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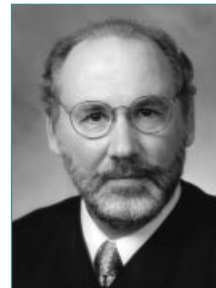


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COVER: Photo illustration of the nine levels of consciousness. (see page 18).

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GLOSSARY

Buddha

“Enlightened One.” One who perceives the true 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 and life force.

Gohonzon

The fundamental object of devotion in Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism. It is the embodiment of the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, expressing in graphic form the life-state of Buddhahood, which all people inherently possess. *Go* means *worthy of honor* and *honzon* means *object of fundamental respect*.

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.

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 can attain enlightenment and declares that his former teachings should be regarded as preparatory. Reciting excerpts from the Lotus Sutra is part of SGI members’ daily Buddhist practice.

Nam-myoho-renge-kyo

The fundamental law expounded in

Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, it expresses the true aspect of life. Chanting it allows people to directly tap their enlightened nature. Although the deepest meaning of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is revealed only through its practice, the literal meaning is: *Nam* (devotion), the action of practicing Buddhism; *myoho* (Mystic Law), the essential law of the universe and its phenomenal manifestations; *renge* (lotus), the simultaneity of cause and effect; *kyo* (Buddha’s teaching), all phenomena.

Nichiren Daishonin (1222–82)

The founder of the Buddhism upon which the SGI bases its activities. He inscribed the true object of devotion, the Gohonzon, for the observation of one’s mind and established the invocation of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo as the universal practice for attaining enlightenment. *Daishonin* is an honorific title that means *great sage*.

Shakyamuni

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

Ten Worlds

Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity, Heaven (or Rapture), Learning, Realization, Bodhisattva and Buddhahood. The Ten Worlds are also interpreted as states of life.

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Frequently Cited Sources

For convenience, all citations from the following works will be given in the text and abbreviated as follows after the first listing:

— *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin:* **WND**, followed by the page number.

— *Gosho Zenshu:* (The Collected Writings of Nichiren Daishonin in Japanese) **GZ**, followed by the page number.

— *The Lotus Sutra*, by Burton Watson: **LS**, followed by the chapter and page number.

Emissaries From the **FUTURE**

But everything in our organization comes back to the essential spirit of gathering in small groups and encouraging one another through dialogue. Our youth express their energy and dynamism in these festivals, but their true growth and development are nurtured within our districts. Though these festivals are proof that a new generation of young people is taking flight, this visible proof is based on the unseen efforts within each district.

Greetings to the readers of *Living Buddhism*. What a wonderful and exciting summer this has been. Throughout the United States, young people are joyfully participating in our Victory Over Violence Family Youth Festivals. As of this writing, nearly 80,000 people have attended twenty festivals across the SGI-USA, including the Caribbean. Twenty-four festivals are still to come, although most of them will have taken place by the time you read this.

A new generation of young people is demonstrating its passion. Youth are polishing their ability, deepening their sense of responsibility and taking the lead to create the future.

Last summer, SGI President Ikeda wrote a poem dedicated to members in the United States. In it, he declares:

*The Bodhisattvas of the Earth
have emerged!
They have arisen!
They have started to stir, to move!...*

*In this great land of America
— the world in miniature —*

*new waves, a new movement,
have arisen and begun!*
(Songs for America, pp. 9–10)

As I've been traveling across America, witnessing our beautiful SGI family wholeheartedly celebrating the vigorous activities of young people, I felt the truth of these words. These youth are those Bodhisattvas of the Earth, sharing their joy and conviction in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. There is no doubt in my mind that they will exert themselves in this new century and contribute to establishing a culture of peace and a society based on humanism. These joyful family festivals, dedicated to proclaiming Victory over Violence, are proof that a new wave — a new movement — is truly beginning throughout our country.

But what does it mean to be a Bodhisattva of the Earth? In *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, we find the passage: "It is the five characters of Myohorenge-kyo that are the great pure Law that will be spread widely in the Latter Day of the Law. And it is the great bodhisattvas who sprang up from the earth in numbers equal to the dust particles of a thousand

A new century will be created starting from our immediate environment. The dynamism to transform the entire planet can be found within the dynamism of transforming our own lives. This is the concept of human revolution. This is the meaning of value creation. And this is the spirit with which we undertake our daily practice of Buddhism.

worlds to whom this was entrusted” (p. 430).

Bodhisattvas of the Earth, then, are those of us who have emerged in this lifetime to take up the banner of humanism and respect for the sanctity of life. They include this generation of young people who will truly enable a transition from the twentieth century — the century of war — to a new century of life.

If we see our youth as precious emissaries from the future, then we can understand the importance of cherishing them, inspiring them with great ideals and developing their great potential. When we unite as a family to embrace these young bodhisattvas, we will see the results in ten to twenty years. The challenges that they willingly take on are not only a cause for their future but also for the future of the SGI-USA and for the future of society. Their development and growth will truly determine all our futures.

Throughout America, we are holding grand and dynamic festivals. But everything in our organization comes back to the essential spirit of gathering in small groups and encouraging one another through dialogue. Our youth express their energy and dynamism in these festivals, but their true growth and development are nurtured within our districts. Though these festivals are proof that a new generation of young people is taking flight, this visible proof is based on the unseen efforts within each district.

Though we can celebrate grand victories, we must not forget that our real challenge is in one-on-one discussions and in the struggles we face within our daily lives. As President Ikeda wrote in his New Year’s poem:

*From one individual to another,
Starting in our immediate environment,
From small, modest efforts,*

*Let us steadily carry on our movement.
A commitment to treasure each person —
In that daily, unceasing practice
Lies the dynamism
To transform the entire planet.
And there, too, shines a life
Of unparalleled value-creation.
(Living Buddhism, January 2001, p. 6)*

A new century will be created starting from our immediate environment. The dynamism to transform the entire planet can be found within the dynamism of transforming our own lives. This is the concept of human revolution. This is the meaning of value creation. And this is the spirit with which we undertake our daily practice of Buddhism.

So let us celebrate our joy, inspire society with our vision and share with many people the great future at which we are aiming. At the same time, let’s remember that the engine for our entire movement is not the grand festivals but rather the individual efforts each of us makes within our own spheres of endeavor. Treasuring one another is the true action of Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for all your sincere and dedicated efforts. I am looking forward to meeting and speaking with you, however briefly, during my travels across America.

Daniel K. Nagashima



SGI-USA General Director

The Devil Made Me Do It!

DEVILS AND DEMONS IN THE LOTUS SUTRA

We have all heard the expression, “The devil made me do it.” We might have even used it whenever our hand was caught in the proverbial cookie jar. The desire to pin our “devilish” actions on someone or something else is so pervasive, we probably don’t think anything of it when we do it. When we, as practitioners of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, talk about devils and demons, what do we mean?

First, we have to toss all preconceived notions of devils and demons out of our heads. Forget the protruding horns, crimson skin and iron staff. Let’s not visualize fire-breathing monsters with warts that hide under the bed or in the closet. In Buddhism, devils and demons are not so obvious.

Nichiren Daishonin stated: “[Demons]... deprive people of their lives, for a demon is also known as a robber of life. [Devils]... deprive people of benefits; another name for a devil is a robber of benefit” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 87). He further indicates that there are two types of demons, good and evil. “Good demons feed upon enemies of the Lotus Sutra, while evil demons feed upon the sutra’s votaries” (WND, 912).

In Buddhist scriptures, there are many types of creatures. There are *yakshas* that eat people; *rakshasas*, malignant demons that feed on human flesh; and *kumbhandas* that feed on human spirit or vitality. Further, there are hungry demons — those that were greedy in a previous existence and are born hungry in the next. It should be noted that while *yakshas* eat the flesh of evildoers, they do not

eat the flesh of good people.

Some evil demons transformed themselves into good demons after taking faith in Buddhism. The “Dharani” chapter of the Lotus Sutra tells of Kishimojin (Jpn) and her ten demon daughters. This demon stole and ate other people’s children. Upon witnessing this, Shakyamuni hid her youngest child from her. Kishimojin was naturally upset about her child’s disappearance. Shakyamuni admonished her by pointing out that the grief she feels is the same that other parents experience when she devours their children. Kishimojin has a change of heart and pledges—along with her ten daughters—to protect the votaries of the Lotus Sutra.

These descriptions of devils in the Lotus Sutra, such as Kishimojin, are used to show how our evil actions affect others and to show how practicing Buddhism changes our lives and the environment.

The Benevolent Kings Sutra states: “When a nation becomes disordered, it is the spirits that first show signs of rampancy. Because the spirits become rampant, all the people of the nation become disordered” (WND, 8). When we speak of rampant demons, we might bring up a mental image of monsters destroying things. In Buddhism, demons represent functions of human nature and the environment that bring misery and suffering. These demons and devils — the robbers of life and benefit — are actually the negativity inherent in our lives. They can appear as negative internal feelings and as external influences that try to obstruct our Buddhist practice.

Even in the lives of wonderful bodhisattvas, there is fundamental darkness. Negativity — like

Subtle negativity, like self-doubt, may be difficult to see as a devilish function, but it most certainly is. It keeps us from recognizing that we are Buddhas, worthy of the highest respect.

death and taxes — is certain to be a part of our lives until our final moments. Subtle negativity, like self-doubt, may be difficult to see as a devilish function, but it most certainly is. It keeps us from recognizing that we are Buddhas, worthy of the highest respect. But if we chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and study Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism on a regular basis, we can strengthen our Buddha nature, thereby overshadowing our devilish nature.

It is important to remember that this fundamental darkness is something that is always within us and we must be ever-vigilant to defeat it. There are things that appear in the external realm like social ills and moral and ethical injustices. But if we do not see that we possess the same tendencies to be unjust, in whatever form, we can become critical of others and feel powerless to do anything to change society or ourselves.

SGI President Ikeda stated in his "Dialogue on the Lotus Sutra": "On the level of the individual, practicing the Lotus Sutra means confronting the fundamental darkness in one's own life. In terms of society, it means confronting corrupt power and authority. Practicing the Lotus Sutra, therefore, necessarily entails challenging great difficulties. Someone who does not confront great hardship is not a true votary of the Lotus Sutra" (*Living Buddhism*, August 1997, pp. 42–43).

Nichiren Daishonin states: "Good and evil have been inherent in life since time without beginning. [They] remain in one's life through all the stages of the bodhisattva practice up to the stage of near-perfect enlightenment" (WND, 1113 [see page 10]).

In our time, any function that attempts to destroy faith in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism can be seen as a demon — or as the Lotus Sutra describes, "evil demons taking possession of others."

In a muddied kalpa, in an evil age

*There will be many things to fear.
Evil demons will take possession of others
And through them curse, revile and
heap shame on us.
But we, reverently trusting the Buddha,
Will put on the armor of perseverance.
(LS13, 194)*

Nichiren Daishonin pointed out the mistakes and misunderstandings of the religious teachings and institutions of his time and declared Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to be the truth that will lead people to happiness. The Daishonin struggled against persecution by religious and secular authority and taught the genuine way of Buddhist practice. We have the same challenge today, to fight against religious authorities that seek to delude and confuse people. These people can be described as functioning as demons.

Let's keep in mind that all demons and devils can serve as a stimulus or motivation toward good if we confront them with faith. When devilish functions arise and we see them for what they are, we can challenge them and change our circumstances for the better. They are good in the sense that we can use them to develop and strengthen our lives. If we fall prey to their negative influence, we will lose in the end. Nichiren Daishonin considered all those who tried to act as his enemies to be his friends in that they allowed him to prove the correctness of his teachings. We can learn from his model.

To summarize, let's fight against evil demons — those internal and external — and increase the function of good demons so that we can further humanism, peace and culture in society. ☸

By Alexis Trass, based on *Yasashii Kyogaku* (Easy Buddhist Study) published by *Seikyo Press* in 1994.

Passages to Victory (6)

Living by Example **VERSUS** SPREADING A METHOD

Particular passages from the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin have become favorites of those who practice his Buddhism. This series introduces some of those passages and the people whose lives they have impacted, proving that it is, indeed, a living Buddhism.

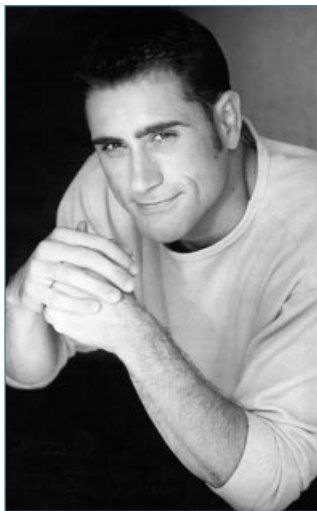
In judging the relative merit of Buddhist doctrines, I, Nichiren, believe that the best standards are those of reason and documentary proof. And even more valuable than reason and documentary proof is the proof of actual fact. (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 599)

The purpose of the appearance in this world of Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, lies in his behavior as a human being. (WND, 852)

BY SHAWN THREADGILL, NEW YORK

I was introduced to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism by a former acting coach whose life so resonated "something special," that I had to inquire into the source. I remember how little she told me other than the simple statement, "I wouldn't do anything for ten minutes that didn't work." I believed her. The rest was up to me. In this simple act of suggestion, the seed of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and a sense of leadership were planted within me.

Instead of trying to convince me of what was "right," her life itself motivated me to want to know more. I was forced to be a leader in my own quest for truth and understanding. I was instantly forced to take ownership of my life. Isn't it too easy to just



say, "Hey look, I found the right way, so I'm okay"? Such a perspective does not promote a true seeking mind. Through my Buddhist practice, I have developed a state of life where people now ask me about that "something special" they see in me. I simply point them in the direction of the SGI and explain the essence of the practice, which is faith, practice for oneself and others, and study. When they ask me what that means, I say, "Go find out! If you have questions, I'll make myself available to discuss them with you." This method of propagation has worked well for me.

Most religions that I am aware of have the concept of propagation associated with them. The need to spread one's religion or philosophical truth throughout the world generally stems from the hope that such

an act will bring individuals together and so create a more peaceful, fulfilling, loving and dynamic society.

Religious propagation in the simplest sense is about helping people and society become infinitely happy. Yet, the very idea [method] of propagation can separate individuals instead of bringing them together. What is it that causes this separating factor in regard to religious propagation? Perhaps the separating factor occurs when those who propagate don't just make new information available, but make "right" information available. This "right" factor separates rather than unites and is the difference between striving for value as opposed to truth.

In *Education for Creative Living: Ideas and Proposals of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi*, the first president of the Soka Gakkai states the importance of distinguishing between value and truth. To be value creative is to take into account each person or situation before determining the best method or approach to any circumstance rather than finding the right approach for all circumstances. Hence, what is "correct" will change, be loose in its effectiveness, and so will always be of a fluid nature. This is the difference between propagation and propaganda. Propaganda, by definition, is to purport news or fact — a statement that is certainly or strictly true. A philosophical truth of value, on the other hand, is never constant, but changing, just as the universe is always in flux and moving and changing.

This wisdom, I assume, enabled Nichiren Daishonin to go against what was believed to be "right" regarding the Buddhism of his era. By looking beyond what was generally perceived as correct, he was able to proclaim that all people were equally capable of enlightenment in their current lifetime. That which was true changed and so had value.

