions means one isn't fighting hard and is just getting by with the least amount of effort.

Nehru spent many long years in prison. [He was jailed nine times and imprisoned for a total of close to nine years.] Despite his confinement, however, he wrote letters to his young daughter, Indira, and taught her about the world. I believe that he did so wishing that his daughter might grow into a leader of world stature.

Some people may ask, "How can a child understand such

grown-up subject matter?" In reality, children are adult. Words spoken with great earnestness cannot fail to be understood by them.

This applies to the families of SGI members. It is important to teach our children the aims and history of the SGI and meaning of kosen-rufu from a young age.

For the 13-year-old Indira Gandhi, her father's imprisonment was the catalyst that led her to participate in India's independence movement.

Indira Gandhi later served as India's third prime minister and was the mother of Rajiv Gandhi.

The time has come for every youth division member to strive in the vanguard of kosen-rufu.

In a letter he sent to his daughter from prison, Nehru writes, "We must sweep away the dirt and the poverty and misery from our country." President Toda also cherished a deep wish to rid the people of Kansai of poverty and sickness.

The formula was the same. The spirit was the same. Both were concerned with practical measures to relieve people of suffering. What they said was not abstract theory or mere intellectualizing.

In the same letter, Nehru continues: "We must also clean up, as far as we can, the cobwebs from the minds of so many people which prevent them from thinking and cooperating in the great work before us. It is a great work, and it may be that it will require time. Let us, at least, give it a good push on — *Inqilab zindabad!* [Long live revolution!]"

Kosen-rufu is also "a great work." We must clear from people's minds "the cobwebs which prevent them from cooperating" in this sacred endeavor.

"I will do whatever I can, no matter how small my contribution! I will give it my best!" — this is the revolutionary spirit, the spirit of kosen-rufu. Kosen-rufu is

the supreme revolution. Consequently, a life dedicated to this cause is one of supreme nobility.

The 21st century is now within sight. The time has come for every youth division member to strive in the vanguard of the kosen-rufu movement.

With the awareness and conviction that Kansai is the driving force in this great struggle, please create, stir up and power a dynamic wave of change from this region into the new century. Even when the ocean's surface is calm and rippled by gentle waves, in its depths there are strong, powerful currents flowing and spreading widely.

I want Kyoto and all of Kansai to be like that. Please be a proud fighting force of the Mystic Law like Kyoto's once-famous group of elite swordsmen, the Shinsengumi. Stride forth boldly, leading people to happiness and helping them realize their potential.

The Buddha is known as One Who Can Forbear.

"The strong are persevering, and the persevering are strong." These are the words of Inazo Nitobe, a world-famous Japanese scholar and close friend of founding Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi.

People of fortitude are strong. They have great character and courage. The Buddha is also known as One Who Can Forbear.

In contrast, those who are weak and cowardly are unable to endure hardship. This was the case with many who left our organization. They were extremely skilled in the art of self-justification, always making excuses for themselves and stu-

diously avoiding hard work and difficulty. They were not prepared to personally undergo persecution for the sake of the Law.

The ancient Roman philosopher Seneca says, "There is no greater evil in covetousness than its ingratitude." The ungrateful are unaware of the immense debt of gratitude they have incurred and instead seek to receive ever more, thinking only of satisfying their own ambitions and desires. This aspect of human nature exists today just as it did centuries ago in ancient Rome.

I talk about many subjects in my speeches, my reason for doing so being to broaden your knowledge and deepen your understanding. The wisdom and keen insights of scholars and heroes, past and present, all resonate profoundly with Buddhism. I want you to learn as much as you can from them. When such study is combined with daimoku, you will find yourself walking the path of justice and truth that you have studied.

Take a rocket launch, for instance. The mathematical calculations can be correct down to the minutest detail, but if the engine thrust is weak, the rocket won't make it into orbit. The power of daimoku provides the unlimited lifting force that enables our lives to take off like rockets.

In "The American Scholar," the American thinker Emerson says, "He who has put forth his total strength in fit actions, has the richest return of wisdom." These words apply to all of you. When you give your all to SGI activities, your efforts quite naturally come to accord with the highest wisdom. You do your human revolution and accumu-

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HIGHLIGHTS

from this speech

Imprisonment is the hallmark of a true revolutionary. Those who stand up to fight in a revolution expect that they may be killed in its course. Trials such as being jailed and having to endure cruel criticism and defamation are part and parcel of being a revolutionary. Not encountering attacks or persecutions means one isn't fighting hard and is just getting by with the least amount of effort.

*

"I will do whatever I can, no matter how small my contribution! I will give it my best!" — this is the revolutionary spirit, the spirit of kosen-rufu. Kosen-rufu is the supreme revolution. Consequently, a life dedicated to this cause is one of supreme nobility.

*

When you give your all to SGI activities, your efforts quite naturally come to accord with the highest wisdom. You do your human revolution and accumulate good fortune. Everything benefits your own lives.

*

If, in the course of the revolution that is our kosen-rufu movement, we exert ourselves for the happiness of countless friends, then we will remain forever in their hearts. For all eternity they will become people with whom we have close connections. They will become protective functions, safeguarding us from harm. Such is the state of life we will attain.

*

It doesn't matter whether you have a leadership position or not, or whether your position is higher or lower than someone else's. It all comes down to whether you are taking action. Without personal effort, Buddhism does not exist, kosen-rufu cannot be realized, and there is no true glory.

late good fortune. Everything benefits your own lives.

Action is crucial.

One of America's leading popular poets, Longfellow, was acclaimed and celebrated for his work throughout the world. He was also a professor at Harvard University. In his poem "A Psalm of Life," he writes:

*Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.*

It is just as he says: Action is crucial. We must lose ourselves neither in enjoyment nor sorrow.

A handwritten manuscript of Longfellow's poetry is among the treasures of Soka University of America. And there are many other important treasures of humankind there. They are being held in safekeeping for you and for posterity. They are all your treasures.

At present, 300 SGI-Taiwan members are visiting Japan as part of a cultural exchange delegation. They will watch the proceedings of this meeting via satel-

lite broadcast at the Okinawa Training Center. My warmest welcome to each of you!

The SGI-Taiwan members have put down solid roots in their local communities and society at large, and have demonstrated most commendable actual proof of their Buddhist practice. Out of some 2,700 social organizations and groups in the territory, SGI-Taiwan has won the distinction of being named the most outstanding people's organization for seven consecutive years, as of the latest awards presented last year by Taiwan's Ministry of the Interior. No other organization in Taiwan has ever achieved this feat. My deepest congratulations! Minister of the Interior Huang Chu-wen has lauded the SGI for displaying the infinite strength of ordinary people.

If we exert ourselves for the happiness of our friends, we will remain forever in their hearts.

As interest in writing and the written word continues to decline in Japan, the monthly magazine *Ushio* [a Soka Gakkai-affiliated publication] is looked to as a jour-

nal of serious journalism. A dialogue on the life and ideals of José Martí being conducted between me and Dr. Cintio Vitier, a leading expert on this great hero of Cuban independence, is now being featured in the magazine.

Cuban President Fidel Castro has sent a message saying that he is watching the dialogue's progress with much interest. And he has also extended me an invitation to visit Cuba a second time, saying that he looks forward to talking with me again.

May is the month when Martí laid down his life for his cause. He died in action on the battlefield on May 19, 1895, at age 42. On May 27, today's date, he was buried on a coastal region of Cuba. Therefore, today I want to speak about him.

Martí died in the midst of Cuba's struggle for independence, in the midst of a revolution. He was a key person in the struggle, a person who would have become the country's future leader. He was indispensable, someone whom the cause could not afford to lose.

His colleagues had urged him to stay away from the fighting on the battlefield. But brushing aside their advice, he resolutely fought on the front lines. There, he was struck by three bullets.

The enemies carried away his body as a trophy of war. In death, his body was desecrated by his enemies — but Martí had always believed that even if his body were destroyed, his ideas would never disappear. He declared that those who dedicate their lives to humanity will live on in the hearts of humanity.

If, in the course of the revolution that is our kosen-rufu movement, we exert ourselves for the happiness of countless friends, then we will remain for-ever in their hearts. For all

eternity they will become people with whom we have close connections. They will become protective functions, safeguarding us from harm. Such is the state of life we will attain.

If we propagate Nichiren Dais-honin's Buddhism widely, throughout the world, the SGI and all SGI members will be protected and supported by people around the globe. This is an unchanging formula of Buddhism. This is why I constantly stress

the importance of dedicating our lives to kosen-rufu and the immense

benefit that accrues to us as a result.

Even now, more than a hundred years after his death, Martí continues to be an object of admiration and deep veneration. His noble ideals of human advancement shine with an ever-increasing brilliance.