The Daishonin saw the essence of Buddhism, which is the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. He saw that the Law does not exist outside our own lives — our lives are the Law. His writing "Questions and Answers on the Object of Devotion," states, "The daimoku [Nam-myoho-renge-kyo] of the Lotus Sutra should be the object of devotion" (*Gosho Zenshu*, pp. 365–66). The Lotus Sutra became Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, which could be viewed

simply as faith. When we practice the Law, we are engaged in the mysteriousness or unknown outcomes (Myoho) of our daily actions (Renge) and dialogue (Kyo). Emphasizing our Buddhist practice could be more valuable than emphasizing the Law, because it is the practice of Buddhism as actual proof that accesses the Law.

A method [Buddhist practice] is only as good as its practitioners. C.J. Jung appropriately states: "In reality, everything depends on the man and little or nothing on the method. The method is merely the path; the direction taken by a man, the way he acts, is the true expression of his nature. If it ceases to be this, the method is nothing more than an affectation, something artificially pieced on, rootless and sapless, serving only the illegitimate goal of self-deception. It becomes a means of fooling oneself and of evading what may perhaps be the implacable law of one's being."¹

Historically, religions, in their quest for peace or unity, have separated themselves from the "other" who held differing belief systems. An appropriate question for all truly spiritual or religious people is to find out how to choose a religious belief system without making other people wrong and so separating themselves from them. This is a difficult thing to do, in part because we are often taught to see things as either/or and right versus wrong. Can we hold our views as true and another's as true and so honor what we really are, which is part of the same "one universe" that is constantly changing, evolving and growing? In doing so, we then bring ourselves to what really matters regarding religious methods of emancipation, which are the individuals rather than the method.

If we separate ourselves by ideas, are we not then promoting a division of people, versus unity or peace? And is this not a form of passive violence? In our quest for world peace, might it be worth asking if the Mystic Law of cause and effect can be expressed in many ways? I believe it can and such a perspective honors the fluidity of truth, creates value and supports the dynamic nature of our minds. Which also fosters the continual deepening of one's enlightenment, which never ends. This is

Continued page 47

The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin

The Treatment of Illness

(*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 1113; *Gosho Zenshu* p. 997; Feb. 2000 *Daibyakurenge*)

The following is an excerpt from “The Treatment of Illness,” the study material for October study meetings in the SGI-USA.

Question: If, as you have stated, the benevolent deities inflict punishment on this country because it does harm to the votary of the Lotus Sutra, then epidemics should attack only the slanderers. Why is it that your own disciples also fall ill and die?

Answer: Your question is reasonable. Nevertheless, you are aware of only one side of the situation and not the other. Good and evil have been inherent in life since time without beginning. According to the provisional teachings and the schools based on them, both good and evil remain in one’s life through all the stages of the bodhisattva practice up to the stage of near-perfect enlightenment. Hence people at the stage of near-perfect enlightenment or below have faults of some kind, [but not those at the highest stage]. In contrast, the heart of the Lotus school is the doctrine of three thousand realms in a single moment of life,

which reveals that both good and evil are inherent even in those at the highest stage of perfect enlightenment. The fundamental nature of enlightenment manifests itself as Brahma and Shakra, whereas the fundamental darkness manifests itself as the devil king of the sixth heaven. The benevolent deities hate evildoers, and evil demons hate good people. Because we have entered the Latter Day of the Law, it is natural that evil demons should be everywhere in the country, just like tiles, stones, trees, and grasses. Good demons are few because sages and worthies are rare in this world. One would therefore expect to find more victims of the epidemic among Nichiren’s followers than among the believers of Nembutsu, or priests of the True Word, Zen, and Precepts schools. For some reason, however, there is less affliction and death among Nichiren’s followers. It is indeed mysterious. Is this because we are few in number, or because our faith is strong?

Background

This letter was originally thought to have been written in 1282, but it now seems more likely that it was 1278. The month and the day of the letter are exactly the same as those of a letter written to Saemon, commonly known as Shijo Kingo, which may very well be the letter mentioned in the first paragraph (WND,1111). Nichiren Daishonin was living at Mount Minobu at the time.

The Daishonin's life at Minobu was by no means easy. Winters were bitterly cold, and his shelter was inadequate. Food was another problem. Moreover, for nearly the entire first half of 1278, he had suffered from debilitating and chronic diarrhea. Shijo Kingo, who was well versed in the art of healing, had prescribed a medicine and sent it to the Daishonin, along with other offerings. Another grave concern for the Daishonin was the persecution of his followers in and around the village of Atsuhara, which began in July 1278.

"The Treatment of Illness" was a reply to Toki Jonin, who had anxiously written about the rampant epidemic. The Daishonin first classifies all diseases into two categories, physical and mental. Physical illness, can be cured by skilled physicians. However, illnesses of the mind are more complicated. Those

that arise from the three poisons can be treated with the Hinayana teachings, but those caused by slandering the correct or "essential" teaching can be cured only with the essential teaching. The Daishonin uses this term to indicate the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo that lies in the depths of the "Life Span" chapter of the Lotus Sutra.

In the Latter Day of the Law, he says, evil demons prevail, attacking the votaries of the Lotus Sutra. "One would therefore expect," the Daishonin tells Toki Jonin, "to find more victims of the epidemic among Nichiren's followers than among" the believers of the other schools. "However," he adds, "there is less affliction and death among Nichiren's followers."

In closing, the Daishonin points to the way to end the epidemic. The only way to do so is to demonstrate clearly that "this teaching" of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is supreme. By this, he means participating in and winning public debate on the relative superiority of the Buddha's teachings. Then he clarifies the difference between the three thousand realms in a single moment of life expounded by T'ien-t'ai and Dengyo and what he himself expounds. He identifies this doctrine as Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.

Commentary

Question: If, as you have stated, the benevolent deities inflict punishment on this country because it does harm to the votary of the Lotus Sutra, then epidemics should attack only the slanderers. Why is it that your own disciples also fall ill and die?

The section of the letter we are studying begins with Nichiren Daishonin asking a question about why his followers also suffer from the epidemics afflicting the country. He often employed this

style of question-and-answer dialogue in his writings to address the doubts and concerns of his disciples. The Daishonin may have heard this doubt expressed, or perhaps he wished to forestall it before it could arise. We note from many of his writings that he never avoided the doubts and questions of his followers but always anticipated them and addressed them forthrightly.

Leading up to this question, the Daishonin argues that the reason people are suffering from epidemics is that the country is filled with slander of the true teaching. In other words, their lives are in con-

flict with the law of the universe because they follow erroneous teachings. The appearance of epidemics is just one of the symptoms that indicate people's internal lives are in disharmony. Because people and the environment in which they live are inseparable, the environment — the land, the country ... even the weather — reflects disharmony. The source of this disharmony is that people base their lives on incorrect teachings. To make this point, he uses the principle of the fivefold comparison.

The fivefold comparison is one criteria for the comparative evaluation of philosophies and religions. Nichiren Daishonin established this principle in 1272 in "The Opening of the Eyes" to demonstrate the supremacy of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo over all other teachings (see page 15). The five successive levels of comparison are 1) Buddhism is superior to non-Buddhism; 2) Mahayana Buddhism is superior to Hinayana Buddhism; 3) true Mahayana (the Lotus Sutra) is superior to provisional Mahayana (pre-Lotus Sutra); 4) the essential teaching or latter half of the Lotus Sutra is superior to the theoretical, first half of the Lotus Sutra; and 5) the Buddhism of sowing, Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, is superior to the Buddhism of the harvest, Shakyamuni's Buddhism.

He addresses the selfish reasons why the country's priests and ruler cannot admit the truth of his assertions — why they persecute the votary of the Lotus Sutra. Priests will lose all they have gained through donations and the support of the emperor if they suddenly abandoned the teachings of their schools. And the ruling powers will not oppose the majority and tradition handed down from previous rulers. As a result, they are filled with hatred and fear toward Nichiren Daishonin and all positive universal forces no longer protect the country.

The Daishonin then poses the question: if his followers are following the correct teaching, why are they also suffering?

Answer: Your question is reasonable. Nevertheless, you are aware of only one side of the situation and not the other. Good and evil have been inherent in life since time without beginning. According to

the provisional teachings and the schools based on them, both good and evil remain in one's life through all the stages of the bodhisattva practice up to the stage of near-perfect enlightenment. Hence people at the stage of near-perfect enlightenment or below have faults of some kind, [but not those at the highest stage]. In contrast, the heart of the Lotus school is the doctrine of three thousand realms in a single moment of life, which reveals that both good and evil are inherent even in those at the highest stage of perfect enlightenment. The fundamental nature of enlightenment manifests itself as Brahma and Shakra, whereas the fundamental darkness manifests itself as the devil king of the sixth heaven. The benevolent deities hate evildoers, and evil demons hate good people.

The argument has been made as to why a country full of slander is being punished, but what would cause the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra to suffer as well?

Although one may speak of the protection of benevolent deities or of attack by demons, these are no more than the externally manifested workings of the good or evil within people's lives. Since the country is filled with slanderers, the workings of demons predominate, and demons by nature hate votaries of the Lotus Sutra. The wonder is not that some believers fall ill and die in the epidemics, but that those stricken are so few.

The appearance of devils can be the result of slandering the Law but also they appear to persecute those who propagate the Law. The "Encouraging Devotion" chapter of the Lotus Sutra predicts what opposition will face votaries of the Lotus Sutra who propagate the Law in the Latter Day. In "The Teaching, Capacity, Time, and Country," the Daishonin states: "In the 'Encouraging Devotion' chapter of the Lotus Sutra, it is recorded that, in the last five-hundred-year period, or two thousand or so years after the Buddha's passing, there will be three types of enemies of the Lotus Sutra. Our present age

corresponds to this last five-hundred-year period. And as I, Nichiren, ponder the truth of the Buddha's words, I realize that these three types of enemies are indeed real. If I allow them to remain hidden, then I will not be the votary of the Lotus Sutra. Yet if I cause them to appear, then I am almost certain to lose my life" (WND, 52–53).

The persecutions predicted by Shakyamuni to occur in the Latter Day of the Law to those who propagate the true teaching prove the identity of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth. As votaries of the Lotus Sutra, they pledged to overcome all obstacles to propagate the teaching that would relieve the suffering of all humanity.

In saying, "Good and evil have been inherent in life since time without beginning," the Daishonin teaches that all people are originally endowed with both delusion and enlightenment. In other words, all people possess the fundamental nature of enlightenment, or the Dharma nature, as well as fundamental darkness, which is the source of all illusions.

This view is far more profound than that of the provisional teachings. According to these teachings, people advance toward enlightenment as they progressively eradicate evil (desire and illusion). Buddhas have totally rid themselves of all evil and thus essentially differ from common mortals. However, the Lotus Sutra denies this view. According to its teaching, all human beings, common mortals and Buddhas alike, are equally entities of three thousand realms in a single moment, or the mutual possession of the Ten Worlds. Even the Buddha has inherent evil—broadly meaning the six paths or, more specifically, the world of Hell. Because Buddhas retain these lower worlds, they can feel compassion for the people suffering in these states and are able to save them. Similarly, even the most deprived common mortal has the potential for good—broadly



The appearance of epidemics is just one of the symptoms that indicate people's internal lives are in disharmony with the Law. Above, Phillistines are falling in the streets as an epidemic sweeps through the city.

indicating the four noble worlds, and specifically, the world of Buddhahood.

This view wipes out at a single stroke any spiritual gap between a Buddha and an ordinary person. The Buddha is not a saint or supernatural being divorced from ordinary people, for he or she retains all the nine worlds of an ordinary person's life.

In *The New Human Revolution*, SGI President Ikeda writes of Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment after the Buddha triumphed over devilish forces and ponders whether or not to teach what he had realized: "If no one can comprehend this Law, any attempt to teach it to others would not only be futile, but could cause people to curse and berate me. Lack of understanding might even prompt some to persecute me." According to one account, at this point, demons reappeared to torment Shakyamuni. This episode can again be interpreted as a struggle with the devilish functions in his own life, which were now attempting to dissuade him from teaching the Law to others.

"Devilish functions thus continued to plague Shakyamuni even after he had become a Buddha. They vied to attack him through even the smallest breach in his heart.

"A Buddha is not a superhuman being; one who



The purpose of our Buddhist practice is to elevate our basic state of life from the lower worlds to the higher ones, gradually establishing the world of Buddhahood as our fundamental condition.

has attained this state continues to experience problems, suffering and pain and is still subject to illness and to temptation. For that reason, a Buddha is a person of courage, tenacity and continuous action who struggles ceaselessly against devilish functions” (NHR, vol. 3, pp. 152–53).

There is, nevertheless, a vital difference between a Buddha and a common mortal. Buddhas fully manifest the fundamental nature of enlightenment, and thus, though still possessing the lower states of life, they do not commit evil in their conduct. In common mortals, the nature of enlightenment is obscured by various illusions arising from the fundamental darkness. Accordingly, they do not see the true aspect of things and are led into various wrong actions, bringing suffering upon themselves. The purpose of our Buddhist practice is to elevate our basic state of life

from the lower worlds to the higher ones, gradually establishing the world of Buddhahood as our fundamental condition. We will never eliminate Hell, Hunger, Animality and Anger in the process, for they are “inherent in life since time without beginning.” But as we continue to strengthen the world of Buddhahood through our sincere prayer to the Gohonzon, these as well as the others of the nine worlds will all come to function in an enlightened way.

This inner struggle between our deluded self and enlightened self, or the worlds of Buddhahood and Hell, is continuous. Without a proactive approach, we can easily fall into the lower worlds. Attaining the higher states of life requires concerted effort in our practice and action in daily life. If we perceive our inner fundamental darkness but fail to make efforts to conquer it, our lives become tainted by it. A good person is someone who struggles against evil. It is by opposing forces that cause suffering that we eradicate those forces within our lives.

Because we have entered the Latter Day of the Law, it is natural that evil demons should be everywhere in the country, just like tiles, stones, trees, and grasses. Good demons are few because sages and worthies are rare in this world. One would therefore expect to find more victims of the epidemic among Nichiren’s followers than among the believers of Nembutsu, or priests of the True Word, Zen, and Precepts schools. For some reason, however, there is less affliction and death among Nichiren’s followers. It is indeed mysterious. Is this because we are few in number, or because our faith is strong?

When one brings forth the fundamental nature of enlightenment, then, according to the principle of the oneness of life and its environment, various factors in one’s surroundings will work to protect one. In “The Three Kinds of Treasure,” Nichiren Daishonin states, “When the Buddha nature manifests itself from within, it will receive protection from without” (WND, 848). These

protective workings are personified in Buddhist texts as benevolent deities, such as Brahma and Shakra. On the other hand, when one's life is shrouded by the fundamental darkness, this delusion will manifest itself as negative workings in the environment that function to produce chaos and suffering.

These destructive functions are personified as the Devil of the Sixth Heaven and his attendant demons. People in the Daishonin's time were accustomed to the notion of gods, demons, devils, benevolent spirits and the like, so he often uses such terminology in his writings. Here, however, he makes clear that human beings are in no way controlled by supernatural, external forces; rather, both gods and demons are the outward expressions of one's own state of life.

The Latter Day of the Law is traditionally viewed as a corrupt age when the pure Law will be obscured and lost. Moreover, as the Daishonin explains, the vast majority of his contemporaries had become deluded as to which teachings were inferior and which superior, and accordingly became slanderers of the Law. Thus, in terms of the nation as a whole, the power of the protective gods is weak, while that of the Devil of the Sixth Heaven is thriving. Since the nature of this diabolical function is to obstruct the practice for enlightenment, one would expect, the Daishonin says, that more of his followers would fall victim to the epidemics than do believers in the provisional teachings. Yet the contrary is the case.

The Daishonin formally suggests two possible reasons for this phenomenon, saying "Is this because we are few in number, or because our faith is strong?" But



(Left) Pablo Corral Vega/CORBIS (Right) Bettman/CORBIS

Human beings are in no way controlled by supernatural, external forces; rather, both gods and demons are the outward expressions of one's own state of life.

this is a rhetorical question. In light of everything he ever taught, the latter is the valid explanation. Faith in the Gohonzon is more powerful than the most terrible array of evil forces. Faith has the power to conquer the workings of devils, and in conquering them, to grow stronger. Moreover, the power of faith has nothing to do with numerical odds. Even one individual isolated in a thoroughly life-denying environment will be protected and eventually emerge victorious, so long as that person maintains strong faith. Buddhism is win or lose, a struggle of good over evil. 🌀

By the SGI-USA Study Department

THE FIVEFOLD COMPARISON

Nichiren Daishonin established the fivefold comparison as a criteria for the comparative evaluation of philosophies and religions. This principle demonstrates the supremacy of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo over all other teachings.

1 Buddhism Is Superior to Non-Buddhist Teachings

Non-Buddhist teachings included Brahmanism in India, and Confucianism and Taoism in China.

Non-Buddhist teachings are not as profound as Buddhism in that they do not reveal the causal law of life that penetrates the three existences of past, present and future. Without such a causal view of life and the world, the teachings cannot serve as a guide for

the people's ultimate happiness. Only through Buddhism, which elucidates the profound law of causality working within one's life, can all people attain absolute happiness.

Buddhism attributes the cause of all phenomena that bring about human happiness or unhappiness to the law of cause and effect functioning in the life of each individual, thereby enabling us to realize that the path to happiness lies within our lives, rather than outside. In contrast, non-Buddhist teachings generally ascribe the cause of such phenomena to external factors outside ourselves, such as transcendent beings or deities. That is why this comparison is called the comparison of the "Inner Way" (Buddhism) with the "Outer Way" (non-Buddhist teachings).

2 Mahayana Buddhism Is Superior to Hinayana Buddhism

Hinayana Buddhism is a teaching of personal emancipation only. In contrast, Mahayana Buddhism aims at both personal salvation and the salvation of others. Hinayana Buddhism is expounded for persons of the two vehicles (Learning and Realization—or voice-hearers and cause-awakened ones) and belongs to the teachings of what is known as the "age of meditation," the second of the five periods in T'ien-t'ai's classification of Shakyamuni's teachings according to the order of preaching. It is called Hinayana (lesser vehicle) because it leads only a limited number of people to enlightenment.

Hinayana Buddhism regards one's earthly desires as the cause of all suffering and asserts that suffering is eliminated only by eradicating those earthly desires. Hinayana practitioners aim at emancipation through austere practices. However, the ultimate goal of their practice can only be achieved at death, when both body and mind—the sources of suffering—are extinguished.

Their practice has accordingly been derided by Mahayanists as the teaching of "annihilating one's consciousness and reducing one's body to ashes." Such a teaching, far from enabling all people to attain salvation, is entirely impossible to practice.

In contrast, Mahayana Buddhism is the teaching

that expounds the bodhisattva practice as the means toward the happiness of both oneself and others. It is called Mahayana (greater vehicle) because it can carry many people to enlightenment. Where Hinayana teaches the elimination of earthly desires, Mahayana aims at redirecting and transforming them into a source of enlightenment by awakening us to our innate Buddha nature and establishing the Buddha nature as our fundamental state of life.

3 True Mahayana Is Superior to Provisional Mahayana

True Mahayana is the Lotus Sutra, a full and direct statement of Shakyamuni's enlightenment. In contrast, provisional Mahayana, or the pre-Lotus Sutra Mahayana teachings, were expounded in various ways according to the people's capacity, in order to prepare them to understand the Lotus Sutra.

In the provisional Mahayana teachings, the people of the two vehicles, women and evil persons, are excluded from the possibility of attaining enlightenment; in addition Buddhahood is attained only by advancing through progressive stages of bodhisattva practice over innumerable lifetimes. In contrast, the Lotus Sutra reveals that all people have the Buddha nature inherently, and that they are able to attain Buddhahood immediately by realizing that nature. Furthermore, the provisional Mahayana teachings assert that Shakyamuni attained enlightenment for the first time in India and do not reveal his original attainment of Buddhahood in the remote past, nor do they reveal the principle of the mutual possession of the Ten Worlds. For these reasons, the provisional Mahayana teachings are inferior to the true Mahayana teachings.

4 The Essential Teaching of the Lotus Sutra Is Superior to the Theoretical Teaching

The twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra are divided into two parts: the theoretical teaching and the essential teaching, according to the role and status of Shakyamuni Buddha depicted in each. The theoretical teaching consists of the first fourteen chapters

of the Lotus Sutra, and the essential teaching, the latter fourteen chapters.

In the same manner as the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings, the theoretical teaching takes the form of preaching by the historical Shakyamuni who first attained enlightenment under the bodhi tree near the town of Gaya in India. Thus the theoretical teaching was expounded by Shakyamuni in a transient role, or aspect that he had assumed in order to save the people.

In contrast, the essential teaching, especially its core, the “Life Span” chapter, takes the form of preaching by Shakyamuni who discarded his transient status and revealed his true identity as the Buddha who had attained Buddhahood in the remote past. The Buddha of the essential teaching is called a true Buddha, as opposed to the provisional Buddha of the pre-Lotus Sutra and theoretical teachings, who conceals his true identity.

The essential teaching treats Buddhahood as a reality manifested in the life of Shakyamuni Buddha who gained his original enlightenment in the inconceivably distant past. Though Shakyamuni of the essential teaching had already attained Buddhahood, he was nevertheless born into this world as a common mortal, thus showing through his own example that Buddhahood is inseparable from ordinary human experience. For this reason, the essential teaching is considered superior to the theoretical teaching.

5 The Buddhism of Sowing Is Superior to the Buddhism of the Harvest

This is a comparison between Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism of sowing, which reveals the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo indicated in the depths of the “Life Span” chapter, and the Buddhism of the harvest, which is Shakyamuni’s essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra.

The process by which the Buddha leads people to enlightenment may be divided into three stages, called “sowing, maturing and harvesting.” The Buddha first plants the seed of enlightenment in people’s lives by teaching them the Law, then nurtures it through his preaching to elevate their capacity and

finally brings them to full enlightenment, just as ripened grain is finally harvested.

The Buddhism of the harvest can save only those who have already accumulated good causes, that is, who have already received the seed of enlightenment from Shakyamuni in the remote past and nurtured it through Buddhist practice over the course of many lifetimes. For this reason, the essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra was propagated for the sake of the people during Shakyamuni’s lifetime and the Former and Middle Days of the Law, who had already received the seed of Buddhahood from Shakyamuni and nurtured it over many lifetimes.

In contrast, the Buddhism of sowing, Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism, implants the fundamental seed of Buddhahood, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, directly in the lives of the people of the Latter Day of the Law. Consequently, they can manifest Buddhahood in this lifetime by receiving the seed of enlightenment, that is, by embracing the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo hidden in the depths of the “Life Span” chapter, the core of the essential teaching of the Lotus Sutra.

Although Shakyamuni Buddha revealed his enlightenment in the remote past as the effect of his Buddhist practice, he did not specify the original cause for his enlightenment, that is, the Law that led him to the supreme state of Buddhahood. In other words, Shakyamuni did not clarify the fundamental Law he himself had practiced to attain enlightenment.

Nichiren Daishonin disclosed that Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is the ultimate cause for the enlightenment of all Buddhas, as well as the fundamental Law that Shakyamuni Buddha had practiced to attain enlightenment. Nichiren Daishonin embodied this Law in the form of the object of devotion, the Gohonzon. In “The Teaching for the Latter Day” he states: “Now, in the Latter Day of the Law, neither the Lotus Sutra nor the other sutras lead to enlightenment. Only Nam-myoho-renge-kyo can do so” (WND, 903).

The comparison of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism and that of Shakyamuni Buddha concludes the fivefold comparison and declares that the Daishonin’s Buddhism of sowing is the only way to enlightenment for all people in the Latter Day of the Law. ❁



Nichiren Buddhism and **EMPOWERMENT**

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Shakyamuni's enlightenment may be considered a seminal event, a critical moment in Eastern psychology. This awakening started with insight into his own unconscious and expanded to illuminate a vast psychic cosmos. His exploration of his inner world, this inner cosmos, moved beyond the individual level, deepening eventually to include all humankind. He continued to explore the bounds of selfhood, from the commonality of all living things, to those realms where the self is fused with the Earth, the solar system and the entire universe.

Nichiren is the thirteenth-century Japanese Buddhist teacher whose teachings inspire the activities of the SGI. In this paper I would like to explore areas of contact

between Nichiren Buddhism and the idea of self-empowerment.

Nichiren himself was thoroughly versed in the intellectual history of Buddhism. His understanding was rooted in the sutras recording the teachings of

Shakyamuni, and drew from the theories and exegeses of the Indian scholars Nagarjuna¹ (c. 2–3 century C.E.), Vasubandhu² (5th-century C.E.), the Chinese Buddhist T'ien-t'ai School,³ and Japan's Saicho⁴ (8th-century

C.E.). Thus, in discussing empowerment, I will start by exploring points of contact between modern Western psychology and the “eight consciousness” theories developed by Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu, and adopted and developed by T’ien-t’ai and Nichiren.

It was the British historian Arnold Toynbee who said that the two great discoveries of this century were the theory of relativity in the realm of physics and the work of uncovering the unconscious in the realm of psychology. He further remarked that the discovery of the unconscious revealed that each individual is in fact a cosmos, a universe.

Credit for the discovery of the unconscious in Western psychology goes to Freud, whose work was followed by Adler,⁵ Jung⁶, Maslow⁷ and others, who have dramatically extended our exploration of the psychic cosmos.

In the East some 2,500 years ago, Shakyamuni, widely known as the Buddha, creatively adapted and recast the ancient philosophy of the Upanishads⁸ as he developed his own philosophy. His awakening as he meditated beneath the bodhi tree may be considered a seminal event, a critical moment in Eastern psychology. This awakening started with insights into his own unconscious and expanded to illuminate a vast psychic cosmos.

His exploration of his inner world, this inner cosmos, moved beyond the individual level, deepening eventually to include all

humankind. He continued to explore the bounds of selfhood, from the commonality of all living things, to those depth realms where the self is fused with the Earth, the solar system and the entire universe. He finally awakened to the fundamental wisdom of life, the life of the universe itself, which gives rise to all phenomena as they evolve in harmonious unity with the psychic cosmos.

Later practitioners would refer to the cosmic life force to which Shakyamuni awakened as the Buddha nature. They would explore means and methods of practice by which all people can manifest the vast energy, dignity and wisdom of this life state; methods, in other words, of self-empowerment.

A Three-Layered Structure of Consciousness

Here I would like to give a brief outline of the eight consciousness teaching that forms an important basis of Buddhist psychology.

The word that is translated as consciousness is the Sanskrit *vijñāna*, which indicates a wide range of activities, including sensation, cognition and conscious thought. *Vijñāna* can be thought of referring to the entire psychic cosmos.

According to the Yogācāra School,⁹ *vijñāna* comprises three layers: 1) the five senses and waking consciousness; 2) the *mano*

consciousness; and 3) the *alaya* consciousness, with the *alaya* being regarded as the core, or most fundamental site of psychological activity. In other words, the content of the *alaya* layer makes itself known and becomes manifest in the activities of the *mano* layer, as well as in the five senses and the waking consciousness. Conversely, the activities of the more superficial layers are inscribed in the depths of the *alaya* consciousness. There is thus a constant and intimate interaction between the different layers of consciousness.

It should also be clarified at this point that the *alaya* consciousness should not simply be understood in an ontological sense, as existing, but as embracing a cognitive and even an ethical dimension.

The *mano* and *alaya* layers of consciousness in many senses correspond to the individual and collective unconscious¹⁰ in Jungian psychology.

I would like first to look at the *mano* consciousness, which is described as emerging from the *alaya* consciousness and being focused in its “attention” on the *alaya* consciousness.

In this sense, the *mano* layer can be understood as the seat of the most basic consciousness of self. The Sanskrit verb from which this derives is *manas*, meaning “to think” or “to consider.” Thus the *mano* consciousness is always thinking about, considering, and in fact reifying the *alaya* consciousness of the individual, which

it perceives as something unique and isolated from other things. It is from this strong attachment, or clinging, to a reified *alaya* consciousness that *mano* consciousness generates the sense of a limited, isolated self referred to in Buddhism as the lesser self.

When the *mano* consciousness functions in this manner it gives rise to a series of powerful delusions that manifest in the other, more immediate layers of perception and consciousness as attachment to and pride in this proscribed sense of selfhood. The delusion that the reified *alaya* conscious is one's true self is identified with fundamental ignorance, a turning away from the truth of the interconnectedness of all beings. It is this sense of one's self as separate and isolated from others that gives rise to discrimination against others, to destructive arrogance and acquisitiveness.

The lesser self is deeply insecure, and vacillates between feelings of superiority and inferiority with regard to others; in the pursuit of its own fulfillment, the lesser self will unthinkingly harm or wound others. When the *mano* consciousness is filled with these delusions about the nature of the self, they give rise to a whole series of delusions that the early Buddhist took great pains to name, number and classify, but which I will omit here in the interest of time. Suffice it to say that the *mano* consciousness functions to create a strong sense of disjunction between self and others and to generate discrimina-

tory attitudes toward those we experience as "other."

Characteristics of the Alaya Consciousness.

In the *Trimsika-vijnapti*, Vasubandhu ascribes the following characteristics to the *alaya* consciousness. First, it is not obscured by delusion and is morally neutral; that is, it is equally receptive to the karmic imprint of both negative and positive causes. Next, it is extremely dynamic; its flow is compared to that of a raging torrent. In Sanskrit the word *alaya* means to store, and it is in this consciousness that the latent causes, often described metaphorically as seeds, are retained.

Karma is, of course, a basic concept in Buddhism. It posits that our thoughts, words and deeds (whether conscious or in the unconscious realm of the *mano* layer) invariably exert an influence that is impressed or imprinted into the deepest layers of life, the *alaya* consciousness. When they encounter the right enabling conditions, these latent causes, or karmic seeds, become manifest as the functions of the *mano* or other more superficial layers of consciousness.

These karmic seeds can be either positive or negative. Positive latent causes become manifest in positive psychological functions such as trust, nonviolence, self-control, compassion and wisdom. Negative latent causes become manifest as vari-

ous forms of delusion and destructive behavior. In this sense, the functioning of the *alaya* consciousness can be understood as prior to that of delusions; it is not stained or influenced by them. It remains neutral and equally receptive to either type of karmic imprinting.

As mentioned, the *alaya* consciousness interacts constantly and intimately with other layers of consciousness such as the *mano* consciousness, waking consciousness and the sensory functions. It is not a separate, independent thing or entity. It is better thought of as a fluid and vitally evolving flow. It is this lack of permanence, this fluidity, which opens the possibility to transforming the content of the *alaya* consciousness, and thus the functioning of the other layers of consciousness.

Transforming Consciousness and Gaining Wisdom

The idea of transforming consciousness and gaining wisdom is central to Buddhist psychology and perhaps represents Buddhism's most direct contribution to the idea of self-empowerment.