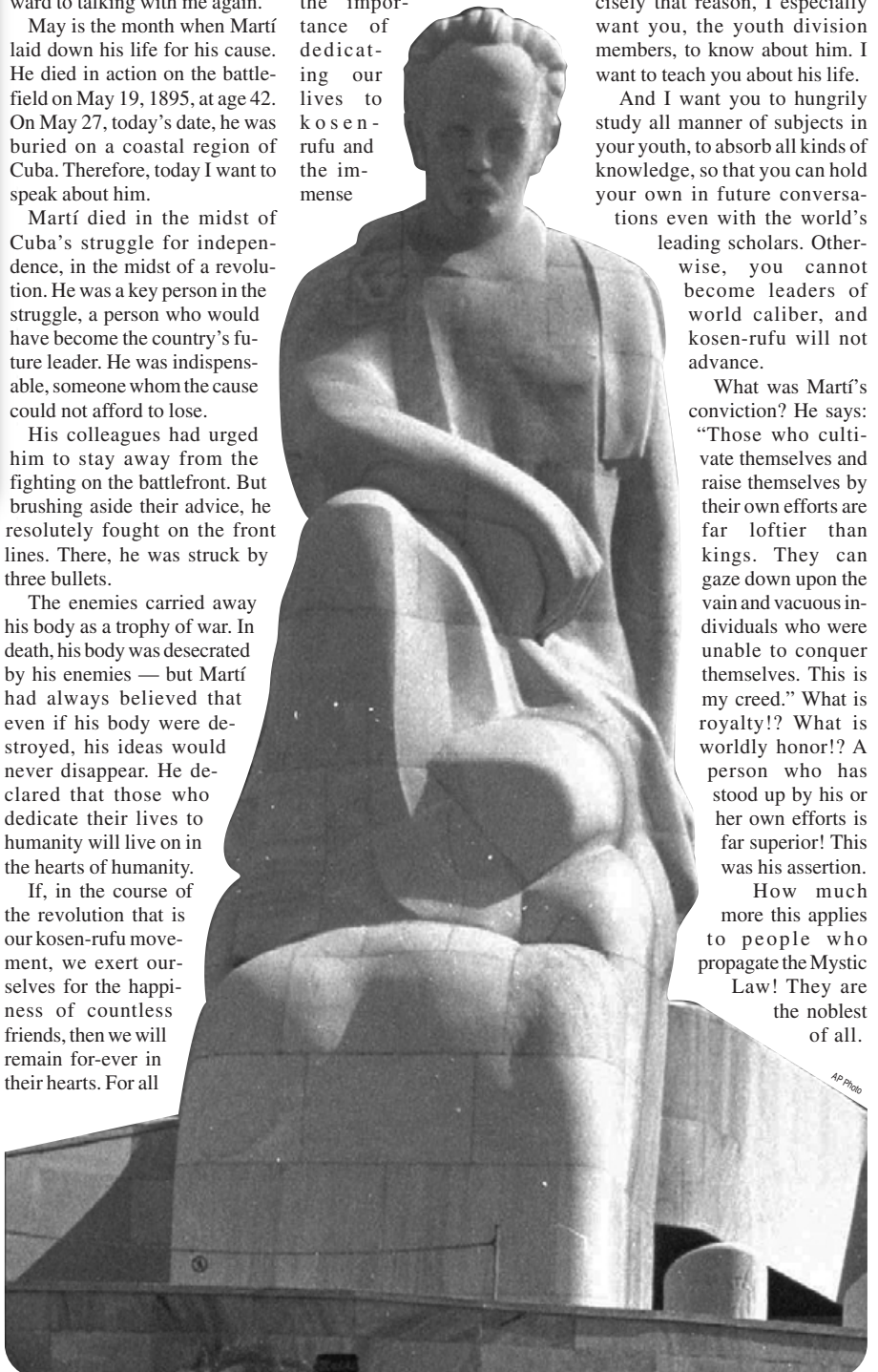
As a martyred hero, the life of Martí resonates deeply with that of President Makiguchi. The name José Martí is perhaps not well known in Japan, and for precisely that reason, I especially want you, the youth division members, to know about him. I want to teach you about his life.

And I want you to hungrily study all manner of subjects in your youth, to absorb all kinds of knowledge, so that you can hold your own in future conversations even with the world's leading scholars. Other-

wise, you cannot become leaders of world caliber, and kosen-rufu will not advance.

What was Martí's conviction? He says: "Those who cultivate themselves and raise themselves by their own efforts are far loftier than kings. They can gaze down upon the vain and vacuous individuals who were unable to conquer themselves. This is my creed." What is royalty!? What is worldly honor!? A person who has stood up by his or her own efforts is far superior! This was his assertion.

How much more this applies to people who propagate the Mystic Law! They are the noblest of all.



A statue of Cuban revolutionary hero Jose Martí in the Plaza de la Revolucion in Havana, Cuba.

The SGI-USA's Weekly Newspaper

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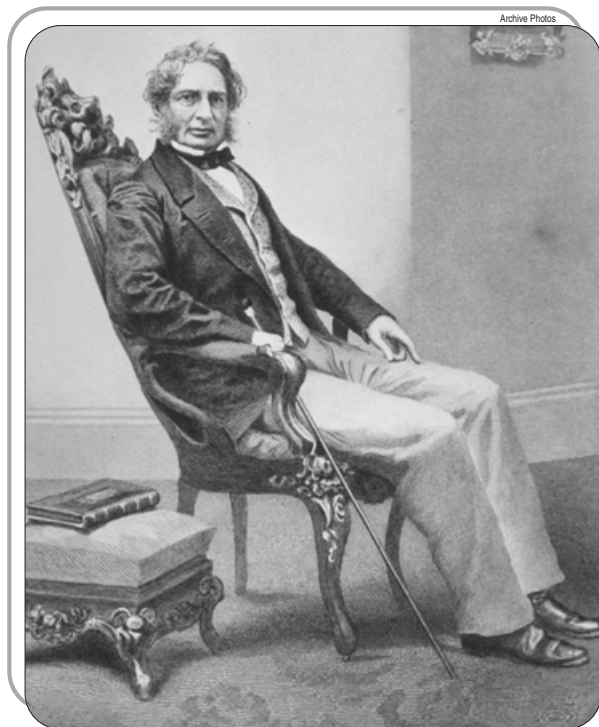
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Henry Wadsworth Longfellow established himself as America's most famous 19th-century poet.

REVOLUTION, FROM PAGE 7

All we need do is stand up tall, with confidence and conviction. No matter what those of shallow understanding say or do, we can just gaze down on them from our lofty height with imperturbable composure — as if from the majestic summit of Mount Fuji.

We either fight to the very end or wind up abandoning our faith.

In a play written by Martí, *Fatherland and Liberty*, are the lines "Friends, have courage! Victory is in our hands!"

"Friends!" he starts. In other words, we need to work together as friends, as comrades; we cannot achieve kosen-rufu alone. This is the correct path.

Buddhism expounds that the practitioners of the Mystic Law always appear together with those with whom they have a profound connection. It also teaches the principle of mentor and disciple.

Martí continues in this play: "The die has been cast. The choice is either a life of infamy or gaining lasting glory. No other outcome is possible."

The struggle has begun. You of the youth division have already embarked on the real-life drama of your mission. You have no course but to press for-

ward, ever forward, to win this "lasting glory."

If you run away from the struggles at hand, you will doom yourself eternally to a "life of infamy." We either fight to the very end or stop midway and abandon our faith.

There is only one choice: Let's keep challenging ourselves to keep advancing!

Without personal effort, Buddhism does not exist, kosen-rufu cannot be realized, and there is no true glory.

Action is the key. One deed surpasses a hundred words. Debate without action is just empty intellectualizing. It produces no results.

It doesn't matter whether you have a leadership position or not, or whether your position is higher or lower than someone else's. It all comes down to whether you are taking action. Without personal effort, Buddhism does not exist, kosen-rufu cannot be realized, and there is no true glory.

At the same time, it is important to respect those who are wholeheartedly dedicating themselves to SGI activities, to thank and praise them for their efforts, saying, for example: "Thank you so much for your hard work." "Thank you so much for coming."

Anyone, no matter who they are, who fails to be respectful toward you who strive so earnestly for kosen-rufu, will incur negative effects. However, when people show you respect, then both you and they will receive benefit.

Those who can sincerely encourage others are genuine practitioners of Buddhism.

Martí declares that a great undertaking is "lost or saved by small things." He calls out: "Think of me who bears incredible suffering and heavy responsibility. Think of how difficult it is to encourage people sincerely, without using exaggeration or flattery. Think of how even more difficult it is to prevent those one has encouraged from becoming disheartened or depressed."

Those who can sincerely encourage others are true leaders of people, true leaders of the SGI and genuine practitioners of Buddhism. They are bodhisattvas.

Martí cries: "How the nature of human ambition and vanity can be a great obstacle for the highest virtue. But no matter how insurmountable the difficulties, nothing can stand in the way of those of us who blaze with the spirit of redemption. Nothing can dominate us, for we are a great army of light."

Base individuals are invariably jealous toward the highest virtue and try to obstruct and hinder it. The Daishonin was treated the same way, and so was his successor, Nikko Shonin. In more recent history, this pattern of persecution was also experienced by Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, Josei Toda and myself.

However, we of the SGI are "a great army of light"! Faith is intangible, yet it is a light that no darkness can smother. We are the forces of the Buddha. We have nothing to fear.