The Indian Yogacara School elucidated the eight-layered structure of the consciousness outlined above. It was the T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen Flower Garland (Jpn *Kegon*) schools in China that uncovered a ninth consciousness, an undefiled *amala* consciousness underlying, supporting and

embracing the functioning of the *alaya* consciousness.

Taking up the thread of the nine-consciousness teaching, Nichiren describes different types of wisdom that manifest in each layer of consciousness. The *amala* consciousness manifests the wisdom to understand that we are one with the cosmic life force. This is the fundamental wisdom of the living universe, and it is by manifesting this most fundamental wisdom that we are able to transform the workings of the other layers of consciousness, including that of the *alaya* consciousness, where profound karmic causes reside. This transformation is the objective of Buddhist psychology and of Buddhist practice, including the pursuit of the altruistic bodhisattva way.

Buddhist practice impresses the seeds of positive causes in the *alaya* consciousness. The more and the stronger these causes, the more fully the content of the *alaya* consciousness is transformed. As the *alaya* consciousness is transformed, it shines with the light of a wisdom that can be likened to a great mirror, perfectly reflecting all phenomena in their true aspect. This is the wisdom of interdependence, the wisdom to perceive and understand that, at the most profound level, we are all interconnected and interdependent.

When the *alaya* consciousness is transformed in this manner, it stimulates the arising in the *mano* consciousness of the wisdom to perceive the equality of all things. In other words, the *mano* con-

sciousness no longer functions as the site of a fundamentally discriminatory consciousness, but can perceive its “own” *alaya* consciousness as equally part of a creatively evolving cosmic life force. In other words, the *mano* consciousness ceases to generate a falsely proscribed sense of “self” in profound ontological conflict with others.

Overcoming the deep-rooted tendency to reify and cling to the *alaya* consciousness enables the individual to overcome feelings of fear and dread of physical death. This is replaced by a profound awareness that the *alaya* consciousness is a flow of life, repeatedly undergoing cycles of life and death, supported and embraced by the fundamental vitality and wisdom inherent in the universe, that is, the *amala*, or ninth, consciousness. Death comes to be understood as the cyclical waning of the ability to support the active functioning of the *mano* consciousness, the waking consciousness and the sensory organs. These functions become latent within the *alaya* consciousness upon death, but the *alaya* consciousness does not undergo extinction when an individual dies, but maintains the continuity of the life-flow over cycles of life and death.

When deep-seated delusions regarding the nature of the self and its existence are overcome, the *mano* consciousness can now function as the site of positive characteristics such as trust, self-control and compassion.

The transformation of the deepest layers of consciousness impacts the functioning of cognition and perception, located in waking consciousness and the sensory apparatus. These become imbued with their own forms of wisdom, including the wisdom to freely control the functions of the senses and to act in a manner that most effectively advances one’s own life and the lives of others.

A person who constantly strives to effect this kind of profound transformation of all layers of consciousness, and who seeks to inspire and aid others in this quest, is referred to as a bodhisattva.

The SGI Movement and the Way of the Bodhisattva

In Nichiren Buddhism, the fundamental practice is that of reciting the mantra Nam-myoho-renge-kyo to the mandala inscribed by Nichiren for the purpose of enabling people to manifest the wisdom of the ninth or *amala* consciousness. In this manner, we seek to transform consciousness and gain wisdom, awaken the Buddha nature that is one with the cosmic life force and to establish a bodhisattva self.

Nichiren identifies four virtues of the bodhisattva as true self, eternity, purity and joy.

The virtue of true self might be understood as the experience of expansive freedom and hope that is rooted in a sense of unity with the life force of the cosmos. Eternity indicates the creativity

inherent in the life of the universe that drives constant renewal and rejuvenation; the vitality to surmount any obstacle. Purity is the function of the cosmic life to cleanse the restrictive egotism that stains and distorts the self. Finally, the virtue of joy is the quality of self-realization, a life-state of utter confidence and serenity based on one's identification with the universal life.

Nichiren asserts that a genuine bodhisattva manifests the entire spectrum of these four virtues. And it is these virtues — true self, eternity, purity and joy — that enable the bodhisattva to transform negative circumstances into the occasion for growth and the creation of value. It is for this reason that the bodhisattva does not avoid or retreat from the difficulties and challenges of life, but rather places her- or himself in their very midst, acknowledging and confronting them head-on.

Nichiren describes the benefit of reciting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo as that of transforming the inevitable sufferings of living — what Buddhism terms the “four sufferings” of birth, aging, illness and death — into the four virtues of true self, eternity, purity and joy. The bodhisattva, by transforming those experiences that are so often the cause of great suffering into the opportunity for development and advancement, inspires others to pursue a path of “transforming consciousness and gaining wisdom.”

Through active engagement with others, we can continually

strengthen and deepen this bodhisattva self, in an endeavor that is not limited to the pursuit of personal happiness, but involves a commitment to the realization of peace, both for humankind and for the entire biosphere.

The work of the Soka Gakkai International to promote a contemporary movement of the Bodhisattva Way is rooted in the efforts of individuals to transform their inner, psychic cosmos. By manifesting wisdom in all layers of consciousness, and encouraging the development of this wisdom in our families, communities and societies, we seek to overcome the delusions that give rise to a host of well-rehearsed personal and social ills: from the sense of disempowerment that plagues so many people, to intra- and inter-societal conflicts, to ecological destruction. While the path of the bodhisattva may represent a gradualist approach, we are confident that it represents a fundamental transformation, with the power to change for the better the lives both of individuals and of all humankind. ☸

1. Nagarjuna: A Mahayana scholar who lived in southern India between 150 and 250 C.E. He wrote many important treatises on a great number of Mahayana sutras and organized the theoretical foundation of Mahayana thought, thus making an inestimable contribution to its development. He is especially known for his systematization of the doctrine of non-substantiality. His treatises include *The Treatise on the Middle Way*, *The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom*, and *The Commentary on the Ten Stages Sutra*.

2. Vasubandhu: A Buddhist scholar in India thought to have lived around the fourth or fifth century C.E. He is known as the author of *The Dharma Analysis Treasury*. He originally studied Hinayana but was later converted to

Mahayana by his elder brother Asanga. He wrote numerous treatises designed to clarify the Mahayana teachings.

3. T'ien-t'ai School: Founded in China by T'ien-t'ai, also known as Chih-i, T'ien-t'ai Chih-che, the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai, and the Great Teacher Chih-che. After studying at Mount Ta-su under Nan-yüeh, he became known for his profound lectures on the Lotus Sutra. He refuted the scriptural classifications formulated by the ten major Buddhist schools of his day, and classified all of Shakyamuni's sutras into five periods and eight teachings, demonstrating the supremacy of the Lotus Sutra. His principal works, *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra*, *The Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra*, and *Great Concentration and Insight*, were all recorded and compiled by his immediate disciple Chang-an. In *Great Concentration and Insight*, T'ien-t'ai set forth the principle of three thousand realms in a single moment of life.

4. Saicho (767–822 C.E.) — Also known as Dengyo or the Great Teacher Dengyo. The founder of the Tendai school in Japan. In 804 he went to China to study T'ien-t'ai's doctrines. Returning the next year, he founded the Tendai School. The word *Tendai* is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word T'ien-t'ai. He made efforts to establish a Mahayana ordination center on Mount Hiei despite opposition from the older schools in Nara. Permission was finally granted shortly after his death and his successor Gishin completed the center in 827. In Nichiren Daishonin's writings, Dengyo is also referred to as the Great Teacher Kompon, or the Great Teacher Fundamental.

5. Adler, Alfred (1870–1937) — Austrian psychiatrist who introduced the term *inferiority feeling*, later widely and often inaccurately called inferiority complex.

6. Jung, Carl (1875–1961) — Swiss psychologist who founded analytic psychology. Jung proposed and developed the concepts of the extroverted and introverted personality, archetypes and the collective unconscious.

7. Maslow, Abraham (1908–1970) — U.S. psychologist and philosopher best known for his self-actualization theory of psychology, which argued that the primary goal of psychotherapy should be the integration of the self.

8. Upanishads — Literally, “Sittings Near a Teacher” Ancient Hindu teachings concerned with the ultimate identity of all phenomena, which merely appear to be separate.

9. Yogacara School — Also called Vijnānavada (“Doctrine of Consciousness”), an important idealistic school of Mahayana Buddhism.

10. collective unconscious — A term introduced by psychiatrist Carl Jung to represent a form of the unconscious (that part of the mind containing memories and impulses of which the individual is not aware) common to mankind as a whole and originating in the inherited structure of the brain.

The Nine Levels of **CONSCIOUSNESS**

The following explanation of the nine consciousnesses discussed in Dr. Kawada's article is from *The Buddha in Your Mirror*, published by Middleway Press.

First Five Consciousnesses

According to the Buddhist analysis, the first five consciousnesses correspond to the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

Sixth

The sixth consciousness integrates the perception of the five senses into coherent images and makes judgments about the external world. For example, take a rose petal. It is red, soft and fragrant.

Our sixth consciousness compiles these sensory data and comes up with the idea of a rose, as opposed to, say, a strawberry. Together, the first six consciousnesses form the conscious mind.

Seventh

In contrast to the first six consciousnesses, which deal with the external world, the seventh, or *mano* consciousness, does not rely directly on the senses. It discerns the inner world. From the seventh consciousness comes the considered judgment: A rose is

quite beautiful. Awareness of and attachment to the self are said to originate from the *mano* consciousness, as does the capacity to distinguish between good and evil. When we are awake, the realm of the six senses is dominant. When we are asleep, the hidden seventh consciousness surfaces in the form of dreams, while the functions of the six senses become latent.

Eighth

The eighth level, the *alaya* consciousness, is a step deeper than the *mano* consciousness, or the realm of individual ego. All the functions of our six senses as reactions, to outer stimulation and our judgments about them, even our most fleeting impressions, are stored and recorded in the eighth consciousness. This storehouse is roughly comparable to memory, but it is also more than that. Buddhism suggests that the eighth consciousness remembers and stores not only everything we have experienced in this life — including all the causes we have made through thoughts, words and actions — but also everything we have experienced

in the remote past.

Instead of an ethereal soul, Buddhism espouses the notion of a true self, which continues to exist whether one is alive or deceased. The *alaya* consciousness may be thought of as the realm that interweaves all the causes and effects constituting the destiny of this individual self. When this life reappears in the phenomenal world, the karmic seeds in the *alaya* consciousness bloom once again, but in new conditions and in a new physical form. One's self continues throughout eternity. Buddhism accepts this as fact. Whether dormant in death or manifest in living, it's the same life energy.

The Ninth Consciousness, or Buddhahood

It can be said that the reason Buddhist teaching can put death into perspective is that it discovered the ultimate realm within one's life that is free from all karmic impurity. This is called the *amala* consciousness, or enlightenment. *Amala* here means absolute

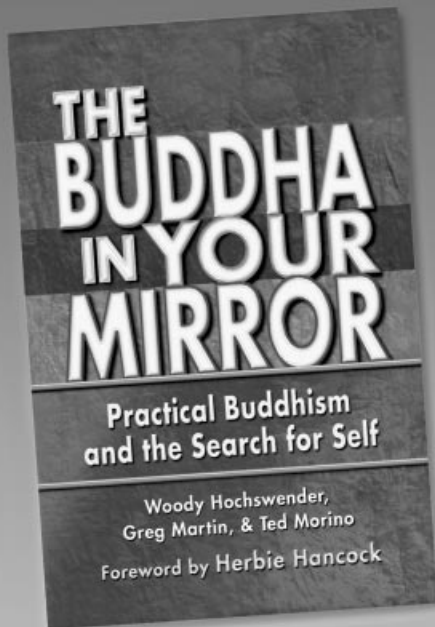
purity. It is a realm connected directly with the life of the universe, which is understood to be Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, the ultimate law of life and death.

Nichiren also called this realm “the palace of the ninth consciousness.” The ultimate message of the Lotus Sutra is that Buddhahood exists as a potential within everyone. Nichiren presented the way to reveal it from within and taught us the way to solidify it in us as well.

In *Unlocking the Mysteries of Birth and Death*, Daisaku Ikeda wrote: “Nichiren Daishonin gave concrete expression to the amala-consciousness — the fundamental reality of life — in the phrase Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and he gave physical form to his enlightenment to the original cosmic life in the Gohonzon, the object of devotion, thus opening a path whereby all people can achieve Buddhahood, manifesting the greater self that is latent within

them. When we devote ourselves to the Gohonzon, we find joy and determination welling forth as we are brought face to face with the reality that our own existences are coextensive with the eternal life of the universe. When we devote ourselves to and base our lives on this reality — the *amala* consciousness — all the other eight consciousnesses work to express the immense power and the infinite wisdom of the Buddha nature” (p. 165). ☸

A New Introduction to Nichiren Buddhism



A practical, how-to journey into Nichiren Buddhism. With chapters on happiness, health, relationships and dealing with death, *The Buddha in Your Mirror* takes a self-help approach to explaining the practice and philosophy of Nichiren Buddhism. Emphasizing its practical aspect, the book explains Buddhism in down-to-earth language that anyone can relate to. A perfect book for new members, friends and family.

“Like the Buddha, this book offers practical guidelines to overcome difficulties in everyday life and to be helpful to others. The authors have done a great service in bringing the profound practices of Asian Buddhism into American idioms. Readers will find these pages are like a helpful and supportive friend. I enthusiastically recommend it.”

—Dr. David Chappell, editor of
Buddhist Peaceworks: Creating Cultures of Peace

“*The Buddha in Your Mirror* puts Nichiren’s profound concepts into readily accessible terms. Whether you’re reading this book out of mere curiosity, or you have a crying need to elevate your life and circumstances, I encourage you to give the practical advice offered in *The Buddha in Your Mirror* a solid try.”

— From the foreword by Herbie Hancock



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She Is an Envoy **&** *of the Buddha:* **Women & Buddhism**

BY AMBER ROLLINS, RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS

“A passage from the ‘Teacher of the Law’ chapter reads: ‘If one of these good men or good women [in the time after I have passed into extinction is able to secretly expound the Lotus Sutra to one person, even one phrase of it, then you should know that] he or she is the envoy of the Thus Come One.’ (‘A Ship to Cross the Sea of Suffering,’ The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, p. 33)

The philosophy of Buddhism is egalitarian in theory, yet historically Buddhist women have faced many obstacles in the practice of their faith, placed in the way of their spiritual development by the very people who were supposed to lead them. Women have been denied the right to study the sutras, the right to teach and the right to lead services. But the Soka Gakkai International, by following the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and practicing as a lay movement, have overcome these obstacles, making this practice, while beneficial to anyone, especially well-suited for women.

Shakyamuni Buddha did not want to start an

order for women. He only did so at the behest of Ananda, a favored male disciple, and even then female renunciates had over a hundred more rules to follow than the males. This included the directive that any monk, no matter how young and new to the order, possessed a higher status than even the most senior woman did. Many Theravada monasteries still operate this way today, even going so far as teaching that to be a woman is a curse, and the only hope for Buddhahood is to be reborn as a man.

Shakyamuni’s injunctions, so strange for a compassionate, enlightened being to propound, are part of what is known as the provisional teachings — pre-



Lotus Sutra teachings expounded during the forty-two years following Shakyamuni's enlightenment. Due to the prevailing attitudes and customs, Shakyamuni, knowing that most people of the time could not accept equality for women, preached this incomplete philosophy as a way of leading them to the ultimate, complete teaching, the Lotus Sutra.

The Daishonin, in "The Essence of the 'Medicine King' Chapter," explains, "...in the Nirvana Sutra he (Shakyamuni) says, 'Though the Thus Come One does not speak untruths, if I knew that by speaking falsely [I could help living beings gain the benefits of the Law, then for their sake I would go along with what is best and speak such words as an expedient means]." Nichiren, while stressing that Shakyamuni Buddha cannot lie, nevertheless concluded, "In view of these passages, it would appear that the Buddha was speaking falsely when he declared that women could not attain rebirth in the pure land and achieve Buddhahood" (WND, 97).

The true teaching of equal Buddhahood for all sentient and insentient beings did not appear until the Lotus Sutra. It alone among the sutras preaches the attainment of Buddhahood by women, without having to be reborn as men. While women in other traditions are restricted in the ways they learn, study, and practice, the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin teaches, "Now, no matter what, strive in faith and be known as

a votary of the Lotus Sutra, and remain my disciple for the rest of your life. If you are of the same mind as Nichiren, you must be a Bodhisattva of the Earth. There should be no discrimination among those who propagate the five characters of Myoho-enge-kyo in the Latter Day of the Law, be they men or women. Were they not Bodhisattvas of the Earth, they could not chant the daimoku" ("The True Aspect of All Phenomenon," WND, 385).

Rather than being something thrust upon him by others, women's enlightenment was integral to the teachings of Nichiren. "Do not these interpretations make clear," the Daishonin writes in "The Sutra of True Requit, "that among all the teachings of the Buddha's lifetime, the Lotus Sutra is first, and that, among the teachings of the Lotus Sutra, that of women attaining Buddhahood is first?" Unlike Shakyamuni, Nichiren Daishonin never discriminated against his female followers. Many of his most faithful and dedicated followers were women, and he bestowed the Gohonzon and wrote to them on an equal basis with men. Forty-six works — almost a third — in *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* are addressed to female disciples. Compare this to other sacred literature, particularly that also written in epistolic form, like much of the New Testament. None of the letters included in the Biblical canon are addressed to women.



It is said that a sage must be able to see beyond his present place and circumstance, and the Daishonin's wisdom transcends his time. While other sacred writings tend to ignore issues pertaining specifically to women, the Daishonin freely discussed topics such as pregnancy, menstruation and parenting with his female followers — quite radical for a celibate monk living in an overwhelmingly patriarchal society!

Nor did Nichiren offer different spiritual advice for men and women. He did not tell men to fight for truth and propagate the teachings while telling women to stay at home and have babies. While Nichiren often celebrated marriage and motherhood, it was to praise their good qualities as havens of love, giving and compassion rather than to trap women into stereotypical and helpless roles. To both men and women, time after time, Nichiren had the same instruction — chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and bring forth your Buddha nature. Under no circumstances abandon your faith, even at the cost of loss of family, social status or one's very life.

The Daishonin's equanimity toward the spiritual development of both men and women, not to mention all sentient beings, reinforces the validity of the Daishonin's identity as the true Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law. The Daishonin was only concerned with a person's faith and practice, not any temporary karmic distinction. He saw beyond the

restrictive mores of society and fearlessly taught the truth of the Mystic Law to all who sought it.

The Soka Gakkai carries forth this spirit in the present day. SGI President Ikeda has declared 2001 to be the beginning of the Century of Women. In his 2001 peace proposal, he states that if we are to transform a culture of violence into a culture of peace, women's contributions are essential: "In this sense, I am certain that the emergence of women in the twenty-first century has a significance that goes to the very core of human civilization." Alone among Buddhist traditions, the Soka Gakkai loudly proclaims the equality of women while recognizing the special gifts we bring.

Whereas women in some traditions — Buddhist and non-Buddhist — are not allowed to teach others the faith, women in the Soka Gakkai share the responsibility to be courageous and responsible leaders in all areas of our lives. As President Ikeda declares in his famous "Clear Mirror" speech, given at the first SGI-USA Women's meeting on February 27, 1990: "The purpose of Buddhism is not to produce dupes who blindly follow their leaders. Rather, it is to produce people of wisdom who can judge right or wrong on their own in the clear mirror of Buddhism...when the members of the women's division freely devote themselves to activities and provide a confident and strong lead for men, that will mark the dawn of a new SGI-USA." ☸

The Century of **AFRICAN WOMEN**

SOWING THE SEEDS OF HOPE

BY SONNI DAVID, UGANDA

I work as a rural sociologist for the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Uganda. I am the only woman and the only social scientist on a team of seven biological scientists. I am also one of only two African women scientists working in the consortium of agricultural research institutions known as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

CIAT works to improve food security among the poor in developing countries by developing and disseminating new agricultural technologies.

Although originally from Liberia, I am now based in Kampala and work with small-scale farmers throughout Eastern and Southern Africa. I feel that it is important for sociologists, especially African women, to work in agriculture, since providing solutions to the problems of African agriculture requires an understanding of the social context.

Also, in most parts of Africa, women are the mainstay of family farms.

I joined the SGI in Kenya in 1992 and moved to Uganda in 1993. My Buddhist practice helps me be more optimistic about the future despite the seemingly gloomy political and economic situation in much of Africa. What encourages me is SGI President Ikeda's call for Africa to become the continent of the twenty-first century, and the Buddhist view that one person can make a difference in the life of an entire society. I feel that Buddhism's emphasis on celebrating differences is highly relevant to helping Africans overcome ethnic hatred and gender discrimination. My own



Sonni David with a group of farmers in southwestern Uganda. Ms. David, a sociologist working in rural development, seeks to empower rural people to develop themselves.

Buddhist practice has helped me respect others regardless of their background or status.

There is a significant link between my Buddhist practice and my role as a sociologist. As a sociologist working in rural development, I am seeking to empower rural people to develop themselves, create value and bring about social change. As a pioneer Buddhist in Africa, I feel my role is also to facilitate change at the spiritual level by encouraging people to do their "human revolution" (a process of fundamental inner reformation) and in that way bring about peace and social change. I believe that Buddhism has much to offer African people since, in contrast to the dependency mentality cultivated by colonialism and neocolonialism, it encourages self-reliance, based on the recognition that each individual holds the key to his or her own happiness. I feel fortunate to have the dual challenge of being a pioneer Buddhist in Africa and working in development, and I look forward to many more challenges and successes. ☸



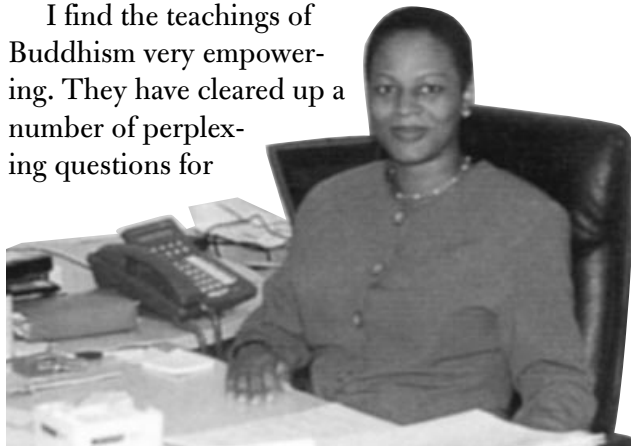
In 1964, SGI President Daisaku Ikeda declared his hope and belief that Africa would be the “continent of the twenty-first century.” His conviction in the promise of Africa has been a source of encouragement to many Africans, both within and outside the SGI. Mr. Ikeda has also frequently expressed his expectations of the increasingly prominent role that women will play in what has also been hailed as the century of women. At the start of the new century, we present the thoughts and experiences of three African women who are SGI members.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

BY GERALDINE E. OKU, NIGERIA

I was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and qualified as a lawyer in the United Kingdom. I currently work with a bank in Nigeria. I was introduced to Buddhism here in 1988 by my sister. Practicing Buddhism has enabled me to experience significant personal development, allowing me for example, to become aware of and change a tendency to be critical and judgmental of myself and others. This, in turn, has enabled me to function more happily and effectively in my work.

I find the teachings of Buddhism very empowering. They have cleared up a number of perplexing questions for



“Practicing Nichiren Buddhism has enabled me to see that I cannot be happy on my own while others around me are suffering — not just materially but spiritually,” says Geraldine E. Oku. She is pictured above in her office.

me, like why “bad” things happen to “good” people or vice versa. The Buddhist law of cause and effect clearly and logically explains why things “happen” to individuals, and even whole peoples, countries and continents.

I have also become more acutely aware of the larger society I live in. I have realized that the causes of our problems on this fantastic continent originate in people’s mindsets and their attitudes to life; I have also realized that the solutions rest with us. We must change the course of our history as a people. It is here that belief systems — religious or not — play their role. It is people’s belief systems that influence the actions that they take. When — individually or collectively — we see the power to create changes as being outside ourselves, we relinquish our responsibility, leaving everything up to that “source of power,” whatever it may be. In fact, however, wars, famine, the AIDS epidemic and so on are not caused by a source outside of ourselves, and therefore, as Buddhism teaches, the solution to these problems must come from us now. I have realized that I must be part of the solution in the way that I am best suited to be.

Practicing Nichiren Buddhism has enabled me to see that I cannot be happy on my own while others around me are suffering — not just materially but spiritually. My goal is to contribute to relieving that suffering in my own way. I try to do this in my work with my clients by finding constructive ways of resolving problems.

I am determined to show that the efforts of one human being continuing to make positive changes in his or her life can help bring about a peaceful world. ☸



Solange Kouo Epá works for the World Health Organization in Mozambique, one of the African countries most lacking in health care.

only six women in leading positions within the organization in this region. I feel that holding such a position as a woman is particularly significant in Africa because I can contribute to the enhancement of women's status. Women often work harder, more seriously and with more humanism than men. I feel we also tend to build more con-

TRANSCENDING LIMITATIONS

BY SOLANGE KOUO EPA, MOZAMBIQUE

I am a medical doctor, a pediatrician and community health specialist. I was born in Cameroon but have lived most of my life elsewhere. I was introduced to Nichiren Buddhism in 1987 when I was studying in France. My deep wish at the time was to have a job that I enjoyed and that would enable me to contribute to society.

In 1989, I had the good fortune to land a job as a national program coordinator for the World Health Organization (WHO). I was thirty-eight years old at the time. To date, no one else has ever been appointed to this responsibility at so young an age.

Since 1990, I have worked in a number of African countries and have recently been transferred to Mozambique, one of the countries most lacking in health care. I view my appointment as an opportunity to create positive change and as an acknowledgement of my competence. The African region of WHO includes forty-six countries, and at present there are

confidence in the activities of the United Nations.

The wisdom and energy that I derive from my Buddhist practice have enabled me to continually transcend my perceived limitations in my work. I base myself on the Buddhist principle that "faith equals daily life." The more I practice my faith, the easier it becomes for me to treat the people I meet with genuine respect and to feel a heart-to-heart connection with them. This has also enabled me to transform conflictual relationships with male colleagues who have felt threatened by my independence. In 1995, my contribution to my field was acknowledged when I received the first WHO award in the African region.

The wisdom and determination that I have derived from my practice of Buddhism have enabled me to chart a clear course to the present, particularly when times have been difficult and I have felt challenged by life.

I firmly believe that, as individuals base themselves on the teachings and philosophy of Buddhism, Africa will be able to stand up and shine as a model for the world in the twenty-first century. ☸

Courtesy of *SGI Quarterly*

Interpretation

**IS THE
LIFELINE OF
CULTURAL
EXCHANGE**



Seikyo Press

BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

A historical meeting between Premier Zhou Enlai and SGI President Ikeda in Beijing, December 1974.

When I met Premier Zhou Enlai (1898–1976) of China (in 1974), outstanding interpretation was provided by Lin Liyun. Premier Zhou once gave the following advice to Ms. Lin on how to be a good interpreter: “You should broaden your knowledge and become well versed on a wide range of issues. Interpreting is not simply a matter of conveying words; you have to transmit the spirit behind the words. Toward that end, you need to have a good understanding of what the speaker is saying.” I agree entirely.

I myself have been able to build a global network of friendship and trust thanks to interpreters

who have conveyed my spirit and thus opened the hearts of those with whom I have met. Interpretation is truly the lifeline of cultural exchange and the nucleus of human diplomacy.

My Meeting With Zhou Enlai

The car drove through the darkened streets of Beijing, its headlights illuminating the lowest strata of the night.

It was the evening of December 5, 1974, and I was scheduled to depart the following day, concluding my second visit to China. I was hosting a banquet at the International Club in Beijing to thank those who had offered their assistance and hospitality during the trip.



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Ms. Lin Liyun, who interpreted for Premier Zhou Enlai and the SGI president, says of the December 1974 meeting: "I keenly felt he (the premier) entrusted Mr. Ikeda with the mission to further bilateral exchange."

As the party was wrapping up, I received word that Premier Zhou would meet with me.

That morning, I had been apprised of Premier Zhou's condition by Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, who told me: "He has been in the hospital for seven or eight months. His condition was worse than we had thought. ... We are doing everything we can to keep him from being burdened by work." His voice was solemn, communicating his deep concern.

Therefore, when the news arrived that I could meet with the premier, I initially tried to decline. But Premier Zhou clearly wished it, and I was urged to take my leave of the banquet immediately. We drove for about fifteen minutes until we arrived at a hospital in the

central part of the city known as Zhongnanhai, or Sea Palace, where the meeting took place.

Winter in Beijing is cold. And that December day was particularly so. The hospital was quiet and in the short time we were waiting for the meeting to begin, my wife began to shiver from the cold. Seeing this, Ms. Lin casually took off her coat and draped it over my wife's shoulders. She has never forgotten Ms. Lin's warm consideration.

A Witness to the Making of History

Despite his frailty, Premier Zhou greeted us standing tall and resolute. He said: "This is your second visit to China, isn't it?" Each word shone with vigor, as if he were wringing out all of his remaining energy. I can still hear his unforgettable remark: "The last twenty-five years of the twentieth century will be an extremely significant period for the entire world." Time has flown by and we have already reached the final year of that period.

Ms. Lin has bright, sparkling eyes and she exudes an elegant simplicity. Although she was raised in Kobe, Japan, Ms. Lin was inspired by reports of the birth of the People's Republic of China (in 1949) and returned to her homeland in 1952 to work for the construction of the new country.

For the benefit of later generations, she often speaks of my meeting with Premier Zhou, saying:

"Even though he was then hospitalized, the premier insisted on meeting with Mr. Ikeda because he recognized very well the latter's contribution to opening a path of friendship between China and Japan. He entrusted Mr. Ikeda with the great mission of creating friendship between our countries."

An interpreter is also a witness to the making of history. I am grateful for Ms. Lin's profound understanding of my sentiments in wishing to build such a golden bridge of friendship.

Betting Everything on Youth

The year I met Premier Zhou, 1974, was a year that saw a dramatic increase in my travels around the world and my opportunities to speak with world leaders. In addition to visiting China for the first time (in May), I also made my first trip to the Soviet Union and traveled to North, Central and South America. A *Seikyo Shimbun* reporter who graphed the number of times I met with world figures each year was surprised by the marked change that took place from 1974.

Through these overseas trips, I gained a deep appreciation for the important role of interpreters. And as my young interpreters and I came to know and understand each other, I trained them in actual interpreting situations.

When the *Seikyo Shimbun*

newspaper was started (in 1951), Josei Toda, the second Soka Gakkai president, remarked: "Being amateur is fine for now. Everyone has to start somewhere. But in ten years you will develop into professionals."