We only live this lifetime once. Therefore, I pray that you will lead lives shining with the glorious, indestructible light of the sun, lives of victory free of the slightest regret and lives of eternal triumph, fueled by the determination to always win in the end. Let us all lead lives like this.

Part 1 of SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 34th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Soka Gakkai's Kyoto Peace Auditorium in Kyoto, Japan, May 27. Part 2 will appear in an upcoming issue.

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FATHER'S DAY IS *Every Day*

Photo by ELMER DeWITT

PERSPECTIVE

To Jack DiPietro, Father's Day is a reminder that he needs to practice what he preaches — every day.

By JACK DiPIETRO
RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIF.

Sonara S. Dodd conceived of Father's Day in Spokane, Wash., in 1909. She wanted to honor her father, who had raised her single-handedly after the death of her mother. Wanting him to know how much she appreciated the effort, sacrifices, care and love he had showed her, she held the first Father's Day in June, the month of his birth.

A joint resolution of Congress recognized Father's Day in 1956, and in 1972 President Nixon established the third Sunday in June as the permanent national observance of Father's Day.

These facts tell us the history of Father's Day, but wondering what Father's Day really means to us today, I decided to ask my family. Tracy, my 8-year-old daughter, replied, "Do I have to give presents?" My 10-year-old son, Tom, similarly said, "It's a day to give a present to Father." Tricia, my wife, answered, "It's nice to have a father."

I think these replies reflect both the superficial and the deep-down meanings of Father's Day. The superficial meaning is obvi-

ous: We buy presents for one another on certain days of the year — Mother's Day, birthdays and so forth — mostly because we are expected to.

While he lost his eldest child, his only son, who died of leukemia at 14, he never became maudlin or bitter over it. He's remained positive and confident throughout his life. It's plain to see why he's been a kind of role model for me, and

happy her father is still living. She loves him (and her mother, too) dearly and feels that every day is Father's Day and Mother's Day, too — Parents' Day, in other words.

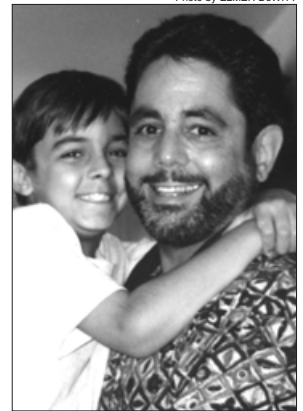
Tricia feels this way because her parents are wonderful people. The fact is, Tricia's dad has been sort of a role model for me for almost 25 years now. He's a man who always chooses the high road. He never yells, criticizes or complains; he always extends his help and support.

Almost any man can become a father; it's not that hard. What is hard, is to try to be the best father you can be by showing your children what it means to take the high road as an SGI member. In essence, this means practicing what I preach.

The deep-down meaning is not so obvious for some. My wife's response means that she is

ing whenever things don't suit my purposes. I thus need to remember to chant to replace my anger with compassion and my stupidity with wisdom, to take the responsibility for creating unity with my wife and my children, so that I can always walk the high road of the Middle Way.

Only then will I feel I deserve the presents my children will inevitably give me on Father's Day.



Jack DiPietro with son, Tom.

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WT

A GLOSSARY OF BUDDHIST TERMS

bodhisattva: A compassionate human being who is dedicated to helping others and who aspires to attain Buddhahood, characterized by boundless wisdom and infinite compassion. People who chant and propagate Nam-myohorenge-kyo are known as Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

Buddha: In Sanskrit, means awakened one. An enlightened person; one who perceives the true, eternal nature of all life and leads others to attain the same enlightenment. The Buddha nature exists in all beings and is characterized by the qualities of wisdom, courage, compassion, freedom, joy, perseverance and life force. Nichiren Daishonin teaches that by embracing the Gohonzon anyone can attain enlightenment in his or her present form in this lifetime.

daimoku: Literally, title of a sutra, it refers to the invocation or chanting of Nam-myohorenge-kyo, the title (and essence) of the Lotus Sutra.

Gohonzon: Object of devotion; a mandala that expresses the essence of the Lotus Sutra. The Gohonzon is the embodiment of the Law of Nam-myohorenge-kyo and the life of Nichiren Daishonin in the form of a scroll, which SGI members enshrine in their homes. *Go* means worthy of honor and *honzon* means object of fundamental respect.

gongyo: Literally, it means assiduous practice. In Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, gongyo consists of reciting excerpts from the second and sixteenth chapters of the Lotus Sutra, chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo and offering silent prayers.

karma: Sanskrit word meaning action. The life tendency or destiny each individual creates through thoughts, words and deeds that exert an often unseen influence over one's future. According to this concept, one's actions in the past have shaped one's reality at present, and actions in the present in turn determine one's future. Buddhism teaches that cause and effect exist simultaneously in a single life-moment. By strengthening our innate Buddha nature through Buddhist practice we can break the chains of karmic causality, less-

ening retribution for negative causes made in the past, and making new causes that will move our lives in the direction of our greatest happiness.

kosen-rufu: Literally, it means to widely declare and spread (Buddhism); to secure lasting peace and happiness for all humankind through the propagation of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

Lotus Sutra: The highest teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha, it reveals that all people are innately capable of attaining enlightenment. Reciting excerpts from the Lotus Sutra is part of SGI members' daily Buddhist practice.

Nichiren Daishonin (1222-82): A 13th-century Japanese reformer upon whose Buddhist teachings the SGI bases its activities. He inscribed the true object of devotion, the Gohonzon and established the invocation of Nam-myohorenge-kyo as the universal practice to attain enlightenment. Daishonin is an honorific title that means great sage.

Shakyamuni: Also known as Siddhartha Gautama. Born in India (present-day southern Nepal) about 3,000 years ago, he is the first recorded Buddha and founder of Buddhism. For 50 years, he expounded various sutras (teachings) culminating in the Lotus Sutra, which he declared his ultimate teaching.

Soka Gakkai International (SGI): The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is a worldwide association of people who practice the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin, with members in 128 countries and territories. Soka Gakkai means value-creation society.

Nam-myohorenge-kyo: The fundamental component of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, it is the law of life. It is also the law of the universe. It expresses the true entity of life that allows people to directly tap their enlightened nature. Although the deepest meaning of Nam-myohorenge-kyo is revealed only through its practice, the

literal meaning is: *Nam* (devotion), the action of practicing Buddhism; *myoho* (Mystic Law), the entity of the universe and its phenomenal manifestations; *renge* (lotus), the simultaneity of cause and effect; *kyo* (Buddha's teaching), all phenomena.

Shakyamuni: Also known as Siddhartha Gautama. Born in India (present-day southern Nepal) about 3,000 years ago, he is the first recorded Buddha and founder of Buddhism. For 50 years, he expounded various sutras (teachings) culminating in the Lotus Sutra, which he declared his ultimate teaching.

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心和氣平 百福自集

SGI會長 池田大作

祝賀五三「創價學會日」、「創價學會母親節」的第三十二屆本部...

明(二)日,「火星」將接近地球,這次是八千六百五十萬公里...

一定能夠實現。在山口和大阪,都有許多會員...

《菜根譚》——一個人只要心平氣和,自然會聚集一切幸福。

高在上,但表面上卻偽裝成品格高尚的人...

「創價學會母親節」! 我在此與全國會員一起祝賀這盛大的日子。

「五月三日的創價學會母親節」,丈夫一定要買點禮物給太太...

「法華經的會座除了三千大千世界之外,更有四百萬億阿僧祇這廣大...

雖然可以有各種詮釋,但可以理解:如說修行的人,甚至能自由地操縱修羅界、畜生界、達成廣...

只有佛力能戰勝大阿修羅王 大聖人也這樣說:「有能與大梵天王、帝釋、四天...

「創價學會萬歲!」 「包括藝術部各位,全體會員萬歲!」

我獨自一人支撐了先生的經濟困境,全數清還了他莫大的債務。

「我獨清」 年輕時,我曾跟戶田先生學習中國古文。先生雖是數學專家,但也喜愛中國古文。

「壓抑不住經常想勝過他人之心,看不起人,輕他罵他,猶如鶴鷹高飛下視。儘管如此,外表卻表現出仁慈禮智等德行,外表卻表現出...