Based on these words, in 1974 I determined to devote ten years to fostering capable interpreters by learning and struggling together with them. I wanted to raise interpreters who were still in the prime of youth. I bet everything on youth.

Raising Capable People

The corps of SGI official interpreters grew into a solid and capable force.¹ In March 1991, to express my appreciation for their daily efforts, I held a meeting with the SGI interpreters at which we were able to discuss a wide range of topics. This was the first meeting of its kind.

I believe in "on the job training" when it comes to raising capable people. It was essentially due to the personal coaching and the life-to-life encouragement and inspiration, that such an outstanding core of SGI interpreters was able to develop.

This year (2000) marks the fortieth anniversary of my first trip overseas (in October 1960). Since then, I have visited fifty-four countries, and traveled abroad on more than seventy occasions. During those trips, I received tremendous support from many interpreters. I have never forgotten those indi-

viduals whose noble efforts behind the scenes have transcended the barrier of language and enabled Buddhism to spread around the world.

A Great Interpreter of Chinese

I often tell young interpreters: "An interpreter must have a strong voice. When the voice is strong, the meaning can be conveyed. There is an outstanding Chinese interpreter whose cheerful voice reverberates throughout China's Great Hall of the People without the aid of a microphone."

The owner of this clear, resonant voice is Huang Shiming. Mr. Huang has been a dear friend of mine ever since my first visit to China. He has interpreted for me on numerous occasions during meetings with Chinese dignitaries, and we have also held personal dialogues here in Japan. He has served as vice president for both the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-Japan Friendship Association.

Mr. Huang is an honest and virtuous man of exemplary character. I have known him since his side-parted hair was a deep black. I recall how he once cited such Chinese proverbs as "It is in times of difficulty that we know our true friends" and "Pure gold fears no fire" in expressing his profound spirit of friendship. He is a person whose every word reflects personal conviction.

Mr. Huang attended an entrance ceremony for the Soka Junior and Senior High Schools in Tokyo. In his address to the matriculating students, he said: "I hope all of you will strive to make the golden bridge [of China-Japan friendship] shine with increasing brilliance for generations to come."

Because he himself had worked so hard to promote China-Japan friendship, his appeal resonated in the hearts of the youth present. Now, many graduates of the Soka Schools have gone on to make building friendship between the two countries their lifelong endeavor.

Youth Are the Axis of Change

When I was in China in 1992 I learned Mr. Huang was in the hospital. I immediately composed a poem and had it delivered to him:

*I pray,
I deeply pray
For the day
When I will again
See your great smile.*

Two years later, having won his battle with illness, Mr. Huang came to Japan together with his wife, his face alight with a brilliant smile.

In September 1998, Mr. Huang sent a kind message saying that my call for the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan² thirty years ear-

lier had been a significant impetus toward the development of bilateral friendship. Referring to my statement at that time, “The times are changing moment by moment. It is the prerogative of youth to take action, ever-focused on the future,” he voiced his expectations for youth, whom he called the “axis of change in history.”

Mr. Huang further stated: “Both officially and privately, I regard my association with the Soka Gakkai as a source of immense honor and pride.” In addition to being a person of keen insight, he is also a true friend who shines with a spirit of sincerity.

Five Guidelines for Interpreters

The SGI official interpreters are all hard-working, serious and highly capable individuals. One of them is Ryoko Yakura, who is my principal English interpreter. Ms. Yakura’s father was a second-generation Japanese-American, and her mother, a Japanese national, was an educator. She attended an international school in Kanagawa Prefecture from kindergarten through high school, and then went on to college — earning top marks all along the way. From the time she attended a summer training course as a member of the junior high school division, Ms. Yakura cherished the dream of becoming an SGI interpreter and she pursued her goal



SGI President Ikeda met with President Jiang Zemin of the People’s Republic of China, who made the first official visit by a Chinese head of state to Japan. The meeting was broadcast throughout China. (Tokyo, November 1998)

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wholeheartedly.

Around the time the activities of the SGI official interpreters really began gaining momentum, I recall giving the following five guidelines for interpreters at a leaders meeting in Los Angeles attended by representatives of many different countries: 1) develop broad learning and linguistic ability; 2) maintain pure faith; 3) cultivate the ability to capture people’s hearts; 4) accurately convey the spirit of the speaker; and 5) develop physical stamina.

Moscow University Rector Anatoli A. Logunov, with whom I published a dialogue,³ highly praised the young woman who interpreted for us, who happens

to be a graduate of Soka University. I’m sure it wasn’t just her linguistic ability he was complimenting; an interpreter’s character is also vital.

In a book of memoirs, former Moscow State University vice rector Vladimir I. Tropin writes: “I will never forget my discussion with President Ikeda during my first visit to Japan in 1976. He stressed the importance of life-to-life exchange, particularly among youth, and of acquiring proficiency in a foreign language toward that end. ... He also joked that now that Soka University has incorporated Russian language instruction into its curriculum, on his next visit to Russia he would

bring a 'home grown' interpreter to save face."⁴

Many outstanding interpreters have been fostered through the active exchange program developed between Soka University and Moscow State University.

My Friendship With Dr. Strijak

Speaking of Russia and the Russian language, I am also greatly indebted to Associate Professor Leon A. Strijak of Moscow State University. When I arrived at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport for my first visit to the Soviet Union, Moscow State University Rector Rem V. Khokhlov and other dignitaries were there to greet me, and Professor Strijak was on hand to interpret. To be honest, I was surprised to find someone able to speak such fluent Japanese in the Soviet Union.

Dr. Strijak interpreted between the rector and me as we drove into the city from the airport, led by a police escort. A different language is a different culture. I deeply appreciate the significant role played by the interpreter who conveys the initial exchange of words between me and my host when I travel overseas.

When we arrived at our lodgings, I praised Dr. Strijak's wonderful command of the Japanese language. My wife was equally impressed.

Professor Strijak also interpreted during my meetings with the late Soviet premier Aleksei N.

Kosygin and the Nobel Prize-winning author Mikhail A. Sholokhov. He provides guidance and support to students of Japanese at Moscow State University, and frequently escorts groups of these students on trips to Japan.

He once shared with me what was going through his mind as he waited for my arrival at the airport that day in Moscow. "I was in fact extremely worried," he confided, "wondering if you would trust me as your interpreter and if I would be able to accurately relate your sentiments. But you were extremely kind, and you spoke in a way that was easy to understand. This gave me confidence."

We formed a bond of trust on that first meeting, and our friendship has continued to this day. I believe that it is just such bonds of the heart that have fostered enduring educational and cultural exchange with Russia.

Dialogue Is an Earnest Struggle

When I visited Central and South America in 1974, my original plans were changed and we wound up flying from Miami directly to Panama, where I was to meet with the country's paramount leader, General Omar Torrijos Herrera (1929–81), along with the president of the republic, Demetrio Lakas, and the rector and heads of a Panamanian university.

Because of the sudden change

in my itinerary, I found myself without a Spanish interpreter. One alternative suggestion was to have what I said rendered into English, and then have a member from the United States who was traveling with us translate it into Spanish. But this would take a lot of time, and would hardly amount to dialogue. And so it happened that the young Kimiro Yoshida, a member of the Soka Gakkai Headquarters staff who hadn't had much experience as an interpreter, was put up to the task at the last minute.

At the end of the first day of the visit, someone expressed concern over the fact that Mr. Yoshida had only been able to communicate about sixty percent of what I had said. But I reassured him, saying that for a first time, to communicate even that much was quite an accomplishment. I believe that the most important thing is to encourage young people and give them confidence. Mr. Yoshida went on to become fully active as an interpreter and has also raised many fine successors.

In a sense, dialogue is an earnest struggle between two people. It could even be described as sparring with words. It is through this process that both parties begin to open their hearts to one another.

When I encourage interpreters to speak in a loud voice, I am thinking in particular about Nichiren Daishonin's reference to the statement: "Voices do the Buddha's work" (WND, 188).



Ryoko Yakura (left) is SGI President Ikeda's principal English translator. Ms. Yakura cherished the dream of becoming an SGI interpreter since she was in junior high school.

Seikyo Press

The Solid Force of SGI Official Interpreters

When I was young, I did not have the time to study foreign languages. I spent each day supporting President Toda through difficult times and exerting myself tirelessly to rebuild the Soka Gakkai, which is my greatest pride. Nonetheless, I deeply sensed the importance of language study. At a meeting of the Suiko-kai⁵ youth division group, I addressed a question to President Toda on this very topic.

With a bright smile, he replied: "Acquiring proficiency in

foreign languages is a precondition for achieving worldwide kosen-rufu. No matter how many language experts we have, there will never be enough."

I am happy to report that due to the hard work of the SGI interpreters and their efforts to develop, they have become a solid force. I am infinitely grateful.

The Translation of the Lotus Sutra, Supreme Treasure of Humanity

Translation is different from interpretation in that it deals with the written word.

Translation of the sutras con-

tributed to the worldwide spread of Buddhism, which originated in India.

In March this year, amid the first signs of spring, the exhibition "The Lotus Sutra and Its World: Buddhist Manuscripts of the Great Silk Road"⁶ opened at the Austrian National Library in Vienna, Austria. It featured a collection of thirty Buddhist manuscripts and block prints (xylographs), including copies of the Lotus Sutra and other important texts from the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The Lotus Sutra, Shakyamuni's ultimate teaching,

is the supreme treasure of humanity. This is borne out by the great many languages into which the Lotus Sutra was translated in the course of its eastward transmission from India along the Silk Road. These languages include Chinese, Old Uygur, Xixia (Tangut) and Tibetan. In this way, the Lotus Sutra served as a vehicle for cultural exchange in Central and East Asia.

Among the scriptures displayed at the exhibition was a Sanskrit copy of the Lotus Sutra known as the Petrovsky manuscript, which was obtained in the late 19th century by Nikolai F. Petrovsky (1837–1908), the Russian consul general in Kashugal at the time.

We must never forget that it is because of the painstaking work of translation that such Buddhist concepts as the sanctity of life, the value of peace and the importance of the environment, and a sophisticated view of the universe have been conveyed as shared human values.

Kumarajiva — Great Translator of the Lotus Sutra

It was the translations of the famed scholar Kumarajiva (344–413) that communicated the essence of Buddhism to China with unmatched precision.

The location of his birthplace in a part of Central Asia between India and China must have contributed to Kumarajiva's sense of

FIVE GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETERS

- 1) Develop broad learning and linguistic ability.
- 2) Maintain pure faith.
- 3) Cultivate the ability to capture people's hearts.
- 4) Accurately convey the spirit of the speaker.
- 5) Develop physical stamina.

mission as a translator. From the time he reached the Chinese capital of Chang-an after having overcome various trials and hardships, Kumarajiva single-mindedly applied himself to the task of translating the Lotus Sutra. It had been his cherished dream for some forty years, ever since a copy of the text was entrusted to him by his teacher Shuryasoma.

When he was in his late fifties, with the help of many outstanding scholars — said to have numbered more than 3,000 — Kumarajiva at last undertook the work of producing a translation of the Lotus Sutra while lecturing on its profound principles. This was not simply a work of translation, but a great movement of Buddhist study.

The well-known writing “On Refuting the Five Priests”⁷ says: “Just as when the Buddhism of India spread eastward, the Sanskrit texts were translated and introduced in China and Japan, so when the time comes to widely declare the sacred teachings of

this country, the Japanese texts are sure to be translated and spread in China and India” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1613).

Many of Nichiren Daishonin's major writings have now been translated into English, and efforts are currently being made to translate them into a number of other languages. It should be remembered that this has all been made possible through the broad-based desire of people around the world to study Buddhism.

The pioneers of this unprecedented movement are none other than our noble interpreters and translators all across the globe. Through the changing times and our expanding activities, it is the invaluable efforts of such language experts alone that spread outstanding thoughts and philosophies far and wide.

The dialogues I have held also must be challenging to render into other languages, for they cover such a wide range of topics. These have taken place with historians, educators, astronomers,

politicians, economists, physicists, chemists, mathematicians, poets, authors, military leaders, religious figures, dancers, musicians, revolutionaries, painters, calligraphers, athletes, diplomats and physicians.

Creating a Foundation of Trust for the Future

It was during my discussions over the course of ten days with the British historian Arnold Toynbee (1889–1975) that I realized the importance of professional interpretation. Although that was more than twenty years ago, I feel as though it was just the other day that Dr. Toynbee and I were exchanging views on history and the problems facing humankind, and thoroughly exploring the challenges and counterchallenges of civilization.

In March of this year, our dialogue was translated and published in Czech, the twenty-fourth language in which it has appeared. Though different, both interpretation and translation play an indispensable role in promoting inter-civilizational dialogue.

Words reveal what is in the heart. Content is of course important, but it is ultimately the true intent, the spirit of the speaker, that the words convey. I imagine that the real thrill for interpreters comes from bringing people together and opening the way for heart-to-heart communication, thereby creating a foundation of trust for the future.



Associate Professor Leon A. Strijak (fourth from the left) of Moscow State University interpreted for the SGI president when he met with Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin of the Soviet Union at the Kremlin, May 1975.

Seikyo Press

The Entire World Is the Stage of Kosen-rufu

I love people. That is why I meet and talk with people from all walks of life. Dialogue transcends ethnic and ideological differences. I will continue to engage in dialogue as long as I live. We must never stop promoting dialogue across cultures.

Interpreting in any area is extremely difficult. I am eternally grateful for the interpreters who stand at my side, becoming my ears and mouth. The SGI's foreign language experts, who are advancing our Buddhist movement for culture, education and peace, are the Kumarajivas of the modern age. I would like to praise them from the bottom of my heart.

The SGI now spans the five continents, reaching all corners of the globe and transcending all linguistic barriers. Nichiren Daishonin says: "It is certain that kosen-rufu will eventually be achieved through-

out the entire world" (*Goshō Zenshu*, p. 816). The entire world is the stage of kosen-rufu. ☸

1. The system for qualifying SGI official interpreters was inaugurated on August 16, 1983, at the time of the Fourth SGI General Meeting in Sapporo, Japan, with the first nine interpreters receiving certificates. There are today more than 80 SGI official interpreters.
2. At a Soka Gakkai student division general meeting in September 1968, Mr. Ikeda called for the restoration of diplomatic ties between Japan and China, for China to be granted membership in the United Nations and for the promotion of Japan-China bilateral trade.
3. *Daisan no Niji no Hashi* (The Third Rainbow Bridge), currently published in Japanese, Russian and Chinese.
4. Translated from Japanese. Vladimir Ivanovich Tropin, *Deai no Nijunen — Sekaishimin Ikeda Daisaku to Roshia* (Twenty Years of Meetings — The World Citizen Daisaku Ikeda and Russia), trans. Ekuko Saito et al. (Tokyo: Ushio Shuppansha, 1995), pp. 151–52.
5. Suiko-kai: A young men's special training group, which studied directly under second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda. They took their name from the Chinese novel *The Water Margin* (Jpn *Suiko-den*).
6. The exhibition opened in Tokyo in November 1998, the first time the collection had been shown outside of the country. In May 2000, after the Vienna showing, it was displayed at the Herzog August Library in Wolfenbüttel, Germany.
7. "On Refuting the Five Priests" (Jpn "*Gonin Shoha Sho*"): A thesis written in 1328 by Nichijun, a disciple of Nikko Shonin, pointing out the errors made by five of the Daishonin's six senior disciples.



Seikyo Press

SGI President Daisaku Ikeda meets with Dr. Ved Nanda, his wife Katharine and daughter Anjali at their home in Denver in 1996.