可是,這種傲慢的人,一旦受到比自己強大的人譴責,便會縮回渺小的「原形」逃去無蹤。

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(文轉下頁)

體 驗 談

在學會活動中學習處世待人

趙淑園

這篇體驗談是趙淑園和她的兩位弟媳在第二屆「COCORC」研修會時和會友分享的。

我於一九六九年隨著媽媽入信，而媽媽入信的動機有三點：一、希望自己身體健康；二、全家移民美國，與祖父母團聚；三、希望子女聽話。

一九七一年，也就是入信兩年後，移民美國的目標果然實現，但是到了美國以後的生活卻不如想像中如意。祖父反對我們的信仰，而爸爸更於一年後去世。雖然遭受如此沉重的打擊，媽媽在不懂英文的情況下，仍然堅持信仰，帶著我和兩個弟弟參加學會活動。



▲信心堅定的廣布家庭

工作多年的汽車行因經濟問題而停業了，在失業期間，我一直祈求找到一份更好更理想的工作，同時，努力參與學會活動。時間配合得真妙，就在失業補助金期限屆滿的時候，我成功地進入一家高級汽車行工作，而且深受上司的賞識和信賴，人際關係也大大改善，與各部門同事都相處融洽，連舊同事都對我刮目相看。因工作關係經常接觸有錢的顧客，看到他們受煩惱困擾，無法突破，我深深覺得錢不是萬

(文接上頁)

只要我們以更強大的力量呵責修羅，它就現出本來面目、醜態畢露。

勝利時謙虛者將繼續勝利。最後想介紹人類的睿智箴言：聖雄甘地 (Mahatma Gandhi) 說：

「所有文明皆是在受考驗途中。具備永遠性的文明，就是經得起考驗長存下去的文明。」

我們也常常在受考驗。還有以下的菲律賓格言：「堅強和勇氣為人生帶來前進。」

「力量存在於團結之中。」
「不歷盡犧牲和辛勞，決不會知道什麼是成功。」
「舌劍是最強力的武器。」
「真實的說話，就是最強大的東西。」
「懂得在勝利時謙虛者，會再次成為勝利者。」
「財富可失，智慧不可失。」
「若想改變世界，就由改變自身開始。」

我經常在努力祈禱，而且一生也會繼續祈求各位健康長壽，度過充滿福運的人生。長時間的聚會，辛苦了，謝謝！

能的。「倉之財不及身之財，身之財不及心之財」，自己很慶幸遇到這偉大的佛法。我的大弟媳也跟著媽媽入信，但他的動機只為了討好和孝順媽媽，並非出自真心。媽媽最擔心的是他的媳婦。他堅持不要女子部部員為妻，因為，他怕她會忙著參加學會活動，忽略照顧家庭，沒想到他偏偏娶了個會友為妻。

婚姻幸福是致力廣布的功德

趙惠英

我是在中學時期跟隨媽媽入信。當時，我正熱衷於尋找正確的人生哲學。正巧媽媽因弟弟的健康問題開始信奉日蓮大聖人的佛法。她不斷地從旁激發我，此外，導致我入信的原因還有兩點：媽媽剛烈的性格改變許多，使家庭充滿和諧的氣氛，佛法教示生命是永恒的，這和我的看法不謀而合。(未入信前，我就感覺到生命是永恒的，但未能肯定。)

一九七四年，有一天我自動自發唱唸第一句南無妙法蓮華經時，不禁掉下淚來，滿心喜悅和感激。

自此，我一直動動於信心的修行，並獲得前輩細心照顧和關懷。受到大聖人哲理和池田會長指導的潛移默化，我的性格漸漸起了變化。我比以前開朗多了，對自己也增加了信心，與家人的關係更和諧並且受到信賴。境界擴展後，我更懂得欣賞和感謝別人。難怪前輩說：「信仰後，人會變得越來越美。(內在美)」。工作方面也做到敬業樂業，並如願地加入幼兒教育工作行列，後來很幸運地進入香港創價學會幼稚園工作。

夏季活動焦點(六、七、八月) 推廣世界聖報

夏季期間，我們將以增加世界聖報訂戶人數為重點。

- 目標
每一位會友都知道世界聖報。
每一位會友都了解世界聖報的重要性在於它是信心修行的一部分。
每一位會友都有訂閱世界聖報的機會。

夏季活動時間表
七月三日 師徒日(七月廣布勤行會時慶祝)
七月五日-八日 第三屆 INCC 華語研修會
八月二十四日 壯年部日

美華友誼會東岸會友第一屆交流會

五月卅日美華友誼會東岸會友在華盛頓舉行第一屆交流會，大約三百廿位華人及其他語系的會友出席。有些會友遠自波士頓、芝加哥、康州、新澤西州、紐約市、費城、西維吉尼亞海灣、維吉尼亞州趕來共襄盛舉。

表演節目包括紐約的舞獅、馬來西亞舞、中國民俗舞蹈、以及華盛頓區國會議友的鼓。司儀以英文、國語和廣東話主持這個聚會。同時，還將所有內容翻譯成英文。由於籌備週詳，這次的交流會極為成功。中林副理事長在賀詞中稱讚東岸會友為真正的廣布先驅，並以「櫻桃桃李」的比喻說明華人在美國廣布運動中所具的重要性。他鼓勵所有華人會友在財律理事長的領導下，團結一致，和諧愉快地在廣布大道上邁進。

感情方面一直未有明確的對象，但我不斷祈求幸福美滿的婚姻。一九九八年，在接受前輩有關婚姻的指導後幾個月，我認識了現在的丈夫，他遠道從美國返回香港。他回美國後，我們分隔兩地，通過長途電話和書信交往(這種方式，其實讓我能夠比較開放地和異性交往)。我每天都認真祈求有智慧看清楚這人是否適合我。幾個月後，我們決定結婚了。有些人認為這是對我很好，但我對自已很有信心，我們已經結婚三年了，丈夫和婆家對我都很好，沒有婆媳之間的隔閡。丈夫雖然在信仰方面不甚活躍，但總算支持我。我以行動折伏他，讓他感受到娶女子部員為妻，其實是幸福的事。回想起來，婚姻幸福是過去女子部時代為廣布努力而累積的冥益功德。

厄運變成福運

趙李小紅

一九八五年我從大陸自費來美留學，初到的落腳點是蒙大拿州。一年之後我決定轉到洛杉磯繼續我的學業，正所謂一線千里亦一線牽。雖然當時我還沒有機會接觸這個偉大的佛法，但相信亦是御本尊的安排，兩個星期後，在一個偶然的機會裡我由親戚介紹認識了我先生。不久後他就開始向我播種，而我一向對宗教不感興趣，覺得只要自己已能安分守己便可與世無爭，漸漸地聽他說只要唱南無妙法蓮華經，一定能夠將一切不好的宿業轉換，獲得絕對的幸福。我覺得這個因果具時的佛法哲理很合邏輯，經過半年的學會活動我終於有幸能夠敬領御本尊，成為創價學會的一份子，並且在同年年底，我倆正式在御本尊面前宣誓結婚。

光陰似箭，一眨眼，我倆結婚已十二年了，兩個女兒活潑可愛。這些年來，我們無時無刻不在感情上，或我先生的事業上都經過不少風風雨雨，但我們倆很幸運都是創價學會的成員。大家異體同心通過題目力量誠心地向御本尊祈求，每次都能將厄運變為福運。

一九九四年一月十七號羅省大地震時，我們住在離震央不遠的SUNNYVALE。地震發生的時候是清晨，當時我只覺得周圍一片漆黑，整個世界瘋狂地震盪。我一心記掛著在另一個房間熟睡的兩個女兒的安危，在愛莫能助的情形下，我同先生只有緊抱狂狂狂。經過一段漫長的搖動後，我同先生立刻衝到她們的房間，非常奇妙地，兩個小孩安然無恙地眼睜睜望著我們，眼見眼前的景象我不由得熱淚盈眶。之後我們一家靠著手電筒，緊抱御本尊一直唱頌到天亮，我深深感受到御本尊的功德無量。地震不久後，我們又面臨另一個挑戰，我先生的公司為了裁減經費，要求員工選擇裁員或跟公司一齊搬到炎熱的沙漠地區TUCSON。當時地震區的房屋買賣市場冷淡，加上公司搬到TUCSON後前途未卜。在進退兩難的情形下，我們一齊不斷向御本尊祈求，無論結果如何，都會是最好的安排。那時時間困難一波又一波，我非常慶幸很多會友與我們一齊唱頌。有一天唱三至五小時不等，前輩們也不斷鼓勵我們未到最後一刻，千萬不要放棄，要堅信御本尊的力量。果然在時間非常吻合的情形下，我們順利地將房子賣掉，分毫沒有損失。搬到TUCSON後我先生的工作環境有了很大的改變，曾經二次獲得上司頒發的最高員工獎。我們在社區健全，環境優美的地方購買了一間新屋，生活環境比起以前可說有了一百八十度的轉變，這些是我們以前未曾預料到的。現在我們一家在TUCSON地區參加學會活動，今年初我先生被任命為地區區長，我成為班長，我倆都將其視為是信心的挑戰，不斷進行人間革命。

我的家人雖然未入信，但看見我們家庭的改變，他們也深信御本尊的偉大。最近由於我媽媽病復發入院治療，我獲悉後立即在御本尊面前不斷唱頌，希望她能夠轉重輕受，將病業連根拔掉。果然不到十天，醫生就批准她出院。父母二人回家探親時，人人都覺得她紅光滿面，判若兩人，這又是御本尊的又一見證。我們的目標是希望有朝一日我的家人也都成為學會的一份子，一家和樂地為廣布努力。

This Beautiful Earth: Photo Essays by SGI President Ikeda



The pyramid of King Khafre.

'Allure of the Pyramids'

A deluge of brilliant yellow light. In the desert, the sun reigns supreme. The light and heat are so intense that if you look, your eyes burn; if you touch, your fingers will be scorched. Amid this sea of light, only the pyramids, jutting majestically toward the heavens, display an overwhelming resilience against the flaming heat.

Once called stairways to the sun, the pyramids are marvels of stone geometry. Looking up, one gets the sense that their summits are merging into the deep blue sky.

The Great Pyramid of King Khufu stands 451 feet tall. Extending in a line to the west are the pyramids of the kings Khafre and Menkaure.

The day was June 17, 1992, the time, past 3:00 p.m. We were 13 kilometers from Cairo, a city of 10 million. Driving through the city

along the west bank of the Nile, one suddenly finds oneself in the desert. Ahead, atop a plateau, stand the three pyramids of Giza.

It was my first visit to Egypt and to see the pyramids in 30 years. Yet before these houses of eternity, 30 years amount to no more than an instant. The Egyptian people have a saying "Time laughs at everything; but the pyramids laugh at time." Standing before these monuments to eternal time, I felt a surge of emotion. "I, too, want to build an indestructible castle of capable people that will remain for all time!" I pledged to myself.

I was invited to a special guest house where Ms. Amal Samuel, chief inspector of the Giza Pyramid Zone, gave detailed answers to all my questions. From the house's broad picture window, we had a direct view of the pyramid of King Khafre. And directly before us were

the lush branches of trees growing alongside the building.

Amid this world of stark colors, green alone means life. With all the life-energy they could muster, the trees were struggling intensely to live in the present moment.

The great stone pyramids signified death, eternity; the greenery was life, impermanence. Here was a mysterious expression of the undulating cycle of life and death that pervades the cosmos. Reflexively, I aimed my camera.

People, too, are like trees swaying in the winds of eternity. It is for this reason that we seek something eternal, something death cannot extinguish. We seek a power that is impervious to death, that can defeat death. It is this search that has given birth to religion and to art, and has made human beings human.

My old friend Mr. Hosni, the Egyptian minister of culture who

had invited me to come, once said: "When I am thinking deeply, I stand before the pyramids. Then I feel something that transcends my everyday reality and is directed toward the universe. This I believe: There is a relationship that exists between the pyramids and the vast cosmos."

One recent hypothesis has it that there is a direct correspondence between the size and arrangement of the three pyramids of Giza and the positions and intensities of the three stars that make up the belt of the hunter in the constellation Orion. Indeed, the pyramids may well have been born of people's prayer and desire to bring the eternity of the stars to Earth's surface.

Modern research suggests that the pyramids were built from the spontaneous and intense passion of people of high intellect. Had they been built by slaves laboring reluctantly

under the force of authority, they may have never withstood the ravages of time. The pyramids thus represent the people's self-imposed challenge to produce and leave behind a glorious edifice, a song of triumph, a paean to the pulsating law of the universe that transcends life and death.

"Let us leave behind this living proof!"

"Let us link ourselves to the eternal aspect of life!"

"If we call forth the limits of our human potential, what a magnificent thing we can build! We will show to future generations the real power of the people!"

The pyramids continue to ask us, "What is it that you will dedicate your life to; what will you leave behind?"

The pyramids stand as monuments to human accomplishment.

Three in a series

Antecedentes del Goshō: "Carta al Señor Feudal Toki"

Cortesía de *The Straits Times*



Una anciana de surakarta trabzando en un manto

"En este episodio, vemos un intercambio maravilloso: una madre que emprende el esfuerzo conmovedor de coser y coser, con manos temblorosas por la edad, movida por un amor puro hacia su hijo; un discípulo que actúa motivado por la preocupación sincera hacia su maestro y hacia la mujer que le dio la vida; un mentor que da todo de sí para que el empeño de ambos brille con la luz genuina de los máximos beneficios, impulsado por su misericordia hacia la madre y el hijo... Así es el mundo del Budismo." (Fragmento de la disertación del presidente Ikeda sobre este Goshō. *World Tribune*. Spanish Pages, 28 de mayo, de 1999, pág. IV)

TOKI JONIN

Un Hombre Digno de Confianza

Toki Jonin (1215-1299?) era un dirigente del clan Chiba, una familia samurai muy influyente en el gobierno del shogunato. El vivía en Wakamiya, en la provincia de Shimosa (en la actualidad Ciudad Ichikawa, prefectura de Chiba, cerca de Tokio en la costa oriental del Japón). Se cree que Jonin era un hombre de alto nivel de educación y de amplios conocimientos sobre el budismo debido a que Nichiren Daishonin le envió muchas cartas sobre importantes enseñanzas budistas.

Jonin probablemente conoció al Daishonin en Kamakura o en Shimosa cerca de 1254 -- un año después de que éste declarara el establecimiento de su Budismo -- y tomó fe poco tiempo después. Jonin fue uno de los primeros creyentes en el Budismo del Daishonin.

En la noche del 27 de agosto de 1260, más o menos un mes después que el Daishonin sometiera su tesis "Rissho Ankoku Ron" a Hojo Tokijori (el regente retirado pero gobernante de facto del shogunato), una banda de fanáticos de la escuela de la Tierra Pura (Nembutsu) tendieron emboscada a la casa del Daishonin en Matsubagayatsu en Kamakura. Al enterarse del incidente, Jonin invitó a Nichiren Daishonin a su finca, donde el Daishonin permaneció por un año, propagando sus en-

señanzas en el área.

Se dice que por esta época otros seguidores importantes como Ota Jomyo y Soya Kyoshin tomaron fe. A través de los esfuerzos del Daishonin y sus seguidores, muchas personas comenzaron a practicar el Budismo del Daishonin, y Jonin se convirtió en líder del área de Shimosa.

En septiembre de 1271 el Daishonin sufrió sus peores persecuciones. Fue llevado bajo custodia y casi ejecutado en Tatsunokuchi y luego exiliado a la remota Isla de Sado. Al mismo tiempo, el gobierno comenzó a reprimir drásticamente a los seguidores del Daishonin. En cada ocasión importante durante este período tumultuoso, el Daishonin le enviaba una carta a Jonin.

Después del intento de ejecución en Tatsunokuchi, cerca de Kamakura, el Daishonin fue transferido a la finca del clan Homma en Echi, provincia de Sagami (en la actualidad Ciudad Atsugi, prefectura de Kanagawa). El día siguiente, el Daishonin le envió una carta titulada "Carta desde Echi," que fue la primera carta que escribió el Daishonin después de la Persecución de Tatsunokuchi. En esta carta, el Daishonin intrépidamente declara su resuelta convicción y alienta a sus discípulos: "La persecución del

gobierno hacia mí ha demostrado claramente mi fe en el Sutra del Loto. No hay duda de que la luna mengua y crece ni del flujo y reflujo de la marea. En mi caso también, como el castigo ya ha ocurrido, el beneficio debe estar al llegar. ¿Qué hay que lamentar?" (MW-7, pág. 7).

Mientras que el Daishonin estaba detenido en Echi, se hicieron algunos esfuerzos para facilitar su perdón. Sin embargo, el gobierno decidió exiliarlo a Sado. Jonin, preocupado, envió un ayudante para cuidar del Daishonin.

Después de un largo trayecto, el grupo del Daishonin llegó a Teradomari, en la provincia de Echigo. De ahí, él le envió a Jonin otra carta, conocida como "Carta desde Teradomari," al comienzo de la cual él declara: "Todos aquellos que están resueltos a buscar el Camino deberían reunirse y escuchar el contenido de esta carta" (MW-4, pág. 97). La carta ofrece aliento a los discípulos del Daishonin que pudieron haber sido conmovidos y confundidos por el exilio de su mentor. En estos tiempos, el gobierno encarceló a cinco de los seguidores del Daishonin y hostigó a muchos otros. Antes de partir de Teradomari, el Daishonin instruyó al ayudante que Jonin había enviado que retornase.

De Teradomari, el Daishonin fue llevado en barco a Sado. Ahí le asignaron una pequeña choza en Tsukahara en la parte norte de la isla, un lugar particularmente expuesto al frío del invierno. Después de llegar a Tsukahara, el Daishonin le envió a Jonin otra

carta, la cual él concluye señalando la importancia de dedicarse a la propagación del Budismo a pesar de grandes dificultades: "La vida es limitada, y no la debemos escatimar. A lo que debemos aspirar, después de todo, es a la tierra del Buda" (MW-5, pág. 132).

Durante esos tiempos difíciles, el Daishonin continuó escribiéndole a Jonin. Es evidente que el Daishonin confió en Jonin la tarea de comunicarle a sus seguidores las circunstancias de su mentor, y más importante, de compartir el aliento del Daishonin para que ellos mantuvieran su fe a pesar de las persecuciones implacables.

Durante el exilio del Daishonin en Sado, muchos creyentes rechazaron su fe, y algunos criticaron abiertamente al Daishonin. Bajo esas circunstancias difíciles, Jonin se mantuvo firme y continuó a apoyar al Daishonin a través de ofrendas de monedas y ropa. Desde Sado el Daishonin envió a Jonin muchos escritos importantes como: "El Verdadero Objeto de Veneración" (MW-1, 45-83); "Carta desde Sado" (MW-1, 33-42); "Shingon Shosho Imoku" [Los Errores de la Palabra Verdadera y Otras Escuelas] (Goshō Zenshu, p. 139-41); y "El Devoto del Sutra del Loto Enfrentará Persecuciones" (MW-6, 77-83). Durante su exilio en Sado, entre los seguidores del Daishonin, Jonin recibió el mayor número de cartas.