Unforgettable FRIENDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Dr. Ved Prakash Nanda — The Eternal Spirit of Learning

In this series, SGI President Ikeda has recorded his impressions of the many friends he has made in his travels for peace. In his New Year's poem in the January issue, he states: "I will continue to knock on the doors / Of diverse cultures and civilizations, / Seeking out the humanity that is vibrantly alive / At the heart of each, / Believing that sincere dialogue/in search of our shared humanity / Will build a rainbow bridge linking the world."

It was a long, long road. Fifty years ago, a mother and her children were walking on a road of terror.

The joy of India's hard-fought independence from Great Britain (1947) was soon transformed by

the Partition of India and the creation of the new Islamic nation of Pakistan into what could only be described as an insane and hellish religious war.

Gandhi opposed the division of India along religious lines to the very end, but nevertheless India split,

with all the wrenching pain and tragedy that would be experienced by a living person torn in two.

The hunt for “heretics” sprang up on both sides of the new border. The Hindus and Sikhs living in Pakistan fled to India and Muslims in India fled to Pakistan, crowding the roads in a rushed double-exodus. They had to rush, for they never knew when they would be attacked by followers of another religion. The violence was horrific and bloody, as people set upon others with guns, swords, knives, hammers and staves.

Dr. Ved Prakash Nanda, former president of the World Association of Law Professors, looks back on those times: “I remember walking with my mother for a long, long time, day after day. The only reason we had to leave our home was that we were Hindus. At the time, I couldn’t understand that. Even today, I cannot.”

Dr. Nanda was born in the town of Gujranwala in northwest India, which had become part of Pakistan. He was only twelve at the time of the Partition, when he and his family were forced to flee to India.

It was an enormous and terribly cruel emigration. According to differing estimates, between ten and fifteen million people were displaced. They walked four hundred, five hundred kilometers on a journey of despair, fleeing arson, looting, starvation and murder. When members of one group were killed, their relatives and colleagues would exact revenge on the killers, continuing the cycle of destruction. Members of the police and the military were also guilty of looting and murder. Well over a million perished, many of them women and children.

Dr. Nanda can never forget this primal experience. “Up to now, history has seen people being constantly persecuted in the name of religion, dividing humanity. But the true purpose of religion is to forge bonds between people,” he says, that last sentence conveying his most deeply cherished wish. Out of his passionate belief that religion should exist for the sake of people, not the other way around, he commented that the Soka Gakkai International is a religious organization where one finds the victory of culture, spirit and individual.

The first time I met Dr. Nanda was at an annual



Dr. Nanda recalls leaving India with his family during the religious war between India and Pakistan. (Above) Pakistani women and children receive refreshment from a Jawan.

Hutton/Deutsch/
Corbis

performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony at Soka University in Tokyo (in December 1994). Dr. Nanda attended the event as the associate provost of the University of Denver accompanied by Dr. Maria Guajardo, a trustee of the university. Dr. Nanda remarked: “The students of Soka University are singing Beethoven’s ‘Ode to Joy,’ which is an expression of an open spirit that recognizes and praises all cultures. This shows a spirit of true tolerance at Soka University.”

I was very moved by Dr. Nanda’s humble willingness to always learn from others. All conflicts — not just religious conflicts but conflicts between nations, ethnic groups, political factions or ideologies — as well as deadlocks in such spheres as government and education are fundamentally the result of an arrogant and narrow-minded refusal to learn from others. The most important task facing us is to change such minds into open and broadly-accepting ones.

Dr. Nanda is a firm believer in not judging by appearances. He once remarked on how a student

“the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law”

who was depressed over poor grades came to see him. Perceiving the student’s great potential that grades alone did not reveal, Dr. Nanda encouraged him wholeheartedly. He said later: “I was able to achieve what I did because of the opportunities given to me. By making a similar opportunity available to that student, he might perhaps go on to do better than I ever have. Everyone is gifted with wonderful potential. Sometimes it’s just that we haven’t noticed it yet.”

Dr. Nanda learned this lesson from his parents. “My mother never spoke ill of family members or friends. All her life she always tried to see what was good in everyone and praise it. When we children would say, ‘That person is bad,’ she would always gently correct us. ‘No,’ she would say, ‘that person has good points as well. It’s just that we can’t see them right now.’ ... My father, too, never raised his voice to scold us, and he never raised his hand to physically punish us.” This spiritual legacy has matured into a great treasure in Dr. Nanda’s heart.

After graduating from Punjab University in India, Dr. Nanda went to the United States and studied at Northwestern and Yale universities. He served as the president of the World Association of Law Professors and the vice president of the World Jurist Association.

Dr. Nanda’s special cause has been winning international acceptance for the idea that the threat or use of nuclear weapons violates humanity’s right to live and as such is against international laws. As a result of his activities and those of his associates, the International Court of Justice in the Hague issued the advisory opinion in 1996 that “the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law”—an enormous step forward in human history.

Last year [1996] I was invited to the graduation ceremony of the University of Denver and presented with an honorary doctorate. Denver is known as the “Queen City of the Plains.” The sun shines brightly in the endless blue sky, and in the distance the Rocky Mountains rise imperviously, like monuments of indomitable conviction. The day before the ceremony, my wife and I visited Dr. Nanda at his home, where we met his wife Katharine and daughter Anjali. They are a family as warm and bright as the sunshine.

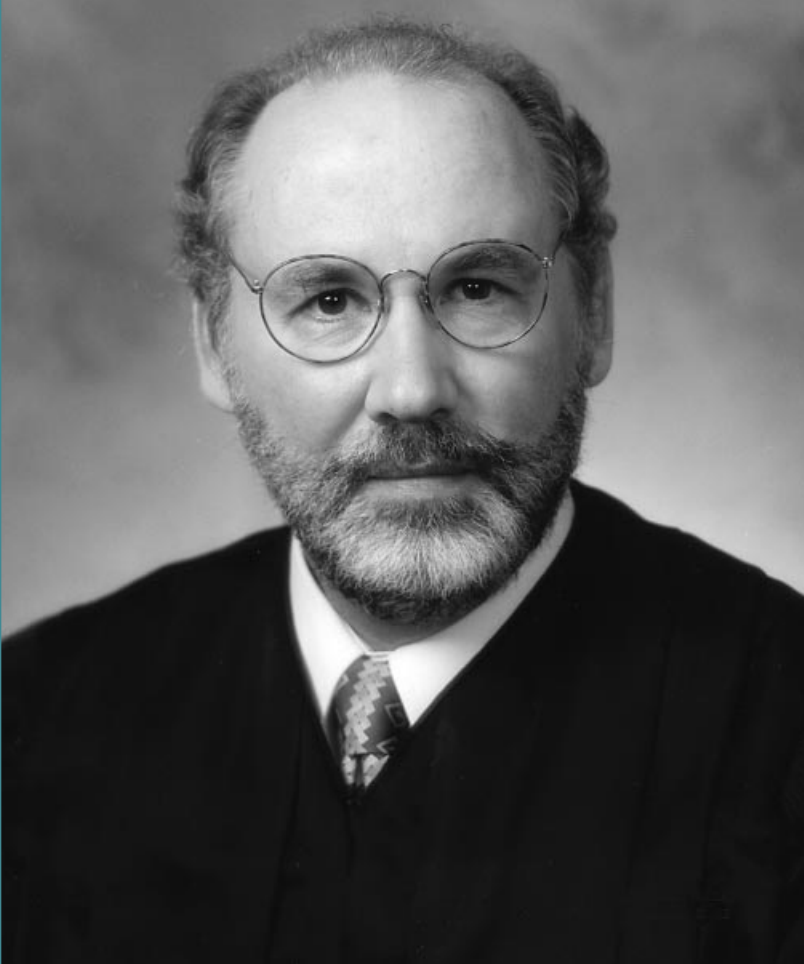
Dr. Nanda is doing great work for all of us, and I told him to take care of his health so he can continue his service to humankind.

There was a piano in the room, and I played “Dainanko” (The Great Hero Kusunoki) for the Nanda family. “This is a very old Japanese song,” I said. “It is a song for parents and children. It says that whatever may happen, father and child will work to survive it together. ‘Let’s build a good future together. When Father is having trouble, I’ll take up his burden and continue the fight,’ it says. It’s a song filled with a noble spirit.”

I played this song for the Nanda family out of a sincere wish for their well-being and longevity — also for the sake of Dr. Nanda’s late parents, who suffered so much in their homeland. I played with a prayer for the happiness of Dr. Nanda, who had inherited his parents’ spirit and carried on the fight for human rights and the happiness of his family.

The desire to learn, to study, is crucial. The Soka Gakkai — if we take its name — is a group for learning about value-creation. The humility of a willingness to learn reflects a respect for others; in it are to be found peace, culture, progress and a springboard to limitless improvement.

As Dr. Nanda said: “I still feel that I haven’t learned enough from my parents. My challenge is to continue learning, as long as I live.” ☸



Owen and Owen

Dan Foley: Setting the Bar High for Justice

BY JOANNE TACHIBANA, HONOLULU

On October 2, 2000, Attorney Dan Foley was sworn in as Associate Justice of the State Appellate Court by Hawaii State Supreme Court Justice Ronald Moon, in the company of his peers, family and friends.

A career advocate of personal civil rights for more than two decades, a true champion of individual human rights — when called to serve in a new capacity in the judicial system, Dan Foley was prepared. The time for change was at hand. Accordingly, Dan Foley's role was transformed as he took his place as a member of a four-panel team for the Hawaii Intermediate Court of Appeals.

The appointment of Dan Foley by Hawaii's Governor Benjamin J. Cayetano was a bold one and brought mixed reaction from the local community. Dan Foley, an outstanding and well-respected civil

rights lawyer, has taken on tough constitutional and legal battles for little or no financial reward. A summary of the typical areas of his past practice includes: legal rights of same sex couples; first amendment rights of police officers; first amendment rights of lobbyists and candidates for office; first amendment rights of vendors on public sidewalks; first amendment and private rights of adult arcade operators; police brutality; prison conditions; discrimination based on sex, race, handicap, age, marital status and sexual orientation; premises liability; defamation; abuse of process and malicious prosecution.

Attorney Foley was brought into the national spotlight during the case of marriage rights for same sex couples, which was popularly called "same sex marriage." It stirred major debate statewide and resulted in groundbreaking rulings by the State Supreme Court that paved the way for other states rulings on this issue.



Dan Foley sharing a moment with his family after the swearing-in ceremony (L-r: Dan's mother, Doris Cellarius, Dan Foley, his sister Jackie Jones, son Jason and wife, Carlyn).

Joanne Tachibana

Throughout his career, Dan has been a tireless advocate for his clients and has striven to pursue justice in accordance with the Hawaii Rules of Professional Conduct. Outside of his law practice, Dan was an adjunct professor of civil rights at the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii. He served as counsel to the State Civil Rights Commission in drafting the Commission's Administrative rules. He chaired the Hawaii Bar Association Section on Criminal Justice.

Dan Foley has been recognized for his achievements and has received numerous awards; two highlights are the "Lawyer of Year" by the ACLU-Hawaii and the LAMBDA Liberty Award.

Dan Foley's experiences laid the foundation of his respect for civil liberties. As a Peace Corps volunteer (1969-70) in Lesotho, Africa, he witnessed the devastation of civil war that resulted in the suspension of the constitution. In this absence of due process, the rights of individuals were suspended. While spending a summer at a private law school in Mexico, he perceived a country where the con-

stitution existed on paper, yet bore no relationship to the people's daily lives.

These experiences impressed upon him the importance of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, and affirmed his decision to pursue a career in law. Following his graduation from the University of San Francisco Law School in 1974, he traveled to Micronesia where he spent the next eight years drafting articles for the constitution, helping return the region to self government. "To this day he remains a near-legendary figure among the people there" (*ImiLoa*,¹ p. 23).

In the field of law, Thurgood Marshall, a well-known figure in the history of civil rights in America and the first black Supreme Court justice, remains one of Dan's heroes. Justice Marshall is credited with changing the landscape of American society by overturning the "separate but equal" apartheid of American life. He won a landmark decision in the 1954 "Brown v. Board of Education," which declared segregation of public schools illegal. Justice Marshall defined the term *equal* as "getting the same

thing, at the same time and in the same place.”

Although he worked on behalf of black Americans, the structure of individual rights he created became the cornerstone of protections for all Americans — women, children, prisoners and the homeless. Dan’s career has been a testament to the Marshall legacy.

In 1984, Dan Foley’s wife, Carlyn, introduced him to the SGI and Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism in Hawaii. The wisdom and compassion of the Buddhist philosophy are exemplified in Dan’s approach to his daily life. A speech given by SGI President Ikeda at Claremont McKenna College in 1993 illustrates the broad view of human life that made Buddhism appealing to Dan.

“To be of real and lasting value, change must be gradual and inspired from within.” Mr. Ikeda referenced economist Friedrich A. Hayek’s analogy of a gardener describing the attitude a true liberal takes toward society: “The growth of plant life is both spontaneous and gradual. At most, the gardener can create conditions propitious to growth. In the same way, Hayek urges that we must utilize the ‘spontaneous forces of society.’”

Mr. Ikeda continues: “Coincidentally, the gardener analogy also leads us to consider the need to respect diversity within society. One of the most critical questions today is how, after the fashion of a skilled gardener, we can create a harmonious garden from the manifold human talents and qualities, while respecting the unique and sacrosanct individuality of each person.

“By adopting an inner-directed and gradualist approach, we can find ways through which the diversity of our experience can become a source of creative energy.” Mr. Ikeda concluded that the tradition of America’s experience qualifies the United



Dan Foley being sworn in as the Associate Justice of the State Appellate Court of Hawaii by Justice Ronald Moon on October 2, 2000.

Joanne Tachibana

States to assume “a special mission to demonstrate a pattern [of respect for diversity] for the entire world” (*Seikyo Times*, March 1993, p. 36).

The respect for the sanctity of each individual is exemplified by Dan Foley’s conduct in all aspects of his life. Lawyers often fail to display that quality. Even Dan’s opponents testified in his favor at the Senate confirmation hearings. They commended his integrity, honesty and positive working relationships with other counsel, friend or foe. Although he took cases that were controversial and unpopular — and certainly not lucrative — he maintained focus and was a successful advocate on behalf of his clients.

Ironically, his advocacy was an issue that was questioned at the Senate public hearings. The remarks of State Senator Jonathan Chun brought clarity to this issue. Senator Chun, who strongly opposed the same-sex marriage issue, commented on that question. “Can Mr. Foley stop being an advocate for his own personal viewpoints as to what is right and apply the law as the people intended it? I feel he was honest and sincere when he testified in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee that he can stop being an advocate for his personal view and base his decisions only on the law.” With that stated, Senator Chun voted in favor of Mr. Foley’s appointment.

The affirmative testimony of State Senator



Colleen Hanabusa crystallized the attributes of Dan Foley. Having worked both with and against Mr. Foley, the senator stated that it was an honor to co-counsel on cases. “On issues of constitutional law and ramifications, in my opinion, there is no one better. My support for Mr. Foley is unequivocal. ... The Dan Foley I know is not afraid to take on politically incorrect issues. He is not afraid to help the underdog. And he is not afraid to say what needs to be said and what needs to be argued on unpopular matters. ... The other part of Dan Foley is that he is somebody who gives more than 100 percent for cases that may pay him less than one percent. Now that is an honorable trait in any profession but especially among us attorneys.”