El Daishonin escribió otra carta importante llamada "La Apertura de los Ojos" en la cual él explica el objeto de veneración en términos de la persona. El Dai-

shonin le envió esta carta a otro fiel seguidor, Shijo Kingo. El hecho de que Jonin y Kingo hayan recibido estos importantes escritos del Daishonin durante su exilio indica que ellos eran el principal apoyo de la orden del Daishonin en un tiempo de grandes dificultades.

En la postdata de la "Carta desde Sado," el Daishonin declara: "Hay muy poco papel con que escribir, aquí, en la provincia de Sado. Escribirles a todos individualmente me llevaría mucho tiempo. Sin embargo, si alguna persona quedase sin escuchar mis palabras, podría albergar resentimientos. Por lo tanto, deseo que todos los sinceros creyentes se reúnan y lean esta carta juntos, a modo de aliento" (MW-1, 42). La vida del Daishonin en Sado se hacía extremadamente difícil tanto por el tiempo severo como por la escasez de necesidades básicas como comida, ropa, refugio y materiales para escribir. Bajo estas circunstancias, el Daishonin contaba con Jonin para para comunicarle su aliento a los otros creyentes.

El 26 de marzo de 1274, después de casi dos años y medio en la isla de Sado, el Daishonin fue perdonado y después regresó a Kamakura. En el 8 de abril, el Daishonin se reunió con Hei no Saemon, el poderoso oficial jefe del Departamento de la Policía y asuntos Militares y por última vez remonstró con el gobierno del shogunato.

Véase Toki, pág. II



Por Eugene Hirahara

Dirigente del Dpto de Estudio.
SGI-USA

Cuando las personas tratan de avanzar o construir algo positivo, surge una resistencia que actúa y funciona para obstruir su progreso. En física, una de las tres leyes de Newton sobre el movimiento dice que por cada acción hay una reacción o-puesta equiva-

lente. Este es un fenómeno natural en nuestro ambiente.

Por lo tanto, conocer y reconocer la existencia de fuerzas de oposición, es crucial en nuestras vidas diarias. Las líneas aerodinámicas de un auto de carrera son el resultado de estudios sobre como utilizar la resistencia del aire para aumentar la velocidad. Debemos enfocar nuestras vidas y nuestra práctica budista en la misma forma-

-estar preparados para enfrentar la resistencia y utilizarla en nuestro favor. Nichiren Daishonin explica que "aquel que obra de acuerdo con el Sutra del Loto inevitablemente logrará la Budeidad. Por lo tanto, el Demonio del Sexto Cielo, amo del mundo triple, sentirá profundos celos de todo aquel que abraza este sutra" (MW-1, pág. 201).

Debido a que estas funciones "diabólicas" o negativas

son difíciles de reconocer, resulta difícil combatirlas y sobreponerse a ellas. Algunas veces surgen como personas que se oponen a nuestra práctica, otras veces emergen como sentimientos de duda dentro de nuestras propias vidas. Ya sean externas o internas, el Daishonin explica que "este rey malvado...se adhiere a la gente como una plaga demoníaca, de tal forma que, no puede ser de-

tectado a simple vista. Por lo tanto, al igual que las personas que se embriagan gradualmente con finos vinos añejos, gobernantes, padres y madres, esposas e hijos paulatinamente son poseídos por él..." (MW-1, pág. 201).

La clave, entonces, es poder reconocer claramente las

Véase funciones, pág. III

Toki de la página

En mayo de 1274, el Daishonin se trasladó de Kamakura para el Monte Minobu de donde le envió otra carta importante a Jonin, "Hokke Shuyo Sho" [Lo Esencial del Sutra del Loto] (Gosho Zenshu, p. 331-38). En esta carta, el Daishonin clarifica que Nam-myoho-enge-kyo de las Tres Grandes Leyes Secretas es la enseñanza correcta para propagar en el Último Día de la Ley.

Está muy claro, entonces, que en cada momento importante en su vida, la Persecución de Tatsunokuchi, el exilio a Sado y su llegada al Monte Minobu - el Daishonin le escribió a Jonin. Esto demuestra la gran y consistente confianza que le tenía el Daishonin a Jonin.

Después que el Daishonin se trasladara al Monte Minobu en mayo de 1274, Jonin continuó a enviarle ofrendas a su mentor. Cada vez que el Daishonin recibía una ofrenda, él le escribía a Jonin, expresando su apreciación y explicando el gran beneficio que uno recibe al apoyar la propagación del budismo.

por ejemplo, cuando Jonin le envió al Daishonin un kimono que había elaborado su madre anciana, él le escribió: "Este kimono sin forrar fue un obsequio que una madre afectuosa, de más de 90 años de edad entregó a su amado hijo (Toki Jonin). Tiene que haber forzado la vista, tiene que haber dejado hasta la última gota de esfuerzo para confeccionarlo. Por ser usted su hijo, me figuro que me lo habrá enviado como ofrenda sabiendo que le sería difícil retribuir a su madre por los favores recibidos y también me será difícil a mí, Nichiren, retribuirse a usted. (Gosho Zenshu, pág. 968). En esa misma carta, el Daishonin le dice a Jonin que su sinceridad al hacerle esa ofrenda acarriará gran protección de las deidades celestiales -- una expresión alegórica que el Daishonin usa a menudo cuando describe las funciones protectoras en nuestro ambiente.

En febrero de 1276, la an-

ciana madre de Jonin falleció. A pesar de que ella vivió una larga vida, su muerte causó gran dolor y tristeza a Jonin. El después visitó al Daishonin en el Monte Minobu llevando consigo las cenizas de su madre. El le dijo a su maestro que su madre había fallecido en paz y que su esposa había extendido un gran cariño y cuidado a su madre hasta el último momento de su vida. El también le dijo al Daishonin que su esposa también estaba sufriendo de una enfermedad. Después de haber recibido mucho aliento del Daishonin y orado por el reposo de su madre, Jonin partió de Monte Minobu.

En esa ocasión, el Daishonin escribió una carta a la esposa de Jonin. El Daishonin la alaba por su apoyo por enviar a su esposo al Monte Minobu. El también le dice lo mucho que Jonin aprecia todos los esfuerzos que ella ha hecho por su suegra. El Daishonin dice al principio de la carta: "Es el poder del arco que determina el trayecto de la flecha, es el poder del dragón que controla el movimiento de las nubes, y es la fortaleza de la esposa que guía las acciones del esposo" (MW-7, 125).

En esta misma carta el Daishonin continúa: "El Señor Toki me ha dicho, que a la vez que estaba afligido por la muerte de su madre, estaba agradecido que ella había fallecido serenamente y que usted la había cuidado cariñosamente. Alegremente el dijo que nunca podría olvidar esto vida tras vida". (MW-7, 125). Probablemente, el Daishonin sintió que Jonin no era lo suficientemente sensitivo a los esfuerzos de su mujer expresados hacia su suegra. En esta carta el Daishonin trata de

Cortesía The Straits Times



Una mujer dibujando en telas de batiks

nutrir el afecto entre los esposos para estrechar más la relación entre ellos.

Sobre la enfermedad de ella, el Daishonin escribió: "Usted es también un practicante del *Sutra del Loto* y su fe es como la luna que mengua o el flujo de la marea. Entonces, ¡puede estar profundamente convencida, de que su enfermedad no podría fallar de ser extendida! Cuidese y no se preocupe" (MW-7, 126) Esto fragmentos del *Gosho* atestan elocuentemente y en detalle las preocupaciones del Daishonin por sus seguidores y el cariño hacia ellos.

En otra carta escrita a Jonin, el Daishonin declara: "Pienso de la enfermedad de su esposa como si fuera mía y estoy orando día y noche [por su recuperación]" (Gosho Zenshu, pág. 978). El aliento y el cuidado del Daishonin por sus seguidores no eran meramente palabras. El oraba sinceramente por la buena salud y felicidad de sus queridos discípulos. La oración era la fuente y, al mismo tiempo, la expresión de la misericordia y humanismo del Daishonin. Cuando Jonin partió del Monte Minobu, el se olvidó de su copia del Sutra del Loto. El Daishonin se le envió con una carta. En esta carta, en vez de regañarlo por tan importante descuido, el Daishonin humorosa y afectuosamente le dice a Jonin: "La persona más olvidadiza en todo el Japón"

después de haber comentado sobre algunos episodios de la falta de memoria de algunas personas

famosas en la India y en la China (Gosho Zenshu, pág. 976). Entonces el Daishonin le dice a Jonin que cuando invoque daimoku y extraiga su Budeidad, su madre también erradicará su karma negativo y logrará la iluminación (Gosho Zenshu, págs. 977-78).

En septiembre de 1278, dos años después que falleciera su madre, Jonin sostuvo un debate sobre el budismo con Ryosho-bo, un erudito de la Escuela Tendai que residía en la provincia de Shimosa. En el debate, Jonin refutó al sacerdote. La victoria de Jonin demuestra que su entendimiento del budismo era mayor que el de los miembros del clero budista.

Cuando Jonin escribió al Daishonin relatándole esto, el Daishonin expandió los puntos del debate. Sin embargo, al final de su carta, el Daishonin instruye a Jonin de no sostener más debates con otros sacerdotes: "De ahora en adelante, no necesita sostener debates en Shimosa. Habiendo derrotado a Ryosho-bo y Shi'nen-bo, sostener debates con otros diluiría el efecto. He escuchado que estos sacerdotes Ryosho-bo y Shi'nen-bo me han estado calumniando por varios años. Estos mosquitos y moscs, por así decir, son tan tontos que denigran sin razón a Nichiren, quien es como el rey león, cuando ellos ni lo han escuchado ni lo han conocido" (MW-7, 133). A raíz de la impresionante victoria de Jonin, el Daishonin probablemente percibió que podía existir un peligro latente si este comenzaba a considerar los debates budistas como una actividad primaria y descuidaba su práctica básica de invocar daimoku y compartir el Budismo con otras personas. Aquí de nuevo, podemos ver el cuidado e interés del Daishonin hacia Jonin.

Aun después que el Daishonin se trasladara al Monte Minobu,

él continuó a enviarle muchas cartas a Jonin las cuales contenían sus enseñanzas importantes. Por ejemplo, Jonin recibió entre otras: "Hokke Shuyo Sho" [Lo Esencial del Sutra del Loto] (Gosho Zenshu, p.331-38); "Sobre las Cuatro Etapas de la Fe y las Cuatro Etapas de la Práctica" (MW-6, 211-28); y "Un Sabio Percibe las Tres Existencias de la Vida" (MW-2, 257-60). Jonin recibió más de cuarenta cartas de Nichiren Daishonin.

Aunque esto indique que Jonin poseía un entendimiento excelente de la doctrina budista, señala algo más importante. El Daishonin probablemente pensaba que la posición social estable de Jonin y su carácter confiable le hacía la persona más apta para garantizar el cuidado de estos importantes escritos para la posteridad.

Encomendado por el Daishonin con esta importante tarea, Jonin se aseguró de que estos escritos fueran cuidadosamente guardados, protegidos de la humedad y otros factores dañinos. Antes de su fallecimiento, Jonin escribió un documento al respecto del cuidado de los escritos del Daishonin. Cualquier persona que quisiera leerlos, advierte Jonin, debe hacerlo cuidadosamente y debe leerlos en el edificio donde están guardados. Jonin también estrictamente encarga a los responsables que tengan sumo cuidado en preservar los escritos del Daishonin después de su muerte.

Jonin nunca olvidó la importancia de los escritos del Daishonin para el propósito de perpetuar sus enseñanzas. La existencia y disponibilidad de muchos de los escritos del Daishonin se lo debemos a los esfuerzos sinceros de Jonin.

(Compilado por el Departamento de Estudio de la SGI-USA).

Traducción del *Living Buddhism* mayo de 1999.

Por: Ossie Lecuona, New Jersey

Experiencia por Esther Zapata San Antonio, Texas

La práctica budista nos enseña que "Mientras más oscura está la noche, más cerca está el amanecer" y yo continué entonando daimoku en miras hacia mi amanecer.



Cuando yo llegué a los Estados Unidos allá por 1989, todo el capital que traía en mi cartera era un billete de \$ 10.00 que no quería cambiar para no gastarlo. Como la mayoría de los inmigrantes, yo venía en búsqueda de una vida mejor, especialmente en el aspecto financiero, por tanto, \$ 10.00 dólares era un capital que no podía darme el lujo de derrochar.

Yo estaba lista para recibir mi Gohonzon al momento de dejar Nicaragua, así que, tan pronto como llegué, busqué a los dirigentes para recibirlo aquí. Recibí mi Gohonzon el 16 de febrero de 1989, y continué mis esfuerzos por sobrevivir en este país. No es fácil, pero como sabemos no hay tal práctica budista fácil. Ya había estado en las casas de tres de mis hermanas, pero ninguna me permitió entronizar mi Gohonzon y cuando mi hermano me dejó hacerlo, fue en un lugarcito, angostito, oscuro y compartido con otra hermana. Para hacerlo peor, toda mi familia es cristiana, entonces, para poder quedarme, yo tenía que seguir sus normas.

Mi primera decisión fue encontrar un lugar para vivir sola, donde pudiera entronizar mi Gohonzon y entonar

daimoku libremente. Yo había oído la historia descrita en el gosho "La Persona y la Ley" (MW-1, pág. 263) del niño que hizo un pastel de lodo y se lo ofreció al Buda. Así que decidí empezar a contribuir para kosen-rufu sin importar cómo, y firmé por una suma pequeña, aunque lo que ganaba distribuyendo periódicos casa por casa era muy poco, yo pensé si el pastel de lodo fue bueno como ofrenda ¿por qué no iba a servir mi dinerito? Y empecé a enviar mi contribución para apoyar la propagación de este budismo.

Un año después de haber entrado a este país conseguí la residencia permanente. Encontré trabajo con una familia que me ofreció casa, comida, un cheque semanal y mucho respeto por mi práctica. Yo tomé mi Gohonzon y dejé la casa de mi hermano. Esta familia, inicialmente me llevaban al Centro Comunitario para mis actividades por kosen-rufu, y terminaron dejándome usar su carro para que yo fuera cada vez que lo necesitara. Medio aprendí a manejar el idioma y comencé a comunicarme mejor en inglés.

Continué entonando daimoku para conseguir un lugar para mí sola, y un año más

tarde, pude rentar un apartamento y, por supuesto, entroniqué mi Gohonzon. Las cosas parecían ir muy bien, conseguí mejores trabajos, mejores cheques semanalmente, mejores obstáculos y mejores experiencias. Hasta me compré un carro del año 1994.

Durante los años 1996-97, yo pasé de difíciles a las más duras situaciones, no solamente financieras sino en todos los demás aspectos de mi vida. Son esos, a los que el presidente Ikeda se refiere como "momentos cruciales", cuando no tenemos que entonar daimoku y más daimoku. Entonces se acercó de nuevo el tiempo para la Contribución Especial de Mayo, y hablando con otra miembro [mi mejor amiga, Teresa] ambas tomamos la determinación de incrementar nuestras contribuciones lo más que pudiésemos. ¿Cómo? Yo no sabía cómo, pero de nuevo firmé e hice todo lo que estubo a mi alcance para conseguir el dinero.

Después de haber hecho esta determinación, supe que mi hijo había tenido un accidente mortal en Nicaragua. Quiero aprovechar esta oportunidad para agradecerles a todos los miembros de mi distrito y San

Antonio sus oraciones por él y el apoyo que me dieron. Yo también tuve un accidente en el que me destruyeron totalmente mi carro nuevo, bello y querido, dejándome sin medio de transporte y sin dinero para reponerlo. La administración del apartamento decidió subir el precio de la renta del apartamento que había sido mi refugio por siete años. El aire acondicionado se quebró y yo me la pasé de la cocina a la cama por casi tres meses. Después de tantos años allí, ellos en realidad querían que me fuera, porque ya no les era rentable. La TV no trabajaba, la computadora ya estaba obsoleta, y hubo días en los que ni siquiera tenía monedas para la lavandería. Los administradores del apartamento decidieron no hacer ninguna reparación en el complejo de apartamentos. Entonces empecé a buscar de un lugar a otro, pero no encontraba nada que se acomodara a mi presupuesto.

En nuestra práctica budista aprendemos que "mientras más oscura está la noche, más cerca está el amanecer" y continué entonando daimoku hasta que llegué a mi amanecer, sin dejar de ahorrar el dinero para mi contribución mensual. Yo no sé qué hice pero pude, incluso, dar un poco de dinero extra para la Contribución Especial de ese mayo.

En cuanto a mi hijo, él se recuperó exitosamente del accidente, y ahora es el dirigente de la Juventud en Nicaragua. Para poner boca arriba lo que estaba boca abajo, la compañía de seguros, no sólo pagó el remanente de la deuda del carro, sino que me envió un cheque por \$3,500.00 dólares, que me ayudaría a resolver el problema de transporte. Aunque todos sugirieron que debería usar ese dinero para una buena entrada en un carro nuevo, yo decidí que no iba a comprarme uno nuevo y especificé que quería uno: de segunda mano, cuatro puertas, no más de \$ 2.000 dólares de precio y azul. Dos semanas más tarde, a pesar de las burlas de mi familia sobre mi "excentricidad de comprar un carro azul", vieron un carro de segunda mano, cuatro puertas, azul y de \$1800.00 dólares, que tiene dos

años conmigo. En mi búsqueda de un lugar para vivir, llamé a una persona que resultó ser una corredora de bienes raíces. Ella me explicó las ventajas de comprar una casa en vez de rentar apartamentos.