To those who protested Mr. Foley’s appointment, Senator Hanabusa said that “the Dan Foley I know would say: ‘Isn’t the Constitution a wonderful instrument? Isn’t freedom of speech the most precious of our rights? And isn’t it true that equal rights and due process for all is something that we should all be willing to fight for?’”

Her only lament was that when the government or someone may infringe on our constitutional rights, there will be no Dan Foley to be our advocate. In closing, she stated that “the one satisfaction that you may have is that if your case goes up to the Intermediate Court of Appeals, you know that there you will have someone with intelligence, integrity, objectivity, impartiality, the unique ability to reason and judicial temperament, and that is what we want in people we put up to the Intermediate Court of Appeals.”

That is Dan Foley the jurist, the first civil rights attorney to be appointed to Hawaii’s State Intermediate Court of Appeals. Wearing the distinguished robe of judge is Dan Foley, a man whose sterling character is widely recognized. ☸

1. *ImiLoa* (Remaking Government Renewing Hawaii)—A publication of the State of Hawaii, Winter 2000 issue.

Shuzo Uemoto

Continued from page 9

the meaning of human revolution. Human revolution is the continual process of understanding changing truths, which fosters acceptance, unity and harmony among people.

This is essential because it clarifies the essence of propagation as I see it, which is living by example versus spreading a method. Faith can then really be what spreads the Law of the universe. Human revolution then becomes kosen-rufu versus kosen-rufu being the spreading of the Law. Open suggestions enable a true transcendence from the realm of theory to actual knowing derived from real experience. It is impossible for someone to make another deeply understand something with just words. Telling someone the “right” answer is assuming too much authority, and prevents them from fully understanding the inner working of their own minds. We have experienced this firsthand with the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood in their dogmatic attitude of hierarchy, which also keeps Buddhism within the realm of theory versus experience.

As President Ikeda states in *For Today & Tomorrow*: “To lead a life in which we are inspired and can inspire others, our hearts have to be alive; they have to be filled with passion and enthusiasm. To achieve that, as President Toda also said, we need the courage to ‘live true to ourselves.’ And to live true to ourselves, we need the strength of mind not to be swayed by our environment or be

obsessed with the vanity of superficial appearances. Rather than borrowing from or imitating others, we need the conviction to be able to think for ourselves and to take action from our own sense of responsibility.” I agree wholeheartedly. How can we “live true to ourselves,” if we are being told what is right, what to do and what to believe in? I believe that religions in general lose influential power by using language that emphasizes the institution versus the people or practitioners of a particular religion.

We of the SGI, I believe, have a responsibility to always check in with each other to be sure that we never fall into this dogmatic approach. Of course, I am not suggesting that all members come from this perspective. Each of us shares our faith to the best of our ability according to the circumstances and our wisdom. It might be worth investigating how we explain our ideas to others and the language used in those efforts. Things like, “Let’s spread the Law and the Daishonin’s Buddhism” could be rephrased as, “Manifesting your goals or your life as actual proof is spreading the Law.” Phrases like, “the Gohonzon knows” and “trust the Gohonzon” are limiting as they could easily cause people to seek the Gohonzon outside their own lives. It might be worth putting more effort into explaining that these phrases mean, “trust your Buddha nature” or “Buddha wisdom” which also suggests the need to go beyond our ordinary consciousness instead of relying on a visceral response and “your Buddha nature knows.”

Kosen-rufu means to create peace through propagating or making people aware of the Daishonin’s Buddhism as a vehicle toward world peace. When President Ikeda speaks with world figures, does he tell them that they have to chant and that chanting is the only way to world peace? He probably just explains why he feels our practice is valuable. In a nutshell, he emphasizes his life as actual proof versus telling others about a “right” way. It is a matter of true human revolution versus persuasive dialogue. Rather than striving to prove another religion “wrong,” is it not more value-creative to just prove ours right by living it? ☸

1. C.G. Jung, *Psychology and the East* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press) 9.

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The Art and Life of Haynes Ownby

BY SCOTT R. BLOOM, PROVINCETOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

Since beginning his practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in August 1985, Haynes Ownby has never veered from his life's goal of being a successful abstract painter. By consequence, his quiet determination, prayer and efforts have borne irrefutable results in the whole spectrum of his life.

In order to create his art, Haynes needed financial stability. At fifty-five, he initially chanted to earn a living without restricting himself to the time constraints of a full-time job. Over the years of his Buddhist practice, he has also challenged epilepsy, and has not suffered from a seizure or needed medication for the past ten years.

By 1999, Haynes was well on the road to solvency; he sold a painting to the El Paso Museum, and the same year was asked to be one of Provincetown International Art Institute's (affiliated with Cape Cod Community College) core founding art instructors. This salaried teaching job allowed Haynes to stay on top of his finances while leaving him plenty of time to work on his own paintings.

In June 1999, Haynes underwent a successful operation to remove half of his cancer-stricken right lung. He was able to teach through the 1999–2000 academic year, but the cancer returned to his left lung in the spring and he was forced to give up his position. Last year, however, the prestigious Pollock/Krasner Foundation awarded Haynes its largest grant of \$30,000. This award allowed Haynes to paint for a year and prepare for his retrospective show at the Cape Cod Museum of Fine Arts which, on November 18, 2000, presented him with an award for his ongoing service and commit-

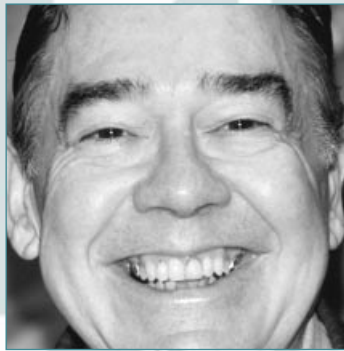
ment. These awards are proof of the positive, caring and persevering life of Haynes Ownby.

His art has always been of a high quality, he feels, thanks particularly to studying with his "mentor in art," the great Bavarian artist/teacher, Hans Hofmann, who has recently been identified as one of the most important abstract expressionists and compared with Picasso and Matisse. But, it has been by activating his enlightened life force through chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo that Haynes believes has allowed his art to truly blossom, his creativity, concentration, and sureness of stroke strengthened and refined.

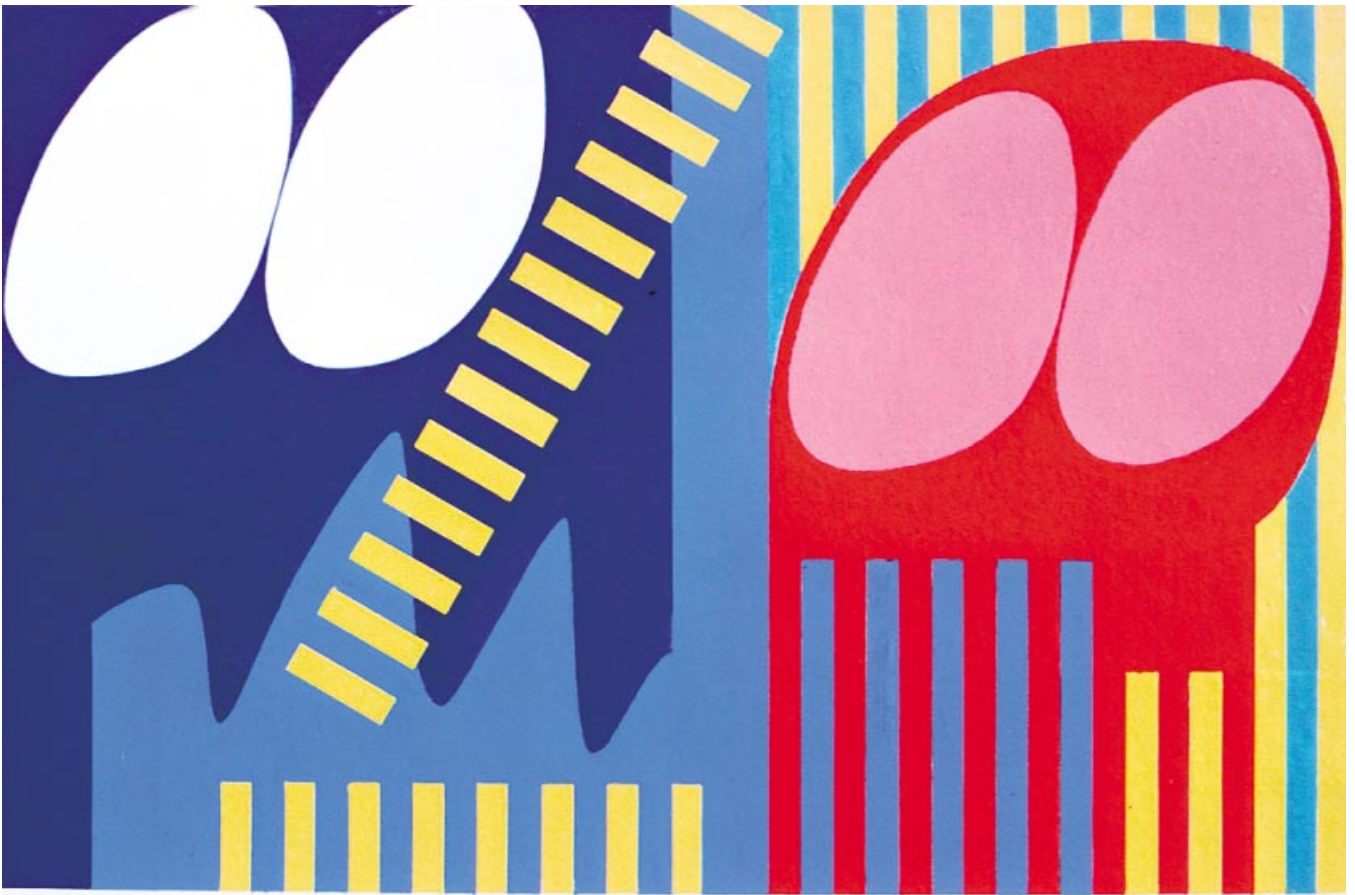
Regarding his art, Haynes said: "Mostly I'm doing what I call semiautomatic work now. [My paintings are] different from the more geometric work that people know me for. I use a swirl of lines that's put down without thought. It goes back to the automatic

drawing of the Surrealists. I do that, then fill in the spaces with black and white or color." He continues: "Sometimes at the beginning I have an idea. You get into a state of mind. You have to concentrate in the moment; it's not thinking in the usual sense. Just say to yourself, let's go, let's do it." He believes the way to uncover one's own artistic "self" is by allowing oneself to be influenced by other great art and literature.

The following is a quote by Goethe, which Haynes said has always inspired him: "Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth — the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never



Linda Ohlsen Graham



"Moon Over Miami," 1997, Acrylic on paper, 12-1/8" x 8"

otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now."

Although developing cancer was a tough blow, he used his Buddhist practice to challenge his health and work to the very last moment of his life. Whenever I

chanted with Haynes, I was always the one who was encouraged. He was always there as a friend for me in the practice, and I know other members who would offer similar words of grateful praise. All the people in Haynes' life came to hold special value in his heart. "The members," he said, "are like a family to me."

Haynes Ownby died April 10, 2001. ❁

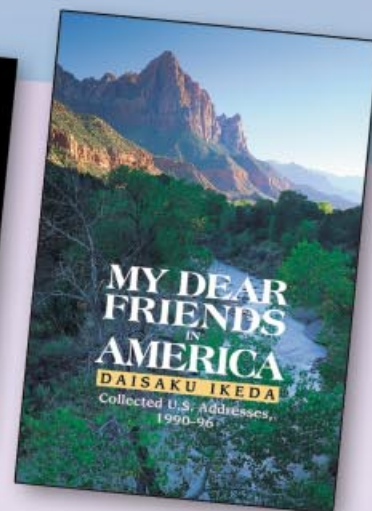


"Easter Island Surf," 1998, Acrylic on paper, 12-1/8" x 8"



"Spice Jones," 2000, Ink and Acrylic on paper, 10" x 14"

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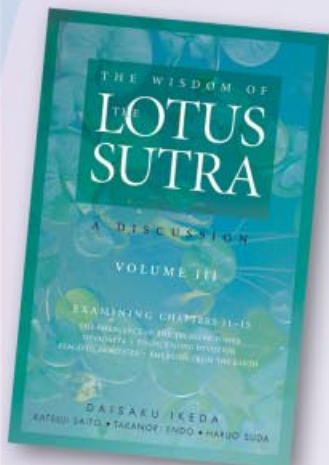
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What are the SGI & Living Buddhism Magazine?

Living Buddhism is the study journal for Soka Gakkai International-USA (SGI-USA), an American Buddhist movement that promotes peace and individual happiness based on the philosophy and practice of the Nichiren school of Mahayana Buddhism. SGI-USA works in association with seventy-five other SGI organizations comprising members in more than half the world's countries. SGI-USA activities are driven by our understanding of the inseparable link between individual happiness and the peace and prosperity of our diverse communities. Our religious teachings place the highest emphasis on the sanctity of life.

Through their Buddhist faith and practice, our members aim to improve their lives by taking up the challenge to create value, to live without fear, to take responsibility for their circumstances, to care for their families and to live with compassion for others.

What we believe...

Our core philosophy is expressed in the concept of human revolution, a process of inner transformation that centers on the idea that the causes we make through our thoughts, words and actions have influence that extends beyond their immediate context to affect the vast and complex web of life. Through undergoing our individual human revolution, we awaken to the responsibility we each have for our own circumstances and for our environment. Our inner transformation will lead us to take the actions that bring about personal fulfillment and help us contribute to the harmony and healthy development of society. These ideals are based on the Buddhist worldview of dependent origination, a concept of interrelation where all things in the realms of humanity and nature are dependent upon each other for their existence and nothing can exist in isolation.

The Buddhist tradition...

The roots of the SGI-USA worldview can be traced to the teachings of the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni, who lived some 2,500 years ago in what is modern-day Nepal. His enlightenment to eternal, universal reality was

most succinctly articulated in the Lotus Sutra. Following Shakyamuni's death, the Lotus Sutra spread through Central Asia into China and Japan.

In the thirteenth century, Nichiren Daishonin revealed the truth hidden in the Lotus Sutra. According to Nichiren Buddhism, the workings of the universe are an expression of a single principle or Law — Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, the title and essence of the Lotus Sutra. By putting their lives in rhythm with this Law, individuals can unlock their hidden potential — the Buddha nature — and achieve creative harmony with the environment. Nichiren Buddhism is a vehicle of individual empowerment — that is, individuals have within themselves, the power to transform the inevitable sufferings of life into happiness and to be a positive influence in the community.

The SGI Heritage...

The SGI organization has its origin in the educational theory of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, whose quest to understand the deepest meaning of life eventually led to his encounter with Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Here, he discovered a philosophy that recognized and sought to develop the wisdom inherent in all human beings. The term *soka gakkai* (value-creation society) was first used by Makiguchi in 1930 when he founded the lay organization. During World War II, Makiguchi and his disciple Josei Toda were imprisoned for their opposition to the war. Makiguchi died in prison within eighteen months at the age of seventy-three. After the war, Toda rebuilt the organization and it achieved remarkable growth until his death in 1958. On May 3, 1960, Daisaku Ikeda became the third president. Under his leadership, the organization has grown to its present membership of twelve million in 177 countries and territories.

Based on the humanistic principles of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, SGI President Ikeda has founded the Soka School System which includes universities in Japan and the United States. He is also the founder of the Toda Peace Institute, the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum, and more. He is the author of numerous books that have been translated into many languages and has received worldwide recognition for his peace efforts.