A pesar de que insistentemente le dije NO, ella me llevó a diferentes lugares, habló con todos los organismos involucrados y casi llenó los papeles por mí. Cuando llegó el momento de conseguir el financiamiento, la compañía quería \$3,000.00 dólares de entrada. De nuevo le dije NO, especialmente cuando tenía mucho que ver con crédito y solvencias. ¡Ni para qué decirles! Dos días después, la financiera me llama para decirme que mi crédito es excelente y que me habían aprobado el préstamo. Pero todavía, no tenía \$3.000.00 dólares para la entrada. La tarde siguiente, cuando llegué del trabajo había una nota de la señora vendedora para decirme que si yo podía pagar \$1500.00 dólares de entrada, la financiera iba a liberar el resto. \$1500.00 dólares era la cantidad exacta que quedaba. Un mes después yo me estaba mudando a una casa de tres dormitorios, pagando menos renta que en el viejo, sucio, caro y feo apartamento.

Hoy en mi bella casa es el hogar del Distrito Blue Bonnet en San Antonio, Texas.

El año pasado yo tomé la determinación de ahorrar el equivalente de una hora de trabajo de cada cheque, así no iba a andar corriendo desesperada en busca de dinero para la Contribución Especial de Mayo este año, y ¡ahora estoy lista para entregarla!

El Director General Zaitzu, en el World Tribune del 19 de febrero de 1999, pág. 10, dijo: "el espíritu de dar ofrendas... debe ser totalmente dedicado a proteger la Ley y a Nichiren Daishonin. No debe haber ninguna expectativa de que resulten en logros [personales]. Nichiren Daishonin nos asegura que tal sinceridad es la fuente de una buena fortuna". Y el presidente Ikeda dice: "Lo que hay en su corazón es lo que cuenta."

Funciones de la pág. II

funciones negativas por lo que ellas realmente son y hacer acopio de coraje para luchar contra ellas. Una vez que podemos reconocerlas, hemos dado el primer paso hacia sobreponerlas a las mismas.

Especialmente cuando practicamos fuertemente y nos retamos a nosotros mismos para propagar esta gran filosofía por el bienestar de toda la humanidad, debemos

esperar que los obstáculos y funciones negativas surjan intentando derrotarnos. En realidad, cuando esos obstáculos se presentan nos indican que es el momento en que podemos cambiar nuestro karma y avanzar en nuestras vidas.

De la misma forma que el Daishonin experimentó una persecución tras otra, igualmente lo hicieron sus discípulos. Muchos de ellos abandonaron su fe debido a lo que parecían severas dificultades. Sin embargo, mirando el

asunto más de cerca, su derrota está ligada al hecho de que ellos no esperaban que tales obstáculos se presentasen. Ellos no pudieron reconocer las funciones negativas por lo que realmente eran y fueron derrotados. Otros, como Shijo Kingo, triunfaron debido a que pudieron reconocer las fuerzas de oposición y mantuvieron su fe.

Así, el budismo enseña que cuando un individuo practica y desarrolla fortuna en la vida, los obstáculos siempre

aparecerán. Y mucho mayores serán las influencias negativas que aparecerán en el mundo cuando los devotos del Sutra del Loto se encuentren por millones, todos ellos propagando la enseñanza pura para el logro de la felicidad de toda la humanidad.

Es por ello que el Daishonin nos previene de que a medida que el kosen-rufu progresa, los Tres Enemigos Poderosos se levantarán sin falta, apareciendo como enemigos y fuerzas sociales que

tratan de impedir el flujo del budismo. La aparición de enemigos poderosos sirve como evidencia de que estamos practicando correctamente--ello es prueba de la legitimidad de nuestro movimiento de kosen-rufu.

El estudio es crucial en el desarrollo de la perspectiva correcta sobre nuestros obstáculos personales y el reto sobre el asunto del templo. *World Tribune*, 9 de abril, 1999 Traducido por Miriam Pinilla. Palm Beach Area, Florida

LA LIBERTAD PARA HABLAR CON SABIDURIA



Por Greg Martin

Dirigente del Dpto. de Estudio de la SGI-USA

El cuarto volumen del Sutra del Loto dice, "La ofensa de pronunciar siquiera una palabra despectiva en contra del sacerdocio o de la laicidad que creen en el Sutra del Loto y lo predicán es aún más grave que el insultar al Buda Shakyamuni en la cara por un kalpa entero." El Sutra del Loto también dice "[Si alguien viera a una persona que abraza este sutra y tratara de exponer las faltas o perversidades de esa persona, en la era presente será afligida por la lepra blanca,] sea verdad o no lo que hable." Tomen en serio estas enseñanzas, y recuerden siempre que los creyentes del Sutra del Loto deben ser, absolutamente, los últimos en insultarse mutuamente. (The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 3, pág. 208).

Este pasaje viene de la carta "Las Catorce Calumnias," en la cual Nichiren Daishonin explica las 14 calumnias o malas causas -las actitudes que los creyentes deben evitar en su práctica: 1) arrogancia, 2) negligencia, 3)

juicio arbitrario y egoísta, 4) comprensión superficial y presumida, 5) apegos a los deseos mundanos, 6) falta de espíritu de búsqueda, 7) no creer, 8) aversión, 9) duda ilusoria, 10) difamación, 11) desprecio, 12) odio, 13) envidia y 14) rencor.

Los diez primeros son, problemas internos, problemas en nuestra práctica personal. Estos nos hacen daño.

Los cuatro últimos - desprecio, odio, envidia y rencor - son actitudes negativas que tenemos hacia otros creyentes. Estos son particularmente difíciles porque interrumpen la unidad armoniosa de los creyentes, aumentando la gravedad de la calumnia. Por lo tanto, albergar malos sentimientos (jap. onshitsu) hacia otros miembros nos impide manifestar beneficios en nuestra práctica. Como todos tenemos esos sentimientos de vez en cuando en nuestra práctica, la habilidad para derrotarlos y dispersarlos es un componente clave en nuestra fe.

Estoy familiarizado con el pasaje citado arriba desde hace muchos años, pero, francamente, hace poco tiempo que me dí cuenta de la parte que

dice, "sea verdad o no lo que hable." De acuerdo al Daishonin, aun cuando lo que hablamos sea la verdad, es calumnia guardar malos sentimientos hacia otros, aunque estemos correctos. Para una persona como yo, criado a creer en "la verdad, la justicia y el sistema de vida Americano," este es un concepto difícil de aceptar y comprender. Yo pensaba que si yo estaba hablando la verdad yo podía decirle cualquier cosa a cualquier persona - y no estaba cometiendo calumnia. Ahora me doy cuenta de que la verdad, también, puede ser una calumnia. Como dice el Daishonin, la mala fortuna nace de nuestra propia boca..

Así que, ¿deberíamos quedarnos callados? No. En otras enseñanzas, el Daishonin nos profesa que el silencio es el enemigo del Buda. Así que no nos podemos quedar callados. Eso no sería correcto. Debemos hablar. Debemos tomar acción. Aún así, el hecho de que creemos que algo sea verídico no es suficiente como para justificar que digamos cualquier cosa que queramos. Yo creo que la crisis de libertad de palabra en América se basa en este punto. El derecho a la libertad de palabra debe ser temperado con la responsabilidad y la preocu-

pación por su impacto sobre otros.

Recuerdo una escena de la película Jurassic Park: cuando el caótico matemático y científico, el rol desarrollado por Jeff Goldblum, se entera que los científicos del parque han traído dinosaurios a la vida y éste hace un comentario profético, "la pregunta que deben hacer no es '¿podemos hacerlo?' La pregunta que deben hacer es '¿deberíamos hacerlo?'" De manera similar, la pregunta operativa en el budismo es cómo uno debe hablar, no simplemente si estamos correctos o no. Confirmar que estamos correctos no es más que un primer paso, no es el paso decisivo.

El primer presidente de la Soka Gakkai, Makiguchi, con su filosofía de creación de valor, reemplazó la virtud occidental de la verdad (como en verdad, belleza y bondad) por logro o creación de valor. ¿Por qué? Porque reconoció que la verdad es, primordialmente, tanto relativa como neutral.

La verdad es relativa porque muchas personas pueden observar el mismo evento de maneras totalmente diferentes. Los testimonios, por ejemplo, son notoriamente subjetivos e inexactos. Así que aun cuando podamos saber lo que dijimos, lo que vimos o lo

que oímos y creemos que esta es la verdad, en realidad no es la verdad absoluta.

La verdad también es neutral. Simplemente lo es. En otras palabras, sólo porque algo sea verdadero no significa que es de valor. Por ejemplo, la verdad puede ser que usted tiene un periódico en la mano en este momento - pero lo que usted hace con ese periódico es lo que crea la diferencia. Leyendo el periódico puede llenarlo de alguna comprensión y crecimiento. Pero si usted lo utiliza para pegarle a alguien, por usar un ejemplo extremo, el periódico se convierte en arma.

Utilizar la verdad con sabiduría es lo que crea valor. La sabiduría es una virtud; la verdad es simplemente un hecho. Y la misericordia es la fuente de la sabiduría. El Daishonin dice que no podemos mantenernos callados, pero debemos hablar con sabiduría si queremos crear valor. Fundamentalmente, los budistas ven la libertad de la palabra como la libertad de hablar con misericordia, con sabiduría y responsablemente para crear valor.

Traducido del World Tribune del 2 de abril de 1999, pág.2 - Por Ossie Lecuona. New Jersey

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